
BRIAR SOVEREIGN
ARMOUR ASTIR
ADVENT
アドベント



This arcane text was certified by: Briar Sovereign
Certification Date: 26th June 2020

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The Crown thanks you for your diligence and honesty.

Armour Astir: Advent is a high-fantasy roleplaying game about striking back against an authority that seeks to control you.

It is a game of rival pilots clashing in steel-clad Astirs, of soldiers holding their own against the odds, and of spies and diplomats twisting the world to their ends. It is not a game of careful preparation or pleasant truces;

It's hard to change the world without taking a *risk*.

Acknowledgements

As a Powered By The Apocalypse game, Armour Astir naturally owes a lot to *Apocalypse World* by D. Vincent Baker and Meguey Baker. Thank you for teaching me about failing forwards. It's great. Additional design influences include *The Sprawl* by Hamish Cameron, *Masks* by Brendan Conway, *Scum & Villainy* by Stras Acimovic and John LeBoeuf-Little, *We Made Them Look Like Us* by Takuma Okada, *Technoir* by Jeremy Keller, and countless others. The creativity of the TTRPG community knows no bounds.

Touchstones include;

- *Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam, Mobile Suit Gundam ZZ, SD Gundam Gaiden, Vision Of Escaflowne, Super Dimension Fortress Macross, Armour Hunter Mellowlink*
- *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, Titanfall, Valkyria Chronicles*

Playtesting FAQ

Can I run a playtest of this game?

Of course! Feel free to run it however much you like. If you do so, though, I urge you and your group to provide feedback based on their experience with the game. These are **in-progress** rules, as **up-to-date** as I can give them, and as a tradeoff for that early access I'd really like to stress how important it is to development that you **provide some feedback** after your game.

What do I need?

If you're playing in-person, you'll need some 6-sided dice, a copy of this rule book, and printouts of the character playbooks. If you're playing online, you just need the PDFs. You can find links to all these at https://weregazelle.itch.io/armour-astir.

Can I stream/record my playtest?

Again, feel free! If you do so, I'd love to hear about it.

Where should I send my feedback?

Feel free to email me at **weregazelle@gmail.com** with the header 'Feedback (Armour Astir)'. Make sure to note how you and your group would like to be credited in the list of playtest groups. If you haven't playtested but still have errors or inconsistencies you've spotted, feel free to email those in too!

Also, feel free to join the Armour Astir discord! (https://discord.gg/5DrDpCr)

Any specific areas of feedback you're looking for?

Yes! I'm always looking for feedback on the feel and clarity of the core risks and perils system, and how it feels to trade these back and forth during 'combat'. I'm also looking for feedback on how it feels to have a mixed group of Channeler and Support playbooks in a group, and if b-plot and other moves help Supports feel like they have things to do during sorties.

Ran a playtest? Get in touch with your feedback! I'd love to hear about it and credit you with the other Playtesting Crews. If you're already listed overleaf under a handle and would rather have your actual name, or vice versa, let me know and I can make sure it's updated.

Quick Setup

Just playing a one-shot and want to get set up as quickly as possible? Follow these steps and you're good to go!

1. Detail your Authority and Cause
2. Detail your Carrier
3. Detail Characters & Choose Playbooks
4. Start Making Stuff Up

Define Your Authority...

The first step is to define your Authority. This should be an oppressive group that the players are interested in fighting back against, however difficult that might be. Also, unless you're feeling particularly unimaginative, they should have a better name than 'the Authority'.

If you're stuck, try thinking about the Authority's goals, why they haven't achieved them yet, and what sort of people are attracted to the Authority.

... And Your Cause

The second is to do the same for your Cause - the group that backs and hands orders down to the player characters. As a whole, the Cause should be a group with whom the players align for the time being, even if the occasional representative is an asshole.

If you're stuck, try thinking about who would have the resources to stand up to the Authority, and whether they would do so for purely virtuous ends.

In both cases, you should also think about what their broad aesthetic is, as well as the design of any common Astirs (your Zakus, your Nemos, etc).

Quick Carrier

The Carrier is your shared home and the ship that takes you from place to place (think the White Base from Mobile Suit Gundam, or the Normandy from Mass Effect). Decide together what your Carrier looks like, how it moves and how you got it. It has;

- A CREW trait of +1. This is used for some Downtime moves and by the Captain.
- 5 SUPPLY, representing parts, credit, and local currencies.
- A main gun that can shoot down other Carriers but is too slow for Astirs.
- Turrets that can be used to fight off Astirs but will barely scratch a Carrier.

Detail Characters & Choose Playbooks

The last step is for the players to make their characters!

- Start by choosing a **playbook**—if you've never played a PBTA game before, they're like classes, or archetypes. Talk with the group what kind of action they are interested in, and what kind of playbooks might support that fiction.
- Next, assign the following values to your Traits as you wish: **+2, +1, +1, +0, -1**. Some playbooks have an extra Trait, CHANNEL, which will come with a pre-set value.
- Then, name your character, and pick out some words to describe their look from the examples—or think up your own!
- Next, choose from the gear or equipment options your playbook has. Some playbooks have more than one choice.
- Next, pick some moves from your playbook list (unless it says you don't get to).
- Finally, since you won't be building them in play, fill out a GRAVITY clock with each other player character, describing your relationship or dynamic and giving it a value of +1.

Start Making Stuff Up

With characters made and the stage set, it's time to launch! Consult the Basic Moves when you're ready to take action or the Playbooks when you want to pull something special off. If you're the Director, the Running The Game chapter has example enemies and advice to help you get things rolling, but don't be afraid to improvise and go off script. It's a one-shot, and nobodies going to be mad if you get things a little wrong. For a little extra help, see the Setting & Mission Hooks.

Playtesting Crews

The Crew of *The Many Hands*

Sean DMR (Luca Sharpe, Impostor of the *Tempest Zephyr*), Evan Nyquist (Impostor of the *Collosus Azure*), LilypadNebula (Cassandra Val Nelithia, Witch of the *Wistful Glance*), Briar Sovereign (Director).

The Crew of the *Hellebore*

Austin Walker (Director - Empyrean, Barter, and the forces of the *Divine Principality*), Art Martinez-Tebbel (Briar Brightline, Captain of the Constellation-Class Carrier *Hellebore*, aka *The Ivory Prince*), Andrew Lee Swan (Cerise Sky, Low Consul of the Center & Arcanist of the Perennial Hallow *Aster*), Janine Hawkins (Teasel Moad, Witch of *The Day's Eye*), Sylvi Clare (Vessel's Gold, Impostor of *The High Price*).

The Crew of the *Salamander*

Em Marko (Agnes Rota, Witch of the *Kubuto*), Lizzy (Astrid Ascendant, team Scout), Jackson Tyler (Avery Sova, Paradigm of the *Caelus*), Alison Autumn June (Ilia Vanseer, Arcanist of the *Aeon*), Briar Sovereign (Director).

The Crew of the *Forge*

Evan Nyquist (Director), Ben Cornell (Ciaran, crew Scout), Katelin Cornell (Stila, Paradigm of the *Vengeance*), and Tasha Zobel (Davée, Imposter of the *Stalker)*.

The Crew of the *Goblin Whale*

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For corrections or additions to the playtesting crews, email weregazelle@gmail.com.

Special Thanks

I'd also like to thank the cast of Friends At The Table, who re-ignited my love of tabletop roleplaying after one too many long nights of Pathfinder. This game wouldn't exist without you.

Additionally, I'd like to thank Em and Jackson of Abnormal Mapping. Without the Great Gundam Project I never would have had the motivation to keep watching, and I'm very glad I did. I love those cool robots.

Finally, a special thanks to all the artists who have collaborated with me on this project. Without you, it'd just be words.

Misc.

Other things I enjoyed throughout this games development include;

- Podcasts: *The Shrieking Shack, Waypoint Radio, Emojidrome, Film Critters, The Magnus Archives, Hold This L, Borat Club*
- Books/Comics: *Delicious In Dungeon, Dead Dead Demon's DeDeDeDe Destruction, Ancillary Justice, Consider Phlebas, Player Of Games, Little Teeth, Men Women & Chainsaws*
- Games: *Dragon's Dogma: Dark Arisen, Risk of Rain 2, Path of Exile, Disco Elysium, Outer Wilds, Timespinner, Battletech, Umurangi Generation*
- TV/Films: *Dirty Pair, The Tatami Galaxy, Us, Get Out, Armored Trooper VOTOMS, Nichijou, Midsommar, Hereditary, Ghost In The Shell: SAC, Night Is Short, Walk On Girl, Hardware, Nosferatu the Vampyre, Pontypool, Parasite*

A Note On Worldbuilding

While this game doesn't include a pre-written setting you are expected to play, that's not to say these rules are completely free of any details outside the mechanics. These are intended to establish a feel for the game that will serve as a starting point for your own world—some core elements that you can build around. 'Armour Astirs' rather than mechs, 'Channelers' rather than pilots—these things are there to inspire and set an identity, and you should feel free to change all of them if the world you and your fellow players are exploring demands something different, or if you already have a setting you're bringing these rules to.

Replacing magic itself is a little trickier, but it's doable. Astirs and Golems are already a pretty natural parallel to mechs and other combat vehicles, and Familiars are intended as an equivalent to drones or funnels/bits. For any weapon you can think of there's probably some modern or sci-fi alternative that fulfils the same role, and you might try to convert the CHANNEL Trait into something that represents piloting skill, grit or luck instead of magic.

The artwork depicted in this book is the work of a group of artists with different ideas, experiences and histories with mecha fiction. It is my hope that it inspires and fills you with ideas about what the world in a game of Armour Astir **can** look like, not what it **has** to look like.

- Briar



CONTENTS

Main Concepts 8
- *Who You Are* 8
- *Who They Are* 8
- *What You're Doing* 8
- *Resolving Actions* 9
- *Traits* 9
- *Ideals* 9
- *Spotlight* 10
- *GRAVITY* 10
- *Dangers* 11
- *The Conflict Turn* 11

Setting Up 12
- *Setting The Stage* 12
- *The Authority* 13
- *The Cause* 14
- *Creating Player Characters* 15
- *Ready To Play!* 16

Basic & Special Moves 17
- *Basic Moves Summary* 17
- *Weather The Storm* 19
- *Read The Room* 20
- *Dispel Uncertainties* 21
- *Help or Hinder* 22
- *Weave Magic* 23
- *Cool Off* 24
- *Exchange Blows* 25
- *Strike Decisively* 26
- *Bite The Dust* 27
- *Group Moves* 28
- *Special Moves Summary* 28
- *Lead A Sortie* 29
- *Subsystems* 30
- *B-Plot* 31

Downtime Moves 33

Conflict & Tiers 37
- *Opposing With +CLASH* 38
- *Opposing With +TALK* 39
- *Tiers* 40

Tags & Gear 41
- *Tags* 41
- *Acquiring Equipment* 43
- *Tier I Equipment* 44
- *Tier II Equipment* 45

The Carrier & Astirs 49
- *The Carrier* 49
- *Creating Your Carrier* 49
- *Astirs* 52
- *Creating Your Astir* 53
- *Astir Extras* 61
- *The Astir Card* 61
- *Example Astirs III* 62

Playbooks 75
- *ARCANIST* 76
- *IMPOSTOR* 79
- *PARADIGM* 81
- *WITCH* 84
- *CAPTAIN* 86
- *DIPLOMAT* 89
- *ARTIFICER* 91
- *SCOUT* 94

Advancement 96
- *Soldier Moves* 96

The Authority & The Cause 99
- *The Authority* 99
- *The Cause* 101
- *Regions* 103
- *The Conflict Turn* 104

Running The Game 107
- *Agenda* 107
- *Principles* 107
- *Director Moves* 109
- *Safety Tools* 112
- *Optional: No-Dice Downtime* 113
- *Creating Director Characters* 115
- *Example Foes* 116
- *Astirs & Golems* 117
- *People* 118
- *Creatures & Monsters* 119
- *Outsiders* 120
- *Rivals* 121
- *Setting & Mission Hooks* 121

The Ghost Reaches 124
- *Overview* 124
- *The New Hunt* 125
- *The Faces Of Progress* 127
- *Example Astirs of The Ghost Reaches* 128
- *Example Gear of The Ghost Reaches* 128

Mission Hooks 129
- *The Grand Melee* 129
- *Neutral Ground* 130
- *Eleventh Hour* 131
- *Authority Attack!* 132

Appendix 133
- *Risk & Peril Examples* 133
- *Glossary & Shorthands* 134
- *Magical Objects* 135
- *Magical Weapons* 136

Release Notes 138

Credits 138

MAIN CONCEPTS

Who You Are

In Armour Astir, you're rebels, mercenaries, and revolutionaries. You might be a Channeler, someone with the ability and training to control an Astir - a humanoid construct of magic and metal, some of which stand ten times the height of their pilots. You might be a Paradigm who gained that power through devout service, a Witch who made a pact in their darkest hour, or an Impostor who seized magic for their own - at a cost. You might be the kind better suited to life outside of a suit of magical armour, of course - you might be a Scout trained by the Authority who left to fight back, an Artificer who grew up keeping things working around their hometown, or a Diplomat who made a name for themselves holding factions together.

Whoever you are, you represent something. This might be a small group, a company, or simply an ideology - but whatever it is, it is referred to as the Cause, and it is from your Cause that you receive direction and instruction. There are surely other factions involved in the struggle against the Authority, and it may be in your interests to align with them - but the Cause is what you belong to.

Who They Are

The exact nature of the Authority is up to you and everyone else at your table, but the Authority is generally an authoritarian group, usually in a grand position of power, that seeks to control and subjugate people who do not fall in line. There is no need for things to be entirely black and white in regards to the motivations of individuals, but as a general whole the Authority should represent something you as players are interested in fighting back against.

As with any other tabletop game, you should discuss what kind of content and themes you want to you want to tackle or avoid during play. There are different degrees and scales of evil, after all - and fighting a simpler, less subtle Authority is just as valid as fighting back against something more real and personal.

Also, unless you're feeling particularly unimaginative, they should have a better name than the Authority.

What You're Doing

In Armour Astir, players typically rotate between Downtime (where they spend their limited free time to repair, rest, and rendezvous) and Sorties (where they leave the Carrier together to try and achieve a goal). Sorties themselves are usually a combination of several scenes - individually framed sections of action, like scenes in a movie or tv show - after each of which the player's risks are cleared. A larger goal, referred to as a Mission, is typically achieved over the course of a few Sorties.

A Sortie might be;

- Venturing out to defend the Carrier against attackers.
- Stabilising or destroying a dangerous magical artifact.
- Negotiating a peace treaty between two rebel groups.
- Something that could be done in one or two sessions of play - a short-term goal.

A Mission might be;

- Disrupting a major military operation.
- Liberating a city from the Authority.
- Dislodging a dragon and their minions from the region.
- Something that can be clearly split into multiple Sorties - a long term goal.

Resolving Actions

In Armour Astir, actions are resolved using 'moves', which are rolls consisting of 2 d6's and a single modifier, usually a Trait: one of 6 values that represent your character's core attributes.

Generally, actions are resolved as such;

1. The Player explains to the Director what it is they want to do (and narrates action where appropriate)
2. The Director decides what move is appropriate.
3. The Player rolls 2d6 and adds the noted Trait.
4. The Director determines and narrates the outcome. Play continues.

Advantage & Disadvantage

Sometimes you'll be asked to roll with **advantage** or **disadvantage**. This means to roll 3d6 and take the highest or lowest 2 respectively. These *do* stack: if you have **advantage** from 2 sources, for example, you'd roll 4d6 and take the highest 2. Similarly, they cancel each-other out. If you have 2 **advantage** and 2 **disadvantage** on a roll, you have neither. *Tags* on equipment and moves are common sources of **advantage** & **disadvantage**, but your Director might also impose either where it situationaly makes sense. The most dice you may roll at a time is 4, regardless of how much **advantage** or **disadvantage** you have.

Confidence & Desperation

Sometimes, a rule will say you act with **confidence** or in **desperation**. When acting with **confidence**, you are almost assured of your success: roll with 2 **advantage**, and ignore any **disadvantage**. When acting in **desperation**, you have a slim chance to claim an unexpected victory: roll with 2 **disadvantage**, and ignore any **advantage**.

Traits

Traits are measured from -3 to 3, and are as follows;

- DEFY, the ability to resist pressure and power through adversity.
- SENSE, the ability to read people and situations.
- CLASH, your prowess in combat, at distance or up close.
- TALK, your skill with the spoken and written word.
- KNOW, your ingenuity and cunning.

Certain playbooks also have the CHANNEL trait, representing your magical abilities. Arcanists draw power from within through practice and training, Impostors claim power through augmentation and enhancement, and both Witches and Paradigms are given power by another - Witches through pacts and deals, and Paradigms through faith or miracle.

Ideals

Each player should write up to 3 beliefs or ideals that are important to their character. They could be principles or ethics they hold dear, views about specific people that heavily shape their interactions, or even oaths they've sworn. Whatever they are, they should be things that drive and colour your character's actions. They don't necessarily need to be things about your character that are true: just what they believe or think is right.

When you take action that requires you to sacrifice or significantly compromise one of your Ideals, cross that Ideal off and act with **confidence**. You may immediately take an advancement.

Spotlight

Whenever you fail a move (that is, you roll a 6 or below), you may take a point of Spotlight. Once you 6 Spotlight, you may spend it at any time to take centre stage and immediately gain an Advancement. If you take a move, you may act with **confidence** to use it right now.

GRAVITY

GRAVITY clocks represent relationships and attachments you have with people and with groups. They're not measures of how much someone loves or hates you - they are countdowns to when a relationship is challenged, confronted or addressed. What this looks like is up to you and the other party - it might be an admission that you want a different kind of relationship, a commitment to things continuing as they are, or you accepting that the relationship should be over entirely - but it should be significant. GRAVITY clocks don't have to be positive - they are for star-crossed lovers just as much as fierce rivals meeting on the battlefield time after time. If it seems like the forces of the universe are dragging two people together often, it might be GRAVITY.

GRAVITY clocks are 6 segment clocks, and start empty. They are shared between two players or a player and the Director (representing a Director character or a faction/group), and represent their relationship and how those characters see eachother. You don't need an GRAVITY clock for everyone you meet - you should save them for your character's relationships you want to focus on and explore in play. For this reason, you may only be part of 3 GRAVITY clocks at a time, as well as 1 for your Rival should you acquire one.

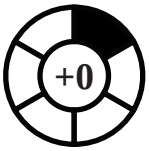
When you start a new GRAVITY clock, choose a word or short phrase that sums up the relationship, and give it a value of +0. Whenever you make a move involving the other party of a clock, you may add the clock's value instead of the normal Trait. If you do so, advance the clock. You can start a new clock whenever it feels appropriate.

Filling GRAVITY Clocks

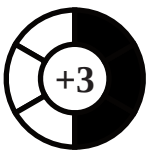
When a GRAVITY clock is filled, the relevant players have three choices;

- They may **redefine** the relationship; take an advancement, start a new GRAVITY clock, and increase its value by 1 (to a max of +3).
- They may **commit** to the relationship; increase its value by 1 (to a max of +3), and take an advancement. Circle the filled clock - it can't be advanced anymore. When you take action that ends this relationship, like sacrificing yourself for your beloved or betraying the person you're supposed to be loyal to, succeed as if you rolled a 10+ and cross out that clock forever.
- They may **abandon** the relationship; both parties take an advancement and erase their GRAVITY clock, freeing up a spot for a new one.

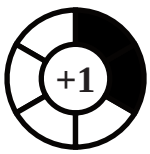
This change doesn't need to be shown the second the clock fills, but it should be represented in play. If it doesn't happen during the Sortie, you gain a free ***talk it out*** (more on that and other Downtime actions on page 31) during the next Downtime to explore the change in more detail instead - this could be played as a flashback scene if appropriate.



Nervous friends



Fated lovers



Zealous rivals



Trying to impress the same boy



Estranged siblings

Dangers

When twenty-foot-long swords and magic guns are involved, injuries tend to be the severe kind. Thankfully, characters in Armour Astir are plenty capable of defending themselves - up to a point. Should enough problems, distractions or *dangers* arise, you may find yourself *defenceless*.

For players, being *defenceless* means your usual methods of avoiding harm aren't available to you. Where you might usually ***exchange blows*** or ***weather the storm*** to avoid a blow or dodge real consequences, that's no longer the case—your guard is down, your armour has a hole, etc. When you are *defenceless* and someone or something tries to harm you, you must roll to ***bite the dust***.

The *dangers* that make it harder to defend yourself come in two kinds: *risks* are temporary things that can be resolved during a Sortie (like having the low ground during a fight, being on fire, or being distracted), and *perils* are more permanent issues that must be solved during Downtime (like serious injuries to you or your Astir, being heartbroken, being exhausted). A *danger* to you is a *danger* to your Astir, and vice versa. For all intents and purposes, your Astir is an extension of yourself. Characters can be affected by a certain amount of both before they are *defenceless*:

- Player, Rival and Main characters are *defenceless* at 3 *dangers*.
- Side characters are *defenceless* at 2 *dangers*.
- Extra characters are *defenceless* at 1 *danger*.

When a move or other effect says you take a risk or are put in *peril*, it means you're being given one of those *dangers*. Sometimes it will be specific exactly what you're gaining - e.g., 'take a *risk* (outnumbered)' means you add a *risk* named 'outnumbered' to your character sheet. If there's no brackets, it means you choose what the *risk* or *peril* is. Generally, if you're asked to take a *risk*, you decide - if you're put in *peril*, your attacker decides. Either way, you should feel free to discuss them with your Director.

If you want some examples, there's some given towards the end of this document. When someone is *defenceless*, it should be obvious—but individual *perils* and *risks* don't need to be so explicit.

If you take a *risk* but already have 3 *dangers*, replace one with a *peril*. If you would be put in *peril* but already have 3 *dangers*, replace a *risk* with it if you have one - otherwise, ***bite the dust*** in **desperation** until the end of the Sortie.

The Conflict Turn

Between sessions, the tide of battle between the Authority and the Cause doesn't freeze in place. During the Conflict Turn, the Director (or the full group, if you want to do this together) will select actions for the Authority to take and Factions to oppose them. These actions might be influence or be influenced by the events of the Sorties that the players are involved in, and could have sweeping effects on the campaign.

If multiple players are involved in the Conflict Turn, you might individually take up the role of certain Faction or Division leaders, with players responsible for the actions of those groups.

If your group finds themselves wanting some structured roleplay outside of usual sessions, using a game like *Mobile Suit Zero: Firebrands* (by D. Vincent Baker and Meguey Baker), *Follow* (by Ben Robbins) or *Fiasco* (by Jason Morningstar) to frame the events of a Conflict Turn could be a fun change of pace.

SETTING UP

Setting up for a game of Armour Astir: Advent is simple, and consists of defining some key elements of the world you'll be playing in, building up the player characters, and figuring out what your first mission together will be.

Setting The Stage

The very first part, and arguably one of the most important parts of playing Armour Astir, is setting up the world in which your game will take place. Other than the existence of a few things, like Astirs and other magical devices (which you and your group are free to re-fluff to suit your personal tastes, of course), this game doesn't assume much of your setting - meaning as a group you have a lot of freedom when coming up with the setting you'd like to play in. There are a few important things to iron out, however.

Your first job as a group will be to shape your games Authority - the controlling force, like a ruling empire or military group that the players are aligned against. The Authority will be the central villain of your game (usually), and should be a group that the players are all interested in fighting against. It's probably a group of shitty imperialists. For some examples, see: the Earth Federation / the Titans (*Mobile Suit Gundam* et al.), the Zaibach Empire (*Vision Of Escaflowne*), the Grineer (*Warframe),* the British Empire (*real life*), etc.

The second will be to do the same for the Cause—the group of revolutionary factions to which the players belong, who supply them with equipment and support to further the fight against the Authority.

Finally, with the above done, players should pick the playbooks they are interested in playing, and use the ideas presented within to create their characters. Character creation doesn't happen in a vacuum - players should feel free to discuss their character ideas with each other and help flesh out an interesting cast.

"*I always wanted better for you than this, Luine. When we used to train together, I could see you were made for great things. What brought you this low? Were we too good to you?*"

The words stung far more than any of her myriad wounds did. What did Hymn know of her fight? What did he know of anything outside his gated home?

"*Don't mock me, Hymn,*" she spat back. "*Made for great things? Like standing guard at some gilded spire? Maybe you'd have me teach the governor's children. Your father would think those both better than listening to his people.*"

Hymn scowled. "*You would dare demean the spire?*"

- Excerpt from '*Spire: The Fall*', Alain Week, XX32

The Authority

As mentioned above, the Authority is the group (or coalition of groups, if that's your thing) that forms the primary antagonist for the players in Armour Astir. 'Authority' as opposed to 'villain' or 'foe' has a certain subtext, and that was intentional - the Authority should be a powerful, oppressive group, that as a whole cares more about stamping out opposition and furthering its own goals than doing what is best for its citizens or its neighbours. Individuals within the Authority need not entirely agree with it, and it may be more interesting for your story that in the smaller scale they operate in shades of grey, rather than being cartoon villains - but either way, it should be clear that as a group the Authority is something that the players are ready to tear down.

As with any other tabletop game, you should discuss what kind of content and themes you want to you want to tackle or avoid during play. There are different degrees and scales of evil, after all - and fighting a simpler, less subtle Authority is just as valid as fighting back against something more real and cruel. When depicting fascist and imperialistic powers it is practically impossible not to also depict relatable, personal violence, and everyone at the table should be in agreement exactly where their boundaries and interests are in regards to what the Authority does.

Creating The Authority

While working out the exact depth and nature of the Authority and what they're up to is something your Director will need some time for, start by answering the questions below as a group to come up with the basics.

- *What do the people of the Authority value?*
- *What do the people of the Authority hate or disparage?*
- *What is hypocritical about the Authority?*
- *What is the Authority's primary goal? Why haven't they achieved it?*
- *What does the average person think of the Authority? Do they support/oppose it?*
- *How does the Authority look? What symbols and colours do they use? What materials?*
- *Does the Authority have a standard or mass-produced Astir? What is it like?*
- *What is the Authority called? Does the Cause call it something different, and if so - what?*

Functionally, the Authority is comprised of three Divisions (see Authority in the Director's section for info on how these work). As a group, you should come up with what these Divisions are and what they do. Every Division should have:

- A name, official or otherwise
- A type (Military, Subterfuge or Resource) that determines their area of influence
- A few key characters who lead or hold important positions within it

These don't need to be all decided immediately, but the sooner the better. You might leave deciding the details of the Authority to the Director while the other players focus on the Cause, or all work the above out together.

If you just want to get started, you can work out a name and type but leave the characters until later, since they'll have plenty of time to develop during play.

If you want to work out the characters now, the Director should check out Creating Director Characters later in the book for an idea on what kinds of info is important to figure out.

The Cause

Opposed to the Authority is the Cause—a revolutionary group to which the players belong, comprised of a half-dozen or more smaller Factions. The players work directly for, and might even be in control of, one of these Factions.

The Cause has resources and information, and fights against the Authority on its own terms - but it relies on the players as its most trustworthy asset. The Cause's network of Factions provide the players and each other with assets and support, like Carriers and Astirs, and can assist them with repairing and acquiring new equipment—but there is an expectation that this aid will be repaid in turn by striking out at the Authority and furthering the Cause's aims.

As with the Authority, Factions and individuals within them might not see eye-to-eye on the Cause's goals and how they should be achieved—but as a whole, the Cause should be a group with whom the players align, even if the occasional representative is an asshole.

During the Conflict Turn, when the Authority tries to take action, the smaller Factions that make up the Cause help oppose and prevent those actions.

Creating The Cause

Again, as a group you should answer some questions to come up with the basics of who the Cause is;

- *Does the Cause have aims other than opposing the Authority?*
- *How much of a secret is the Cause?*
- *Where do the Cause's resources come from?*
- *What do people within the Cause disagree over?*
- *What does the average citizen think of the Cause? Do support/oppose it?*
- *How does the Cause look? What symbols and colours do they use? What materials?*
- *Does the Cause have a standard or mass-produced Astir? What is it like?*
- *What is the Cause called? Does the Authority call it something different, and if so - what?*

As a group, you should decide on some basic information about the Cause. This might include answers to the above questions like a name or visual palette, but might also include a few characters who are important to the Cause at large rather than a specific Faction.

While the Director will flesh out most of the Factions (unless the group wants to do this together), the details of the one the players will belong to are up to them. Between you, you'll want to come up with a name for your Faction, official or otherwise, and choose a Faction type from the list in Running The Game. For other Factions, the type mainly determines what kind of consequences you impose on the Authority during the Conflict Turn when your attempts to oppose it succeed: for the players, it signals to the Director what kind of Sorties you're interested in playing.

Once the other Factions are done, or if your Director had prepared them ahead of time, you'll also want to decide on:

- A Faction that has taken the lead, and is shouldering most of the burden: they start with 3 Stake, rather than 2.
- Two Factions that are struggling, and unable to contribute right now: they start with 0 Stake, rather than 2.

Creating Player Characters

Finally, each player needs to make their character! Making characters in Armour Astir is simple, and ideally something you should all do together as a group. This helps everyone get a feel for the kind of characters you're making, and lets you make characters that immediately feel a little more coherent as a group. The main part of creating your character is choosing a 'playbook', which could be thought of like a 'class' or a character archetype within the world of your game. There's a few other things you must do too, though - the steps below will lead you through the process.

During play, you might suddenly find yourself in need of a new character. This might be due to the one you were previously playing dying, but for whatever reason you do need to make a new one, you follow the below steps as usual.

Choose Playbook

Look over the playbooks (found on Page 66) and decide which one you want to play. Playbooks are split widely into two categories: Channelers (playbooks that use Astirs to fight) and Support (playbooks that have expertise outside of Astirs). It's ok if two people want to play the same one, but consider mixing up the group so everyone gets to feel a little unique.

Choose Name

Every unsung hero has a name, even if nobody learns it. Write a name for your character – if you're having trouble, consider asking your GM what kind of naming conventions the people in the area your story will take place use.

Choose Looks

Each playbook has a few choices for clothing, your overall look, and something else playbook-appropriate, like how your magic looks or how you fight. These are just suggestions to help you think about your character's appearance, so feel free to ignore them! Channeler playbooks also ask what you say when you launch your Astir. This can say a lot about how your character feels about Astir piloting and how seriously they take it, so put some thought into it!

Choose Gear

Each playbook has a few choices for equipment and items you have at the start of the game. Channeler playbooks all start with a tier III Astir (see The Carrier & Astirs).

Choose Traits

Take the following values and assign them however you wish to your Traits. These values are added to your roll when you make certain moves. CHANNEL, for the playbooks that have it, start at whatever value is listed on the playbook - you don't need to assign a value to it.

+2, +1, +1, +0, -1

It's a good idea to look at the basic moves, as well as the starting moves for your playbook, to get an idea of what Traits might be most useful to you.

Choose Moves

Each playbook starts with three moves (except for the Arcanist and the Witch, whose starting moves provide multiple benefits), some of which are pre-picked, and some of which are your choice. Each playbook will list which ones you already have, if any, and will let you know how many to pick, so make sure you check!

Choose Ideals

Finally, you should come up with up to 3 Ideals for your character (Ideals are detailed on Page 8). If you're just playing a one-shot (or are playing a character you won't return to for other reasons) and won't be bothering with Advancements, you don't need them but they might still help you decide how your character acts.

If you want, some extra things to consider;

- *Did you know each other before you started working for the Cause? If so, how?*
- *How did you first come into contact with the Cause?*
- *Have you been personally suffered under the Authority? If so, how?*
- *Where did you acquire the skills of your playbook? Where did the equipment come from?*

Ready To Play!

Once the above is all done, you're ready to play. You might want to have some further conversation as a group to flesh out your characters and the setting you're in (starting with the questions above), but if not, it's time to all turn and look expectantly at your Director for the setup to your first Sortie.

When it's time to do things, read on for information on the Basic Moves as well as some important Special Moves—more specifically, the move lead a Sortie! When it's time for the action to begin, whoever is in charge should roll to lead a Sortie, establishing how well things start off. This is similar to the engagement roll in some other systems, and is rolled with a different Trait depending on who did the planning. You can find more detail under Special Moves.



BASIC & SPECIAL MOVES

Basic Moves Summary

The Basic Moves are moves everybody has access to, regardless of their chosen playbook. You use Basic moves to do most things, unless your playbook provides a move that is more specific to the situation you're in. Below is a quick summary of them, followed by some more detailed info with examples of their use.

Weather The Storm

When you ***weather the storm*** to do something safely under pressure, roll;

- +DEFY to dodge, tough it out or strong-arm your way through.
- +KNOW to make it through with quick thinking or the ace up your sleeve.

On a 10+, you manage to make it to safety.

On a 7-9, you succeed but at some cost: your Director will ask you to settle for less, take a *risk*, or make a difficult choice.

Read The Room

When you ***read the room*** to get insight on your situation, roll +SENSE;

On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, and spend it 1-for-1 to ask the following questions. Your hold lasts until you leave the current situation or it changes significantly.

- Who has the upper hand here?
- What is being overlooked here?
- How does x really feel?
- What are x's real intentions?
- How is x at risk or in peril?

On a failure, you may ask one of the above questions immediately, but the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger.

Roll with Advantage when you act on the answers to what you've asked.

Dispel Uncertainties

When you ***dispel uncertainties*** by clarifying something unknown or answering a question, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, the Director will tell you something directly useful you know about the situation or subject at hand.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you something potentially useful, but it is up to you to discern how. The Director might ask you to explain how you know that information, or where you learned it.

Help Or Hinder

When you ***help or hinder*** someone to influence their attempts to do something, roll +GRAVITY with them if you have one;

On a 10+, they take **advantage** (help) or **disadvantage** (hinder) to their roll. On a 7-9, as above, but you become entangled in the consequences of their actions, and possibly cause them.

Weave Magic

When ***weave magic*** to do something taxing with your power, roll +CHANNEL;

On a 10+, you manage to channel power the way you desired without ill effect.

On a 7-9, you succeed, but your invocation is twisted in an unexpected and dangerous way.

Cool Off

When you take a moment in safety to ***cool off*** or help someone else do the same, declare a *risk* you want to get rid of and roll whatever Trait seems most appropriate;

On a 10+, you/they erase a risk or untick 'overheating' from an Astir.

On a 7-9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.

Exchange Blows

When you ***exchange blows*** with foes capable of defending themselves, roll +CLASH or +TALK, whichever is more appropriate, and advance a GRAVITY clock if you have one;

On a 10+, either your opponent takes a *risk*, or you take a *risk* and put your opponent in *peril*.

On a 7-9, both you and your target are forced to take a *risk*.

Strike Decisively

When ***strike decisively*** against someone who is *defenceless*, roll +CLASH or +TALK, whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat or otherwise removed as a threat as per the fiction. Player characters should bite the dust.

On a 7-9, you succeed as above, but choose 1;

- You overreach or underestimate—take a *risk*.
- You waste ammo or words, losing use a weapon until you can re-arm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage.
- You strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations.

Bite The Dust

When you're *defenceless* or risk harm so severe you might ***bite the dust***, roll +DEFY;

On a 10+, they miss, hesitate, or you're saved by sheer luck—you rally, and clear a risk if you have one.

On a 7-9, retreat from the Sortie safely, or be put in peril.

On a fail, that strike sure was *decisive*. Decide with your Director the consequences of what has happened to you - what was damaged? What have you lost? Who and what is changed by your defeat?

If you survive, you are changed by your defeat. As well as the above, choose one;

- Increase one of your Traits by 1 and reduce another by 1 (no Trait may be higher or lower than -/+3.
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and the Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.

Heat Up

When you push your Astir to it's limits and start to ***heat up***, tick 'overheating' and take **advantage** on the next move you make.

Weather The Storm

When you attempt to ignore the 'witty' barbs of ambitious politicians, try and walk across a thin wet beam as thunder booms overhead, or otherwise do something under significant pressure, you're attempting to ***weather the storm***. When you do so;

- Roll +DEFY to dodge, tough it out or strong-arm your way through.
- Roll +KNOW to make it through with quick thinking or the ace up your sleeve.

On a 10+, you manage to make it to safety.

On a 7-9, you succeed but at some cost: your Director will ask you to settle for less, take a *risk*, or make a difficult choice.

If you're doing something that doesn't fall under another more specific move and there's a chance something could go wrong for you, your Director will probably ask you to ***weather the storm***. As long as there's a 'storm', i.e something that could hurt or inconvenience you, this move should cover it if nothing else does. Just make sure you pick the correct Trait! It's easy to look at DEFY and KNOW and think they cover physical and mental resistances respectively - but you could DEFY someone's provocations just as easily as you could KNOW how to quickly reroute magic from your Astir's weapons into a defensive spell.

Director Notes

On a result of 7-9, they still manage to pull through - but the storm is a bit fiercer than they were ready for. When considering what *risk*, difficult choice or limited success to offer, you should be able to come up with something related to that storm fairly easily as if it didn't present some threat or setback it wouldn't be worth rolling over to begin with.

If for some reason nothing springs to mind, consider letting them choose what kind of risk they take, narrating how they claw back the success they wanted dangerously. Just remember - whatever you impose on them, it shouldn't invalidate the fact that they still succeeded at whatever they were trying to do.

Examples Of *weathering the storm*:

Perrin the Witch is trying to cross the field of battle in his Astir, but finds himself caught in crossfire. There's dangers both magic and mundane flying through the air from all angles, but Perrin hopes he can focus on evading the bigger threats as he moves across. He rolls a 4, and I get to declare the outcome. While attempting to dodge a huge bolt from a trebuchet, he's caught by a wayward beamrifle shot. Because he's in an Astir, I decide to damage it rather than him directly, and the blast tears a chunk out of its right leg. Perrin notes that he's in *peril* (damaged leg), and grits his teeth - it'll be much harder to get anywhere now.

Prim, an Arcanist, is trying to reload his beamrifle. This normally wouldn't be any hassle at all, but he's trying to do it while a nearby squad pelt him with boltrifle fire. Not only is it distracting as their bolts fly past his vision and clatter against the Astir's plating, if one hits him in the wrong place it might actually cause some damage. He rolls an 8, and I offer him an ugly choice - does he dash into the open to reload, taking the *risk* (exposed), or does he hunker down and make the reload where he is, missing something he might've spotted otherwise?

Elias, a Scout, is being charged at by a few men armed with spears. Rather than stand there and be horribly stabbed, Elias instead decides they want to side-step the spears and vault over one of their foes. On a 7-9, I might consider having a spear snag their clothing, tearing some of their equipment onto the floor, or have them land badly after vaulting. They roll a 10 and succeeds, so instead they perform the manoeuvre without a hitch and land on their feet behind the surprised footmen.

Read The Room

When you're trying to figure out which side a battle is in favour of, whether or not a holding is defend-able, or are otherwise trying to get insight on your situation, you're trying to ***read the room***. When you do so, roll +SENSE ;

On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, and spend it 1-for-1 to ask the following questions. Your hold lasts until you leave the current scene or it changes significantly.

- Who has the upper hand here?
- What is being overlooked here?
- How does x really feel?
- What are x's real intentions?
- How is x at *risk* or in *peril*?

On a failure, you may ask one of the above questions immediately, but the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger.

Roll with Advantage when you act on the answers to what you've asked.

If you're trying to learn more about the situation you're in, chances are you're trying to ***read the room***. There's a lot of things this could look like - gazing stoically out onto a raging battlefield, listening closely to a pair of arguing politicians, going over a shipping manifest you've found in an Authority camp—and even if you fail, you still learn something. It's just going to get you in trouble. Unless you fail, you keep your hold as long as you stay in the current situation or scene. No need to spend it quickly.

Director Notes

Don't be too strict with your players on what constitutes their scene changing or ending. Respect the risk they've taken in trying to learn more about their situation, and let them put what they learn into use within reason. When in doubt, lean on letting them keep it. Whenever someone asks a question from ***read the room***, you get to advance and complicate the situation at hand, and that's probably always going to be interesting. When someone rolls a 6 or below on this move, they basically get to pick their poison. If they ask who has the upper hand, it probably isn't them. If there's anyone *defenceless* around, it might be someone they'd rather see make it through. If something is being overlooked, it's already too late. Be inventive.

Examples Of *reading the room*:

Anya, a Diplomat, is mediating a discussion between ambassadors from two smaller factions. She expected things to get heated, but Fran, the usually more demanding of the two, is conceding minor points at every turn. I suggest she ***read the room*** to represent the attention paid to what has been said so far, and she rolls a 7-9. She decides to ask 'What are Fran's real intentions?'. I explain that, given what she knows about Fran, there is no way he'd accept all these concessions - it's likely he has an ulterior motive, and is here solely for appearances.

Torres, the group's Paradigm, skids to a halt on a crowded battlefield, and uses vis elevated position in an Astir to assess the situation. Ve reads the room and rolls… a 4. Ve asks 'What is being overlooked here?', and the answer strikes ver in the back - there's a squad armed with a beamrifle hiding on the ridge behind ver!

Kai, a Diplomat, has broken into a small military base, and is snooping around for useful intel. Given that he's looking for information on bigger picture things than this one camp, there are some questions that don't have obvious answers. If I had something specific in mind to reveal here, I might have him ***weather the storm*** instead to find it before he is discovered. But I don't, so instead I ask him to roll as usual and interpret 'here' to mean the group's Sortie, as what he's doing is likely to give him broader information. He rolls an 11, and chooses to save his hold until he returns to his friends. While he's technically leaving this scene, the information he's gained is still pertinent outside of it, so I let him keep his hold.

Dispel Uncertainties

When you offer an answer to a difficult question, rack your brains for what you know about a topic, or explain to everyone what mysterious thing you've encountered is, you are ***dispelling uncertainties***. When you do so, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, your Director will tell you something directly useful you know about the situation or subject at hand.

On a 7-9, your Director will tell you something potentially useful, but it is up to you to discern how. Your Director might ask you to explain how you know that information, or where you learned it.

Dispel uncertainties is pretty straightforward as far as moves go. Confronted with something unknown that you want to clarify? ***Dispel uncertainties***. Need to see if you know about an Astir model? ***Dispel uncertainties***. On a 7-9, what you know isn't directly useful, but it's related - and still useful if you can figure out how to use it.

Director Notes

As above, this isn't a move you need to think too hard about. On a 10+, hand them what they wanted to know, or at least something they can clearly use. On a 7-9, go a little adjacent. Give them something close, or something they can make their own conclusions from. On a 6-, make a move as usual.

Examples Of *dispelling uncertainties*

The group is meeting a mysterious faction for the first time, and is introduced to their leader. Scour, a Witch, asks if he recognises her. He rolls to ***dispel uncertainties***, and gets a 10 - he knows exactly who she is! It's a member of the royal family he remembers meeting some years prior.

Prim, an Arcanist, is fighting a mysterious new Astir that has turned up on the battlefield. They explain how they think back to a codex of Astir designs they looked through recently which might offer some information, and they roll. They get an 8, and I give them some potentially useful information. The new Astir wasn't in that codex - but Prim can tell from some of the design elements that it was designed by Rosegold Factoria, a faction in their campaign.

Merin, the party Artificer, is overseeing some repairs to their Cruiser, *The Planted Standard*. He wants to speed things up, so he asks me if they know a safe way to make those repairs faster than usual. He rolls a 6, and I explain to him how it would be *very* safe if they re-purposed the mana channels from the *Standard*'s main gun and used them to make the repairs. Or, that's what they think, at least.

Help or Hinder

When you attempt to lend aid to someone or interfere with their ability to make a roll, you are trying to ***help or hinder***. When you do so, roll +GRAVITY with them if you have one;

On a 10+, they take **advantage** (help) or **disadvantage** (hinder) on their roll. On a 7-9, as above, but you become entangled in the consequences of their actions, and possibly cause them.

If someone else is making a move, and you're trying to do something to either help them or to get in their way, your Director will probably ask you to ***help or hinder***. Succeeding lets you pass them a bonus to their roll, but on a 7-9 you get caught up in the results of the move. If someone gets hurt, it's probably you, etc.

Help or hinder asks you to roll the value of your GRAVITY clock with the target rather than a regular Trait. If you don't have a clock with them, you don't add a Trait.

Director Notes

This isn't a particularly complex move, so it shouldn't often cause you any trouble. If someone is clearly trying to prevent or facilitate someone else doing something, this is what they should roll. On a 7-9, involve them in what happens afterwards, and feel free to make it their fault if you want to.

Examples Of *help or hinder*:

Fau, a Witch, is striding into battle alongside zir allies. Ahead of zir, Brennan is tangling with a pair of enemy Astirs. Brennan is going to ***exchange blows*** with them, and Fau decides to help out by giving covering fire to zir friend. Ze rolls an 8, allowing zir to give **advantage** to Brennan for his roll. He succeeds, and all is well.

Seven is not so lucky, however. Having rolled a 7 to help Matrice avoid an serious blow from their would-be-rival and passed them Advantage, Seven is in harm's way - and when Matrice rolls a 5 on their ***bite the dust***, I decide that their intervention puts them in the path of the blade, rather than Matrice.

Serrah, a Captain, is watching over a battle from the helm of their Carrier. Down below, Merin is making use of their Artificer abilities to quickly construct a foothold, from which he can assess the state of the fight. Serrah offers her assistance - from this high up, and with the capabilities of the Carrier, she could definitely help pick out things on the battlefield. I ask her to ***help or hinder***, and she rolls a 10, allowing her to offer Merin **advantage** without putting herself on the line. Merin then, unfortunately for her, rolls a 6. There will be repercussions - but Serrah won't be part of them.

Weave Magic

When you invoke your magic to crumble a bridge, attune to mystical orbs at the centre of the galaxy, or otherwise do something taxing with your power, you're attempting to weave magic. When you do so, roll +CHANNEL;

On a 10+, you manage to channel power the way you desired without ill effect.

On a 7-9, you succeed, but your invocation is twisted in an unexpected and dangerous way.

In Armour Astir, magic is typically channelled through an Astir, imbued into potions through alchemy, or forged into objects by enchanters and artificers. More direct uses, in the form of spells and such, have fallen out of use somewhat. When you try to twist your magic ability into desired results, then, you're not picking a spell from a list - you're ***weaving magic***. It's tiring to use your magic directly in this way - expect to take a *risk* or even be put in *peril* if you test yourself in this way more than once during a Sortie.

Director Notes

Like some of the others, this is a pretty straightforward move. If they're trying to do something with their magic outside the usual purview of controlling their Astir, and you think it's something within their ability, they're trying to ***weave magic***. Overuse of ***weave magic*** should visibly exhaust characters, and make it tough for them to operate. This is the trade-off for how wide and varied the uses of this move could be.

Examples Of weave magic:

Lamina, an Arcanist, is on foot, trying to get back to their Astir that they have been separated from. They encounter some soldiers on the way back, and not being trained in using her magic for direct combat, Lamina decides she wants to try teleporting herself the short remaining distance to her Astir. I ask her to ***weave magic***, and she rolls an 8. I narrate how her sudden burst of unfiltered magic is easily picked up by a sensory ritual over the area, which magically 'tags' her Astir as a target - as a result, I ask her to take a *risk*, suggesting 'targeted'. She's at her mech, but it's going to be tougher to escape now there's an ethereal bullseye painted on her.

Strata, the party Paradigm, wants to try and produce a magical shield to protect his allies while they make some quick repairs. This feels like something he could do, so I ask him to ***weave magic***. He rolls a 10+, so it happens just the way he wanted. It's a little exhausting, but sure enough a white-gold sheet of magical force spreads out from his fingertips, lasting as long as he concentrates on it.

Plana is trying to collapse a bridge their group has just travelled over, to prevent anyone from following them. As an Artificer, Plana doesn't usually have a CHANNEL Trait, but they have the ***arcane generator*** move which gives them one. Plana describes how they try to send waves of magical force through the bridge to shake it apart, and I ask them to roll ***weave magic***. On a 7-9, I might describe how their magic spills dangerously out, causing a localised earthquake that shakes more than just the bridge to pieces.

Cool Off

When you attempt to vent heat from an Astir, to calm yourself from spiralling emotions, or to otherwise take a few minutes to fix something about your situation, you're trying to ***cool off***. When you do so, declare a risk you want to get rid of and roll whatever Trait seems most appropriate;

On a 10+, you/they erase a *risk* or untick 'overheating' from an Astir.

On a 7-9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.

Doing things can be pretty stressful, especially when those things include fighting, getting hurt, or talking to people. Many actions in Armour Astir can require you to take *risks*, and while it's easy to imagine getting rid of these with many other moves (getting rid of 'outnumbered' with ***exchange blows***, using ***read the room*** to clear 'surprised', etc) sometimes it won't always be that clear, or might be something you can't fix without a minute to breathe.

For those things, ***cool off*** acts as a catch-all risk removal move. What using it looks like can differ a lot: it might be taking a quiet moment to center yourself, talking an ally down from an emotional peak, or venting heat buildup from your Astir—heat represented by the 'overheating' tick gained from certain Channeler moves—which also might look different depending on how your Astir is designed. Maybe your Astir collects heat in canisters that it can eject, or maybe you have a maintenance ritual you cast that disperses excess mana from it.

Director Notes

The important thing about ***cool off*** is that it takes a little time. While you make this move, you're not fighting, you're not running, and you're not paying close attention to what's going on. Maybe it's only a minute or two, but that can be a big opportunity for foes - so characters should try to make themselves some breathing room before they take a breath. You can choose what Trait you use when ***cooling off***, but it should match what you're doing. If you're trying to flush a hex out of your Astir's systems, it'd be +CHANNEL. If ice has frozen over the finger joints of your Astir, you can't chip it off with +TALK - it'd be +DEFY, or maybe +CLASH.

Examples Of *cool off*:

Ray, a Scout, has just seen vis ally Luxx narrowly dodge a bolt of lightning. The close call disrupted a sensory ritual, giving them the *risk* (blinded). Ray has the Scout move ***patch job***, and ve decides to move in and try to clear up the disruption for Luxx. Ve describe how ve scales up the Astir's side and sets to work replacing some shattered reagents. I ask ver to roll to ***cool off*** with +DEFY since this is a pretty routine fix done quickly, and ve rolls a 9, attracting unwanted attention as a result. A second bolt of lighting sears overhead: they've both been spotted!

Fau has just dispatched a pair of enemy Astirs but caused zirs to overheat in the process. With zir sensory chimes picking up new contacts incoming, ze decides to do something about that heat problem. Ze describe how zir Astir has a series of pods full of frosty, alchemical liquid attached to it, and ze activate one to ***cool off***. Ze rolls an 11 after adding zir +CHANNEL, which is a total success. The liquid frost washes through zir system, and ze removes the 'overheating' tick.

Merin, an Artificer, currently has the *risk* (entangled) after being caught up in some magical plants. If they were in a hurry they might have tried to ***weather the storm*** to escape, but they're alone and otherwise safe - so they decide to take their time cutting themselves free. They roll to ***cool off*** with +CLASH, and unfortunately only get a 5. The more they cut, the more these vines seem to trap them, and they end up taking too long. A flying enemy golem sweeps overhead and spots them - if they weren't in a hurry before, they sure are now.

Exchange Blows

When you charge at a foe with your blade, engage someone in debate or try to provoke them, or otherwise act against someone able to defend themselves, you are attempting to ***exchange blows***. When you do so, advance a GRAVITY clock if you have one, and roll +CLASH or +TALK - whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, either your opponent takes a *risk*, or you take a *risk* and put your opponent in *peril*.

On a 7-9, both you and your target are forced to take a *risk*.

When you go toe-to-toe against someone capable of defending themselves, you're ***exchanging blows***. This move is used to wear foes down before ***striking decisively*** to deal with them for good - whether you're doing it with +CLASH and physical harm, or +TALK and your words. When you're actually fighting, it's important to consider what weapon you're using. You can't hit someone far away with a *melee* weapon, for example, or shoot someone close up with a *sniper* weapon. When it comes to using +TALK, it's worth keeping in mind that most conversations are probably just that - conversations. But when there is conflict or you're trying to get something, it might instead be ***exchanging blows***.

Director Notes

When players are trying to ***exchange blows***, make sure to keep in mind the methods and weapons they are using, as well as who they're using them on. There's lots of variables that could come into play, so don't be afraid to offer adjustments to the roll based on the situation. If players are ***exchanging blows*** with +TALK, it should go without saying that their choice of weaponry probably doesn't factor in, unless they're using it to intimidate someone.

If a player is trying to harm someone who isn't trying to harm the player back but is otherwise still capable of evading or defending themselves, they still need to ***exchange blows***. While they're not in direct danger there's still plenty of other reasons they might need to take a *risk*—over-committing to chase an agile foe, getting mad they they can't land a solid hit, and so on.

If a player wants to continue ***exchanging blows*** with someone who is *defenceless*, let them, but it should be clear they are toying with someone who is basically done. It should seem cruel.

Examples Of *exchange blows*:

Caryx, an Arcanist, wants to engage an enemy Astir that has rushed up to block their path. They describe pulling out the greatsword their Astir is armed with, and launching into melee. This sounds like ***exchange blows*** to me, which they roll. They get a 10+, and take the option 'your opponent takes a *risk*'. I narrate how their foe boosts backwards suddenly to evade the blow, leaving them unsteady on their feet, and I add the *risk* 'unstable' to their sheet.

Juniper is blade-to-blade with aer Rival, Sequoia. They have already traded *risks* a few times, and Junipers player continues the fight, rolling to ***exchange blows***. Ae rolls a 7, meaning both aer and Sequoia have to take another *risk*. Juniper elects to take the *risk* 'distracted', describing how ae's so focused on Sequoia that ae could miss something else. I give Sequoia the 'disarmed' *risk* as the blade is knocked from her hands.

Frankly Darling is trying to convince an engineer they've bumped into in an enemy base that they're supposed to be there. They might ***weather the storm*** to avoid suspicion this once, but they want to not have to worry about this engineer for the rest of the scene, so we ***exchange blows***. They roll a 5 - as it turns out, they're not that good a talker.

Strike Decisively

When you're lining up the perfect shot against an opponent who can't defend themselves, delivering a scathing dismissal of their character using irrefutable fact, or otherwise engaging someone who is *defenceless*, you are ***striking decisively***. When you do so, roll +CLASH or +TALK - whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat or otherwise removed as a threat as per the fiction. Player characters should ***bite the dust***.

On a 7-9, you succeed as above, but choose 1;

- You overreach or underestimate - take a *risk*.
- You waste ammo or words, losing use a weapon until you can re-arm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage.
- You strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations.

If you're trying to kill someone you're fighting or to otherwise do something serious enough to remove them from the situation at hand, and it's possible to do so, you're trying to ***strike decisively***. This doesn't necessarily need to be something that causes actual harm to the target, and in many cases, like when you're using +TALK, it's likely physical harm might not be involved. You can't call someone's shitty ideology out so hard that they die (unless your Director says you can, in which case: hell yeah).

Director Notes

As with ***exchange blows***, a player cannot ***strike decisively*** if they aren't at the right range for the weapon they're using. It's also hard to lay into someone if they're too far away to hear you (though, it is of course possible to damage someone's reputation or assets by talking about them, rather than to them). When battling it out with +TALK, a 10+ will typically look like getting what you wanted out of the conversation rather than them being owned so hard that they burst into flame. This might be convincing them of something, intimidating them into a course of action, winning an argument, etc.

Central to this move is the target being *defenceless*. If a player is trying to finish off someone that isn't *defenceless*, they aren't making this move - they're being overconfident, and giving you a good opportunity to make a move of your own.

Examples Of *striking decisively*;

Mura, a Scout, spots an enemy bearing down on her friend Ophelia, a large axe drawn. Mura thinks the fact that it is distracted by its fight with Ophelia makes them *defenceless* to her, and she takes aim with her marksman bow, intending to kill them. I know they aren't actually that distracted by their fight, and actually have room for another *danger*. I explain this to Mura, and describe how her target sidesteps the attack, before returning fire with a hand-crossbow. Things are going to get rough for Mura.

Cirrus the Diplomat has been trying to convince a guard to let them into a restricted area. Having already worn them down a little, Cirrus delivers the coup de grace ("You know, I could put in a good word with your superiors…") and rolls to ***strike decisively***. They get an 8, and choose to waste ammo or words - I describe how now none of the other guards will buy that line until you actually do put in a good word for this one, since they'll talk to the others about it. It's still a success though, so the guard is removed as a threat, which in this case just means they'll stand aside and let Cirrus through. The guard doesn't suddenly die or anything. But they might've.

Damocles, a Scout, is working in tandem with his friend Erin to take out a service golem. Damocles climbed onto its back while Erin distracted it, and wants to try and destroy it with a manacharge. The golem's pilot is *defenceless*, but Damocles only rolls a 6. I decide the charge is faulty, and that it goes off early, sending him flying back down to the floor painfully, giving him the *peril* (burned).

Bite The Dust

When something dangerous slips through your defences, you're caught off-guard, or someone delivers those perfect words to tear you down, you're at risk of biting the dust. When you do so, roll +DEFY;

On a 10+, they miss, hesitate, or you're saved by sheer luck - you rally, and clear a *risk* if you have one.

On a 7-9, retreat from the Sortie safely, or be put in *peril*.

On a fail, that strike sure was decisive. Decide with your Director the consequences of what has happened to you - what was damaged? What have you lost? Who and what is changed by your defeat? If you survive, you are changed by your defeat. As well as the above, choose one;

- Increase one of your Traits by 1 and reduce another by 1 (no Trait may be higher or lower than -/+3.
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and your Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.

Director Notes

When a player is *defenceless* as a result of having three *risks* or *perils*, they're in real danger. When someone threatens them with the intent to finish them off - i.e, when they would fictionally be ***striking decisively*** rather than ***exchanging blows*** - that player should ***bite the dust*** in response. The time for ***weathering the storm*** or defending yourself by ***exchanging blows*** is over. This is what it means to be *defenceless*.

Failure on this move should be a conversation between you and the player, but you shouldn't feel the need to have this conversation there and then. Feel free to go with something ambiguous in the short term—a pair of Astirs dashing out of sight but only one returning, a bloody trail left leading off somewhere unseen, an escape pod landing heavily—and determine the outcome once the action of the Sortie dies down.

Examples Of *bite the dust*:

Min-seo, a Captain, is commanding the crew of her Carrier against a huge elder dragon. Things are going badly: covered with burns, streaked by talon-marks and gripped by fear, Min-seo and her crew are *defenceless*. The dragon cuts them off, and launches one last burst of flame towards the Carrier's bridge. It's time to ***bite the dust***, but lucky for Min-seo (and her crew) she rolls a 10. She describes how the crew pulls off a miraculous manoeuvre, dropping the Carrier out of the sky for a moment to evade the attack, and she removes the *risk* (afraid) as everyone cheers.

Aidah, eir group's Paradigm, was ambushed by a group of Astirs. Between being outnumbered and taking a few extra *risks* while trying to even the odds, e is *defenceless*. It's too late to ***weather the storm****:* If Aidah wants to get out, e needs to make sure e doesn't ***bite the dust***. E rolls an 8, and I give em the choice: retreat safely from the Sortie, or be put in *peril*. E decides to take the *peril*, so while e escapes to regroup, e does it under fire and a rayrifle shot shears through eir right shoulder joint, replacing one of eir risks with the *peril* (destroyed arm).

Scour is in a bad way. His Astir is damaged, disarmed, and he's *defenceless*. His opponent, channelling a mysterious prototype Astir, isn't interested in giving him mercy, but Scour's not backing down. He rushes back in and risks ***biting the dust***. He rolls the dice: it's a 3. It's early in the campaign and Scour's player still has things they want to explore with them in play, so we agree that they manage to eject from their Astir before their foe gets a decisive slash in, destroying it completely. They're alive, but shaken, and will need rescuing from the battlefield. They adjust their DEFY by +1, and their CLASH by -1 to represent a blow to their confidence.

Group Moves

When everyone would be performing the same move (like all ***weathering the storm*** to get away from a big blast of magic), or if multiple people want to help out with something (since usually only one person can ***help or hinder*** a move), you should instead make it a group move.

When performing a group move, the person participating with the lowest relevant trait makes the roll, but anybody participating counts as doing so - thus, any bonuses to rolls that have, like Advantage or hold they can spend, applies to the group move. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, but good teamwork can shore up any weaknesses.

Everyone participating in a group move may advance GRAVITY clocks with other participants if they have them.

Special Moves Summary

There are a few other moves that don't fit into the above categories. These are ***lead a Sortie***, which is rolled once at the beginning of each Sortie to determine how the initial engagement goes, ***subsystems*** which is a move usable by any Channeler playbook, and ***B-plot*** which is a move usable by any Support playbook.

Lead A Sortie

When it's time for action and you ***lead a Sortie***, decide who planned the mission and roll;

- +Stake, if a Faction's help is vital to the Sortie.
- +KNOW, if you're leading with wits or following a clever plan.
- +CREW, if it was someone else aboard.
- +DEFY, if you're heading into danger blind.

On a 10+, you make it to the action unscathed. On a 7-9, the crew stumbles, misses something important, or is unprepared for what they meet.

Subsystems

When you activate your Astir's ***subsystems***, spend Mana 1-for-1 to do one of the following;

- Power up an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.
- Divine your situation, asking one question from the ***read the room*** list.
- Disperse away excess energy, fully unticking 'overheating' on your Astir.

B-Plot

When you take part in the ***b-plot*** rather than be involved in a Sortie, name one or two Director characters that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player increased level of success on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny an NPC from appearing during the Sortie - they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and take a Downtime move.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

Lead A Sortie

When you lead the group into battle, get in the robot when you're not supposed to, or otherwise take action that would move the game from Downtime to a Sortie, you're ***leading a Sortie***. When you lead, roll;

- +Stake, if a Faction's help is vital to the Sortie.
- +KNOW, if you're leading with wits or following a clever plan.
- +CREW, if success hinges on someone else aboard.
- +DEFY, if you're heading into danger carelessly.

On a 10+, you make it to the action unscathed. On a 7-9, the crew stumbles, misses something important, or is unprepared for what they meet.

While most moves have certain triggers or can be used whenever you want, ***lead a Sortie*** is a little different. At the beginning of every Sortie, when everyone leaps into action (whatever that action may be), the players should figure out which Trait is appropriate and have someone roll for the move. ***Lead a Sortie*** establishes on what footing the crew finds itself once they get to their first obstacle.

Director Notes

You should always have someone roll to ***lead a Sortie*** once the action starts, but if you forget, it's OK to do it retroactively and carry the results forward as you continue playing. When rolling with +Stake and +CREW, it doesn't matter who makes the roll, since those attributes don't belong to any one player. When rolling +KNOW or +DEFY however, the roll should be made by whoever's trait is being used. If you're all going along with a plan thought up by the player with a -2 in KNOW, you don't get to have the +3 KNOW player make the roll on their behalf - that doesn't make any sense. There being a plan doesn't prevent someone from rolling with +DEFY if they want to rush off and ignore it.

Examples Of *lead a Sortie*:

The crew of the *Ouroborous* has drawn up a plan to assault a prison ran by their campaign's Authority, the Zonel Empire. However, Dimir, the crew's Impostor, hotheadedly rushes into action so everyone else can benefit from their ***don't follow me*** move. So, they roll to ***lead a Sortie*** with +DEFY. It's a 7-9, and I decide the crew missed something important - they missed Dimir leaving! They'll have to catch up, and Dimir will be alone until they can.

The *Coarse, Correct* is heading into battle alongside a Carrier sent by one of their allied Factions, the Atteri Guild. Since a Faction is helping them out, they'll be rolling to ***lead a Sortie*** with the value of that Faction's Stake. It's +1, which isn't bad, so one of the players makes the roll. She gets lucky - it's a 12! The *Coarse, Correc*t and the Atteri ship both make it into battle safely, positioned to carry out the Sortie.

Serrah, a Captain, is leading the crew of her Carrier, the *New Serpent*. They're on a mission to deactivate an ancient magical relic their foes have unearthed, and having made the plan, Serrah rolls to ***lead a Sortie***. She rolls a 5, which leaves the crew on an unfortunate footing. All around the ship, sensors light up in worrying shades: they won't be making it anywhere without a fight.

Subsystems

When you activate your Astir's subsystems, spend Mana 1-for-1 to do one of the following;

- Power up an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.
- Divine your situation, asking one question from the ***read the room*** list.
- Disperse away excess energy, fully unticking 'overheating' on your Astir.

All Channeler playbooks may use the ***subsystems*** move. This allows them to spend Mana, a resource that is part of their Astir, like hold for the above results. Some Astirs have 0 Mana, but most have between 1 and 4 depending on the choices made creating it. You start every Sortie with your Astirs full amount of Mana, and do not usually regain spent Mana between scenes.

Director Notes

The ***subsystems*** move gives players a quick way of resolving a variety of problems. It's risk-free and many Astirs offer the opportunity to do it more than once, so don't be afraid to remind your players if they find themselves in a tough spot and have Mana to spend. As long as they're piloting their Astir and it's not deactivated or shut down, they can activate ***subsystems***.

Examples Of *subsytems*:

Aidah is fighting eir Rival, and has just tried to ***exchange blows*** with them. E described how they tried to circle around them, laying into them with a rayrifle, but then e rolled a pair of 2s. Not happy with this result, e decides to spend a point of Mana on ***subsystems*** to reuse their 'Afterburners' artifact and roll with Advantage. E rolls an extra dice for the Advantage, which is a 6! Taking eir two highest results (the 6 and a 2), combined with eir +CLASH of +1, brings the total from 5 to 8, making the move a partial success instead of failure.

Strata, the party Paradigm is snooping through a strange labyrinth, clearly built to be explored by something even larger than their Astir. He's been lost in there for a little while without finding anything, but he doesn't want to risk something bad happening if he ***reads the room***. Instead, he spends Mana on ***subsystems*** to safely ask one question from the read the room list. He asks 'what is being overlooked here?'.

Prim, an Arcanist, is attempting to outrun a rampaging magma worm. He's pulling out all the stops, and his Astir is overheating after he used the ***diverse channelling*** move to ***weather the storm*** with +CHANNEL instead of +DEFY. Since his CHANNEL is +2, much better than his DEFY of -1, Prim decides to spend Mana on ***subsystems*** to remove the overheating tick, meaning he can safely use ***diverse channelling*** again.

B-Plot

When you head out for some solitary revenge, leave to take part in negotiations, or otherwise take part in a secondary narrative thread to the players involved in the Sortie, you're in the ***b-plot***. Name one or two Director characters that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player **confidence** on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny an NPC from appearing during the Sortie - they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and take a Downtime move.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

All Support playbooks may use the ***b-plot*** move. If the Sortie looks like it's going to involve Astir combat and you want to help out in an indirect way, or you have a plot thread you want to follow alone, you can use the ***b-plot*** to do that - it lets you be elsewhere, effectively in a Sortie of your own, while still having some agency over the main one.

Director Notes

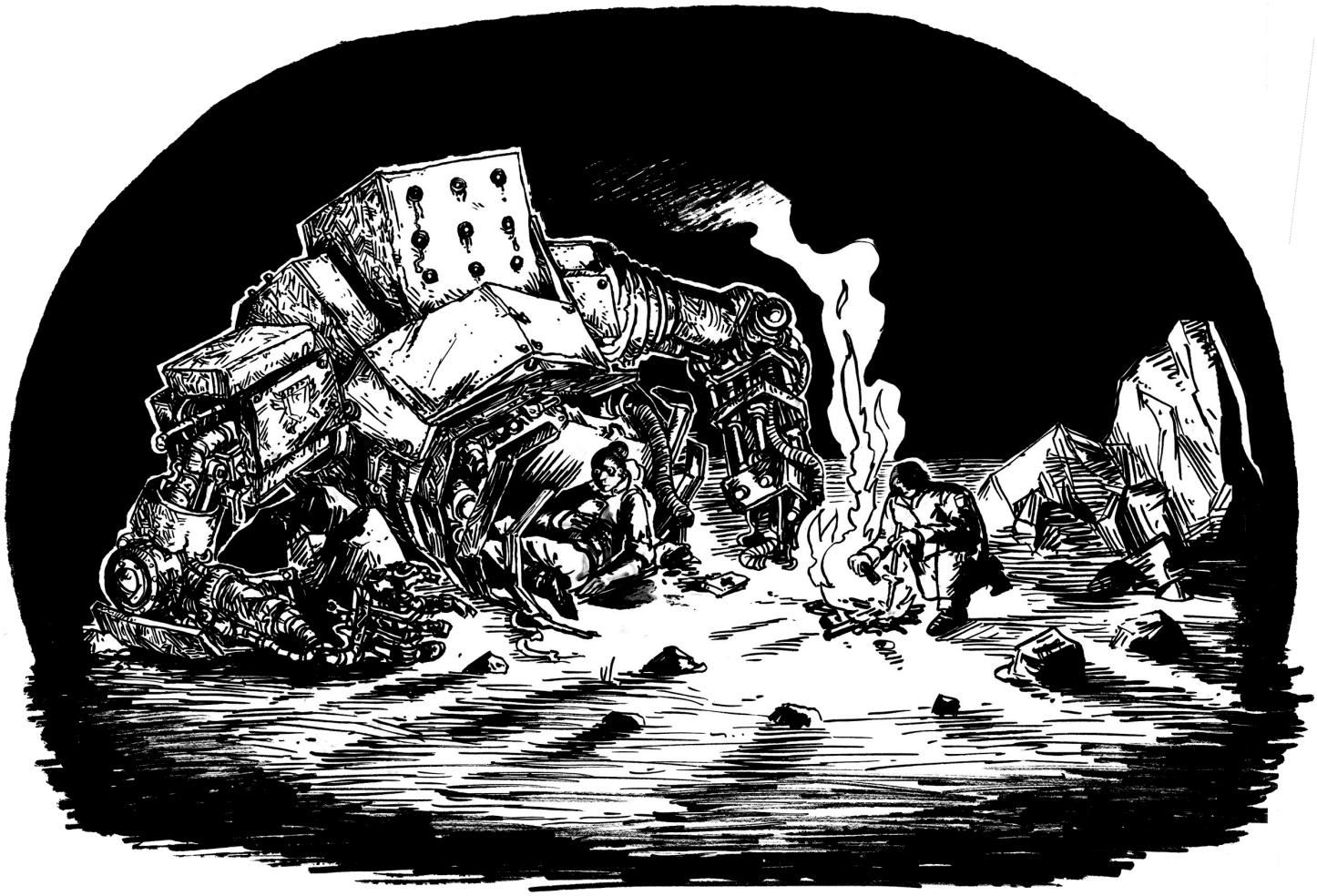
The ***b-plot*** move provides people playing a Support playbook an easy way of always being able to apply their skill-set, even if the Sortie calls for something else entirely. Artificers can be off fixing things, Diplomats can be taking part in negotiations, and so on. This means that players can place themselves in somewhere interesting for their character, rather than sitting around on the Cruiser idly, or putting themselves in grave danger fighting Astirs on foot if they're the lone Support in a group full of Channelers. If there's a ***b-plot*** to a Sortie, it should be established when ***lead a Sortie*** is rolled, or earlier if possible. If the ***b-plot*** takes a player far away from the Carrier and the rest of their group, they should be prepared to explain how that happened. Since Sorties follow a period of Downtime, they might have travelled beforehand, or maybe they used some kind of magical method like a teleportation circle. ***B-plot*** by itself isn't magic, but the game's full of it elsewhere, so don't hold them to anything too rigid here.

Examples Of *b-plot*:

Captain Brightline has left to meet with other members of their Cause at a star castle. The rest of the crew is busy dealing with an errant god during the Sortie, so Brightline's meeting is a ***b-plot***. They have 3 hold to help out though, and later when the fighting gets tough they spend 1 to let their ally Teasel act with **confidence** when she tries to commune with a space orb.

Kai, a Diplomat, is using the ***b-plot*** to sneak around a military encampment. Back in the Sortie, their allies are handling things ok, and the other players suggest Kai use his last hold to make a Downtime move. They do so, choosing to take the ***overhear*** action, representing them eavesdropping and gathering info. They roll with +SENSE and get an 11, letting them choose 2 from the results listed on ***overhear***.

Mura, a Scout, is aiding one of their allied Factions by helping break the siege on a neutral city. Since everyone else is working to broker a peace treaty between two other Factions this Sortie, Mura's taking part in the ***b-plot***. The group has been worried an Authority agent named Prose will show up to disrupt the treaty meeting, so Mura decides to spend hold to deny Prose from appearing during the Sortie. This'll certainly stop Prose from interfering with the meeting, but it also opens them up to being a problem for Mura.



"Rocky sat in the frame all night cus it was the warmest place I could put him outta the wind, with the engine still hot, even busted. I wanted him comfortable, just when I woke up he was gone some time during the night, and Three-by, old Three-by was gone too, oil leaks all down her front plate like she was cryin' fierce..."

- Excerpt from *'Our Year In The Dust'*, Anonymous, Founding Year Of The Empty Throne Era

DOWNTIME MOVES

Between Sorties, player characters have time to themselves on the Carrier to rest, recuperate, and do their own thing. This is referred to as Downtime, and the moves they use during it are the Downtime moves. You may use GRAVITY clocks on Downtime moves by involving other characters in the 'scene', whether handle it in abstract or actually play it out.

Each player may make TWO moves per Downtime, unless something specifies otherwise, but before you can do that everyone should take a moment to...

Check In

When you finish a Sortie and return to the Carrier to figure out what's next, it's time to ***check in*** with each-other not as your characters, but as players. Is everyone happy with how the game has gone since the last downtime? Does anyone want to discuss the safety tools you're using, and maybe amend any lines/veils etc? Does anyone have thoughts or comments on how the game is progressing, and what they might want to see more or less of?

After you've ***checked in***, everyone can choose and make their two Downtime moves.

Overhear

When you wait in the corridor, tap into someone else's sending stone, or otherwise become privy to information you're not supposed to (intentionally or not), you're attempting to ***overhear***. When you do so, roll;

- +CREW to consult ship records, books or other recorded information.
- +SENSE to listen out for exchanges, out-loud thinking, or generally eavesdrop.

On a 10+, you aren't noticed or detected, and may choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 2, but someone takes notice of you.

- What you learn changes how you think about someone—start or advance a GRAVITY clock with them.
- Roll with Advantage in the next Sortie while acting on what you learned.
- You make progress on learning something larger—start a clock to represent this progress, or advance an existing one as per ***work on a project***. You may ***work on a project*** to perform research towards this clock as if it were a normal project.

Talk It Out

When you try to ease tensions, make a connection or spend time with other characters during Downtime, you're trying to ***talk it out***. When you do so, declare one or more characters you would like to have a scene with, and roll +TALK;

On a 10+, everyone in the scene holds 3. On a 7-9, they hold 1, as does the Director. This pool is shared between them (except for the Director, who keeps their 1 to themselves), and during the scene anyone can spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Remove a *peril* of social or emotional origin from another character.
- Add to or excuse a character from the scene—or invite a player to enter/leave.
- Roll with **advantage** next time you ***plan & prepare***.

Mend Something

When you attempt to repair a damaged Astir, suture wounds, or take the rest you need to recover from that last Sortie, you're attempting to ***mend something***. When you do so, roll +CREW;

On a 10+, clear a *peril* of mechanical or physical origin from a character or construct. On a 7-9, as above, but you use up parts—pay 1 SUPPLY, or take **disadvantage** to ***mend something*** until you do.

Shore Leave

When you try to purchase something at a market, look for trouble in neutral turf, or otherwise leave the safety of the ship to do something on foot during Downtime, you're taking ***shore leave***. When you do so, roll +TALK, and take;

- **Disadvantage** if what you want is limited or hard to find
- **Disadvantage** if you want to skip a queue for something
- **Disadvantage** if what you want is illegal or restricted here
- **Advantage** if you're willing to accept lower quality
- **Advantage** if what you want is abundant or easy to find
- **Advantage** if what you want is useless or a burden to the owner

On a 10+, you find what you were looking for if it's available, without any problems. On a 7-9, you find what you're after, but there's a complication, trouble, or even a fight involved to get it.

Work On A Project

When you take part in long negotiations, start building something from scratch, or otherwise put effort towards a longer-term endeavour, you're trying to ***work on a project***. If you're starting a new project, explain it to your Director and they will start a clock to represent it. When you work on a project, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, fill in two empty segments of the clock. On a 7-9, fill in one empty segment. On a 6-, you suffer a setback of some kind—either remove one filled segment, or scrap the project for parts and take **advantage** next time you ***work on a project***.

Plan & Prepare

When you review orders for the next Sortie, go over scouting reports and maps, or otherwise attempt to prepare the crew for what comes next, you're trying to ***plan & prepare***. When you do so, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1. On a 6 or below, choose 1, but some element of your preparation or planning will backfire or fail during the Sortie.

- During the next Sortie, you will have the opportunity to recover 1 dropped Stake and give it to a Faction of your choice.
- During the next Sortie, you will have the opportunity to acquire up to 3 SUPPLY.
- The next ***lead a Sortie*** roll is made with **advantage**.
- All players hold 1. You may spend your hold during the next Sortie as if it were hold gained through one of your basic or playbook moves.

Only one player may ***plan & prepare*** per Downtime. Players may give up one of their Downtime actions to assist: if one does so, take **advantage**. If two do so, act with **confidence**.

According to Irion (1Y Dimitri, p.173), Astirs used in regions of the Western Reaches (his studies focusing on Jennehill and Locaster primarily), even smaller golems used for simple labour work, would "encounter what is colloquially known in the area as 'rust monsters' (but recognisable through simple observation as a common oxide-dog, canis lupus ferrugo) on a near-daily basis." Irion detailed futher how these encounters would affect constructs whose designs incorporated iron plating or frames, noting that "even when guards posted nearby were able to chase away the creatures quickly from idle Astirs, repeated cases of even minor contact would result in a build-up of rust so severe that most were no longer functional after two to five weeks of deployment." In my own observations, extending from Jennehill and Locaster into the current western front in the Dragonspine Mountains, I found this estimate of two to five weeks to be charitable.

At three military forts in the region of Dragonspine, all constructed within the last five years, quartermasters reported to me an operational lifespan of, at most, three weeks for Astirs whose designs featured iron heavily. Furthermore, Astirs whose designs used iron in a more reduced role—just as armour plating, as joints, or as is commonly used in radiatior grilles—would still require much heavier maintenance over their typical operational lifespan.

Why, then, are the troops deployed to the Western Reaches so often supported by newer and more expensive Astir designs that are still constructed on iron frames?

- Excerpt from '*A Treatise On Endemic Rust Monsters & Their Effects On Astir Deployment In The Western Reaches*', Artificer-Knight Cecil Knowles, Third Year Of Emperor Dimitri's Reign





CONFLICT & TIERS

As a game largely about getting into magical mechs and fighting fascism, much of the interaction between players and other characters (during Sorties at least) will involve them in various kinds of conflict or negotiation. In Armour Astir, much of this will largely fall under the purview of two moves: from friendly duels to fights to the death, from lying to avoid suspicion to addressing a nation.

Narratively, players will ***exchange blows*** to set opponents up, wear them down, give an argument strength or cast doubt, then ***strike decisively*** to land a killing blow, dismiss an argument entirely, or otherwise follow through on opportunities opened up by their earlier exchanges.

Mechanically, players will ***exchange blows*** to make an opponent *defenceless* by giving them a number of *risks* or *perils*, then ***strike decisively*** to remove them as a threat according to the fiction.

Of course, there are many factors at play that might affect how the rolls behind these moves go down. Physical conflicts are affected most obviously by physical things: by the weapons being used as well as what kind of protection those involved have to rely on. The terrain, relationships, weather, and so on might also come into play. Anything settled with words is likely to be affected on a more circumstantial basis: by what is being said, who it is being said to, and countless other little factors.

What this largely boils down to is having one or more levels of **advantage** or **disadvantage**, or if you're particularly lucky (or unlucky) the ability to act with **confidence** (or **desperation**). See Opposing With +CLASH and Opposing With +TALK below for specifics on things that might affect these rolls.

Affecting both equally are Tiers, the embodiment of what kinds of creature or object something can, broadly speaking, be considered in the same league as. Fighting something below your tier is far easier (see: an Astir stomping on a man), whilst fighting something above your tier is far harder (see: a man trying to stomp on an Astir). See Tiers below for more information.

Just as complex spells often require intricate rituals and awkward somatic gestures, the magic used to power an Astir can be augmented by intentionally complicating its design. 'Flourish components', as they are referred to, sometimes take the form of odd, restrictive design choices, and sometimes look like compact rube-goldberg-esque contraptions that contribute somatic components to an Astir's spells.

Regardless of their differences, they can largely be described as additions to an Astir that serve no true function, their lack of purpose providing a supplementary source of magical energy. I am told that new Channelers, at schools abreast of such advancements, are given a stern warning: be wary of Astirs with capes.

- Excerpt from '*Efficient Inefficiency: Practical Applications of the Flourish Theory*', Prof. Keller June, ERA3/1 (Lilac)

Opposing With +CLASH

When it comes to literal combat, weapon ranges and approaches are the primary thing to consider. Many *tags* also offer benefits when using certain moves or fighting in certain situations.

Ranges

Weapon ranges, largely, define if you can trigger moves like ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively***. They might also have relevance in attempts to intimidate or threaten: a smart foe might know full well that you're bluffing with a weapon they have little to fear from.

- *Melee*: This weapon is used to physically hit targets at close range.
- *Ranged*: This weapon is used to hit targets from a medium distance or close up.
- *Sniper*: This weapon is used to shoot at targets from a long or medium distance.

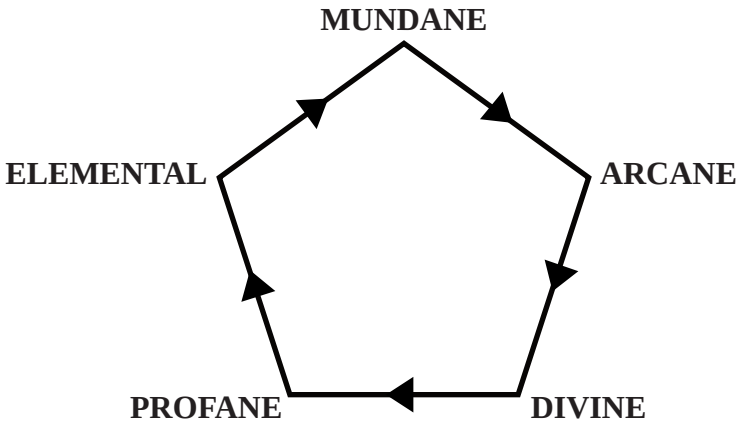
Range tags are relative to the tier of the weapon - an Astir-sized sword with *melee* range can strike something a lot further away than a sword wielded by a person, for example. *Ranged* and *sniper* weapons mounted on something higher tier than them are re-tuned so that their range bands are relative to their new housing.

Approaches

There are, in the broadest of senses, five approaches to combat. Each is particularly effective against another, but in turn vulnerable in the same way. You act with **confidence** when facing an approach yours is strong against, and **desperation** when facing an approach that is strong against yours. They are:

- **Mundane *(M)***, the approach of those with blades, bows and shields, cuts easily through **arcane** defenses meant to protect against magic with simple steel.
- **Arcane *(A)***, the approach of those who weave pure unaspected magic, pierces the domains of the **divine** well, having long since been stolen away from them.
- **Divine *(D)***, the approach of those with a godly sponsor, scours the **profane** from our world quite readily, holy powers being anathema to those of the dark.
- **Profane *(P)***, the approach of those who consort with the unkind and the forgotten, is effective against the natural forces of our world, and as such easily smothers **elemental** magic.
- **Elemental *(E)***, the approach of those wielding fire and frost, easily subverts **mundane** defenses that rely on materials that warp, conduct and shatter under the elements.

You might ***work on a project*** to change the damage type of something, or take ***shore leave*** to find a quick way do it temporarily.



On foot, your approach is typically defined by your playbook. Golems, Astirs, Carriers and other magical constructs have their own approaches which override yours when you're fighting in them.

Opposing With +TALK

When trying to achieve things with words, the tags on your gear and weapons tend to be less important (though if intimidation is your chosen avenue, this might not be the case). What matters more is what is being said, who it is being said to, what kind of person they are, and so on.

Debate Me

When you're using ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively*** to persuade, intimidate, deceive, inspire and otherwise use words get your way, it's very important to keep the facts of your fiction in mind. Rugged mercenaries are less likely to cower under intimidation that shy scholars, and it's harder to negotiate with an expert merchant than someone with barely a sale to their name: situations like these are where Advantage and Disavantage might often come from when using +TALK. You should feel free to suggest these to your Director when they arise.

Strike decisively notes that on a success your foe is removed as a threat according to the fiction. When rolling with +TALK, the fiction will typically be that they believe what you've said, are willing to carry out some instruction or bow under threat, etc. As such, ***striking decisively*** in this manner means the character will do what you wanted and them cease being a threat to you. This might mean they stand aside, retreat, are so well-convinced of your disguise they no longer suspect you at all, or so on. Characters must still be made *defenceless* for this to happen. In social circumstances, the *risks* and *perils* you inflict to do so are likely to be very different to the ones you inflict in actual combat. You might mention a name that makes someone *uneasy*, imply violence that leaves someone *scared,* or speak with courage that inspires *confidence* in someone you're trying to instruct.

That's not to say *dangers* of a more physical nature don't effect social engagements and vice-versa. Someone already hurt could be easy to intimidate, just as someone who is scared might falter in battle.

Talking To God

While weapon tags like *bane* and *ruin* provide an avenue of overcoming tier differences (see Tiers on the next page), those differences also apply when you're ***exchanging blows*** or ***striking decisively*** with +TALK. If you're just one person, it can be hard to sway the entire crew of a Carrier, intimidate someone in an Astir, or lie to a deity. There are, of course, plenty of situations where those differences break down though. If you are someone in a position of authority over them that crew might listen to you immediately. If you know the trigger word for an explosive rune etched onto that Astir, you have leverage behind your threat.

For that reason, when rolling with +TALK, you may treat words as having the *bane* or *ruin* tags where appropriate, or even ignore the tier rules altogether if the situation calls for it.

Tiers

In Armour Astir, there are five tiers things usually come in when it comes to conflict, reaching from tier I (characters) to tier V (carriers). Weaponry within each of these categories is described relatively—that is to say, in general, a Carrier-sized weapon with *area* has a much larger effective radius than a person-sized weapon with *area*—because close range between two people is a lot smaller than close range between two Carriers.

- Tier I covers any creature of around vaguely human strength and resilience.
- Tier II covers simple magical constructs and people particularly talented in combat. Monsters that might threaten two or three people alone could be tier II.
- Tiers III and IV are Armour Astirs; large, magically-animated suits of armour that are piloted by someone with magical ability, referred to here as a Channeler. Monsters with tough hides or magical protection might be one of these tiers.
- Tier V is the realm of vessels and vehicles on a grander scale than any single construct - ships, trains, or other interesting creations, that often carry and deploy constructs or Astirs into battle. Carriers, like the one the players have, are tier V. Immense creatures, like krakens or really big dragons could be considered tier V.
- Tier VI covers things beyond Carriers or Astirs. They are things men might call unfathomable, or unknowable - but men designed them, men lifted the timbers, and men guided them until they could walk. It is not the shape or definition of the divine that makes them beyond us.

You should feel free to include exceptions to the above in your game. Golems of a higher tier that can go toe-to-toe with Astirs more readily, smaller Carriers or ships that are only tier III/IV, and other things can be interesting to think about: what does a tier V person look like?

Lower vs Higher Tier

People, monsters, weapons and so on have a tier - typically the same as its intended users. These tiers reflect what they are typically effective against: tier III weapons are built to fight tier III things, and so on.

Affecting something of a higher tier than you is difficult due to the difference in scale and power, meaning moves like ***exchange harm*** and ***strike decisively*** can't be triggered normally. In certain situations these restrictions might be sidestepped—an Astir's magic isn't much protection if you open the cockpit, etc. Another exception to this rule are weapons with the *bane* and *ruin* tags, which make them effective against targets of one and two tiers higher respectively.

Additionally, if you're a lower tier than something trying to harm you, instead of ***weathering the storm*** or ***exchanging blows*** to avoid that harm, you must ***bite the dust*** - but you roll with Advantage, since you're not actually *defenceless*.

Higher vs Lower Tier

Working in the other direction is a little different. When moving against something one or more tiers above you, players can ***strike decisively*** against foes of a lower tier without making them *defenceless*. When doing so, you roll with **disadvantage** to represent the difficulty and distraction of hitting a small target—unless you're using a weapon with the *area* tag. Beware the dangers of painting details with a such broad brush, however.

If all this is a bit much at first, the important thing to remember is that if you want to hurt something one step tougher than you, you need *bane* on your weapon. If you want to hurt something two steps tougher than you, you need *ruin*. If you want to hurt something three or more steps tougher than you, you need a plan.

TAGS & GEAR

Equipment in Armour Astir is distinguished by a few things. While weaponry has specific ranges and types of damage, all equipment also has *tags*. These tags help define an object in terms of narrative effects as well as more specific mechanical ones. Below, you'll find a list of mechanical and narrative tags followed by a list of equipment across tiers I and II (see The Carrier & Astirs for tiers III through V). Also provided is a recap of weapon ranges and damage types.

Feel free to expand all these lists with options of your own to better suit your campaign and setting, as well as the tastes of you and your players. Neither list is by any means exhaustive.

If you encounter a tag that isn't on these lists, assume it's a Narrative tag: what it does should be self-descriptive.

Tags

Mechanical

The following tags have specific mechanical affects ascribed to them, as well as any narrative implications.

- *Bane*: Can damage or harm targets of a tier above it.
- *Ruin*: As per *bane*, but can damage or harm targets up to two tiers higher.

- *Blitz*: You may expend or break a weapon with this tag to make a move with **confidence**. If your weapon also has a tag like *infinite* or *sturdy* that would make it more long-lasting, remove that instead.
- *Decisive*: Grants **advantage** when you ***strike decisively***, but usually relies on precision or catching your opponent off-guard, meaning you have **disadvantage** when you ***exchange blows*** with it.
- *Defensive*: Provides good defence or ease of use at the cost of lethality, granting **advantage** when you ***exchange*** blows but **disadvantage** when you ***strike decisively***.
- *Versatile*: A versatile weapon grants Advantage to both ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively***.
- *Guided*: This weapon has guided strikes or projectiles, allowing you to take a 7-9 result when you ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** rather than rolling if you wish. Guided projectiles are reliable, but leave little room for finesse.
- *Refresh*: Readily available or replenish-able in some way, objects with *refresh* can be replenished before the next scene if lost or expended.
- *Area*: This weapon affects a large area and can hit multiple targets. While any melee weapon might hit multiple people stood right next to each-other, an area weapon might slice through an entire crowd or catch spread-out foes in blasts or hails of fire.
- *Set-Up*: Make moves using this item at **disadvantage** unless you prepare or arm it in some way.
- *Ward:* You may discharge this tag once per Sortie to reduce an incoming source of harm from a *peril* to a *risk,* or from a *risk* to nothing.

Narrative

The following tags do not have specific mechanical effects, but their descriptive nature could have mechanical effects.

- *Aquatic*: Can manoeuvre in water easily, and might have an extended oxygen supply if an Astir or Golem.
- *Aerial*: Can fly easily in gravity rather than being limited to short jumps and glides. If your campaign involves space, an *aerial* Astir might be able to survive atmospheric re-entry.
- *Custom*: This weapon would be easier than normal to modify for or load with custom ammunition.
- *Dangerous*: Volatile or difficult to use safely, dangerous objects invite dire consequences if not used carefully.
- *Fragile*: Easily broken, either by shoddy design or frail materials.
- *Distinct*: Impressive, loud, or just particularly memorable, distinct equipment is hard to be subtle with.
- *Rare*: Difficult to find, and sure to be prized by anyone who owns one.
- *Infinite*: This thing either doesn't use ammo or power to function, or uses such small amounts relative to your supply that it is practically endless.
- *Insulated*: Provides a degree of protection against the elements, allowing you to better weather intense cold or heat.
- *Small*: Small, light, and easy to hide or be quick with. You might throw *small* things with enough accuracy to hit foes.
- *Slow*: There is a delay involved in this objects use, like the travel time of a projectile, or the low speed of a construct.
- *Limited*: You have a particularly limited supply or use of this thing, and it will run out typically at an inconvenient moment.
- *Messy*: This weapon is imprecise, and can have excessive, unwanted results.
- *2H*: Takes both hands to use properly, though not necessarily just to carry.
- *Mounted*: Rather than taking up the hands of the wielder, this weapon is mounted or worn in some way.
- *Restraining*: Can restrict or slow targets in some way.
- *Reloading*: After firing, this weapon requires you to manually reload it or perform some other action to ready it for use. If it is listed as *bane/reloading* or *ruin/reloading*, it means those tags specifically require a reload, but the weapon can continue to be used without them otherwise.

Acquiring Equipment

Typically, there isn't anything for sale on board your Carrier. Okay, there's probably a quartermaster you could requisition things from, if you're willing to wait for it to be shipped out, and maybe you could persuade a private merchant to tag along - but in general, when you want to buy something you need to go and find it.

Doing so means making the ***shore leave*** move during Downtime. Provided you don't roll a 6 or below, you find what you're after if it's available - but on a 7-9, it's not going to be as simple as handing over the cash. Keep in mind that you can't find something if it isn't there - if you stop by a small farming town looking for Astir parts, you probably won't find them.

Generally speaking, the equipment provided below is not a comprehensive list of what exists in any given world, and some might have a completely different set of things people use. You should feel free to, as a group, tweak existing things and add anew to fit your game and its requirements.

SUPPLY And *Shore Leave*

ARMOUR ASTIR uses SUPPLY to represent currency, trade goods, and whatever else you have aboard your Carrier to exchange for the things you need. Feel free to rename it for your game, but either way it's assumed you often actually deal in local currencies and trade goods where appropriate - it's just easier to keep track of a single value. When you roll ***shore leave***, you can expect your SUPPLY to go a lot further depending on what you're trying to get. 1 SUPPLY might be enough to restock parts or equipment used up when mending something, but it's also probably enough to feed the entire crew for a week or patch up serious damage to the Carrier.

Depending on what you're looking for and where, your Director might modify the roll further - especially if you're looking for something rare or expensive. Generally, you can expect to take;

- **Disadvantage** if what you want is in limited supply
- **Disadvantage** if you want to skip a queue for something
- **Disadvantage** if what you want is illegal or restricted here
- **Advantage** if you're willing to accept lower quality
- **Advantage** if what you want is abundant or easy to find
- **Advantage** if what you want is useless or a burden to the owner

Gaining SUPPLY

Getting SUPPLY to pay for things can happen in a variety of ways. If the goal of a Sortie was given to you directly by one of the Factions that makes up the Cause, they might offer SUPPLY in exchange for it—though this might come with obligations or restrictions in how it could be spent. A Faction of Assassins might not be able to give you materials to repair an Astir, but might have medical knowledge that are willing to give you some points of SUPPLY worth of access to.

Additionally, during the Conflict Turn, Factions might provide you with SUPPLY depending on how certain moves shake out. Factions are often busy opposing the Authority, but might occasionally be able to spare SUPPLY for you. You might also take ***shore leave*** after a Sortie and try to salvage or gather SUPPLY from the wreckage of battle.

It's also important to remember that you can only carry a certain amount of SUPPLY. By default, your Carrier is equipped with a Cargo Bay that can hold up to 10. If you're finding yourselves carrying lots of surplus, you might want to look into getting a second one.

Tier I Equipment

Tier I equipment is intended for use by people, like humans, goblins or other similarly scaled characters. It is generally easier to find than higher tier equipment, and often cheaper too. Since the focus of this game is largely on combat between Astirs, tier I equipment is largely abstracted.

A tier I weapon will typically have a range and possibly one or two tags from above. All playbooks receive a weapon, but some additional examples can be found below.

To some degree, feel free to just wholesale make up what melee weapons exist in your world, because unless you're doing it to try and gain a large advantage on a roll or to try and deus-ex-machina your way out of a bad situation, you probably can't break anything badly enough that it matters. Take that fire sword. It's cool.

Tier I Melee Weapons

Infantry Weapon I (*melee*)
Simple, sturdy weapons like blades and clubs.

Dagger I (*melee / small*)
A concealable dagger, easily worn beneath clothing and thrown if needed.

Greatsword I (*melee / area, 2H*)
A large weapon, with good reach and weight, perfect for taking heads. Praxis.

Armourbane I (*melee / decisive*)
A thin, pretty blade, good for slipping between armour plates.

Enchanted Blade I (*melee / bane)*
What was once simple steel now carries the unmistakable sheen of ritual.

Partisan I *(melee / defensive, 2H)*
A long spear, perfect for keeping your friends safe and your enemies at a very specific distance, as the saying goes.

Tier I Ranged Weapons

Crossbow I (*ranged / 2H*)
For when you don't need anything fancy, a crossbow is perfectly capable of doing the job for as long as you have bolts.

Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
The typical protections afforded to Astir pilots: a reliable tool capable of firing bursts of light arcane energy.

Raypistol I (*ranged / bane*)
A powerful but short-lived firebolt wand, fitted with a comfortable grip.

Boltrifle I (*ranged / blitz, 2H*)
Effectively repeating crossbows fed by lightweight 'barrels' of ammunition, bolt rifles are a common sight among troops of any real armed force.

Rayrifle I (*sniper / reloading, ruin, 2H*)
A heavy rifle, often using magical crystals or wands as charge for a single shot. Their bulk, heavy recoil and cost makes them highly uncommon, but not overly so - after all, little else hand-held will put a hole through an Astir.

Ashstaff I (*ranged / area, bane, 2H)*
A large, shoulder-carried staff charged with incendiary magic. A little lighter and easier to use than a rayrifle, but still fairly bulky and lacking in the ability to pierce the protective wards of Astirs.

Gear Names / Tags

Extra Protection I *+ward*
Helps keep you intact, usually.

Farspeech Stone I (*small, fragile*)
Stones of Farspeech allow you to communicate over great distances with the holder of a linked stone. Most are enchanted to be linked only to one other stone, but more expensive versions can be linked to as many as the owner requires.

Construct Sensor I (*bulky*)
Circular tables with a surface constructed of an array of enchanted steel pins. The pins independently slide up and down when unregistered Constructs are detected in a certain radius, creating a rough three-dimensional relief of oncoming forces. The height of raised pins correspond to the size of a detected constructs, and larger tables with denser arrays allow for more precise reliefs.

Latch I (*small*)
Basically handles enchanted to lock into place when pushed against something magical, Latches are typically used by ground forces to hitch a ride on constructs that don't have room for them to ride inside of. Also available as a pair of weaker Latches, built into a glove and boot, so that the wearer may simply hold a hand and foot against a construct to attach to it.

Grappling Hook I (Allows you to climb or grapple)
A small sturdy grip attached to a barrel loaded with an steel hook, which is propelled by forceful magic. An attached cord can then be reeled in, allowing the holder to quickly relocate.

Invisibility Cloak I (*limited, fragile,* makes you invisible)
Generally speaking, doing just about anything is cooler if you're invisible when you do it.

Manacharge I (*area, ruin, fragile*)
A destructive spell delayed by a wax timer. Stick it on an Astir, light the wick, and run for your life.

Tier II Equipment

The most common way players and other characters might make themselves tier II is by piloting a golem: a sort of magical vehicle or construct. There are some examples of golems on the following page, but here's some examples of tier II weapons that might be used by a player with the Scout playbook, or might be found as emplaced weapons mounted in a fortress or some other defensive position.

Baneblade II (*melee / bane, area, 2H*)
Most Astir pilots do not concern themselves with the scrambling of foot-soldiers. Some of these pilots meet very unexpected ends.
Might also be: **Blowtorch, Enchanted Broadsword, Bolt Gauntlets**

Warp-Slinger II (*ranged / blitz, infinite, mounted*)
An emplaced device incorporating multiple wands linked to a simple firing ritual that can be triggered by even those not gifted with magic.
Might also be: **MG Turret, Point Laser, Multi-Crossbow**

Golem Rifle II (*ranged / reload, bane, 2H*)
A large two-handed tool that fires searing bolts of light, capable of burning through even an Astir's defences. Typically used by golems, due to its weight.
Might also be: **Arbalest, Flame Staff, Greatbow**

Seeker Cluster II (*ranged / guided, defensive*)
Guided by a faint magical intelligence, this device lets loose a swarm of small magical crystals to hound a particular target. Though they struggle to pierce armour, these crystals shatter on impact, resulting in sharp shrapnel.
Might also be: **Orbiting Motes, Shock Rod, Command Bracelets & Drone**

--BEGIN PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT--

KEEPER 02: ...in te food trough. Et was, much kind of [unintelligible]

KEEPER 01 (interrupting): --Sabe Graces, wie gets et? (shouting) Baron! Wass griber tha, hein?

GRF-B41 'BARON' (150 decibel emanation from the obelisk, sufficient to dispel the recording daemon for approximately two seconds): A KNIFE.

KEEPER 02: (shouting) NIE! KOLP SIE OBER EN DROPPIT!

--END PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT--

- Excerpt from untitled ritual recording, Aesefyreth, 23 Cropquart Y8.34

Golem Names / Tags

Steed Golem II M
- **Iron Hooves II** (*melee*)

A large, horse-shaped mechanism driven by simple magic. Steed Golems are no faster than a normal horse, but never tire or want for food, making them much easier to maintain.

Might also be: **Armoured Horse, Motorbike, Personal Shuttle**

Transport Golem II (*ward, bulky*) **M**
- **Cargo Hold II** (Secure and spacious)

For moving things from point A to point B - just make sure you have an escort.

Might also be: **Van, Trader Caravan, Cargo Shuttle**

Service Golem II A
- **Golem Fists II** (*melee / small, blitz*)
- **Condenser Stave II** (*ranged / infinite, 2H*)

Service Golems are large, roughly humanoid constructs, designed to perform heavy lifting and assist infantry forces without impacting their resupply costs much.

Might also be: **Loader Frame, Exo-suit, Industrial Drone**

Tank Golem II (*ward*) **A**
- **Salvo Stave II** (*sniper / area, bane, mounted*)
- **Bolt Rifle I** (*ranged / infinite, mounted*)

Protected by heavy metal plating and carried by large, flexible legs, Tank Golems are capable of launching explosive magical spells over a long distance.

Might also be: **Tank, Fighter Jet, Artillery Platform**



ACT II
SCENE III. Gatehouse above the Battle of Almafwyr

Enter MYTHRY and ROMERE

ROMERE
Beloved! What a gift you have given to appear before me now. We were fated to meet, surely?

MYTHRY
You truly think our fates are bound? It is by your lord's will you are sent to die today, not by mine.

MYTHRY and ROMERE clash, as do their ASTIRS.

ROMERE
To die? Would you not mourn our love?

MYTHRY
Fool! I will mourn neither your love nor your life. Stand aside or perish, an example for your lord to follow.

ROMERE
Ha! You would not kill me.

ROMERE is killed.

MYTHRY
[To AUDIENCE] Pity this man! Even at death's door he could not see I strike not him, but his master. A fatal mistake, to think I yearn more for love than for justice.

- Excerpt from '*MYTHRY*', Promise Apparent, YA223





THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

The Carrier

Your Carrier is the place you call home - it's the base of operations you return to between the fighting to rest, recuperate, and hopefully not fight with your friends instead. Your Carrier might be a large ship, flying fortress or other huge vehicle, and is probably powered by a complex blend of magic, alchemy and simple human ingenuity - most importantly, meaning it doesn't require a Channeler to helm it, freeing them up for active service. It is in many ways your most valuable asset.

Your Carrier typically has enough room to store an Astir (or another 'vehicle', like a golem, a magical carriage, or a horse I guess) per player, and room for any Director characters who journey with them to store their own. It's also assumed to have enough room for each player character who lives there to have their own space - though how large or comfortable this is might vary. The ship's regular crew might not be so lucky. Your Carrier is your home, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's a safe place. Players should be prepared to defend it, and should think about how best to do so. At the very least, it contains a small armoury so that all crew members have access to a simple blade or crossbow.

Mechanically Speaking...

Your Carrier is made up of a few things:

- A CREW Trait, starting at +0. Like other traits, it has a maximum of +3.You can also ***work on a project*** to increase CREW by 1. It's an 8-step clock, and could represent training, developing new equipment, or something else. CREW might also be lowered should staff be killed or hurt, or if the Carrier is damaged heavily.
- Weapons (for knocking Authority ships out of the sky).
- Modules, which provide various benefits. You'll start with some of these if some of your players are playing Support playbooks, and fit them into the Carrier layout.

Creating Your Carrier

Creating the Carrier, in at least these first few steps, is a group task. Players will decide what kind of craft their Carrier is, what kind of movement it is capable of, what it looks like, etc (and the Director should take this into account when thinking about what kinds of Carriers and similar crafts the Authority uses—there won't be much fighting if the players live on a burrowing ship that goes beneath the earth while the Authority mostly just have submarines). Once that's out of the way, you have a few initial choices to make between you.

Carrier Type

Firstly, you'll want to decide broadly what kind of craft or vehicle your Carrier is. This is mostly a fiction decision, and will inform where it can go and what kind of places it might take you to—things that, naturally, should tell your Director what types of places you're interested in going to.

- Flying: Lifted through the sky by magic, levitating crystals, lighter-than-air gases or something else entirely, a craft that soars through the air is capable of taking you practically anywhere above ground. You might dramatically take it down between narrow canyon walls, make emergency landings in an arid desert, or explore islands floating above the clouds.
- Ground: Either a single vehicle or a convoy of them, ground Carriers are bound to the earth but might be equipped to explore very particular environments: train wheels that restrict your movements to tracks, big thick wheels for splashing through muddy marshland, mechanical drills for exploring hidden caverns, etc.

- Aquatic: Whether floating on the surface or plumbing the deepest depths, an aquatic Carrier is built for the sea. It, naturally, probably doesn't perform to its fullest once it hits the shore.
- Combination: Your Carrier does some or all of the above! It's just flexible like that. What magic or artifice lets it do this? Is it better in some environments than others? Is this functionality part of its design or something it's been altered for?

Weaponry

Your Carrier probably has weapons built into it: tier V weaponry to be precise, perfect for taking on Carriers, krakens, elder dragons and fascists. The really big ones.

Together, choose a main weapon for your Carrier, and decide on its approach. It may use any of the approaches, and that might colour how its weaponry works.

- A powerful long-range weapon V (*sniper / decisive, bane, limited, mounted*) - This might be a powerful magical blast capable of reaching far into the distance, a steam-powered weapon that propels a steel bolt at distant foes, a scorching ray fuelled by bottled motes of elemental flame, etc.
- A seeking mid-range weapon V (*ranged / guided, mounted)* - This might be magically-guided wands carrying explosive spells, bolts of arcane force that never miss their target, sealed explosives etched with guidance rituals, etc.
- A relatively close-range weapon V (*melee / defensive, infinite, mounted)* - This might be defensive sceens of blasting magical force, volleys of alchemically-treated arrows, a shocking aura or shield, etc.

Modules

Finally, modules are the facilities, features and upgrades that make your Carrier more than just a box you all sit in to move from one place to the next. Your Carrier starts with a Cargo Bay module stocked with **3 SUPPLY** (used to barter, make repairs, etc). If all players are playing Channeler playbooks, at this point your Carrier is finished: it's time to pick out your Astirs!

Any player who has chosen a Support playbook, however, gets to add a module to the Carrier. This might be something you've added to the Carrier yourself, something from a past life before you joined the Cause, or something that has always been part of it. The modules you pick will need to be fitted into the layout on your Carrier Card, so each one is listed with how many boxes it takes up in the layout: ■, ■■, or ■■■.

Acquiring new Modules might be done through a Sortie or through the Downtime move ***shore leave***. You might then also need to ***work on a project*** to install/set it up.

Spellcraft Lab (+1 segment when you ***work on a project*** to build an Extra)	■
Crew Quarters (+1 CREW)	■
Infirmary (***mend something*** with Advantage when treating physical injuries or illnesses once per Downtime)	■
Cargo Bay (Can store up to 10 SUPPLY)	■
Simulation Rituals (+1 CREW)	■
Mana Fonts (+1 Mana to all Astirs)	■■■
Advanced Tools (***work on a project*** with Advantage once per Downtime)	■
Mess Hall (***overhear*** with Advantage once per Downtime)	■
Officer Quarters (***talk it out*** with Advantage once per Downtime)	■
Historical Records (***plan & prepare*** with Advantage once per Downtime)	■
Artifice Workshop (***mend something*** with Advantage when repairing damage to an Astir once per Downtime)	■
Advanced Shielding (*+ward)*	■■
Full Pantry (+1 CREW)	■

Layout & The Carrier Card

You'll record your Carrier's information on a card like the one below - it has space for your CREW Trait, any weapons your Carrier has, and also your Carrier's layout where you will slot in any Modules you have.

THE TWICE REMOVED v					CREW +2
FLYING / ARCANE					
LV1	CARGO BAY ■	MANA FONTS ■	MANA FONTS ■	MANA FONTS ■	FULL PANTRY ■
LV2	CREW QUARTERS ■	☐	☐	☐	☐
WEAPON	Magic Missiles V (*ranged / guided, mounted)*				
WEAPON					

The layout on your Carrier Card has two levels to it. The first level is open to use by default - any Modules you being play with will slot in here. If you need the extra space of the second level, you'll need to modify your Carrier.

Accessing your Carrier's second level can be done in two ways. You can:

- Spend 5 SUPPLY to refit the Carrier during Downtime
- ***Work on a project*** during Downtime to do the refits yourself (8-step clock).

Directing The Carrier

During play, it's likely you'll want the Carrier and its crew to do things. This is, arguably, what they're for. If nobody is playing the Captain playbook, your Carrier and it's crew are effectively Director characters. They're on your side, but you're not in charge - you're part of a larger effort represented by the Cause, and if you want the Carrier to be used in a certain way you might need to do some convincing. You can expect things like fire support and transport during Sorties, obviously—after all, you're the best Astir team they have—but convincing them to break orders from above or take more drastic courses of action might be difficult.

If you're playing the Captain, forget all of the above. You're in charge! Fly it into the ground if you want to. Okay, maybe don't do that: that's probably not the kind of damage easily repaired even with magic. But as the Captain, you have authority over the Carrier's crew and can give them orders which they will, broadly speaking, follow to the best of their ability. This is why the Captain has moves like ***in command*** and ***information network*** that use the Carrier's CREW Trait, as well as an extra box for *dangers*: you're not just responsible for your character, you're also playing the Carrier. Just like a Channeler playbook might take a *risk* or be put in *peril* to represent damage to their Astir, the Captain is responsible for anything that happens to the Carrier.

Astirs

Astirs are, in simple terms, magical mechs. They are piloted (and powered) by a Channeler (someone with magical ability that is trained to control one), and given their magical nature are not bound in their designs to how we might think of mechs in a typical setting. Materials are much more flexible—sturdy materials can be enchanted to be lightweight, and vice versa—so don't feel tied to heavy metals and so on.

Depending on your setting and who built them, an Astir's design might include wood, stone, ceramics, glass, or even organic matter like bone, natural fabrics or still-living plants. Your Astir with armour made of glass and structure made of monster bones can match one made of twice-forged steel blow for blow if you want it to, because *magic*.

The same goes for its design. Things don't need to look mechanical, or even make logical sense outside of what limits you establish at the table for your game. Your Astir could be a typical humanoid design, or it could be giant cursed monolith with arms that glides everywhere, humming.

Talk between yourselves about what is appropriate for your setting, and how far from the norm you want to get with designs. Go with whatever feels right for what you want an Astir's look to say about it and its pilot, but be prepared to have a discussion with the other players in your game about what, broadly speaking, Astirs in your setting look like, as well as where they come from. Are they constructed, or grown, or summoned from elsewhere? Do different factions and groups have their own aesthetics and designs, or even methods they use to get them?

You might also want to discuss control mechanisms. Does your magic allow you to control an Astir with 1:1 body movements, your mech being a true extension of self, or do you still need to guide it through more conventional means? Again, is this different depending on where the Astir came from, or what faction developed it?

Setting Expectations

Regardless of the design or model you choose, we assume by default all Astirs are capable of the below;

- Flight when not weighed down by gravity (the natural phenomenon, not the game mechanic) - short, limited flight otherwise.
- Providing a magical source of oxygen, at least for a limited time (some Astirs might be designed to provide something more reliable)
- Facilitating communication between friendly, willing pilots within line of sight (external factors might make this ineffective at long distances, like areas where the ambient magic in the air isn't dense enough)
- Facilitating communication between any pilots when in physical contact with each other

If the above doesn't work for your game, feel free to change them. It won't break anything!

Mechanically Speaking...

When it comes to the actual mechanics of using or creating one, Astirs are are made up of the following;

- A core, which determines the **approach** of your Astir.
- Two parts, which offer a variety of bonuses and abilities.
- Weapons, which are used to destroy fascists, imperialists, god, etc.
- A move, which is inherent and unique to that model of Astir.

All Astirs also have a pool of Mana. This begins at **4**, and is spent on choosing Parts and Weapons. The remainder becomes the amount you have to spend on the ***subsystems*** move in play, and you return to this amount every Downtime.

Creating Your Astir

When creating a custom Astir, there are a few simple steps to follow. First, you pick your Astir's core, determining its **approach**. Then, you'll spend some of your Mana (**starting with 4**) on Parts and Weapons, before creating a unique move that defines your Astir. As above, your leftover Mana then becomes the pool available to you for the ***subsystems*** move, so you don't need to spend all of it.

1) Cores

An Astir's core determines what it's **approach** to combat is. Consider this a broad summary of the kinds of spells and rituals used by your Astir to protect itself and attack your foes.

Alchemical

An alchemical core, that uses magical substances and mechanisms to amplify the power of a Channeler and allow them to move an Astir.

- **Mundane** or **Arcane:** ***work on a project*** to swap

Crystalline

A simple core that uses a large mana-rich crystal or gemstone as a focus for a Channeler's own magic.

- **Arcane** or **Profane:** ***work on a project*** to swap

Natural

A gift of the wilds: a living core, of bark, briar or bramble, imbued with all the life and force of nature. Installed into a war machine.

- **Divine** or **Elemental:** ***work on a project*** to swap

Ancient

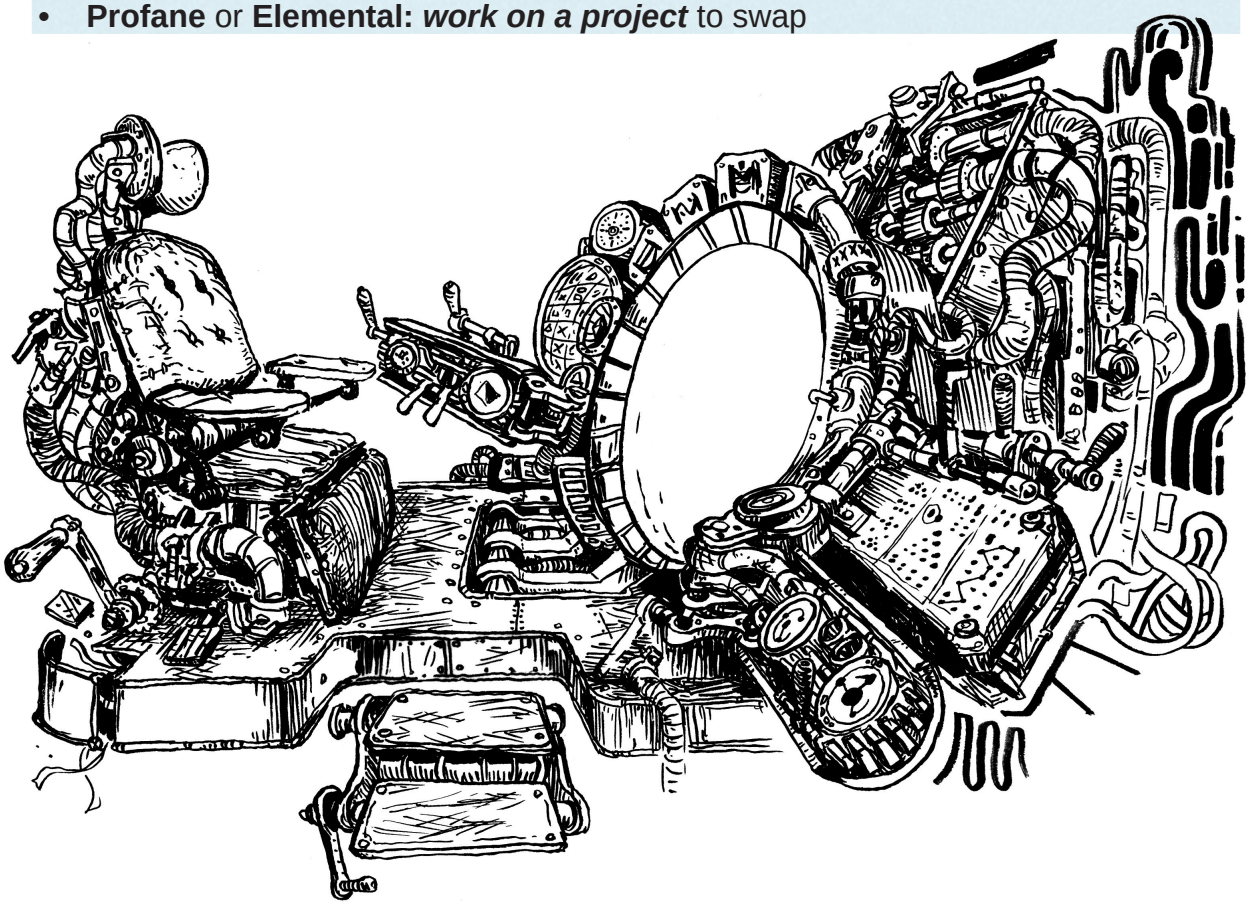
An ancient magical artifact, handed down by the gods to mankind long ago. While once a hero might have borne this into battle, it now fuels an Astir.

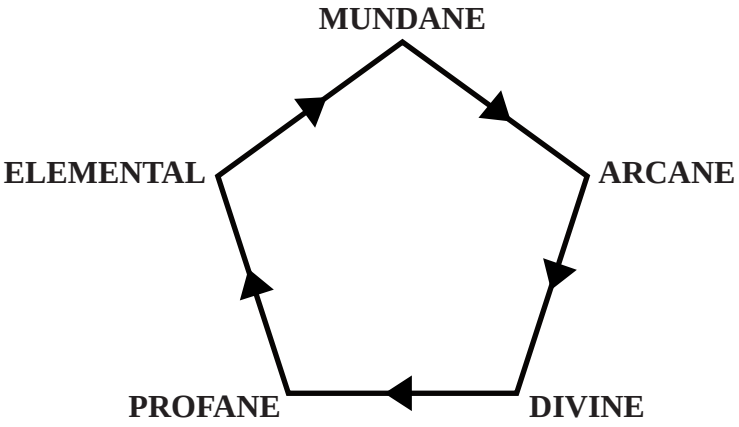
- **Mundane** or **Divine:** ***work on a project*** to swap

Occult

A core made from false life and stolen power. Blood, sacrifice, demons, you know.

- **Profane** or **Elemental:** ***work on a project*** to swap





As a reminder, you act with **confidence** when facing an approach yours is strong against, and **desperation** when facing an approach that is strong against yours. Don't worry too much that you're giving your Astir a huge weak spot here: all your foes will have one too, and there are ways of permanently or temporarily changing your Astir's approach.

You might ***work on a project*** to change what it, or take ***shore leave*** to find temporary protection or weaponry of a different kind.

An Astir's approach also typically leads the fiction of how they fight and protect themselves. For example:

- A **mundane** Astir might rely on thick armour or speed for protection. At range, it might use weapons that magically propel physical projectiles like metal bolts or pellets. Up close, its melee weapons likely rely on sharp blades or weighted heads to pierce the protections of other Astirs.
- An **arcane** Astir might rely on charms and rituals that cast magical shields or provide limited bursts of invincibility for protection. At range, it might cast destructive bolts of eldritch energy or barrage foes with magical force. Up close, its melee weapons might be enchanted to cut clean through armour or wrapped in arcane energy that lets it pass through shields or barriers.
- A **divine** Astir might rely on blessings or small miracles for protection. At range, it might sear away foes with divine light or undo them with the power of the gods. Up close, its melee weapons might channel the power of a deity through symbols and blessings to smite the Channeler's enemies.
- A **profane** Astir might rely on cloaking itself in shadow or impeding foes with hexes and curses for protection. At range, it might shower other Astirs in acid or poison, or use ignoble magic that harms an Astirs pilot directly. Up close, its melee weapons might use dangerous or forbidden materials for cruel results, or project blades of psychic or shadowy energy that passes through armour easily.
- An **elemental** Astir might rely on bolts of lightning that strike down projectiles or weapon-melting mantles of flame for protection. At range, it might use artifacts that bring about localised storms or flash-freeze enemy Astirs. Up close, its melee weapons could carve apart armour with super-heated blades or discharge a powerful shock on impact.

When adding weapons to your Astir, you should feel free to tweak their names and fiction to better fit the approach of your Astir.

2) Parts

The charms, rituals and other magical enhancements built into an Astir are what make it truly special. While most of these are free, some are particularly demanding of an Astir's core. Choosing these requires you to spend **Mana**, but remember: the more you spend on Astir parts, the less you have during play for ***subsystems***.

Some parts are marked as [Passive], indicating their benefit is effective all the time. [Active] parts have an effect that can be used once per Sortie (unless specified otherwise) and is then expended. [Active] parts may be re-used once expended with the ***subsystems*** move.

Extra Arms [Passive] (-1 Mana) *While adding extra arms to an Astir is child's play, properly coordinating them is much more complex.*	Two extra arms & hands
Weapon Conduit [Passive] *A magical conduit that compensates for the heavy magical load of certain weaponry, trading utility for output.*	+2 Mana towards weapons only
Divination Codex [Passive] *A cross-referenced record of countless common omens, signs and prophecies, easily perused by an attuned Channeler in a flash.*	When you ***read the room***, also ask "What is about to happen?"
Mana-Forge [Passive] *A magically-powered forge, capable of casting common Astir supplies and munitions from mana and a local stock of raw materials.*	You may ***cool off*** to resupply an expended weapon
Flourish Component [Passive] (-1 Mana) *Like traditional spellcasting relies on strange gestures, chanting and complex foci to provide power, an Astir's design can be complicated in similar ways to achieve much the same.*	+1 point of Mana at the start of a scene.
Spell Routines [Passive] (-1 Mana) *The battlefield is a busy place, full of countless distractions. It can be helpful to let the magic take over sometimes.*	Choose to take a result of 7-9 on a move of your choice
Familiar Matrix [Passive] (-2 Mana) *Matrices store and coordinate Familiars, making it possible for one Channeler to guide many at a time.*	Holds and comes with one set of Familiars of your choice
Chromatic Focus [Active] *A device capable of twisting and re-aspecting magic. For Channelers that don't like to ever be at a disadvantage.*	Change your **approach** for a single Scene
Alchemical Suite [Passive] (-1 Mana) *A selection of alchemical equipment, capable of storing and mixing useful potions before venting them into the cockpit as a vapour to save time.* Potions; • **Red:** Remove a *peril* related to physical injury or wounds. Metallic. • **Blue:** Gain +1 Mana. Tangy and sharp. • **Purple:** Take Advantage when you next ***weave magic***. Fruity. • **Yellow:** Take a *risk*. Act with **confidence** when you next ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively***.	Choose 3 Potions from the list when someone ***leads a Sortie***

Chameleon Cloak [Active] *They can't hit what they can't see.*	Become invisible for a Scene. The next *risk* you take is 'revealed'.
Standardised Parts [Passive] *This Astir uses a large amount of common, easy-to-find parts shared with similar models. This makes it easy to repair.*	***mend something*** with Advantage when repairing this Astir
Warding [Active] *Anything that helps an Astir not explode is a worthwhile investment.*	+*ward*
Transmutation Link [Passive] *A frame endowed with the ability to shift between two forms quickly, making for a versatile Astir.*	+*aerial* OR +*aquatic*
Resistance Charms [Passive] *While it is difficult to offer a broad blanket of protection against damage and difficulty, more specific avenues of harm are relatively simple to protect an Astir against.* Examples: • Replication Rituals (Lowers *dangers* from limb loss) *Crawl. Climb. Rip. Tear. Many hands make light work.* • Failsafe Channels (Lowers *dangers* from comms disruption) *Hear you loud and clear, 9th. Everyone else went quiet.* • Lightningrod Spines (Lowers *dangers* from electricity) *Don't be the fool caught out in a storm. Plan ahead.*	Lowers *dangers* from one source. *Peril > Risk* *Risk > Nothing*
Artifact [Active] *High-quality artifice provides an edge when it is needed most.* Example: • Familiar Sync Rituals *Co-ordination rituals allow a Channeler to better direct their familiars, cutting down on the 'attunement drift' common in most matrices.* • Dragonscales *For decades before Astirs became a possibility, craftsmen put bartered dragon scales to work as a protective material, never understanding why it seemed less durable wrapped around a man than it did around a dragon. Those profitable wyrms never let slip quite how much magic ran in their blood.* • Afterburners *An injection of volatile alchemical substances paired with a burst of magic can provide a substantial, if short lived, increase in speed. Not for those on a shoestring alchemicals budget.*	Grants **advantage** towards a task of your choice
Heat Condensers [Active] *Stopping to vent heat during a fight can make you a sitting duck - it makes sense then, that many Channelers who could care less about managing it carefully opt to invest in heat condensers.*	Untick 'overheating' from your Astir twice per Sortie

3) Weapons & Arms

Astirs can use as many weapons as they can carry. Unless you took extra arms from the previous step, an Astir is assumed to be able to carry and use two weapons, or one with the *2H* (two-handed) tag. When you add weapons to your Astir past this initial capacity, you should decide whether they are mounted to your Astir for hands-free use (add *+mounted* and pay an additional 1 Mana) or carried in a holster or sheathe (which costs nothing, but naturally the weapons aren't usable whilst stored).

There are both ranged and melee weapons available for Astirs, some of which cost Mana to take. These are categorised as ‘basic’, ‘bane’ and ‘ruin’ weapons. There are also familiars, which can only be chosen if your Astir has a Familiar Matrix (chosen from Astir parts). If you're making a tier IV Astir instead of a tier III one, just replace the tier number and rename the weapon if you want.

The weapon names and descriptions below are merely suggestions. You should feel free to re-imagine them to suit you and your Astir however you please.

Basic Weapons

Astir Fists III (*melee / small, blitz*)
Every Astir can fall back on its fists, but they don’t make for graceful brawlers.
Might also be: **Concealed Blades, Close-Range Vulcans, Mining Drill**

Sword/Mace/Axe & Shield III (*melee / defensive, ward, 2H*)
An Astir-sized melee weapon paired with a shield makes for a reliable combination. Bones and forelimbs of monstrous creatures are often used as sturdy, cheap parts.
Might also be: **Flame Jets, Shielded Gauntlets, Energy Field**

Forceknife III (*melee / small, decisive*)
Short (for an Astir) blades jacketed in a layer of magical energy, forceblades are good for when you find yourself up close and personal.
Might also be: **Throwing Glaive, Charged Hatchet, Enchanted Kunai**

Greatarm III (*melee / area, 2H*)
Often almost as tall as the Astirs wielding them, ’greatarms‘ are the Astir equivalent of greatswords, battleaxes, and any other kind of large, simple, 2-handed weapon.
Might also be: **Godbuster, Laser Flail, Industrial Saw**

Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive*)
A simple mechanism that rapidly fires short blasts of magical energy, serving as an effective reserve weapon.
Might also be: **Manapistol, Mining Laser, Point-Defense Turret**

Autoballista III (*ranged / area, blitz, bulky, 2H*)
One of the few non-magical weapons in active use among Channelers. Autoballistae are popular for their fire rate, which allows for fending off groups with a spray of bolts as well as overwhelming a single Astir with a flurry of shots.
Might also be: **Heavy Bowgun, Assault Cannon, Flechette Launcher**

Rayrifle III (*ranged / infinite, 2H*)
Rayrifles are the workhorse of most armies when it comes to arming Astirs. A highly efficient charging cycle means every cast uses an almost meaningless amount of mana.
Might also be: **Machine Gun, Arc Staff, Recycler Rifle**

Magic-Missile Array III (*sniper / guided*)
Often mounted on an Astir’s shoulder to leave their hands free, magic-missile arrays fire a dizzying cluster of magical darts that can be guided by an Astir rather than its Channeler.
Might also be: **Chaser Missiles, Lock-On Beam, Automortar**

Bane Weapons (-1 Mana)

Golempiercer III (*melee / bane, decisive, set-up*)
Immense lances designed to punch through armour plating, golempiercers are heavy enough that they must be held in place and used as a charging weapon - just swinging one around is unlikely to deliver results.
Might also be: **Ceremonial Pike, Heavy Estoc, Pile Bunker**

Forceblade III (*melee / bane*)
Your typical, garden-variety sword made out of projected magical force. It cuts well and won't explode - what else do you want?
Might also be: **Beam Saber, Thermal Cutter, Pneumatic Hammer**

Basilisk Lance III (*ranged / bane, 2H*)
An uncommon weapon, basilisk lances house a lens composed of dozens of magically preserved basilisk eyes. When mana is passed through this lens, a petrifying beam is produced.
Might also be: **Chemical Jet, Beam Rifle, Plasma Repeater**

Blazewands III (*ranged / bane, reloading*)
Arranged in paired racks and crafted using subdued motes of elemental fire, short-range wands are a common and potent weapon when it comes to arming Astirs.
Might also be: **Grenade Launchers, Acid Pods, Plasma Mortar**

Burstcaster III (*ranged / area, bane, 2H*)
Burstcasters launch a projectile that discharge a spell on impact - typically some kind of dramatic fireball. The wand projectile only arms past a certain distance, to prevent a Channeler from being caught in their own fireball.
Might also be: **Rocket Launcher, Fireball Cannon, Reactor Rifle**

Novawhip III (*melee / area, reloading/bane, dangerous*)
Concentrated motes of fire slumber at equal lengths along this whip, and violently detonate on impact. A devastating weapon in skilled hands that know how to recharge the motes mid-battle.
Might also be: **Chain Mines, Plasma Cable, Storm Gauntlet**

Ruin Weapons (-2 Mana)

Ruinblade III (*melee / ruin, 2H*)
Long, slender, and fragile - ruinblades are long swords edged with arcane-charged crystal, allowing them to cut through even Carrier hulls. Just try not to break it.
Might also be: **Decay Lance, Null-space Projector, Hi-Beam Saber**

Titan Bow III (*sniper / ruin, reloading, 2H*)
Immense, heavily-reinforced longbows, taller than even some Astirs. While some balk at taking a bulky single-shot weapon into the field, others point to the ability to sink an arrow through Carrier hulls as a valuable upside.
Might also be: **Single-Cast Rifle, Beam Sniper, Abyss Gun**

Spellcannon III (*ranged / ruin, limited, 2H*)
A heavy, devastating weapon. Though it demands magic such that few Channelers can muster more than a handful of shots, the results are easily worth the expense.
Might also be: **Assault Cannon, Heavy Beam Rifle, Anti-Materiel Rifle**

Familiars

Familiars are small autonomous constructs, typically launched from an Astir, that assist a Channeler in battle. They are small, expendable and easily replaced—any *perils* you take as a result of your Familiars being lost or destroyed are automatically removed during Downtime. When you ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively*** with Familiars, you roll with +CHANNEL instead. All Familiars have the *area* tag, to reflect their numbers, and are *ranged* or *sniper* to reflect either ranged attacks or the fact they can move independently of you.

Wisp Familiar III (*ranged / area*)
Wisps are by far the most common familiar, and for most people are synonymous with the word. Small free-floating constructs that pack a surprising punch for their size, wisps are limited by the short lifespan on their magic.
Might also be: **Assault Funnel, Fire Spirits, Attack Drones**

Mote Familiar III (*sniper / area, bane, limited*)
Motes are primed with conflagration magic, and detonate in a fiery blaze when impacted against a target. Channelers usually deploy them only when needed, since if shot the explosions tend to set off other nearby motes.
Might also be: **Remote Bombs, Volatile Elements, Lev-Grenades**

Needle Familiar III (*ranged / area, restraining, defensive, fragile*)
Needle Familiars pin their targets in place with thin, iron spikes. While lacking when it comes to decisive blows, they excel at restraining and harassing foes.
Might also be: **Glue Turret, Labour Drones, Medusa Heads**

Claw Familiar III (*ranged / area, defensive*)
Sharp-clawed contraptions of magic and stone, in the familiar shape of a crow.
Might also be: **Trained Wolves, Raven Ghosts, Saw Drones**

4) Astir Move

Finally, every Astir has a move attached to it, which is unique to that model of Astir's design and doesn't cost any Mana. It should feel equivalent to a playbook move, or around 1-2 Mana worth of things from the earlier steps. It could be something you roll for, or something passive - it's up to you. If in doubt, consult your Director for help making something suitable for your concept, or try taking an existing playbook move and modifying it to your needs. There are some examples below, and you can also always look to the example Astirs for further ideas or moves to rename to fit your

Overdrive Ritual - +*blitz* to all weapons.

Sanguine Sensors - You can detect living creatures up to *sniper* range.

Munitions Forge - Whenever you use your ***subsystems***, you may also re-arm a weapon that has ran out of ammunition or has been damaged.

Auto-Divination - Whenever you use your ***subsystems***, you may ask two questions from the ***read the room*** list rather than one.

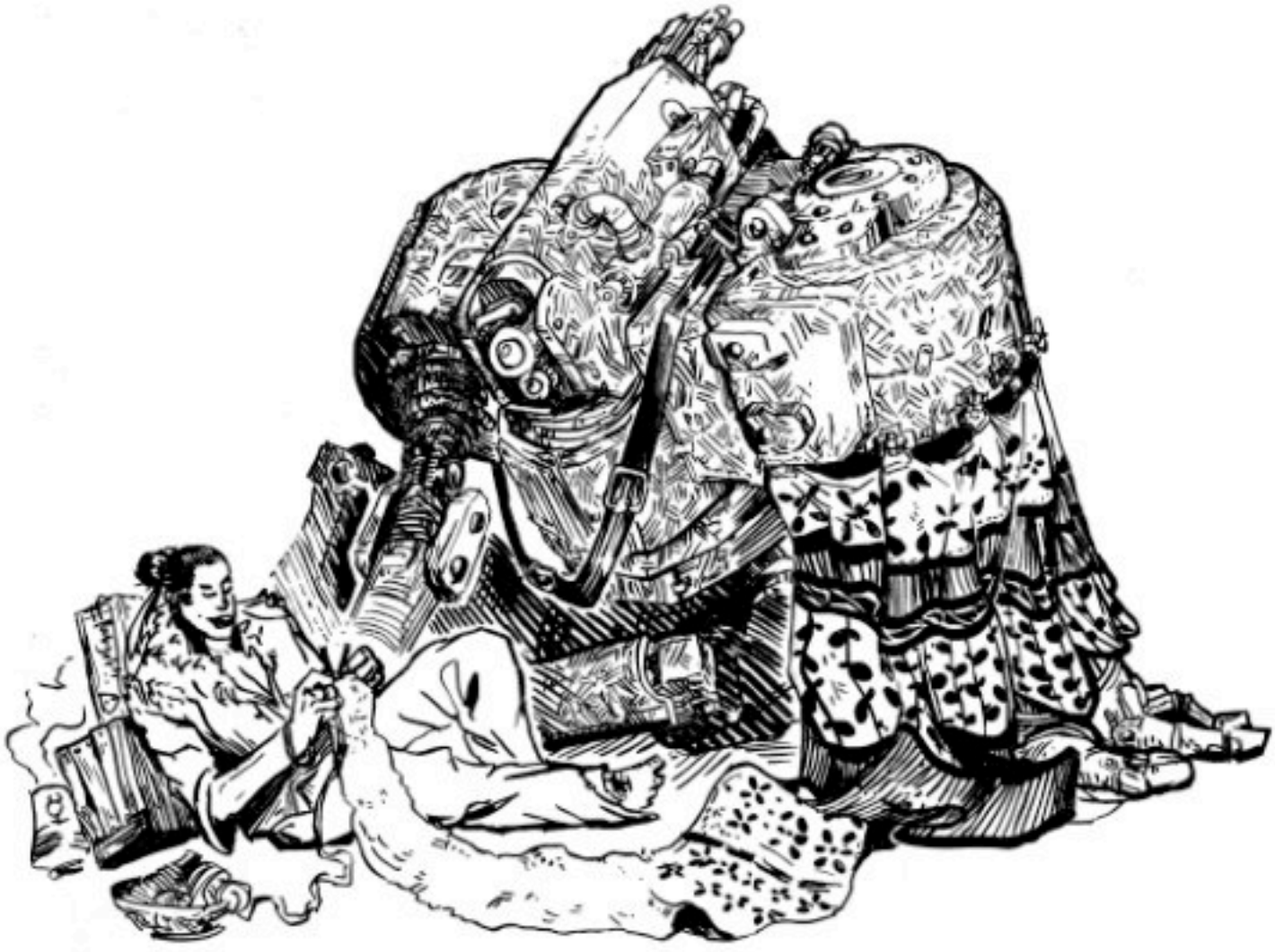
Conjure-Core - Add the following option to ***subsystems***;
- Create an object of up to tier III that has the *limited* and *fragile* tags.

Ironfeather Wings - +*aerial*

Aura of Health - Anyone who rests beneath your Astir is slowly cured of illnesses and injuries.

“When I was fourteen, see, my bearer took me aside one night and showed me the thing they'd made. It was this heavy black and white blanket, patterned all over with the big old lumps of Reach cactus, which I hated for the prickles, and the diamond dashes of the tattoos we gave ourselves, which I loved for how brave they made you look. Sometimes I would see them brush it with horsehair to remove dust, or wash it with a pump-vack, just an inch at a time, and then fold it and put it back in the closet. I asked them then, if it was, say, a curtain, or a blanket for spreading on the prairie rocks and sunning on. They told me it was for their war-love, that it was a craft they performed all on their own, and that when it passed away they took hold of it once more. It's a tradition, they told me, one with teeth. Wool thick enough, made with desire and grace enough, to stop any blade, arrow, or channelling. So now I'm making one for you.”

- Excerpt from *‘Windswept: Conversations From The Reach’*, Ironcase #23 “June”, Second Year Of The Empty Throne Era



Astir Extras

Sometimes, you know a Sortie is going to involve certain kinds of danger or problems. To combat them, you can add an Extra to your Astir: a temporary Part or Weapon that is useful for one Sortie. Extras might be things like heavy armour (Warding), special lenses for seeing in the dark (Resistance Charm), or a mantle mounted with a weapon (Weapon Conduit). To make an Extra, you can either;

- Pay 1 SUPPLY (+1 per Mana cost) to get one quickly from another Faction.
- ***Work on a project*** during downtime (2 steps, +2 per Mana cost) to build it.

Extras only ever last for the Sortie they are made or bought for. Extra weapons are expended or blown up, equipment is tossed aside to make your Astir lighter, armour is dramatically destroyed to reveal your Astir spotless beneath it, etc.

The Astir Card

You'll record your choices and the stats of your Astir on small sheets like these, which have space to record all of its component Parts as well as its Mana capacity (used to make the ***subsystems*** move) and a tickbox for overheating. As a Channeler, certain moves might ask you to tick or mark 'overheating'—that's this box. If you're asked to tick this box but it's already ticked, the building heat destroys one of your Parts, putting you in *peril*.

EXAMPLE III	APPROACH	CORE	MANA	
			OVERHEATING ☐	
PART A		**PART B**		
Description of Astir part		Description of Astir part		
Description of Astir.			**MV: ASTIR MOVE**	
			A unique move that defines your model of Astir.	
CARRIED	Weapon Name III (*range / tags*)			
SHEATHED, ETC	Weapon Name III (*range / tags*)			

Example Astirs III

A selection of example tier III Astirs, made using the above custom Astir rules.

GOLIATH III	MUNDANE	CORE	MANA	2
		ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	

RESISTANCE CHARM	WARDING
STALWART GREAVES (Lowers *dangers* from knockback or pushing)	TITANIC ARMOUR (*+ward*)

The Goliath is constructed with a simple design intent - to shield allies from long-range fire without putting the Channeler at risk. Thick armour and a fair Mana capacity provide a reliable bulwark, with a paired axe and shield serving as a simple, but effective, armament.

MV: GOLIATH SHIELD

Advantage when you ***help or hinder*** to protect others.

CARRIED	Battleaxe & Shield III (*melee / defensive, ward, 2H*)
+MOUNTED	Blazewands III (*ranged / bane, reloading*)



ADVENT III	DIVINE	CORE	MANA 3
		ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■

ARTIFACT	WARDING
REACTION ENHANCER	ADVENTIUM PLATE (*+ward*)

The Advent is a storied design, said by some to be based on an Astir that won a great war a century ago, and said by others to be that very same Astir. Stories of the white Astir vary, but it never seems to be on the losing side, whether that side is right or wrong.

MV: ADVENT LEGACY

lead a Sortie with **Advantage** when piloting an Advent

CARRIED	Rayrifle III (*ranged / infinite, 2H*
SHEATHED	Forceblade III (*melee / bane*)



SUMMONER III	ARCANE	CORE	MANA	2
		CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING ■	

ARTIFACT	FAMILIAR MATRIX
FAMILIAR SYNC RITUALS	Wisp Familiars III

The Summoner is designed to overwhelm foes by directing fire from multiple angles. It does this with a small network of familiars, which coordinate fire as directed by their Channeler. A special matrix augmented to increase its magical output allows for a veritable swarm of familiars.

MV: REFRESH MATRIX

+blitz, +many to Familiars

CARRIED	Arcane Focus III (*ranged / infinite, 2H*)
MATRIX	Shard Familiars III (*ranged / area, blitz, many*)



TARRASQUE III	PROFANE	CORE	MANA	0
		OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■	

ARTIFACT	RESISTANCE CHARM
CHAOS ENGINE	CHAINBREAKER'S BOON (Lowers *dangers* from restraints or slowing)

The Tarrasque has a reputation for being piloted by the brave or those with a death-wish, and it's not hard to understand why. Armed with little more than claws and a tail and powered by a voracious chaos-engine, it's a heavy, inefficient mess. But slip up once, and it'll eat you alive. With a meal in its belly, this mess becomes a monster.

MV: MANA DEVOURER

+1 Mana when you successfully ***strike decisively*** another Astir with physical harm

CARRIED	Rending Claws III (*melee / ruin, 2H*)
+MOUNTED	Novatail III (*melee / area, reloading/bane, dangerous*)



LANCE-MINOR III	ELEMENTAL	CORE	MANA 1
		NATURAL	OVERHEATING ■

HEAT CONDENSERS	FLOURISH COMPONENT
Untick 'overheating' from your Astir twice per Sortie	Generate 1 point of Mana at the start of a scene.

Armed with a long, armour-piercing lance, this gallant model excels at charging down a foe from distance and delivering a decisive hit. While its length makes it difficult to strike close foes, a small weapons mount allows for defensive fire to keep foes occupied.

MV: INERTIA DRIVE

Regain 1 Mana when you roll a 10+ on ***weather the storm*** to outpace, rush or dodge.

CARRIED	Golempiercer III (*melee / bane, decisive, set-up*)
+MOUNTED	Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive*)



PROTEAN III	ELEMENTAL	CORE	MANA 3
		ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING ■

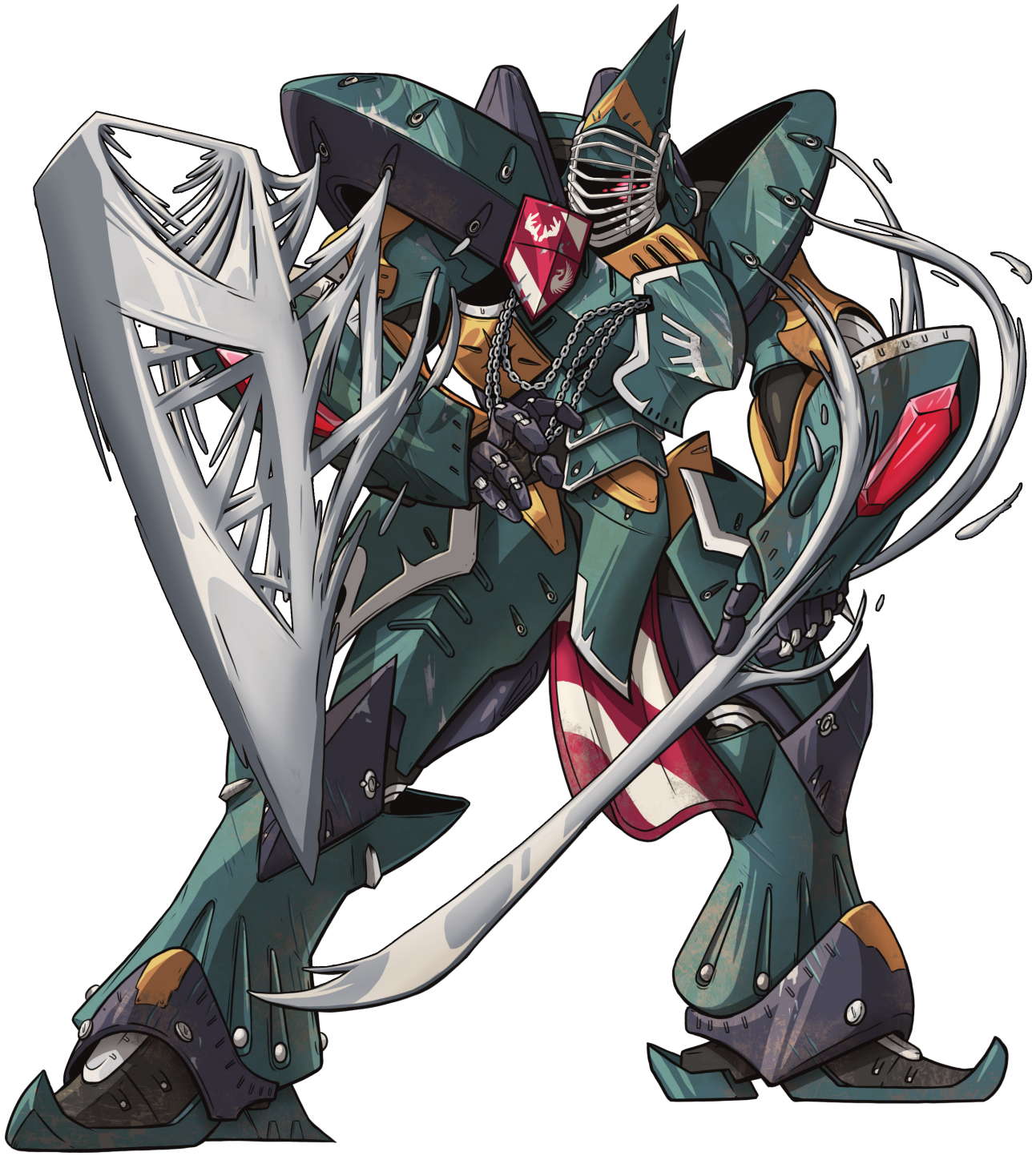
TRANSMUTATION LINK	ARTIFACT
+aerial	QUICKSILVER FORM

The Protean is intended to be a flexible, middle-of-the-road design - a jack of all trades. It's body is filled with alchemical quicksilver, which can be magically reformed at a moments notice, making for an Astir that can adapt to virtually any situation.

MV: FICKLE FORM

You may take the *risk* (unstable) to use your Quicksilver Body without spending Mana on ***subsystems***.

CARRIED	Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive*)
SHEATHED	Forceblade III (*melee / bane*)



OMEN III	MUNDANE	CORE	MANA	3
		ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING ■	

STANDARDISED PARTS	MANA-FORGE
mend something with **advantage** when repairing this Astir	You may ***cool off to resupply an expended weapon***

While somewhat austere a design compared to other Astirs, Omens are famously easy to maintain and repair. Combined with the fact their design makes use of many common parts, Omens (or suits like them) typically make up the bulk of any organised force of Astirs.

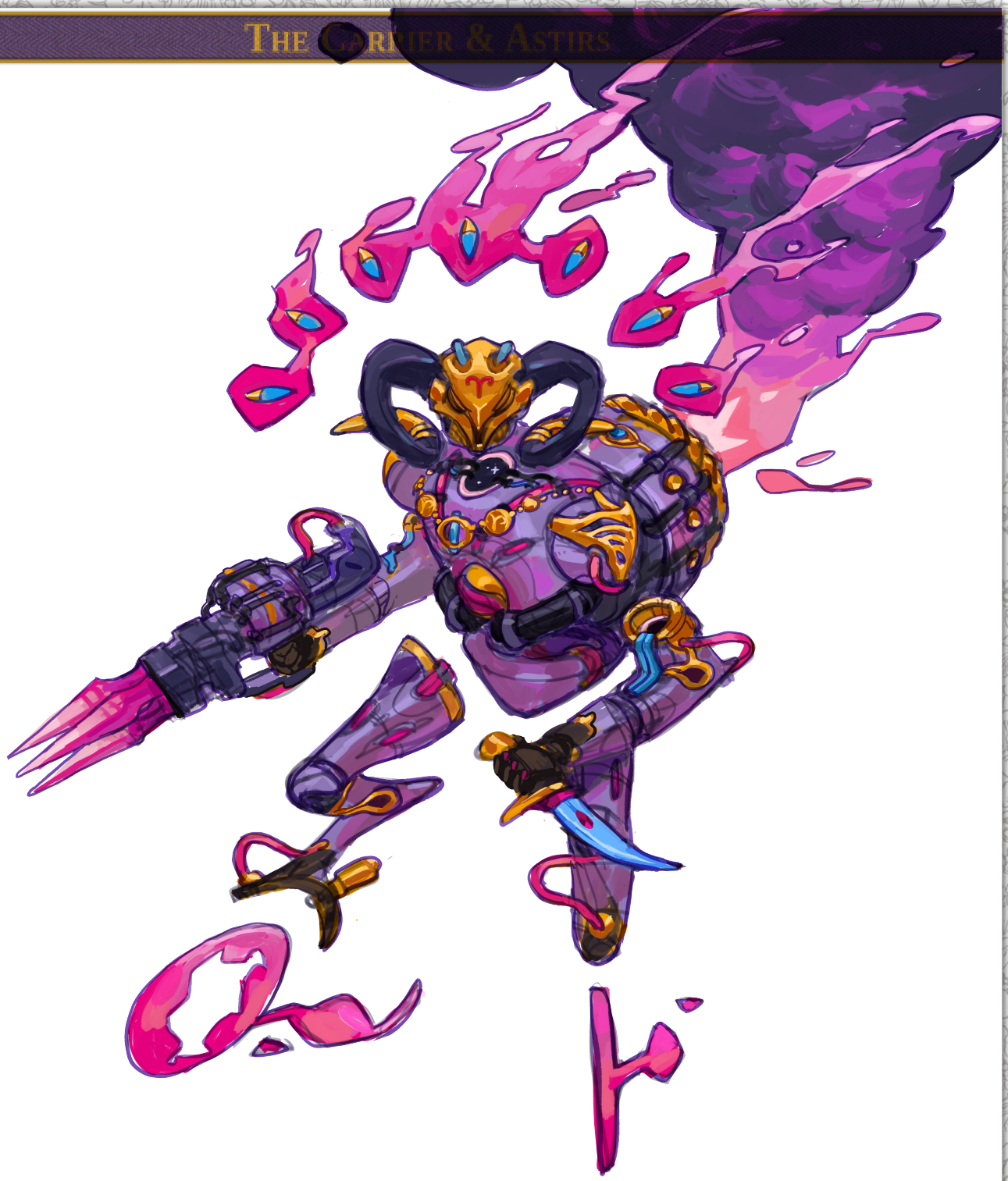
MV: GENERIC PARTS

Act with **confidence** when you ***mend something*** to repair an Omen.

CARRIED	Rayrifle+1 III (*ranged / bane, 2H*)



ART PLACEHOLDER



ARIES III	ARCANE	CORE	MANA	1
		ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING ■	

HEAT CONDENSERS	FAMILIAR MATRIX
Untick 'overheating' from your Astir twice per Sortie	Wisp Familiars III

The Aries is an imposing design, with devilish horns and familiars that have a habit of congregating in aura-like formations. The scariest thing about it, of course, is it's speed. Propelled on wheels of magical flame that scorch the ground beneath it, the Aries is not an easy thing to run from.

MV: MANAWHEELS

While Overheating, take **Advantage** when making a move that relies on your speed.

CARRIED	Blazewands III (*ranged / bane, reloading*)
CARRIED	Forceknife III (*melee / small, decisive*)
MATRIX	Wisp Familiar III (*ranged / area*)

JESTER III	ARCANE	CORE	MANA	0
		CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING ■	

RESISTANCE CHARMS	SPELL ROUTINES
PRESSURE REGULATOR (Lowers *dangers* from acceleration)	***weather the storm*** (+DEFY)

Embedded with spell-stones that reduce its weight, the Jester excels at staying mobile. Capable of hovering short distances and moving with agility unheard of for most Astirs, most long-time Jester Channelers develop an almost supernatural sense of battlefield positioning.

MV: LEV-SPELLS

You may use the ***mobility*** Move from the Scout Playbook while piloting this Astir.

CARRIED	Ruinblade III (*melee / ruin, 2H*)
HOLSTERED	Basilisk Lance III (*ranged / bane, 2H*)



Tier IV

PURSUER IV	PROFANE	CORE	MANA 3
		OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■

WARDING	ARTIFACT
SHADOWVEIL (*+ward*)	HASTE RITUALS

The Pursuer is hunter, designed to track and destroy specific enemy Astirs. Though its pursuit-bond requires line-of-sight for an initial lock, the tracking it provides is accurate, long-lasting, and incredibly difficult to shake. When it comes time to end the hunt, a simple blade is often more than good enough to finish off a Pursuer's prey.

MV: PURSUIT-BOND

You may designate another Astir you can see as your target. You are supernaturally aware of its location at all times

CARRIED	Wrist Blades IV (*melee / small, blitz*)
+MOUNTED	Magic-Missile Array IV (*sniper / guided*)



BIRDCAGE IV	DIVINE	CORE	MANA 2
		ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■

ARTIFACT	FAMILIAR MATRIX
ANGEL COLLARS	Bound Angels IV

There are many that would say the concept of Astirs is a dangerous one. Evil, even. There are few that make such a judgement so easy as the Birdcage, a hefty, walker-style Astir with little in the way of its own armaments. It makes up for this with a flock of bound and collared angels, who are cowed into service by threat of a true death. They are cruel machines, and their Channelers more so.

MV: BINDING RITUALS

When you use ***subsystems*** to take **Advantage** with your Angel Collars, you may clear a *risk* related to your Bound Angels.

CARRIED	Hulking Form IV (*melee / defensive, ward, 2H*)
MATRIX	Bound Angels IV (*ranged / area, bane, fragile*)



JACK-OF-BLADES IV — MUNDANE	CORE	MANA	3
	ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	

RESISTANCE CHARM	EXTRA ARMS
FLASHFORGE (Lowers *dangers* from melee weapon breakage)	+2 Arms

Rarely witnessed as anything but a storm of sharp and shattering metal, the Jack-Of-Blades is a strange Astir, designed to wield fragile weaponry that it breaks and re-forges repeatedly during combat. Mana-channels in the blades allow for the re-purposing of magic usually lost in the heat venting process, and a paired armament forgoing defense in favour of offense means very little remains standing long in the face of a Jack-Of-Blades.

MV: BRANDED BLADES

Your next ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively*** has **Advantage** when you untick 'overheating'.

CARRIED	Paired Blades IV (*melee / defensive, ward, 2H*)
CARRIED	Forceknife IV (*melee / small, decisive*) x 2



MEDUSA IV	PROFANE	CORE	MANA 0
		OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■

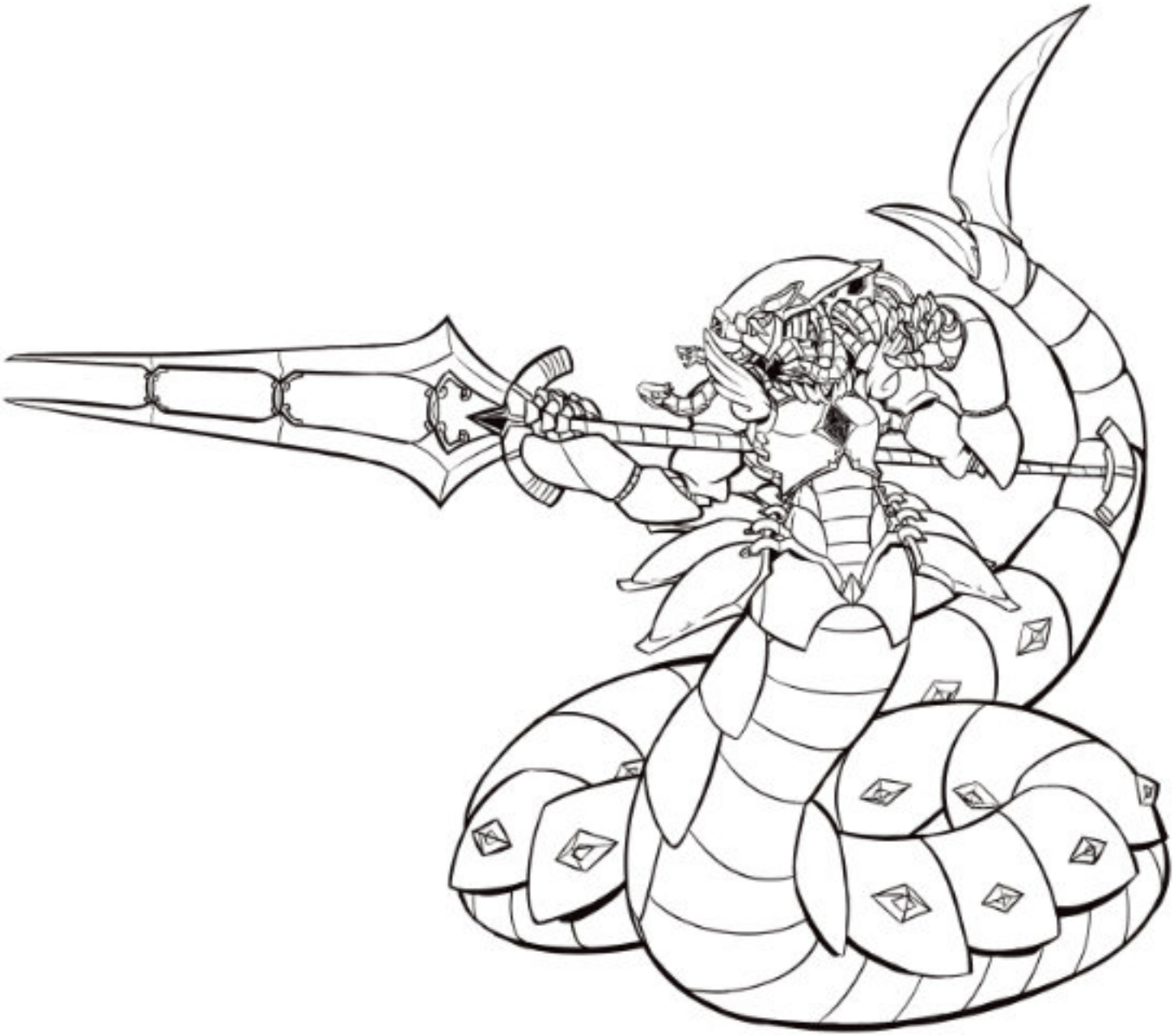
FAMILIAR MATRIX	ALCHEMICAL SUITE
Adder Familiars IV	Blue x 3

Protected by magically animated snakes and bearing petrification magic, the Medusa is understandably a feared Astir. Even the most talented of pilots put themselves at risk when coming close to its gaze.

MV: PETRIFIER CORE

When you ***exchange blows***, on a result of 6- you may spend 1 Mana to have your opponent take the *risk* (restrained)

CARRIED	Gorgon's Glare IV (*ranged / bane, 2H*)
MATRIX	Adder Familiars IV (*ranged / area*)



PLAYBOOKS

All players in Armour Astir create a character using a 'playbook', which is a mechanical framework similar to classes or archetypes in other games. Playbooks offer choices for starting equipment, moves, and aesthetics like clothing or style. They also offer some narrative background for your character to root them into the world you're playing in, as well as some questions to help you further develop what it means to be that playbook in your setting.

Playbooks are split into two kinds: Channelers, who are Astir pilots primarily, and Supports, who are not. Each kind has a specific extra move attached to it. For Channelers, it's ***subsystems***. For Supports, it's ***b-plot***.

CHANNELERS

Channelers are magic-users who stride into battle while piloting Astirs, making them best equipped to deal with Sorties that involve physical conflict. While they have their differences, all Channelers are more than capable in a fight. They're also all capable of diverting magic to their Astir's ***subsystems*** with the move below.

ARCANIST IMPOSTOR

PARADIGM WITCH

Subsystems

When you activate your Astir's ***subsystems***, spend Mana 1-for-1 to do one of the following;

- Power up an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.
- Divine your situation, asking one question from the ***read the room*** list.
- Disperse away excess energy, fully unticking 'overheating' on your Astir.

SUPPORTS

Supports are a varied group, but are generally people with less of a direct combat focus than Channelers. While they're all capable of holding a sword, most Support playbooks have an area of expertise best put into practice off the battlefield. When a Sortie doesn't call for their skill-set, they can instead take part in the ***b-plot*** with the move below.

SCOUT CAPTAIN

ARTIFICER DIPLOMAT

B-Plot

When you take part in the ***b-plot*** rather than be involved in a Sortie, name one or two Director characters that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player **confidence** on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny an NPC from appearing during the Sortie: they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and take a Downtime action.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

ARCANIST

Disciplined students of arcane magic, who practice their talents for years before graduating to the cockpit of an Astir.

+CHANNEL (+2)

LOOK

You look: *smart, bookish, wily, anxious or imposing*
You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, fancy robes*
Your magic is like: *roaring elements, bright and neon, abstract and formless, formulaic and defined*
When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **arcane** or **elemental** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Touch Spells I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Arcanist Gear
- Clothes that match your look

ARCANIST GEAR

- Telescoping Staff I (*ranged)*
- Reagent Knife I (*melee / **mundane**)*
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive)*
- Shield Broach I *(ward)*

Arcanists are careful, prepared magic-users. This is most apparent in their use of 'rituals' - magical tactics and enhancements preemptively cast before they embark onto the battlefield. Arcanists typically attain the magical mastery they have through formal study, and while good at making plans and full of useful knowledge, they often don't deal well with surprises.

Playing an Arcanist often means calling your shot, either through your choice of rituals or through plans you make in the heat of action. Once you have advanced and can take new ones, other moves like ***expend rituals*** and ***diverse channelling*** make it easier to respond to situations you haven't prepared for. Consider;

- What does formal magical study look like in your world?
- Is this something open and public, like an academy, or private, like training passed down through a family lineage? Was it tied to military service?
- Do you have a familiar or bonded item you use to focus your magic?
- What does performing your rituals entail?
- Where did you get your Astir? Is it stolen from a military force? A family heirloom? Does it belong to the Cause?
- Do all Arcanists study where you did, or are there multiple schools of thought?
- Are people like you openly referred to as Arcanists? If not, is there another name for what you are?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***plans*** and ***prepare rituals*** moves.

Prepare Rituals

You have a practised set of rituals you use to enhance your piloting talents. Discuss what they are with your Director and where you perform them. When someone ***leads a Sortie***, choose 2 rituals you had time to perform;

- A **realigning** ritual - Increase one of your Traits by 1 and reduce another by 1 (no Trait may be higher or lower than -/+3)
- A **contingency** ritual - Specify three specific situations: if you find yourself in one of them, increase your level of success on your next roll by one, and this ritual expires.
- An **adaptation** ritual - When you fail a roll, take **advantage** on your next one.
- A **clarity** ritual - When you ***read the room***, you may ask questions of a broader situation than here and now.

All rituals expire after the Sortie, and you lose their effects when that happens.

Plans
Arcanists are educated in the art of war, and fight according to preordained tactics in order to perform at their best. Unexpected situations are the bane of a good arcanist. Whenever the party enters a dangerous situation, declare your plan to resolve it.

If your plan is interfered with or prevented at any point, take the *risk* (perturbed, irritated, vexed, confounded).

If your plan succeeds, even accidentally, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who didn't think it would.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Expend Ritual
When you disperse the magical energy of a ***ritual*** to re-use that energy in a pinch, choose one of your prepared rituals—you no longer gain its benefit. You may then choose an option from the ***subsystems*** move without spending Mana.

Diverse Channelling
When you make a move while piloting an Astir, you can roll +CHANNEL instead of the usual Trait. If you do so, tick 'overheating' on your Astir. If it's already fully ticked, it destroys one of your Astir's parts—you are in *peril* (burnout).

Consult Literature
You have a store of books and scrolls on various subjects that you can consult for information when given time. Choose 1 subject you have almost perfect records of, and 2 you have extensive information on;

- Construct models and design
- Magical beasts and monsters
- Enchantment and spell-craft
- Mundane craft and building
- Natural flora and fauna
- Military tactics
- A specific nation/faction
- General world history

Combat Spells
If you are outside your Astir and fighting on foot, you can ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with +CHANNEL when attempting to cause physical harm, using the following profile;

- Hand-casting II (*ranged / area, bane*)

Tactical Illusions
When you distract your foes with magic, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1, but your illusions also distract an unintended audience.

- The illusions last until you stop sustaining them (otherwise they last up to a minute).
- Your illusions affect anyone you intend to perceive them, rather than a single person.
- Your can create illusions that affect all the senses, rather than just sight.

Archivist [Requires: Consult Literature]
You acquire a new source of knowledge, and choose 2 more subjects you have extensive information of to your ***consult literature*** move.



THE *ARCANIST*



THE *IMPOSTOR*

IMPOSTOR

Through magic, medicine, or sheer force of will, you took control of your body and made it ideal. This is who you were meant to be, and they'll never take it away from you.

+CHANNEL (+1)

LOOK

You look: *wild, cold, sharp, cocky or brash*
You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, casual attire*
Your magic is like: *smoke and industry, neon beams, firey outbursts, arcing bolts*
When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **profane** or **elemental** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Augments I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Impostor Gear
- Clothes that match your look

IMPOSTOR GEAR

- Mana Focus I (*ranged)*
- Shortsword I (*melee / **mundane**)*
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I *(ward)*

You have no magic of your own, and control an Astir through enchanted augmentations or alterations to your body. They say what you do is fake. They call you an Impostor - but what you do is real, and you've made yourself exactly who you needed to be. The Impostor has a diverse skillset with lots of ability to play with *risks* and *perils*.

To play an Impostor is to, depending on what your ***arcane augments*** are and why you got them, invite questions about the body: about disability, transhumanism, being transgender, loss of bodily autonomy to the Authority or otherwise and so on. It might not be the focus of your campaign or even your character to tackle this in-depth, but you should at least think about the place of these things and the people affected by them in your world. It's also the playbook most indulged in mecha anime tropes, with moves like ***face to face***, ***resonance***, ***bullheaded*** and ***let loose*** all lending themselves to various kinds of hot-blooded action. Consider;

- Where and how did you get your augments?
- How are they made, and of what material? How rare are such things in your world? How noticeable are they?
- Do people use a word other than 'augment'?
- Why did you choose to undergo augmentation? Did you choose?
- How does the existence of Impostors relate to disability in your world?
- Do your augments require maintenance or upkeep in some way?
- What kind of reactions do people have to your augments?
- Are your augments heavy or uncomfortable? Can they be removed?
- How do your augments help your control an Astir? Do you use controls with them like usual, or do they interface directly into it somehow?
- How often is the term Impostor used, if at all? Is it formal or informal? Do you have another word for yourself? Are there others who control Astirs in a similar way?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***arcane augments*** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

Arcane Augments

Impostors control their Astir using magical augmentations, like artificial limbs or organs. These augmentations allow a non-magic user to power and control an Astir, but otherwise do not interfere with your life unless you (the player) decide so. Being bonded to magic in this way often leads to it affecting the body and vice versa, irreversibly tying their magic to their emotional and physical state.

Your CHANNEL is increased by 1 for each *danger* you have (up-to a max of +3). When someone you have GRAVITY with sees you be put in *peril*, advance it.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Vent Wrath
If you are outside your Astir and fighting on foot, you can ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with +CHANNEL when attempting to cause physical harm, using the following profile;

• Hand-casting II (*ranged / area, bane*)

Scour Existence
You can ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with +CHANNEL when attempting to cause physical harm with Astir-mounted weapons. If you do so, tick 'overheating' on your Astir. If it's already fully ticked, it destroys one of your Astir's parts—you are in *peril* (burnout).

Don't Follow Me
When you ***lead a Sortie*** with +DEFY, give everyone that follows **advantage** to their next roll.

Resonance
When you would ***weave magic*** to form a clear empathic bond with another, sharing your true feelings and ideals, choose 1 instead of rolling;

- Your connection lasts a single, precious moment—time for little more than a short exchange.
- They or someone else view it as a breach of trust or some kind of trick, and will hold it against you.
- You miss something important while you're together.

Let Loose
Whenever you gain a *peril*, ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with **advantage** until the end of the Sortie.

Bullheaded
You may take a *risk* to take **advantage** on your next roll.

Face To Face
When you leave your Astir in the hopes another will do the same to meet you ***face to face***, roll +TALK.

On a 10+, NPCs will leave their Astir to face you. PC's must weather the storm to refuse.

On a 7-9, NPCs will leave their Astir to face you, but choose one;

- Take the *risk* (entangled).
- You have **disadvantage** to moves against the other Channeler.
- You are separated from your Astirs temporarily.

PC's may choose whether to leave their Astir or not - if they do, they pick one of the above for you.

Realignment
You undergo deeper alteration and enhancement to your body. Discuss what it is with your Director, and either choose a move from another playbook to represent its effects, or work with your Director to create a new one.

PARADIGM

Adherents of the gods who channel sacred power into their Astir to control them. The devout know to respect their gods tenets, lest their Astir fail beneath them in the line of duty.

+CHANNEL (+3)

LOOK

You look: *serious, haughty, caring, wise or zealous*
You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, religious garb*
Your magic is like: *angelic choirs, blinding lights, warm embraces, blazing icons*
When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **divine** or **profane** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Divine Touch I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Paradigm Gear
- Clothes that match your look

PARADIGM GEAR

- Holy Symbol I (*ranged)*
- Sacred Weapon I (*melee / **mundane***)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive)*
- Shield Broach I *(ward)*

Paradigms channel their divine power from a deity, and must adhere to its tenets in order to maintain that power. These tenets, as well as what upholding them looks like, might vary between members of a faith as well as just between different faiths. Paradigms have something to uphold outside of the Cause's goals, and naturally bring a religious element to the game that might not be present otherwise - of course, there doesn't need to be Paradigms in a world for faith to be important.

While playing a Paradigm, you have lots of moves that let you aid and protect other players, like ***safeguard*** and ***bless***. Your high natural CHANNEL of +3 also gives you a great chance of success on moves like ***weave magic*** and ***firebrand***, but keeping this +3 will require you do always keep your ***tenets*** in mind. Broadly speaking, playing a Paradigm also means you have an important voice in what the role of faith and religion is in your setting. Consider;

- Is your deity really divine in the supernatural sense, or just a godlike figure?
- How formal is your religion/connection to your deity?
- How well known is your deity?
- How common are people like yourself? Are they called Paradigms, or something else?
- What is the Cause's relationship to faith?
- What is the Authority's relationship to faith?
- What is your deity like? What do they demand, and what do they request?
- What does giving service or worship to your deity look like?
- What was your life like before the Cause?
- How were you introduced to your deity?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***evangelise*** and ***tenets*** moves as well as one other from your Additional Moves.

Evangelise
You are in service of a deity or faith and are responsible for the spiritual well-being of your Carrier's crew. You gain an additional action during Downtime that can only be used to give formal service or privately consult with a crew-member, both using the ***talk it out*** move.

Tenets
Instead of Ideals, write three tenets that represent your deity's will. When you discuss your faith with someone or learn something about how they personally relate to faith and religion, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one. If you ever sacrifice or break a tenet, it is lost forever; replace it with an Ideal instead of crossing it off and taking an advancement. Your CHANNEL Trait is also reduced by 1 until you make amends in whatever way is appropriate for your faith.

Example tenets might be:

- Violence is a road taken when all others are closed.
- Share your faith freely, that it might spread.
- Scepticism is an affront to the divine.
- From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Divine Guidance
When you consult your deity for information or guidance, you may ***dispel uncertainties*** with +CHANNEL. If you do so, on a 7-9 the information is still directly useful, but it is difficult to discern if your answer came from the intended deity.

Inspire Focus
Once per Sortie, you may take a visible position over the battlefield and inspire confidence and clarity in your allies that see you - they each clear a *risk* and take **advantage** to their next roll.

Bless
When you enter battle with a group of allies, give up to four people (including yourself) **advantage** when they next ***bite the dust***.

Safeguard
When you ***exchange blows*** and someone ***helps or hinders*** you, you can protect them from any harm they might suffer as a result. When you ***help or hinder*** someone who is ***exchanging blows***, you can suffer any harm taken in their place.

Turn Unearthly
When piloting an Astir you are attuned to, you may project an aura that causes otherworldly creatures to flee. Roll +CHANNEL: on a 10+, any creature not native to this plane of existence is sent back to their home plane instantly. If they are powerful enough to return themselves (or are summoned) during the same Sortie, they are in *peril* (turned) as your divine presence sickens them. On a 7-9, they must flee from your sight, and are in *peril* (turned).

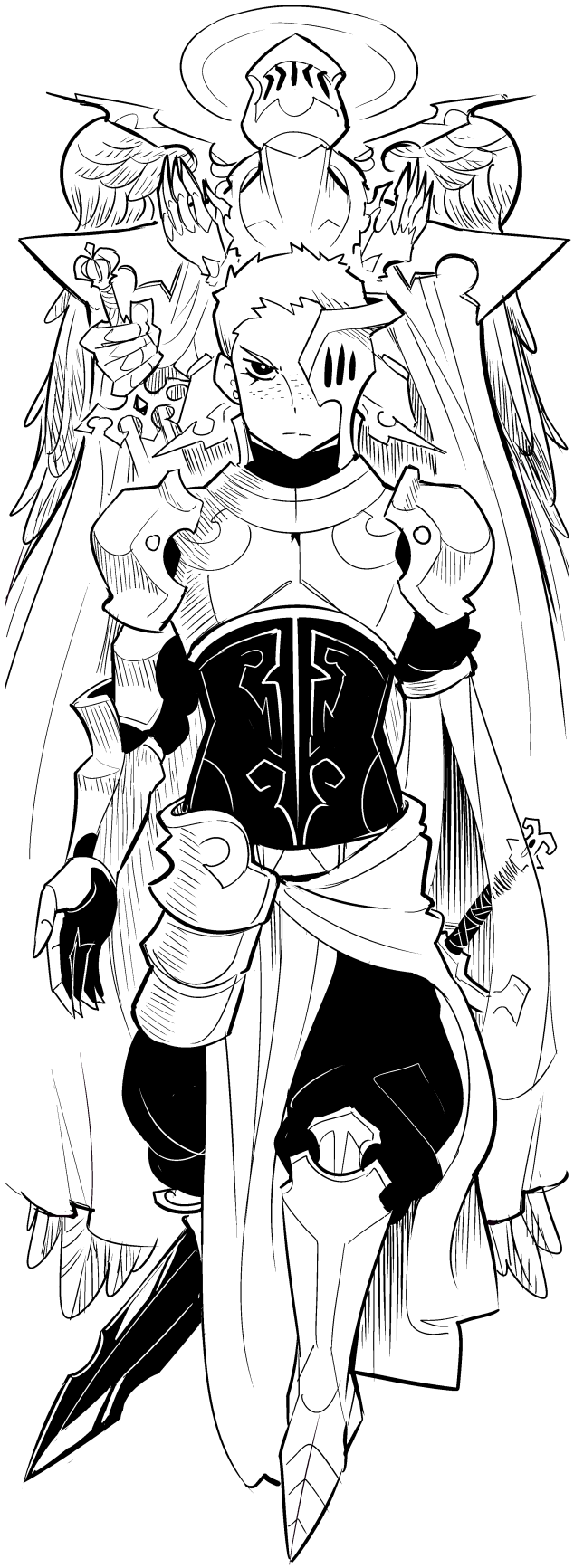
Firebrand
When you openly and loudly advocate for something related to one of your tenets, roll the highest of +TALK or +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1.

- Your words reach people far beyond where your voice is heard.
- Even those not of your faith connect to your message.
- You are not targeted immediately for what you preach.

On a 6 or below, your words are misinterpreted, co-opted, or misrepresented in a terrible way.

Consecrate Ground
When you attempt to imbue an area or building with your divine power and presence, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1;

- Creatures opposed by your deity cannot enter the consecrated area.
- Creatures within your consecrated area cannot take violent action against each other.
- Creatures within the consecrated area ***cool off*** with **advantage**.
- Creatures within your consecrated area cannot knowingly lie.



THE *PARADIGM*



THE *WITCH*

WITCH

Witches seize power through pacts with powerful creatures, knowingly or otherwise. This power fuels and binds an Astir as well as any other, but its sources can be demanding… and mischievous.

+CHANNEL (+2)

LOOK

You look: *dark, mysterious, shrouded, unsure or haunted*
You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, occult robes*
Your magic is like: *smothering darkness, roiling chaos, striking bolts, withering curses*
When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **arcane** or **profane** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Pact Weapon I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Witch Gear
- Clothes that match your look

WITCH GEAR

- Patron's Icon I (*ranged)*
- Ritual Dagger I (*melee / **mundane**)*
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive)*
- Shield Broach I *(ward)*

Witches receive their powers directly from a magical benefactor, like a powerful demon, spirit, or other non-divine entity. That benefactor could be a great many different things, and their grip on an Impostor might be visible in a lot of different ways - but they have one thing in common. Patrons trade in Influence.

While playing a Witch, you trade Influence to your ***patron*** to activate a variety of moves, like ***re-weave reality*** and ***borrowed power***. These moves let you break the rules a little: altering weapon tags, automatically succeeding at rolls, and even using moves from other playbooks. ***Receive boons*** gives you two moves at random per Sortie, but both ***whims*** and ***borrowed power*** give you some control over what you end up with. Consider;

- What and who is your patron? Are they supernatural, or just powerful enough to seem so?
- What is the nature of your relationship with your patron?
- Are there other Witches serving your patron? Are there other Witches at all?
- Do people refer to you as a Witch? Is there another term they or you use?
- Is your bond with your patron forever, or will it expire?
- What other kinds of beings exist that could be patrons?
- Did forming this bond cost you anything now, or will it in the future?
- Is there a recognisable symbol of your patronage? An associated familiar?
- Does your patron have a direct connection to you, or do they act through agents?
- Are your boons an informal collection of helpful magics, or something more defined? If so, what do you call them?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***receive boons*** and ***patron*** moves.

Patron

You receive your magic from an otherworldly patron or benefactor, whose motivations are typically not something you can discern. While they are often content to let you run free with their power, they will sometimes require things of you - and when they can, they will exert their Influence to make sure their bidding is done. You have a GRAVITY clock with your patron, representing the tenuous bond between you.

Your patron may spend their Influence like hold in order to do the following;

- ***Help or hinder*** you, succeeding as if they had rolled a 10+.
- Attempt to force you to do something; you may ***weather the storm*** to resist.
- Re-roll your ***boons*** for the day.

Whenever your Patron spends Influence, advance your GRAVITY clock with them.

As long as you Patron has at least 1 Influence, your CHANNEL Trait is set to +3.

Receive Boons
At each dawn, you receive ***boons*** from your patron. Roll on the list below two times to discern what powers you receive. They last until the next dawn.

1 · Channelling Boon - You may give your patron 1 Influence to make a move with +CHANNEL instead of the usual trait. When you do so, describe what mark your patron's power leaves on the situation.

2 · Hexxing Boon - You can curse an Astir, locking it out of some of its systems. When you do so, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1;

- A Player or Rival cannot spend Mana to activate ***subsystems***.
- A weapon, tool or function stalls, malfunctions, and stops working.
- The Channeler cannot prevent you from communicating with them.

3 · Masking Boon - You can mask yourself or an Astir you are attuned to against detection. When you do so, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, you are disguised or cloaked in a fashion appropriate to your ***patron***. On a 7-9, the Director will tell you a flaw with your disguise.

4 · Shielding Boon - You may give your ***patron*** 1 Influence to have **advantage** when facing harm.

5 · Vigorous Boon - You may give your ***patron*** 1 Influence to make the ***subsystems*** move for free.

6 · Trickster's Boon - When you use the ***subsystems*** to use an Artifact, instead of taking **advantage** you may roll a d6 and replace either or both of your regular dice results with it.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Occult Lore
When you consult your patron for information, you may ***dispel uncertainties*** with +CHANNEL. If you do so, on a 7-9 the information is still directly useful, but using it would cause some unforeseen complication entertaining or beneficial to your patron.

Whims
Your patron is unfathomable, and their interests obscure. Your GM should, once per Sortie, give you some minor goal or abstract requirement your patron demands of you - it should be doable within the session. If you complete it, at the next dawn you may choose your ***boons*** instead of rolling. If you don't, give your patron 1 Influence.

Embrace Chaos
Whenever you roll a 10+, you may opt to instead take a partial success as if you had rolled a 7-9. If you do so, hold 1, which you may spend at any point before the end of the Sortie to do one of the following;

- Swap two of your Traits.
- Act with **confidence**.

Re-Weave Reality
When you use a piece of equipment to make a move, e.g using a weapon to ***strike decisively***, you can ignore one of it's tags OR act as if it had an additional one of your choice. When you do so, give your patron 1 Influence.

Relinquish
If a part of your Astir is damaged or destroyed and you take a peril as a result, you may ***relinquish*** your ***boons***; losing them until you ***receive boons*** again but fixing that part and losing the peril. You cannot re-roll relinquished boons.

Share The Burden
When you cool off you may choose to succeed as if you had rolled a 10+. If you do so, give your patron 1 Influence.

Borrowed Power
When you request help from your patron, roll +CHANNEL and give your patron 1 Influence. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, or be in *peril* and hold 3. You may spend your hold at any point during the Sortie 1-for-1 to use any ***boon*** you don't currently have, or you may spend 2 hold to make any move from another playbook.

CAPTAIN

Even the best of teams need guidance. Overlooking sorties from the Carrier's helm, the Captain commands the crew and ensures those in the field get the help they need.

Look

You look: *noble, upright, callow, eager or intimidating*
You wear: *immaculate uniform, casual clothes, armoured clothing, officer's coat*
You lead with: *gut feelings, well-informed advice, stoic instruction, tested experience*

Approach

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

Gear

- 2 Ornate Gear
- 1 Bonus Carrier Module
- Clothes that match your look

Ornate Gear

- Gilded Sidearm I (*ranged / blitz, distinct*)
- Ruinlock I (*ranged / **profane**, reloading, ruin*)
- Duelist's Blade I (*melee / bane, distinct*)
- Arcane Mantle I (*ranged / **arcane***)

Carrier Modules

- Construct Sensors (Can detect & identify II-V magical constructs approaching the Carrier) ■
- Sending Stones (Can send long-distance messages quickly) ■
- Construct Bay (Steed Golems for everyone) ■
- Cloaking Rituals (Can hide the Carrier from sight) ■

Responsible for the crew and their mission, the Captain provides support on missions by leading the crew and harnessing the Carrier's equipment and weaponry. Captains can even provide temporary upgrades and refits for Constructs deployed on a sortie, or level their tactical know-how into better positioning on the battlefield.

While playing a Captain, you're ***in command*** of the group's Carrier and its crew. This lets you roll several moves with the Carrier's +CREW trait instead of your own when commanding it - which is either a blessing or a curse, depending on what that CREW value is. Additionally, while at the helm of your Carrier you can take 4 *dangers* rather than 3 before you're *defenceless*, meaning you're tough to take down in a straight fight. All those hands on deck add up, after all. Many of your other moves revolve around supporting other players, like ***surprise requisition*** and ***fire support***. Consider;

- Were you formally schooled as a Captain? How exclusive are such schools?
- Who appointed you Captain of this Carrier?
- Have you served with another crew before?
- Are you used to helming ships this big?
- Have you served with a military before? Are you a commissioned officer?
- What exactly is your place on the Carrier's bridge?

Starting Moves

You start with the ***coordinator*** and ***in command*** moves, as well as one other from your Additional Moves.

Coordinator

When you roll a 10+ to ***help or hinder*** and choose to help, your ally may act with **confidence** instead of **advantage**.

When you roll a 6 or below while rolling +CREW, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who has put their trust in you.

In Command

You are the Carrier's captain, and naturally have command of its crew. While at the helm of the Carrier, you may order the crew to;

- ***Exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with +CREW, using the Carrier's weaponry.
- ***Weather the storm*** with +CREW to perform evasive actions.
- ***Read the room*** with +CREW to assess the battlefield.

Additionally, both Carrier and crew are part of your character as far as *risks* and *perils* are concerned, just like an Astir is an extension of its channeler. To reflect the many minds and hands at work for you, you are *defenceless* at 4 *dangers* while at the helm of your Carrier, rather than 3.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Tactical Genius

When you're supervising allies from afar during a Sortie, you can lever your tactical know-how into better positioning. Take 3 hold at the start of a Sortie, and spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Remove one *risk* from an ally.
- Give an ally Advantage to their next move, describing how you advise or support them.
- Have an ally appear somehow in a place they are needed.

Force Multiplier

You acquire something—a tool, ship upgrade, a caged malevolent sentience, etc—that allows the Carrier and it's staff to operate far better than usual, but it has a downside. Once per Sortie you may act with **confidence**, but choose 1;

- It whispers in your ear—change one of your Ideals to represent its demands.
- It's *fragile* and needs protecting. It grants no benefit while damaged or destroyed.
- It takes up a lot of resources—spend 1 SUPPLY on it when someone ***leads a Sortie***, or it stops working until you reawaken it by spending 3.

Surprise Requisition

When you dispatch supplies to another character or reveal something extra you had them deployed with all along, roll +CREW. On a 10+, choose 1 for free. On a 7-9, you had to requisition that gear personally - pay 1 SUPPLY, or drop 1 Stake from a Faction as they spread themselves thin to help you.

- A weapon rendered unusable by damage or lack of ammo is replaced/rearmed.
- A weapon gains the *bane* tag until the end of the scene.
- A weapon gains the *ruin* tag for one shot or strike.
- An Astir changes it's approach until the end of the scene.

Fire Support

When you provide instruction and call shots for the Carrier's crew, you may ***exchange harm*** and ***strike decisively*** using +KNOW and the Carrier's weaponry.

Information Network

When you have your crew search for information, you may ***dispel uncertainties*** with +CREW.

When you contact your superiors for relevant intel, you may ***dispel uncertainties*** with +TALK.

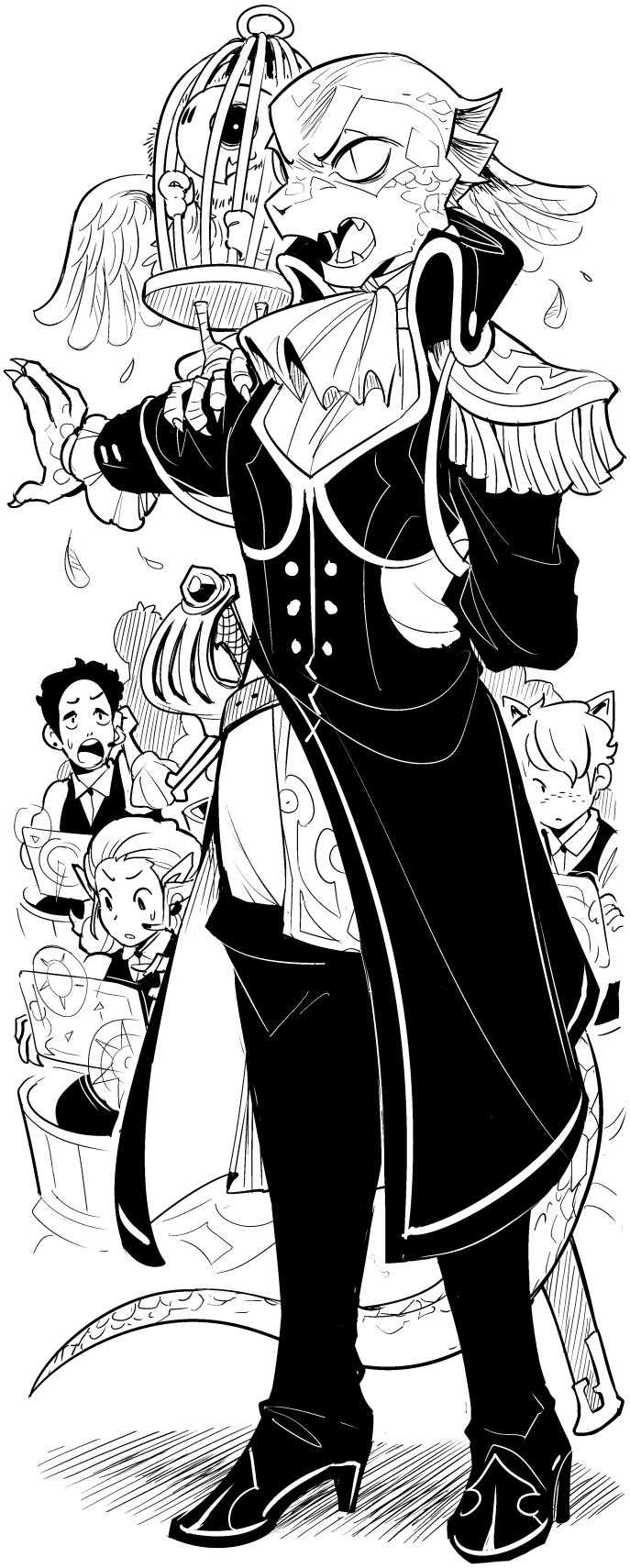
Resupply Priority

Your Carrier gains 1 SUPPLY whenever you start Downtime.

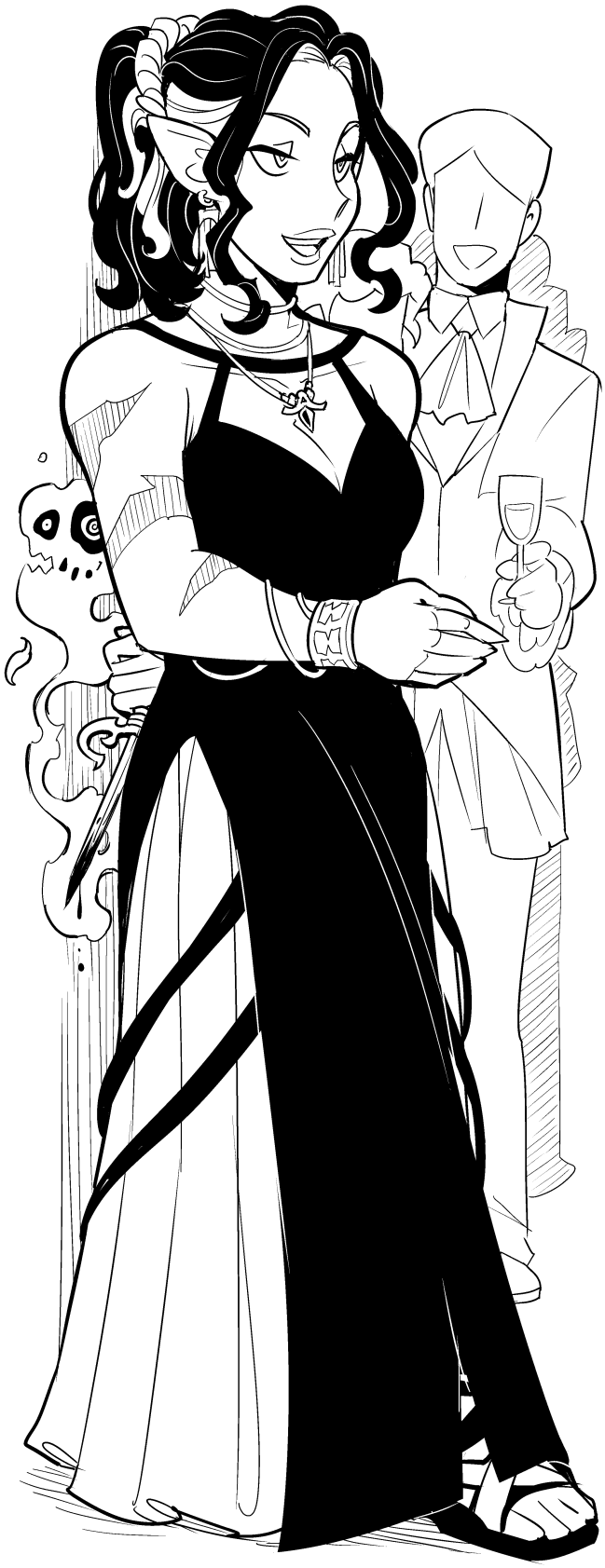
Human Resources

When you ***read the room***, you may also choose from the following questions;

- What is the crew's mood like?
- Who is responsible for a problem on-board the Carrier?
- What could be a problem for the crew in the immediate future?



THE *CAPTAIN*



THE *DIPLOMAT*

DIPLOMAT

Not every war is fought with weapons. For a Diplomat, the battlefield is a boardroom, the landmines are a host's hospitality and the only weapon you need is a winning smile.

LOOK

You look: *noble, refined, experienced, naive or slick*
You wear: *military dress, mostly disguises, luxury fashion, recognisable uniform*
You have a reputation for being: *fair and trustworthy, sly and wily, unpredictable, bold and pushy*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Diplomacy 'Tool'
- 3 'Diplomacy' Tools
- Clothing that matches your look

DIPLOMACY 'TOOLS'

- Frost Charms I (*ranged / restraining, **elemental***)
- Fencing Blade I (*melee / defensive, distinct*)
- Arcane Dagger I (*melee / bane, small, **arcane***)

'DIPLOMACY' TOOLS

- Listenbugs (overhear anyone during Downtime near a bug you've hidden - they're *fragile*)
- Lockpicks (Useful for picking locks, unsurprisingly)
- Silencing Matrix (Removes all noise from a tier I weapon)
- Shimmershape Clothing (Clothing can magically change colour and design)
- Agents (take ***shore leave*** with **advantage** when searching for info or evidence)
- Transport (You have a mount/vehicle that's fast and quiet - probably a tier II construct)

Diplomats are the kind of people that bring factions together and negotiate the impossible. They definitely never ever spy on anybody; instead, they meet with other important people face to face to achieve with words the kind of things that a legion of men couldn't with blades. The pen is their sword, and none of them have ever knocked a man out before stealing his uniform to pass as a guard.

While playing a Diplomat, you have a lot of power to set the rules of a social situation with moves like ***under the table*** and ***bureaucrat***. You're also very good at subterfuge, both by manipulating people and by stabbing them when they aren't looking, with a suite of moves including ***sharp tongue*** and ***sharper knives***. Consider;

- Are you actually a diplomat? Do you hold any official office?
- How long have you been with the Cause? Were you part of it before joining this crew?
- What's your stance on violence?
- What is your network of connections like? Do you have one?
- What motivates you during this conflict? What are your goals?
- What's the most danger you've been in before?
- What does diplomacy mean to you? How do you go about it?
- Have you ever negotiated with the Authority before?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***negotiator*** and ***under the table*** moves, as well as one other from your Additional Moves.

Negotiator

You may ***read the room*** with +TALK when mediating or taking part in a conversation/ discussion. When you successfully negotiate or advocate for something important to you, advance a GRAVITY clock of your choice.

Under The Table

When you set up a clandestine meeting, choose 2;

- There's no risk of an ambush or interference.
- Third parties aren't privy to the contents of the meeting.
- All parties are willing to discuss in good faith.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Sharp Tongue
When you ***exchange blows*** with +TALK, on a roll of 12+ your opponent is put in *peril*.

Sharper Knives
Daggers and other small weapons are your forte; you can always keep at least one concealed on your person, no matter how well checked, and you ***strike decisively*** with **advantage** while using one to cause harm. This might extend to improvised weapons, also. You probably struggle not to show off or toy around with knives in casual situations. It's unsettling.

Stir The Crowd
When you attempt to inspire dissent against the Authority, roll +TALK. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2, or let your Director choose 1.

- It takes a tragedy to truly galvanise people.
- In doing so, you become known and targeted.
- You have no control or influence over any acts of protest.
- You are unable to spark wider resistance than the local area.

Bureaucrat
When you would ***exchange blows*** with +TALK to slow someone down or distract them with regulations, bylaws, or whatever piece of red tape you can think of, you also choose one from the below even on a fail.

- You're not lying—they'll really be in trouble if they don't listen to you.
- You can hold them up for more than a brief moment.
- They won't remember or recognise you.
- You don't need to take a *risk*.

Irrefutable
When you argue or advocate for something and back up your point of view with hard evidence or facts, hold 1. When you reach 3 hold, you may spend them to ***strike decisively*** with +TALK against someone who isn't *defenceless*.

Connected
When you meet someone of note, roll +TALK. On a 10+, you're familiar with them, and you may choose whether their view of you is positive or negative. On a 7-9, as previous, but the Director decides how they think of you.

Shree Klime
During Downtime, you may also prepare an alias or disguise. Most people will believe you are who you say you are, unless you're disguised as someone they're very familiar with, or they are given reason to thoroughly check your person or any identification. You may take ***shore leave*** to secure 2 of the following;

- You have ID that is either legitimate or so well faked it is impossible for anyone short of an expert to tell the difference.
- There's a reason or expectation for someone fitting your disguise to show up.
- You've had something useful planted ahead of time—select a weapon or piece of equipment (one you have access to) to be hidden just where you'll need it.

ARTIFICER

Between necessary repairs and wholly unnecessary tinkering, Artificers do their best to keep their allies equipped and their Astirs functioning.

Look

You look: *tough, filthy, punky, weary or wise*
You wear: *pristine overalls, casual clothes, patched jumpsuits, homemade armour*
You handiwork looks: *clean and utilitarian, fancy and artistic, like it barely holds together, unremarkable*

Approach

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

Gear

- 2 Artificer Tools
- 1 Transport or Service Golem II
- Construct Manuals (***dispel uncertainties*** regarding construct & Astir design with **advantage**)
- Clothing that matches your look

Artificer Tools

- Heavy Wrench I (*melee / bane*)
- Beam Cutter I (*melee / reloading, ruin, decisive*)
- Steelfuser I (*ranged / **elemental***)
- Alchemical Gel I (**Advantage** when ***cooling off*** to repair something)

Artificers ensure that the Carrier and the Constructs it carries are in top condition, repairing and tinkering with them whenever the chance arises. While talented at putting new things together, an Artificer's expertise is just as easily applied to taking something apart. Artificers might be professionals, trained in the construction and repair of Astirs, or natural tinkerers who grew up making jury-rigged improvements to their town.

While playing an Artificer, ***expert repairs*** lets you give everyone else room to breathe during Downtime, and also lets you ***mend something*** with one of your traits in the event that the Carrier's CREW isn't very good. Aside from that, you have some very versatile options: ***arcane generator*** and ***from scratch*** let you acquire a CHANNEL trait and give you a powerful new way to use it alongside the norm, and ***combat engineer*** even lets you branch out into the Scout playbook easily. Consider;

- Where and how did you learn your craft?
- Are there others as skilled at working with Astirs as you in the Cause? What about the Authority?
- How did you get involved with the Cause?
- What was your life like before the Cause?
- Have you always worked on Astirs, or did you hone your craft making something else?
- Do you have a certain material or style that is considered tell-tale of your work?

Starting Moves

You start with the ***expert repairs*** and ***jury-rigger*** moves, as well as one other from your Additional Moves.

Expert Repairs
You're an expert at fixing things, and gain an additional Downtime move which you can only spend to ***mend something***. Additionally, you may ***mend something*** with +KNOW. When you tend to someone's body or Astir, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one.

Jury-Rigger
When you take random parts or objects and attempt to create something useful out of them, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2;

- It fits the purpose you had in mind.
- It stops working after hours, not minutes.
- It doesn't explode when it stops working.
- It doesn't look like garbage stuck together.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Augmenter
When you ***work on a project*** during Downtime, you may fill an additional clock segment on a result of 10+ or 7-9.

You may ***work on a project*** to create and install magical enhancements or alterations to living creatures.

Arcane Generator
You've built a magical device, small enough to be worn on your back or at your hip, that generates arcane power for you. When you start it up, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, you are considered to have CHANNEL at +2. On a 7-9, you have CHANNEL at +1 instead. This lasts for the duration of a Sortie.

Should the generator be broken or damaged you lose your CHANNEL trait, and if you are currently attuned to an Astir the connection is severed (meaning it shuts down). It has the *magic* and *distinct* tags.

From Scratch [Requires: Arcane Generator]
When you tap into magical power to create something long-lasting quickly, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, you can create something as big as a tower or as complex as a lock, and it takes but a few minutes of work. On a 7-9, choose 1;

- You must overclock your generator to do so—reduce your CHANNEL to -1.
- You are unable to conjure any sturdy materials, and everything you have built has the *fragile* tag.
- The work is taxing—take the *peril* (exhausted).

Field Testing
You're used to testing out new equipment, and can easily get to grips with new tech. You have **advantage** when trying to use, analyse, or figure out something about unfamiliar equipment, constructs, or similar magical machinery.

It's A Prototype
Once per Sortie, you may reveal what prototype upgrade you've made to a Astir that you reasonably had access to recently. When you do so, choose 2;

- You didn't have to disassemble anything else for parts.
- Your invention doesn't draw unwanted attention to you.
- The upgrade burns out at the end of the Sortie, rather than after one use.
- Using the upgrade isn't dangerous is any way.

Combat Engineer
You supplement your Artificer training with something more conventional: choose a move from the Scout list instead and a piece of Scout Equipment.

Counterspell
When you get close and use your expertise in magical machinery to try and break a construct or magical mechanism, you may ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** with +KNOW using the following profile;

- Counterspell III (*melee / slow, ruin*)



THE *ARTIFICER*



THE *SCOUT*

SCOUT

Scouts are straightforward people. Trained in navigating any terrain and pathfinding for less mobile troops, scouts are often the eyes and ears for their Astir allies.

LOOK

You look: *wild, cold, sharp, cocky or brash*
You wear: *gleaming plate, well-worn uniform, survivalist's gear or rugged leathers*
You fight with: *brute strength, dextrous moves, practised discipline, raw tenacity*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Scout Weapon
- 2 Scout Equipment
- Any tier I weapons that feel appropriate
- Clothes that match your look

SCOUT WEAPONS

- Astircleaver II (*melee / bane, area, 2H*)
- Crossbow+ II (*ranged / infinite, blitz, 2H*)
- Force Ballista II (*sniper / reloading, ruin, 2H*)

SCOUT EQUIPMENT

- Maps and Charts (You can always figure out a route)
- Gatherer's Tools (You can always feed your party)
- First Aid Kit (You can tend to basic injuries and wounds)
- Traps and Nets (You can always set up a defence given time)

Scouts are more than the rank-and-file soldier. Trained to be fast, strong and capable, Scouts are the trailblazers and survivors that make it possible for everyone else to do their job. From sneaking into enemy territory to gather information to performing patch repairs on Astirs damaged in the field, a good Scout can work wonders.

While playing a Scout, you have the fairly unique position of being someone who excels at fighting on foot in a world of Astirs. Thankfully, ***field scout*** lets you stand toe-to-toe with things higher tier than you, and also lets you use bulky, awkward equipment far more easily. Depending on the moves you take, a Scout can be a dangerous solo agent, leaning on moves like ***personal armoury*** and ***strong as hell***, or a powerful team player with moves like ***natural leader*** and ***patch job***.

Consider;

- Are Scouts common, or are you an exception ?
- Do you have a tool or ability that helps you be mobile, or are you just agile?
- What kind of reputation do Scouts have? Is fighting an Astir considered risky for you?
- Who didn't want you to fight?
- Who encouraged you to fight?
- How long have you been a soldier?
- Were you trained or are you a natural fighter?
- Where did you get your equipment?
- What drives you to work on foot in a world of mechs?
- Do you have a better relationship with regular soldiers due to not being a pilot?

STARTING MOVES

You start with the ***field scout*** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

Field Scout

You're an expert at managing operations in the field and supporting your allies. You're agile and strong, you tend to notice things those in Astirs don't, and your size allows you access to spaces too small for them.

You can wield tier II weapons without much difficulty, can reload weapons easily while on the move or under fire, and don't need to ***bite the dust*** when threatened by harm from a higher tier than you.

When you hold your own against Astirs or show yourself completely above the rank-and-file, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who sees you and is impressed.

Additional Moves

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

Team Player
When you ***read the room***, you may pass the information you gain along and allow an ally to act with **advantage** instead of you. This counts as them making a move involving you, and they may roll with +GRAVITY as appropriate.

Mobility
When you're fighting somewhere with the room to be acrobatic and mobile, roll +DEFY. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. You can spend 1 hold at any time to do one of the following;

- Escape from something that binds, traps or impedes you
- Acquire high ground or a defensible position
- Get to somewhere or something before others can
- Avoid an incoming source of physical harm

Improvisation
At the beginning of a Sortie, hold 3. You may spend 1 hold to change your approach for a single move. Explain to your Director what you did or used to do this.

Natural Leader
When participating in a group move, you can always make the roll in place of whoever has the lowest relevant trait.

Strong As Hell
You can carry and wield tier III weapons by taking a *risk*.

Patch Job
When you ***cool off*** to remove a *risk* or the 'overheating' tick from an Astir, you can do it in a few moments rather than minutes, even while the Astir is still moving. Instead of the usual result, on a 7-9 you attract unwanted attention.

Guerrilla
When you attempt to evade detection or sneak past others, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1, or choose 2 and take a risk.

- You avoid detection.
- You find something hidden or forgotten.
- You can set up for an ambush.
- You find a way to allow others to follow you without being detected.

Pathfinding
When you're leading a group that is travelling a long distance, hold 3, and spend it 1-for-1 on the following options while you travel;

- You lead the group past an area of difficult terrain without issue.
- You find a comfortable, sheltered place to set up camp.
- You're familiar with the area; ***dispel uncertainties*** regarding it or the things in it with Advantage during the journey.
- You find a shortcut, reducing the length of your journey but adding complications.

ADVANCEMENT

In Armour Astir, characters earn advancements in three ways;

- Completing a GRAVITY clock
- Compromising or sacrificing an Ideal
- Completing your Spotlight clock

Advancements can be spent to;

- Choose a new Move from your playbook (up to 3).
- Increase a Trait by 1, to a max of +3.
- Rewrite as many of your Ideals as you want.

After you have advanced and chosen from the above options 3 times, you may also choose from the following additional options.

- Choose a Soldier Move or a non-starting Move from any playbook (up to 3).
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and your Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.
- Retire from combat without losing sight of your Ideals.
- Take control of a Faction. You may take ***shore leave*** to trigger its Faction move.

Soldier Moves

Get Out Of My Way!

When you come to blows with your Rival, see someone you have a GRAVITY clock with die, or witness the Authority commit a truly terrible act, hold 3.

You may spend this hold 1-for-1 to ***strike decisively*** against non-Rival or Main foes, even if they aren't *defenceless*, and treat any result of 6 or below as a 7-9.

Red Comet

Any Astir you channel gains a Artifact called 'Uncanny Speed', and its Mana capacity is increased by 1.

Flash

You may communicate with other Channelers instantly over great distances in times of urgent need, sending words or even feelings and sensations to ***help or hinder*** with +CHANNEL.

Additionally, dead characters may still ***help or hinder*** you, their spirit able to speak with you from beyond.

Selfless

You may put yourself in *peril* to completely defend another from one source of incoming harm, like a blade or a challenging statement.

You may put yourself in *peril* to attempt something uncanny, superhuman, or unbelievable.

Indomitable

Whenever you make a move, on a result of 12+ you may clear a *risk*.

Midseason Upgrade

If you are a Channeler, an opportunity to acquire a tier IV Astir will appear.

If you are a Support, an opportunity to acquire an upgrade to the Carrier will appear.

White Devil
Stories of your talent and your Astir have spread far and wide among your enemies: anyone other than your Rival who would act against you whilst piloting your Astir must take the *risk* (intimidated) to do so. This *risk* is cleared if they witness your Astir be seriously damaged, if you flee from fighting, or if they have reason to believe you aren't piloting it.

Nightmare Of Solomon
You have acquired a weapon of horrific potential. When you deploy it to destroy your enemy with overwhelming force, you succeed. Resolve all your GRAVITY clocks as if you had filled them, even ones that have been previously committed to and locked. You don't gain advancements for clocks resolved in this manner. In the future, no matter how noble your intent or just the results, your actions will be used to justify further violence.

The Arity Method
Once per Sortie, when you would ***bite the dust***, succeed as if you'd rolled a 10+. Act with **confidence** the next time you would ***exchange blows*** or ***strike decisively***.

Original Video Episode
During Downtime, you may spend one of your Downtime moves to lead a raid or operation against the Authority to disrupt their activities. Tell the Director what you set out to do, and who comes with you. If it's anyone you have GRAVITY with, advance it. During the next Conflict Turn, the Authority has **disadvantage** on any moves they make.

Once The War's Over
When you talk about what's waiting for you after the fighting's over, hold 3.

You may spend your hold 1-for-1 to automatically succeed on any move as if you had rolled a 10+.

Whether or not you spend your hold, you will perish before the beginning of your next Downtime. Don't roll to ***bite the dust*** as usual—instead, let your Director know when you think it's time.

Couple summers ago, a few folks from up at the pass—ones with magic of a sort, but not the kind your Channelers use—figured out that if you hang enough people from the same tree, it gets a little twitchy. A little angry, especially at those that are doing the hanging. It gets the inkling that, a little nudge from mother nature, and those branches can be arms. But, they also figured, well, you spin a little spell to stop it telling one man from another, and it don't care too much about who it swings those gnarled fists at. Now the trees up at the pass? I reckon you could build yourself a tidy little house out of one of those. They ain't, by any means, something you want taking a shot at you.

A lot of people came through that year, from the city, asking me what I thought this meant for the war. If what they were doing made up for them not having Channelers of their own.

Never did have an answer they liked. I'm not one that can speak too much on if this kind of magic's better than that kind of magic. But I always told them what I could. We run caravans that way once a month, buying and selling, and you know what?

Up at the pass, they always need more rope.

- Excerpt from *'The Thoughts And Tales Of Albert Jayner'*, Albert Jayner, YA230



THE AUTHORITY & THE CAUSE

The Authority and the Cause are the big players in any game of Armour Astir. The Authority is oppressive, powerful, and domineering, with its sights set on the world - or at least the slice of it our game takes place in. On the other hand, the Cause is, hopefully, benevolent and driven—but is just as likely scattered, conflicted, and scared. While players tend to their wounds and sneak precious moments in Downtime, these forces develop too, during the Conflict Turn.

The Authority

The Authority is a single entity, divided into Divisions each of which have their own specific goals and interests in service of the Authority. Each of these Divisions has a name and leader, a resource it generates during the Passive Step, and an Ideal - something that drives its actions in service of the greater Authority, an idealistic leader, or something else entirely.

The Authority is split into 3 Divisions;

- A Military Division, which focuses on deploying forces to attack or defend with violence.
- A Subterfuge Division, which focuses on deploying spies or agents to deal with things quietly.
- A Resource Division, which focuses on developing new magic or tools, accumulating wealth, etc.

Each Division generates one of three resources during its Division Step. Military Divisions generate POWER, Subterfuge Divisions generate INFO, and Resource Divisions generate SURPLUS. During the Conflict Turn, these are spent to make moves that allow the Authority to increase its influence over the world, through whatever means it has. The Authority begins play with **0** of each, meaning they must spend at least the first turn of the game building up strength.

In mechanical terms, this means spending POWER or INFO to ***encroach*** and build up GRIP on Factions or Regions, then spending that GRIP in an attempt to ***seize control***. The Authority also gathers SURPLUS to ***invest*** in a project that, should it be completed, would spell doom for the Cause and it's efforts.

If you want to define your Authority further, with more than 3 Divisions, remember that more Divisions means more possible Division Moves in a single turn - possibly allowing them to brute-force actions with more resources than your amount of Factions can oppose. Keep this in mind when determining how many Factions the Cause is made up of. Additionally, consider giving these other Divisions a Passive Step that isn't resource gathering, since inflating the amount of resources the Authority also makes it easier for them to exhaust Factions.

For some examples, consider;

- A Research Division, which focuses on developing new enchantments and rituals. Passive Step: Start or advance a 6 step clock titled 'Introduce or improve a construct design.'
- A Curator Division, which focuses on stealing and investigating that which doesn't belong to it. Passive Step: Start or advance a 6 step clock titled 'Take something that isn't theirs.'
- An Administrative Division, which focuses on the development and protection of bureaucracy. Passive Step: All players take **disadvantage** while operating within Authority structures or remaining undiscovered among Authority citizens and personnel.

Authority Forces

The Authority, broadly speaking, has far more soldiers and assets than ever worth individually keeping track of. Instead, we just keep an eye on the things that are likely to come up in play. Broadly speaking, everything that the Authority makes use of is either a *person*, a *group*, or an *asset*. A *person* is a character of specific talent, power or influence. A *group* is a number of characters who are, together, an important force. An *asset* is an object or place that is useful to the Authority, and might be anything from a Carrier to simple supplies like food or clothing.

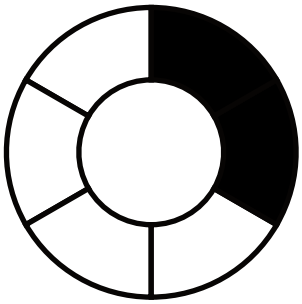
When creating these, keep a hierarchy in mind. Everything should be tied to something else, indicating who they answer to, or in the case of resources and places, who they are controlled by. Soldiers are likely tied to their officers, who are likely tied to a general or other significant figure, who is then likely tied into the Authority's military Division at the top. Assets, depending on what they are, might be tied directly to the people that make use of them, or tied to figures who are responsible for their use or protection.

As the Director, it's important to think about what happens when these connections are broken. Does that elite cadre of Astir pilots fall in line behind a different officer when theirs is killed in battle, or was their loyalty to that officer rather than the Authority overall, causing them to leave it? When they lose a trio of experimental Astirs in battle, is the Captain of the *Second-Hand Fortune* given command over a new unit, or just demoted underneath one of their peers? Don't feel like you need to have a grand plan penned for every foe or asset in advance, though. Sometimes decisions in the moment are the most fun to make.

Authority Projects

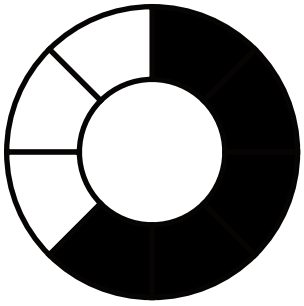
With the ***invest*** move, the Authority can gradually start and complete long-term projects. These projects, if completed, should create a large advantage for the Authority that threatens to completely turn the war in their favour unless it is dealt with as quickly as possible.

Projects don't need to be one big macguffin that's being slowly constructed. A project might be developing a plan for one decisive military push, slowly accruing reserve forces for an unstoppable offensive, or even the inner political turmoil of the Authority slowly resolving itself into a state where its true might can be properly coordinated.



Unsealing the Sovereign Crypt
Crown-Claimant Goze aims to open the Sovereign Crypt and use the contents as fuel for another ritual.

The End Of Mourning
Once the mourning period for the last Empress is over, the remaining heirs are sure to unleash the forces they have massed in a civil war.



The Cause

While the Authority is one entity organised into orderly Divisions, the Cause is disparate Factions united under one banner. Factions represent the smaller groups and efforts that make up the Cause. For those, we just keep a list of their leader, a short summary of who they are, and their type, which has a move attached to it.

In the Conflict Turn, the primary role Factions play is opposing the moves made by the Authority and possibly countering with their own, depending on how the dice turn out. What that opposition looks like, and what move they might make, is determined by their type;

Type	Opposition	Move
Guerrillas	Opposes with ambushes and scattered force	A Division of your choice can't lead a move next turn.
Assassins	Opposes with targeted killing	An important figure in the Authority is killed.
Thieves	Opposes with robbery	Resources shift from the Authority, reducing SURPLUS by 1.
Agents	Opposes with infiltration and subterfuge	Something important is taken or learned, reducing INFO by 1.
Saboteurs	Opposes with sabotage and ingenuity	Something important is destroyed, reducing POWER by 1.
Suppliers	Opposes with new equipment or supplies	Take upto 3 dropped Stake and distribute it among Factions.
Diplomats	Opposes with negotiation and law	Remove any GRIP on a Faction.
Military	Opposes with direct assaults and force	Remove any GRIP on a Region.
Strange	Opposes with the weird and unexplained	Something unexpected and strange happens.

It's a good idea to have around two Factions per Division in the Authority, to ensure some balance in the economy of actions during the Conflict Turn.

Faction Stake

Factions can't offer infinite support. When they take action during the Conflict Turn, expending manpower, supplies, or revolutionary zeal, they lose some of their Stake.

Stake is an abstract representation of both a Factions assets and members (i.e its ability to oppose the Authority), and its responsibility and metaphorical weight within the Cause (i.e its ability to direct that opposition). Factions with high Stake are more invested in the Cause, and as such are more able to push it into action.

Factions may have a maximum Stake of 3, and all Factions begin with 2 except for those picked out during Cause setup. However much Stake the Cause has in total when you begin play is all the Stake that exists. Stake can shift between Factions or be temporarily 'dropped', but not destroyed or created. When a Faction loses Stake by opposing the Authority, other Factions gain that Stake by stepping in to make up for their losses.

Stake asks you to consider how well those with agency and ability direct the Cause with consideration and respect to its various Factions, if there are conflicts of formal hierarchy in the Cause vs who in the Cause have actual agency, and how Factions choose to view the loss of Stake: as a moment for recovery in which other Factions must cover for them, as a passing of the torch (their duty now done), or even something more antagonistic like other Factions capitalising on their spent nature to take agency from them.

Example Factions

The Iron Circus (Suppliers)

The Iron Circus build and repair magical constructs, operating out of a steel-clad airship. The Circus aren't an orderly workforce, but they're fast, reliable, and loyal.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

Syl's Stallers (Saboteurs)

The Stallers, led by Syl Sarna, specialise in stopping constructs in their tracks. Using experimental gauntlets that nullify enchantments, they infiltrate reinforcements in transit and prevent their constructs from ever animating.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

Allington Merchant's Association (Suppliers)

More commonly known as just the Allington Association, they possess a significant amount of capital and are more than willing to put it on the line to support more revolutionary-inclined clients.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

The Riverknights (Guerillas)

A cadre of fighters who use custom-enchanted aquatic Golems to rapidly navigate rivers and canals, often striking ships or dockside fortifications before retreating as quickly as they arrived.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

The Barkwrights (Military)

Though low on resources and stretched thin, the Barkwrights have long since made a name for themselves protecting against deforestation. Their secret to success is an ancient transmutative magic that bonds flesh with living wood, which they use to recover from even terrible injuries.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

League Lament (Assassins)

An elderly coven of witches who orchestrate assassinations through repeatedly hexxing their targets over a period of time, eventually causing them to die in accidents that, to anyone else, seem incredibly unlucky. The superstitious often blame the League Lament for any misfortune they suffer.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

The Door Society (Agents)

Locksmiths by day and spies by night, the Door Society consider going where one shouldn't their area of expertise. All locks can be picked, and it's far easier if you're the person that made it.

STAKE ☐☐☐
GRIP ☐☐☐

Regions

Regions are places of importance, on whatever scale is appropriate to that of your game. In a large campaign spanning a globe, Regions might be entire countries and capital cities or bases of importance, while in a smaller campaign your Regions might be cities, towns and military encampments. In either case, make sure you don't step into the trap of only considering Regions that are of military importance. Places of historical, cultural, spiritual or ecological importance are equally as valid: they, after all, represent the people and the future that the players and Factions are fighting to protect or free from the Authority's clutches.

Regions aren't just for fighting over, of course. The people in them will likely call for the aid of Factions and the players, and if they want to you should allow your players to invest themselves in the future of Regions. Players might help repair the damage from Authority raids or occupation, help build houses or infrastructure for the people that live there, or might help bring refugees to safe Regions in order to make a new home there. All of the above might be things done in Downtime, or might be the focus of Sorties and Missions.

Players may have a GRAVITY clock with a Region if they desire, but Regions themselves do not have any statistics or moves attached to them—even small communities are difficult to codify in a way that is truly representative. The Director might connect characters or assets to a Region instead of a Faction, and a Faction might call a Region home.

If the Authority seizes a Region, this should mean something. It is up to you to determine why Regions are important, and what the Authority stands to gain by seizing them.



The Conflict Turn

During the Conflict Turn, the Authority develops and spends resources to make moves. In response, the various Factions that make up the Cause mobilise to oppose these moves, or given the opportunity, make their own.

Step 1: Choose Division Moves

Each of the Division moves spends a different resource built up during the Conflict Turn. When you make a move, you must choose a Division to lead it, and each Division may only lead one move. This means you may make a maximum of 3 Division moves during any Conflict Turn. Leading confers no benefits, but colours the action and determines which Division feels the fallout should the move fail. Note that you can only build up 3 GRIP on any one Faction or Region with ***encroach***, but save up as much POWER, INFO and SURPLUS as you want.

Invest

When a Division takes extra resources and puts them towards a longer-term plan, commit +1-3 SURPLUS and roll 2d6. On a 10+, start or advance an 8-step clock representing a project the Authority is working on. On a 7-9 as above, but an opposing Faction also triggers their move.

Encroach

When a Division attempts to increase their control of a Region or Faction, commit +1-3 INFO or POWER and roll 2d6. On a 10+ Gain 1 GRIP on a Region or Faction. On a 7-9 as above, but an opposing Faction also triggers their move.

Seize

When a Division capitalises on their GRIP to take over a Region or Faction, commit +1-3 GRIP and roll 2d6. On a 10+ seize control of a Region or Faction. On a 7-9 as above, but an opposing Faction also triggers their move.

Step 2: Resolve Division Moves

For each move, decide which Factions are opposing it. Opposing Factions must ante up Stake to do so. If less Stake is wagered than the Authority is spending resources, the Authority rolls with **advantage**. If more is put forward, the Authority rolls with **disadvantage**. If no Factions oppose, the Authority rolls with **confidence**.

On a 7-9 result, you may choose one of the opposing Factions and trigger their move in addition to the one the Division made. What this looks like is up to you, and might differ much from Faction to Faction. On a result of 6 or below, the move goes badly for whatever Division is leading it—again, what this looks like and means for the Authority is up to you—though it should take more than a few bad rolls to really damage a Division.

Finally, 2 points of the total Stake wagered is given up. 1 is redistributed to a different Faction and 1 is ‘dropped’, to be recovered through Sorties or Faction moves. If only 1 point had been wagered, it is redistributed.

Step 3: Passive Step & Faction Move

Finally, any Division that didn’t lead a move this turn performs its Passive Step instead, earning a resource for the Authority: Military Divisions earn 1 POWER, Subterfuge Divisions earn 1 INFO, and Resource Divisions earn 1 SURPLUS.

If all Divisions performed their Passive Step—that is, if you made no Division moves—you can choose one Faction and trigger its move, as if you rolled a 7-9 on a Division move. When opportunity presents itself, someone is sure to strike.

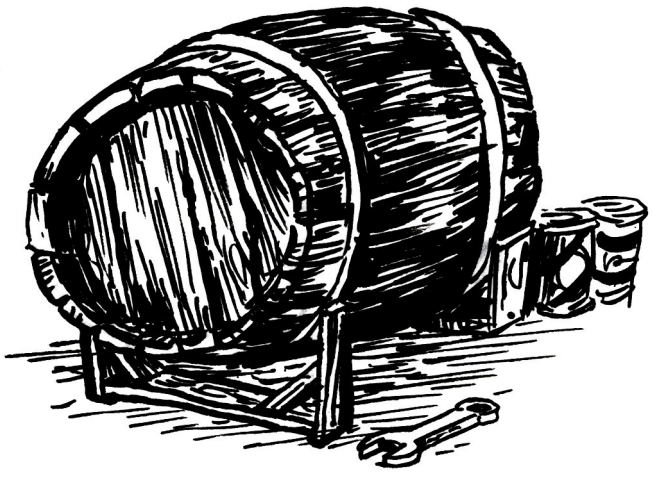
Choose Division Moves ▸ **Resolve Division Moves** ▸ **Passive Step & Faction Move**

INVENTORY OF '*THE BUSY BEETLE*'
Port Huginn Authority, YA230, Quartermaster Luis

1 HERCULES-Class Astir, '*Dire Dismissal*'
2 STAG-Class Astirs, '*Fair Lady*' & '*Florence*'
4 SHIELDBEARER Golems, unnamed

90 javelins (steel-tipped)
10 javelins (steel-tipped, enchanted to pierce armour)
1 dozen spears (iron-tipped)
1 dozen crossbows (wood construction, leather bindings)
180 crossbow bolts, quivers of 15
3 snap-rifles (licensed, unknown artificer)
9 fingers of alchemical ruby (medium quality, fully charged)
50 candles, beeswax
18 lanterns, brass
18 flasks, lantern oil, 1 pint
4 drums, lantern oil, 1 gallon
13lb powdered silver
1lb powdered diamond
3lb elemental fire, salts
7 healing elixirs, 6 fl oz
2 crates, assorted bandages & ointments
6 large drums, water, 10 gallons
6 crates, packaged rations
8 parcels, fresh fruit (sealed)
1 barrel, pickled fish
1 bar of chocolate, 4oz
1 crate, unmarked (sealed, shielded against divination)

- Excerpt from '*Flight Log Of The Busy Beetle*', several writers, first entry YA211, final entry YA231, recovered YA233





RUNNING THE GAME

As the Director, it's primarily your job to facilitate play. To that end, you have an **agenda** and **principles** to guide your decisions and help you figure out what is in the spirit of the game. When it comes to making moves, your **director moves** give you clear options for directing the action. There's also a brief primer on **safety tools**, though I encourage you to research these more to find something that suits you, some **example foes** and guidelines for creating characters to oppose the players, and an explanation of **rivals.**

Agenda

As a Director running Armour Astir, there are certain things you should strive for. These are your agendas. Think of these like your tenets, as you perform the sacred rites of running a fun game for your friends.

- Portray a world entrenched in conflict.
- Let the players make a difference.
- Play to find out what happens.

Principles

Additionally, you have your principles. Your principles are things to consider when deciding what move to make, and can also serve as a reference when you're unsure if a move you want to make is appropriate.

- Give Conflict Weight
- Begin And End With The Fiction
- Address The Characters, Not The Players
- Consider Scale
- Fight Wars With Words (Sometimes)
- Ask Questions And Use The Answers
- Let Them Be Victors As Well As Victims
- Make Moves Off-Screen
- Keep Things Magical

Give Conflict Weight

In Armour Astir, conflict reaches everyone in some way. When you present your world and the people in it, consider the effects of it on them, and the things they've been caught up in because of it. Confront your players with the consequences of their actions, and remind them that marginalised people often suffer the most during times of struggle: even if it feels like what is being struggled against isn't something directly adversarial to marginalised identities.

Begin And End With The Fiction

When you make your moves, establish and ground them in the fiction before you detail what the mechanical results are. Then, return to the fiction, and show the fictional consequences of those results. Be a good example for your players: teach them to make their action clear before resolving it with dice, and then to hook the consequences back into the fiction.

Address The Characters, Not The Players

As far as you're concerned, once you start the session you're no longer at the table with your good friends. To your left is Cordelian, the Arcanist, piloting his Lance-Minor Astir. To your right, the rough-and-rowdy Scout, Rio. Staring daggers at you from across the table is Mire, the Witch, whose Falcon-class Astir is currently missing an arm. So when you talk to your players, make sure you're actually addressing those Paradigms, Artificers and assorted other heroes. Ask Mire what they do, not what their player thinks they do. This helps everyone focus and keep their minds on the fiction that you're all creating together.

Consider Scale

War is a big, bloody thing, stretching continents as easily as it stretches time. Let your players feel the consequences of their involvement with it on more than one scale. Just as they involve themselves in the small-scale of conflict, getting in their Astirs and taking the fight to the enemy as commanded, let them involve themselves in the overarching systems of war—the politics, the organisation—and let them become valuable to the cause they fight for. Then, you can involve them in larger consequences - and if they try to run, they should find these connections they've made difficult to cut.

Fight Wars With Words (Sometimes)

Not all fights are fought with blades. Fight your players with words, spoken or otherwise, and remind them of the impact influential figures can have without setting foot on a battlefield when the opportunity arises. If your players are so inclined, let them wield this power too: let them disarm foes with a scathing insult, or write a challenging letter that wins over a sympathetic lord. Not all problems are best solved with force, after all.

Ask Questions And Use Their Answers

The shared fiction of your world is something you work on together with your players, so involve them in fleshing it out. Ask them questions about their characters, and the places and concepts related to them. If you don't know something, if you're short on interesting ideas, or you just want someone else's viewpoint, don't hesitate to ask one of your players instead. Be curious about what they want to contribute to the fiction, and help them feel invested in it by using the information they give you. This lightens the narrative load for you, helps keeps things a little varied, and also lets you have the same curiosity and surprise as the players do when something new becomes part of the story.

Let Them Be Victors As Well As Victims

At the table, you're all part of the same fiction. Your players are the stars of the show—so let them feel like it. Let them succeed and fail in the directions they find interesting, and try not to force them down particular avenues in the grand scheme of things. Don't gun for them too hard. You're here to create an interesting story about war and revolution together, not a miserable one about how they spent several sessions in a narrative gutter before you killed them all. Generally, use your players *risks* and *perils* as a guideline for when to hurt them. Let their Astirs feel powerful when it matters, but punish them when their guard falls: after all, they're bound to the same rules when trying to harm your characters.

Make Moves Off-Screen

It's also important to remember that, while your players and their characters are important, not everything that happens does so right in front of them. Don't be afraid to make moves and keep things shifting behind the scenes, then present the results of those moves to the group when appropriate. There are battles the characters aren't involved in, and discussions or decisions they don't get to make. Remind them that the world is bigger than they are.

Keep Things Magical

Finally, Armour Astir isn't just a game about mechs and pilots. It's a game about giant magical constructs, slinging spells at each other through enchanted weapons, protected by complex rituals and powered by Channelers—powerful magic-users fueled by innate talent, divine powers, otherworldly influnces and arcane artifacts. Don't forget that!

Director Moves

Just like your players have moves, you as a Director have moves to help guide and codify what you can do. The players make a move when they want to do something - you make a move when;

- They roll a 6 or below on one of their moves
- When they look to you for something to happen, or can't decide what to do
- When the fiction says something should happen

Broadly speaking, the moves you have are to;

- Make an obvious threat
- Test the forces of GRAVITY
- Exploit a *danger* or a *tag*
- Split them up
- Put them in *danger*
- Reveal something new
- Attack someone who's *defenceless*
- Start a (mysterious) clock
- Give an option with cost or consequence

Typically, after making a move, you should pass the narrative baton back to your players by asking: what do you do?

Make an obvious threat

Show them the barrel of the gun, tease something to come, etc. Put things on the table so everyone can see what's in play, and take that into account when making awful decisions.

"There's an explosion from behind the bay doors, and a blue Astir striped with grey dashes through the smoke directly towards you, a long blade streaking with white-hot energy. What do you do?"

"You're out of sight, moving from column to column keeping an eye on the Ambassador, when one of his guards falls out of step with the others. They reach into their coat. What do you do?"

"Back on the ship, Hargen, you watch as the construct sensor spikes upwards in two, no, three spots. Ensign Wren dials in the sensitivity and turns to you. 'Two Wolves and an unidentified third, closing fast.' What do you do?"

Exploit a *danger* or a *tag*

Use the *risks* and *perils* your players have taken, and the *tags* on their gear, as vectors for action against them.

"They're faster than you expect, rushing up on the side where your sensors are disrupted. You dodge just enough to make sure the blade doesn't go through your cockpit, but they carve your Astir's head off entirely instead - replace that risk (blinded) with a peril (blinded). What do you do?"

"You took the risk 'embarrassed', right? As you try to walk away, Cress takes your wrist, and says 'You know, we don't have to do this in front of the others. Come with me.' She starts to pull you away as the others are leaving—what do you do?"

"June brings her shield up, but she doesn't need it. You run the firing ritual and... nothing. Your missiles had the limited tag, and that previous salvo was your last. What do you do?"

Put them in *danger*

When the players fail a roll or leave themselves exposed to harm, that's a good opportunity to hurt them by putting them in *danger*. It's up to you how severe you be here in a given situation: putting them in *peril* is a much harder move than asking them to take a *risk*, and having them replace a *risk* with a *peril* is a slightly kinder middle ground.

"He dashes out of your reach to safety, and fires a rayrifle shot directly at you. You'll need to take a risk to avoid it. Ok, now what do you do?"

"You're holding the wreck up for the time being, but your Astir just isn't made for this. You can hear and feel the grating and grinding of its parts as your arms start to buckle - take the peril 'crushed'. What do you do?"

"They don't look impressed by what you have to say at all. The guy with the helmet looks at you, and seeing how scared you look, keeps eye contact as he slowly puts his blade through the injured guard. Replace your 'scared' risk with the peril 'shaken'. What do you do?"

Attack someone who's *defenceless*

If a character has stacked up enough *dangers* to become *defenceless*, they're truly in the crosshairs and are exposed to consequences that could force them to flee, be killed, or otherwise taken out of action. When someone is *defenceless*, there's blood in the water and everyone can smell it.

"Carryl, you glance leftwards and see Paldry's Astir, smoking and immobile. She's defenceless, and does nothing but panic as one of the Coursers dashes forward, sinking its lance right through her iron carapace. What do you do?"

*"You try to step away, but Kett isn't going to let you leave even if it costs him his life. He swings the thermal axe at you, decisively. I need you to **bite the dust** - what do you do?"*

*"The crowd are talking among themselves as they watch you, waiting for you to respond, but you can't find the words. Second-of-Blades gives you that smug grin again, and says 'Take your time, channeler. I can wait here all day to see how little merit your case has.' You're already defenceless, so I need you to **bite the dust** and see if you can keep your cool. What do you do?"*

Give an option with cost or consequence

When your players ask you how or if they can do something, give them options: and where appropriate, tell them the cost or consequence attached. This lets them make more educated choices about the fiction you're all making together.

"Sure, you can try and snatch the sword away from him, but if you mess it up you'd be putting yourself in a really dangerous spot."

"You catch that red Astir out the corner of your eye, breaking away from the pack. You could give chase, but with the damage to your mobility enchantments you'd really have to push your Astir to catch up to them: you'd have to mark 'overheating'."

"You reach out with your magic to the presence you noticed, feeling around in the ether for it. You can feel your senses dimming as you extend further and further from your body, and you know that if you keep going you risk losing yourself entirely. Do you keep going?"

Test the forces of GRAVITY

Ask a player to make a decision that calls one of their GRAVITY clocks into question, like putting someone they love in danger, or giving them a tough request from a trusted friend. They can't change their clocks until they're filled, but you can always make moves to sow the seeds of doubt—or reinforce those relationships instead.

"You're taking the time to carefully line up the shot, when you hear Function over the comms, struggling against someone. You have GRAVITY with them, right? What do you do?"

"Knight Huller breaks away from the others as he sees you leave, and plants himself between you and the door. Your clock is 'We can't help but fight when we lock eyes.', right? You could maybe still get past him if you wanted. What do you do?"

"Mishell takes you by the hand, and comes in close if you let her. She looks genuinely worried, and actually—she puts one of her hands on your shoulder, and says 'Jess, I need you to trust me. I know it seems like a lot, but I know you can do this. You're ready.' What do you do? As a reminder, your clock with Mishell is 'Always had each-other's backs'."

Split them up

Nice and simple - introduce something that separates the players, requiring them to deal with trouble without working together.

"Manchester, you fall behind as the three of you are sprinting through the halls. Hold and Sander make it down to the end of the corridor ahead of you, and you're catching up when the building shakes. The floor and walls in front of you crumble as an Astir backs through the building, demolishing a wide portion of it and cutting you off from the others. What do you do?"

"You watch the others swipe their stolen sigils against the crystal, and the lifts take them upwards. It goes red when you do yours, though, and instead you start descending. You know what's on the floor below, right? What do you do?"

"June, you manage to quickly boost your way out, so you're safe. Sear, though, you're not quite so lucky. That grey Astir didn't just stab you, the spear went through your armour and it's pinning you to the inside of the chamber. You can hear the hum of the macrospell charging, and see June rushing to safety in the distance. What do you do?"

Reveal something new

Reveal something new to the players that complicates things for them.

"Ok, ok. That's a six, but you don't fail here actually. There's a hiss of pressure as the Lovesong's cockpit opens, and the pilot gets out. It's like looking into a mirror, Coln. It's your brother. What do you do?"

"You dash forwards, bringing your axe down towards Hill as he staggers backwards, but his guard hasn't fallen. It was a feint, Lottie. He steps under your swing and tugs the weapon loose from your grip. I'm erasing his 'stunned' risk, and you should take the risk 'disarmed'. What do you do?"

"There's a huge cracking noise, and all of you—even the people who aren't channelers—feel the magic in the air around you get stronger instantly. Up in the sky, the clouds break as the Ophelian Engine tears into your plane of existence. What do you do?"

Start a (mysterious) clock

Start a clock to represent a countdown until something happens, progress towards something, etc. Label it, or leave it a mystery: either way, a ticking clock creates pressure on the players and leaves them anticipating whatever is to come. Clocks typically have 4, 6, or 8 segments, but you could make a larger one if you wish, or divide something into multiple shorter clocks.

You should also decide what advances these clocks: will they fill on their own over time, are they something that ticks up when the players fail moves or ignore a threat, or do the players need to take action directly to advance it? Whatever the method, when a clock is filled, it should be a big deal. Everyone should know about what happens next.

Safety Tools

When playing tabletop games, even with people you're intimately acquainted with, there can be situations in which topics and imagery players aren't comfortable with can arise. It's important to communicate clearly ahead of time to help keep everyone at the table safe.

Personally, I recommend at very least having a 'Session 0', where players and the Director can make characters together and discuss what kinds of play and subjects they're interested in tackling. However, this alone doesn't provide a framework for the group to step back in the event that something unexpected and potentially triggering comes up during play.

To help with that, there are a number of safety tools groups can use to help avoid these situations that, even if they aren't used, better communicate the boundaries of everyone at the table. You should discuss as a group what safety tools, if any, you will be using.

Provided below is info on a few I am personally familiar with, but there are more out there - I encourage you to talk with your players and look up tools that suit your needs. There is no end-all be-all of safety tools other than open, honest communication with the people you play games with. While they can be helpful, they are no replacement for treating each-other with genuine care.

The X-Card

The X-Card is a simple method by which players can veto content during a game, signalling to everyone that they wish to step back from whatever has been flagged. It is a card with an X on it, that, should a player be uncomfortable with something that arises during a session, they can tap or raise to signal their discomfort. The group steps back or edits out the signalled content.

More information on the X-Card and examples of its use can be found at **tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg**.

Lines & Veils

Lines & Veils is a system where players can designate topics as a boundary for them at two levels - as either a 'line' or a 'veil'.

- Lines are hard limits. A 'line' is something that should not come up during the game - it is something that a player has communicated that they do not want present in their role-play.
- Veils are soft limits. A 'veil' is something a player has communicated they wish to 'fade to black' or 'pan away' from. Unlike a line, they are ok with it being present in the story—just not with it being a focus.

More information on Lines & Veils and examples of its use can be found at **rpg.stackexchange.com/questions/30906/what-do-the-terms-lines-and-veils-mean**.

Optional: No-Dice Downtime

During No-Dice Downtime, players take turns performing actions to fill the Downtime Clock: once filled, it's time for the next Sortie. It is a 6-step clock, and different moves fill different amount of steps. The last action may overflow the clock if there's not enough steps left: if you do so, take **disadvantage** when you next ***lead a Sortie***. These moves are quick scenes framed and led by a player, and may be chosen in whatever order or fashion suits the party. The first move must always be ***check in***, but aside from that players are free to choose whichever options they think are the most useful.

Other players can take part in a move to help out or to cause problems. Every player taking part past the first should flip a coin and call it. On a success, they may either;

- Reduce the move's step cost by 1, to a minimum of 1.
- Gain the benefit of the move also.
- Advance a GRAVITY clock with another character in the scene.

On a failure, they may either increase the Downtime Clock an additional step, spend 1 SUPPLY, or cause a problem that will put them at *risk* during the next Sortie. This could be sudden mechanical problems, a wound re-opening, etc.

Check In — *0 Steps*

When you finish a Sortie and return to the Carrier to figure out what's next, it's time to ***check in*** with each-other not as your characters, but as players. Is everyone happy with how the game has gone since the last downtime? Does anyone want to discuss the safety tools you're using, and maybe amend any lines/veils etc? Does anyone have thoughts or comments on how the game is progressing, and what they might want to see more or less of?

After you've ***checked in***, everyone can choose and make their two Downtime moves.

Mend Something — *2 Steps*

When you attempt to repair a damaged Astir, suture wounds, or take the rest you need to recover from that last Sortie, you're attempting to ***mend something***.

When you do so, remove one *peril* of mechanical or physical origin from yourself or someone else.

Work On A Project — *2 Steps*

When you take part in long negotiations, start building something from scratch, or otherwise put effort towards a longer-term endeavour, you're trying to ***work on a project***.

When you do so, fill in one empty segment of your progress clock. If you're starting a new project, explain it to your Director and they will start a clock to represent it. Other players may contribute to your clock or their own.

Talk It Out — *2 Steps*

When you try to ease tensions, make a connection or spend time with other characters during Downtime, you're trying to ***talk it out***.

When you do so, you may choose to remove a *peril* of social or emotional origin from another character.

Shore Leave — *4 Steps*

When you try to purchase something at a market, look for trouble in neutral turf, or otherwise leave the safety of the ship to do something on foot during Downtime, you're taking ***shore leave***.

When you do so, flip and call a coin. If you succeed, you find what you were after. You may pay 1 SUPPLY to flip the coin again, however many times it takes.

Plan & Prepare *4 Steps*

When you review orders for the next Sortie, go over scouting reports and maps, or otherwise attempt to prepare the crew for what comes next, you're trying to ***plan & prepare***.

When you do so, choose 1 of the following;

- During the next Sortie, you will have the opportunity to recover 1 dropped Stake and give it to a Faction of your choice.
- During the next Sortie, you will have the opportunity to acquire up to 3 SUPPLY.
- The next ***lead a Sortie*** roll is made with **advantage**.
- All players hold 1. You may spend your hold during the next Sortie as if it were hold gained through one of your basic or playbook moves.

Each choice may only be taken once per move, per Downtime.

Playbook Alternatives

Some playbook moves make reference to the Downtime moves: versions of them alterered to work with No-Dice Downtime can be found below.

Expert Repairs (Artificer)

You're an expert at fixing broken constructs, and any repair bay runs smoother with you around. When you ***mend something***, assisting players may try again if they fail their coin toss. When you tend to someone's body or Astir, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one.

Augmenter (Artificer)

When you ***work on a project*** during Downtime, you may fill an additional clock segment. You may ***work on a project*** to create and install magical enhancements or alterations to living creatures.

Shree Klime (Diplomat)

During Downtime, you may also prepare an alias or disguise. Most people will believe you are who you say you are, unless you're disguised as someone they're very familiar with, or they are given reason to thoroughly check your person or any identification. You may take ***shore leave*** to secure 2 of the following;

- You have ID that is either legitimate or so well faked it is impossible to tell the difference.
- There's a reason or expectation for someone fitting your disguise to show up.
- You've had something useful planted ahead of time: select a weapon or piece of equipment (one you have access to) to be hidden just where you'll need it.

Evangelise (Paradigm)

You are in service of a deity or faith and are responsible for the spiritual well-being of your Carrier's crew. When you ***talk it out***, assisting players may try again if they fail their coin toss. When you give religious service or perform the rites of your faith, you may advance a GRAVITY clock with someone involved.

Creating Director Characters

Director characters (or non-player characters in more common parlance, though the GM of a game is also a player) are any character other than those created and owned by the players. When they appear on screen, the Director is typically responsible for their actions, though where appropriate you could (and should) find opportunities to let players step into their shoes.

When creating a Director character, you first need to think about how important they are. Characters are ranked as either **extras**, **side** or **main** characters. Extras are characters who are only important in their opposition to the player characters: the rank-and-file, the nameless soldiers, etc. Side characters are those that have some minor importance to the story: if they're important enough for a player to know their name, they're probably at least a Side character. Finally, Main characters have a larger role, appearing fairly often and having an impact on the world similar to or beyond that of the players.

When making a Main character, someone who is important to the story you're telling and likely to be on-screen often, come up with three adjectives to describe them. For a Side character, someone who will appear more than once but isn't quite so important, come up with two. For Extras, who are unlikely to appear more than once (and are likely to end up dead), a focus on one adjective can help their short time on screen feel nice and sharp. If you know a character might involve themselves with the players in a more direct manner, you might choose a tag or two instead of some of your usual adjectives. Saying someone is resolute means something, but saying someone is *decisive* has specific mechanical effects.

If you want to come up with additional details or backstory ahead of time for Main or Side characters, feel free—but putting that degree of effort in for Extras is likely to be wasted time.

When creating the Authority and Cause, the characters you come up with that lead or influence those groups are most likely Main or Side characters. That said, characters can move between these classifications in play wherever appropriate. Sometimes you bring on an Extra without realising how in love with them the players will become.

Clashing With Director Characters

Naturally, players can and will probably spend a lot of time fighting against and opposing the actions of Director characters on account of the Authority being made of them (if a player is a member of the Authority something has gone drastically awry).

In conflict, a character's status as either an **extra**, **side** or **main** character determines how many *risks* and *dangers* a player needs to inflict on them to make them *defenceless*. **Extras** are *defenceless* at one *danger*, meaning they are dealt with pretty quickly in straightforward conflicts, or even immediately vulnerable when in a situation where they might be at *risk* already—a player attacking them when they're unaware, etc. Extras are perfect for the rank-and-file or enemies that attack in massed numbers.

Sides are *defenceless* at two *dangers*, making them a little more involved to deal with. Even in a situation where they're at *risk* to begin with, you'd still need to inflict a second on them to ***strike decisively***, making them less resilient than the players but still someone they need to confront properly.

Mains are *defenceless* at three *dangers*, making them equal to players in this regard. Main characters should be a challenge the players can't ignore—someone they might tangle with on more than one occasion, who feels like a fair match for them (at least one-on-one).

If you know a character is going to be involved in fighting, there's some additional details you might want to come up with for them. You'll need to decide their tier, as described above in Conflict & Tiers. This defines broadly what what they are effective against, and what is effective against them. You will also want to determine what approach they use in combat, which gives them weaknesses and strengths against certain opposition.

Finally, give them whatever equipment, attacks or bonuses that feel appropriate for who they are and what their role is, either from the example lists or made fresh for your game. For Extra-level monsters, creatures, or other foes that you want to keep simple, you might forgo giving them this level of detail and just give them a note like 'this foe's attacks have the *bane* tag' or 'this foe has the *armour* tag'. Keep a few things in mind, though;

- *Bane* and *ruin* lets foes hit effectively above their tier
- For simplicity's sake, Director characters who pilot Astirs don't have Mana or ***subsystems*** unless you decide specifically otherwise.
- Weapons used by foes might be stolen or picked up by players
- You don't need to build the Astirs used by foes using the normal rules

Squads

When foes are attacking in large numbers, they fight as a squad (aka a small gang). When engaged in combat with a squad of your tier or higher while alone, your rolls against them are made at **disadvantage**. You can ignore this if using a weapon that has the *area* tag. A squad being defeated doesn't necessarily mean the entire group has been killed—they might simply scatter or retreat where appropriate—but doing so removes the **disadvantage**, as does disengaging from the fight or acquiring backup.

Example Foes

The following pages have some example foes of various ranks and tiers, broadly categorised into;

- Astirs & Golems
- People
- Creatures & Monsters
- Outsiders



Astirs & Golems

Like those piloted by the players, Astirs and Golems are the mainstay of most Authorities when it comes to warfare. Whether grown from the soil, forged in foundries, or summoned from another plane, all Astirs have something in common: they are exceptionally dangerous in the right (or wrong) hands.

Unprepared Cadet III (*Extra, Mundane*)

- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive)*
- Omen III
  - Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive*)

"U-uh, reporting for duty, sir! Ready to skirmish."

Militia Labour Pilot II (*Extra, Arcane*)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (*melee*)
- Service Golem II
  - Golem Fists II (*melee / messy*)
  - Condenser Stave II (*ranged / refresh*, *magic*, *2H*)

"Simple bipedal constructs, Service Golems are still capable of doing the work of ten men. If only we had more of them."

Bandit Skirmisher Pilot II (*Side, Mundane*)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (*melee*)
- Skirmisher Golem II
  - Hefty Blade II (*melee / messy, area*)

"Quit bragging, Marco. It's not much of a competition when we have to scrap and fight to pull down one servo, but you can cut down two in one swing."

Mercenary Astir Pilot III (*Side, Arcane*)

- Raypistol I (*ranged / bane, limited*)
- Wolf III
  - Rayrifle III (*ranged / area, 2H*)
  - Forceknife (*melee / small, thrown, decisive*)

"There's our print on the steelwork, sure—but everything else is new. The benefit of… diverse employers."

Authority Main IV (*Main, Arcane*)

- Raypistol I (*ranged / bane, limited*)
- Orca IV
  - Forceblade IV (*melee / bane*)
  - Burstcaster IV (*ranged / area, bane, 2H*)

"Orca, mark one. Launching."

Mechanical Knight II (*Main, Mundane*)

- Shatterlance II (*melee / bane, reloading, limited, 2H*)
- Sword/Axe/Mace I (*melee*)
- Warded Plate (*ward*)
- Steed Golem II
  - Iron Hooves II (*melee*)

"Cavalry? Of a sort, I suppose. Just stay out of our way."

People

People come in all shapes and sizes, from all walks of life, with all kinds of identities. They're you, and they're me.

Anti-Construct Team I (*Extra, Arcane*)

- Raycaster I (*sniper / reloading, ruin, 2H*)
- Shortswords I (*melee*)
- Arcane Generator I (*Ignore reloading on weapons*)

"Stop complaining, kid. It won't feel heavy once you see it put a hole in an Astir."

Militia I (*Extra, Mundane*)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (*melee*)
- Repeater Crossbow I (*ranged / 2H*)

"People like you or me, ready to fight for what they believe in. Or to keep their homes, at least."

Rifleman I (*Side, Mundane*)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (*melee*)
- Snaprifle I (*ranged /, infinite, distinct, 2H*)

"Heads down, hold fire. Don't shoot back until you hear the snap."

Knight I (*Side, Mundane*)

- Great Weapon I (*melee / bane, area, messy, 2H*)
- Warded Plate (*ward*)

"Clad in steel, bearing blades almost as tall as they are, and carrying the confidence of a nation. Once upon a time that was all an army needed."

Scout II (*Main, Mundane*)

- Scourblade II (*melee / bane, distinct, 2H*)
- Raypistol I (*ranged / bane, limited*)
- Grappling Rig I

"So, bad news about the captain. Someone swung out of a tree and stuck a broadsword through his cockpit."

Pathfinder I (*Main, Mundane*)

- Blessed Bow I (*sniper / decisive, **divine**, 2H*)
- Hatchet I (*melee*)
- Invisibility Cloak I (*limited, fragile, makes you invisible*)

"Arrows have to come from somewhere! Spread out. Search the treeline."

Creatures & Monsters

All sorts of things lurk in the deep, dark corners of this land. Some of nature, some not so much.

Wolf I (*Extra*, *Mundane*)

- Tooth & Claw I (*melee*)

"Hail, adventurer. Prithee bring me ten wolf asses, so that I might fashion you a belt."

Giant Spider I (*Extra*, *Mundane*)

- Fangs I (*melee*)
- Spinnerets I (*ranged / restraining*)

"Scouts say they found an Astir in the northern forest, covered in so much webbing they couldn't move it at all. No sign of the pilot. Probably for the best."

Owlbear II (*Side*, *Profane*)

- Rending Claws II (*melee*)

"Look, I don't care if you believe me or not. I'm not going back in without a golem. Not while that thing is in there too."

Wyvern III (*Side*, *Elemental*)

- Fireball III (*ranged / area*)
- Rending Claws III (*melee*)
- Fireproof Scales III (Cannot be harmed by fire)

"If you can see their shadow pass on the ground, it's too late. Your best bet is to hope that when they descend, it's not you they're after."

Frost Dragon V (*Main*, *Elemental*)

- Rimebreath V (*ranged / area, reload, restraining*)
- Tail Sweep V (*melee / area*)
- Frostbound Hide V (*ward*)

"The final count? Two companies of men, their assigned golems, and a full wing of astirs."

Landshark Matriarch IV (*Main*, *Mundane*)

- Crushing Jaws IV (*melee / messy, area*)
- Digging Claws IV (Can dig and swim through earth or sand)
- Tremorsense IV (Can detect foes through vibrations in the ground)

"The worms? Oh, no. You can feel them coming from miles away. No, it's the sharks you want to worry about."

Outsiders

Extraplanar creatures, those from worlds beyond ours, are broadly referred to as 'outsiders'. Unbound by natural law, outsiders are often inherently magical.

Imp I (*Extra, Profane*)

- Devilish Firebolts I (*ranged / bane*)

"Among the lowest orders of devils, but dangerous in their own right."

Frost Mote I (*Extra, Elemental*)

- Freezing Touch I (*melee / restraining*)
- Ice Shard I (*ranged / bane, reloading*)

"Set a fire burning tonight, have someone keep an eye on it. Mara said she saw motes blow in on the wind last night."

Lowly Angel II (*Side, Divine*)

- Divine Flame II (*ranged*)

"The shapes of angels seem strange, but why pretend to understand the work of the divine?"

Void Giant III (*Side, Mundane*)

- Obelisk III (*melee / messy, 2H*)
- Voidborn (Doesn't need to breathe or eat, is immune harm from cold)

"They came from above. Down from the skies, from the deep darkness of night."

Pit Fiend III (*Main, Profane*)

- Abyssal Warmace III (*melee / bane, area*)
- Hellish Regrowth (*Perils* from physical harm reduced to *risks*)

"Leading any gathering of devils will be a pit fiend. Unlike the lesser creatures beneath them, these fiends have the strength and tenacity to match their cruelty."

Terra, Titan Alive V (*Main, Elemental*)

- Erupting Earth V (*ranged / area, messy*)
- Titanic Punch V (*melee / slow, ruin*)
- Uncaring Gaze (Doesn't notice things III or lower unless directly interfered with)

"The elemental planes have no king or governor, and they never will. One would have to wrest power from the waking earth itself. "

Rivals

Rivals are recurring characters who appear again and again to challenge specific players who have earned their attention. Mechanically speaking, they are Main characters with a GRAVITY clock with whoever they're the Rival to. They also have a Need (what their faction demands of them, what they are obligated to do, etc), and a Want (what they want from their counterpart), which helps direct their fiction, but also provides them with ***leverage*** the Director may use against their counterpart (whichever player is involved with a particular Rival).

Leverage

When your counterpart interferes with your Need or indulges you in your Want, hold 1. You may spend this hold whenever 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Raise or lower the result of one of their moves by one level of success.
- Ask a challenging question that must be answered.
- Appear somewhere you aren't expected.

Rivals don't need to explicitly be foes that are gunning for a player in an antagonistic way. They might be an allies with a competitive relationship, someone they are trying to impress (or vice versa), and so on.

RIVAL

Name: Corel White
Need: To follow her orders to the letter
Want: To learn more about the Ilgard's music
Gravity +2 ■■■□□□□□□ **Hold** 2

RIVAL

Name: Bromwael
Need: To be rewarded by the Associate
Want: To fight their rival alone
Gravity +3 ■□□□□□□□□ **Hold** 1

Examples of *leverage*

Lilette, an Arcanist, is crossing blades with her Rival, Kett. She has forced them into a corner and made them *defenceless.* There's no love lost between the two of them, so Lilette takes the opportunity and tries to ***strike decisively***, driving her trice-forged blade right through the chest armour of Kett's astir. She rolls an 8, netting her a mixed success, but Kett's fate isn't quite sealed: he has hold to spend! The Director spends 1 hold to lower the result of Lilette's move by one level of success, reducing it to a failure. The outcome of Lilette's move is now out of her hands.

Dani is struggling against Cress, her Rival. Rain is pounding against the rooftop they are fighting on, and Dani has been knocked over, crawling along the slick rooftiles to try and grab their dagger. Before she can reach it though, the Director spends one hold to ask a challenging question that must be answered. Cress calls out through the storm: "Did what we had mean *anything* to you?"

Setting & Mission Hooks

The next section of the book is dedicated to Setting & Mission Hooks.

Setting Hooks serve as examples of the settings you might play Armour Astir in: each containing an example Cause and Authority, some key locations, factions and characters, and even some variants of example gear and Astirs. Take them whole-cloth, scavenge from the bones, or simply use them as inspiration.

Similarily, Mission Hooks provide a quick scenario outline with options for customising it to match the setting and players of your game. If only part of a hook interests you, cut it out and just use that! You could even take elements from various hooks and combine them, just like any of the other example content in this book.

[-3H TO INCIDENT]
Chief Machine-seer [redacted] enters Astir Hangar #3, and proceeds to perform the standard rituals for seraphim-binding. Divination reveals no deviations or mistakes made in ritual process.

[-1H TO INCIDENT]
Second-seer [redacted] enters Astir Hangar #3 to deliver necessary tools and [redacted] for seraphim-binding. Divination reveals minor deviations in binding ritual seals at this time due to a small lizard smearing the [redacted] glyph.

[-.3H TO INCIDENT]
Labourers Hurley, Wright and Lilan enter Astir Hangar #3 and begin preparations on a Siege-walker Class Astir to receive the modified, binded core. Seer-adepts [redacted] and [redacted] enter Astir hangar #3 and assist Chief Machine-seer [redacted] and Second-seer [redacted] as they begin the seraphim-binding process.

[-.1H TO INCIDENT]
Labourers Hurley and Wright install the binded core containing [redacted] (outsider, divine source, classification #[redacted]) into the prepared Siege-walker Class Astir. Astir is at this time re-classified as Radiant, and titled 'PRIDE OF [redacted]'.

[INCIDENT]
Binded core containing [redacted] (outsider, divine source, classification #[redacted]) malfunctions due to earlier deviations in seraphim-binding rituals. Manifestation is immediate (flames: class A, eyes: class D, chorus: class undetermined). 'PRIDE OF [redacted]' is rapidly liquified from the inside out due to extreme heat. Damage to Astir Hangar #3 is considerable. Chief Machine-seer [redacted], Second-seer [redacted], Seer-adepts [redacted] and [redacted] all evacuate via standard teleportation. Labourers Hurley, Wright and Lilan are subject to [redacted] [redacted].

- Excerpt from '*The Seraphim Files*', author unknown, discovered C3/Y73.3, divine-dated to C2/Y93.8-9





THE GHOST REACHES

Overview

The Ghost Reaches are a bustling, dense archipelago, that stretch from the many temperate southern islands up to the frigid Isle of Repose. Named for an old local legend, which described how wayward spirits would make a pilgrimage from island to island, eventually coming to a final rest at Repose.

The Reaches, while once divided by fierce rivalries, have long since been united under a ruling council consisting of democratically elected delegates from each island. How many delegates an island may elect is based on a number of factors, like population, how much trade value their ports provide to the Reaches, and so on. While in their warring days many of the islands struggled to be self-sufficient, co-operation has allowed them to find new identities and niches in regards to what they provide those that live there and the Reaches at large. These transformations in infrastructure and industry have left the Reaches a prosperous but lightly defended place, much of its military returning to civilian life in the post-unification period.

In recent years, this attracted the attention of the Faces Of Progress, an industrial-militaristic faction from the continent to the west. Seeking access to the Reaches' resources and workforce, the Faces Of Progress made a rapid, unexpected move to capture the Isle of Repose and re-purpose it as a staging point from which to move on the entire region. Opposing them (and their now-frequent raids on nearby islands) is The New Hunt, a loose militia that cobbles together Astirs from what local craftsmen can spare and parts taken from creatures on the Isle of Kings.

Authority: The Faces Of Progress

The Faces Of Progress, having recently grown from 'vampiric cohort', to 'cabal of industrial magnates', to 'sovereign state', is quickly becoming the production centre of the known world. Their factories produce everything from cutlery to armed Astirs, in dizzying quantities. To keep this up and expand even further, they find themselves in need of new sources for raw materials, a need they see fit to address by force. The Ghost Reaches is merely first on their list: once it has been strip mined and levelled to make room for factories, Progress will be made somewhere else.

Leader: The invasion of the Reaches is led by Galinn Juriss, a former mine foreman who proved himself as a natural military leader during the Faces' violent transition from business to nation. Rumour has it the Faces' true leadership has shared a certain sanguine gift with him.

Aesthetic: Porcelain, damage repaired with gold lacquer. Leather padding and patterned silks. Golden trims and ornamentation. Exposed tubing and scarlet liquids.

Cause: The New Hunt

Formed in reaction to the Faces Of Progress seizing the Isle of Repose, The New Hunt is a loose militia of a few dozen resistance cells, doing what they can to prevent their foes gaining any more of a foothold in the archipelago.

Leader: The New Hunt has no overall leader, with cells acting largely independently.

Aesthetic: Monster bones, horns and teeth. Recycled driftwood, iron chains and bolts. Colourful paintwork, kill tallies and trophies.

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Example Factions of The New Hunt

King's Isle Couriers (Guerillas)

Once upon a time, the KIC were your best bet for getting packages quickly and safely across the Isle of Kings. With the Faces of Progress on the scene, they've turned their pathfinding skills and secret routes to slightly different ends.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

The Beached (Military)

An offshoot of a mercenary company, The Beached washed up on shore after getting caught in crossfire during the Faces' initial invasion. In following with their company's code, they quickly set about converting their wrecked ship to a local HQ and scheming against their accidental attackers.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

Sif's Sleepers (Strange)

Many were displaced when the Isle of Repose was seized, including the many priests that tended to its restful temples. Those young and angry enough to turn their sorcery against the Faces banded together as Sif's Sleepers.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

The Reaches Unity Fund (Suppliers)

With the Reaches' actual military slow to mobilise, many influential and resourceful individuals collected together to form the Unity Fund, a thinly-veiled operation to financially back the various resistance cells of The New Hunt.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

Calistone (Thieves)

Calistone were a small-time band of thieves who just happened to have a very well-hidden route in and out of Repose at the time of the invasion. Though the route was only good for one heist, the spoils of Progress were enough to take them from an amateur group to a well-tooled organisation.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

Loreth Tidal Guild (Saboteurs)

The Tidal Guild is reponsible for maintaining a system of dams and locks that keep Loreth Island inhabitable following an magical accident that sunk it a few meters below sea level. Their engineering expertise also made them naturals at disrupting arcane fortifications and Astirs belonging to the Faces Of Progress.

STAKE ☐☐☐

GRIP ☐☐☐

BREAKING: MERCENARIES MAKE LANDFALL ON MERMAID'S ISLE - FRIENDS OR FOE?

Onlookers were stunned today as armed swords-for-hire made landfall on the northern shore of Mermaid's Isle, commonly known by locals as Watcher Beach. Bringing a number of constructs with them including a large Astir, these sellswords quickly set about making a camp and raising a small stake wall. Their ship, which seemed to this scholar to be damaged quite heavily, was brought high on the beach and stripped for wood.

It is unknown from what company these mercenaries hail, but those of Mermaid's Isle are hopeful they will not cause trouble in the coming days of the Progress's occupation.

- Excerpt from *'The Reach Gazette'*, Silt-town Publishing, YA212.M3.D13



The Faces Of Progress

Overview

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Example Divisions of The Faces Of Progress

The Juriss Company (Military)

Galinn Juriss’s personal expeditionary force, sent to claim the Ghost Reaches for his vampiric masters. Galinn is eager to improve his position: there are few within the Faces of Progress who have their own armed Companies, but there are fewer with their own lordships.

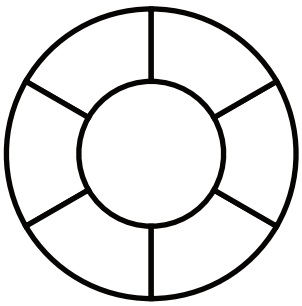
The Veiled Order (Subterfuge)

The Veiled Order is a small organisation that spreads itself out within the many operations of the Faces Of Progress, doing behind the scenes what it cannot do on the stage. Spies and saboteurs, the Veiled Order rely on disguises cast from blood magic in order to pass unnoticed among their enemies.

Artery #23 (Resource)

The many Arteries of the Faces Of Progress transport goods, weapons, and that sweet sweet sanguine wherever they are needed. #23 is tasked with aiding and abetting the Juriss Company in their many endeavours.

Example Projects of The Faces Of Progress

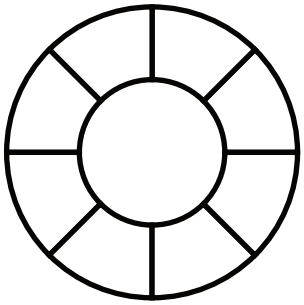


Pacifying The Isle Of Kings

Sinnh Renere, an agent of Artery #23, thinks something can be done to make the Isle Of Kings’s wildlife ignore Juriss Company troops.

A Watchful Eye

An extensive checkpoint system between islands would be tough to install, but would heavily restrict movement of The New Hunt.



Example Astirs of The Ghost Reaches

CLIPPER III	MUNDANE	CORE	MANA 2
		ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■

WARDING	SPELL ROUTINES
RUGGED BUILD *(+ward)*	Choose to take a result of 7-9 on a ***weather the storm***

Clippers are large, rugged Astirs originally designed for patrols over the Isle of Kings, keeping the roads clear of overgrown fauna. The New Hunt has re-purposed an entire fleet of them for war, a task they are more than fit for.

MV: CUTTING ARMS

You may use the ***subsystems*** move to remove a environmental hazard of your choice.

CARRIED	Hewer III (*melee / bane*)
CARRIED	Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive*)

PUNCTURE III	PROFANE	CORE	MANA 2
		OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■

MANA-FORGE	RESISTANCE CHARM
You may ***cool off*** to resupply an expended weapon	CLARITY COVENANT (Lowers *dangers* from stunning/dazing)

Punctures are the rapier of any Faces Of Progress squad, designed to be let loose on particularly dangerous foes. Carrying large blood-fed spellcannons, Punctures are best dealt with harshly: focusing rituals mean middling blows will do little to sway their aim.

MV: FOE EYE

You can always assess which foe before you is the most dangerous.

CARRIED	Spellcannon III (*ranged / ruin, limited, 2H*)
SHEATHED	Forceknife III (*melee / small, decisive*)

Example Gear of The Ghost Reaches

Bloodletter I (*melee / distinct*)
The rank-and-file of the Faces Of Progress carry these sinister spears, mundane in nature but by design capable of drawing the blood of their victims. Those not of the rank-and-file, it turns out, have an unquenchable thirst.

Ashmaker Bow I (*ranged / ruin, dangerous, 2H*)
Ashmakers were just a theory until the invasion began: one the New Hunt have taken pleasure in putting into practice. Immensely dangerous alchemical arrows paired with a bow ritually treated with the protections needed to withstand them, Ashmakers are the prized possesion of any resistance cell.

Little Shark II (*melee / small, freezing*)
When the first mariner's golem team was dispatched to interfere with Progress reinforcements, they found their equipment lacking for undersea use. Dubbed Little Sharks, these golem-fit wands stacked with short-range frost magic provided an easy way of ruining ship hulls.

Decanting Staff III (*ranged / bane, 2H*)
A long staff, held in both hands of an Astir. A series of alchemical processes purify and extract magical energy from stolen blood, before turning it to violent ends.

Hewer III (*melee / bane)*
A circular saw, spun at lightning speeds by the volatile reaction between distilled alchemical fire and permafrost from the deep heart of Repose.

MISSION HOOKS

The Grand Melee

The Authority has arranged a grand tournament between Channelers. It has invited would-be challengers from *[around the country/within its military/around the world]* to fight in their Astirs *[one-on-one/in teams]* and compete for *[glory/a grand prize/a blessing/an important role]*. Little do the challengers know, however, the Grand Melee is simply an opportunity for the Authority to *[show off a new Astir/kill off skilled channelers/steal custom Astirs/recruit channelers]*.

Places

An Astir workshop, where:

- Artificers are dismantling a heavily damaged Astir
- Trainee Artificers are being taught the basics by the workshop chief
- Everyone is working together on an emergency/large repair job
- An injured channeler is being freed from their destroyed Astir

A lounge where;

- Channelers are waiting between tournament bouts
- Rich spectators are watching the tournament from safety
- Authority officials are debriefing their plans for the tournament
- The players can relax, whilst secretly being observed

The tournament grounds, where;

- Some challengers are being a little *too* secretive about their Astirs
- A boisterous Channeler is looking for a fight to tide him over
- The Authority is openly recruiting channelers
- Someone is itching to cause trouble

People

An ace Authority channeler who is;

- Waiting for the perfect opportunity to betray their masters
- Desperate to prove their true worth
- Taking part in the tournament as penance

An artificer who is;

- A double agent
- Sabotaging any Astirs they work on
- Looking for a promising channeler to give an experimental upgrade

A Cause agent who is;

- Here on completely unrelated business
- Way in over their head
- Looking for help getting somewhere they shouldn't be

Things

- Ruined banners
- A lost badge of office
- A malfunctioning weapon
- A rare magical focus
- Crates of alchemical supplies
- A vandalised altar
- Books full of odd rituals
- A storm in a teacup
- A trapped storeroom
- A mythical sword

Neutral Ground

The Cause has learned of a secret Authority project set up in a supposedly neutral city. It has sent the players to *[scout out/steal/destroy]* the project, which is *[an experimental Astir/a dangerous magical experiment/a secret arms depot].* Complicating this is the fact that the Cause *[has no intel on the nature of the project/is hiding something from the players/has been fed false information]*.

Places

An entry checkpoint, where:

- Overworked employees aren't checking anyone's papers
- A recent event has extra attention being paid to inbound parties
- Someone is trying to smuggle goods into the city
- Some Authority soldiers are making a scene

A warehouse where;

- Authority personnel can enter their secret base
- Rich spectators are watching the tournament from safety
- Authority officials are debriefing their plans for the tournament
- The players can relax, whilst secretly being observed

The forest nearby, where;

- The Authority is secretly testing something
- The magically enhanced trees are being directed to Authority lumberyards
- A large clearing makes for a perfect ambush spot
- Someone is itching to cause trouble

People

A rookie Authority channeler who is;

- Far, far too naïve
- Personally invested in the success of the project
- An old friend of one of the players

An artificer who is;

- Helping cover up the project, since it might lead to other advancements
- Posing as a civilian while spying for the Authority
- Sheltering smuggled Cause resources

A Cause agent who is;

- Here on completely unrelated business
- Way in over their head
- Looking for help getting somewhere they shouldn't be

Things

- Stolen alchemical supplies
- An abandoned Astir
- A hidden weapons cache
- An unfinished ritual
- Strange remains
- A broken chain
- Forged documents
- A trail of blood, still wet
- A seeing orb
- Smuggled luxuries

Eleventh Hour

The Cause has learned that the Authority has developed [*a macrospell/an Astir/a magical weapon/something strange and arcane*] capable of ending the war in one fell swoop—in their favour, of course. It falls to the players to [*discover it's secret location/destroy it/seize it for the Cause*] before the Authority can use it to [*force Cause leadership to expose themselves at a 'peace' meeting/destroy the Cause's primary base or holding/kill an absurd amount of dissenters*].

Places

A grand hall, where:

- The Cause's bureaucracy is crumbling
- An official is about to overplay their hand
- A performance with unforeseen consequences is about to begin
- A betrayal is about to be revealed

A Carrier's command deck, where;

- A terrifying order is about to be given
- A mistake is about to be made
- A coup attempt is made
- Someone has a moment of clarity

A secret location, where;

- The players aren't welcome
- The players are, suspiciously, very welcome
- Something is revealed to have been vastly misunderstood
- Something equally as bad is happening far more quietly

People

An ace Authority channeler who is;

- Aghast at the lengths the Authority is going to
- A Cause agent in deep cover
- Responsible for pulling the trigger, whatever that looks like

A diplomat who is;

- Moving resources in a very unhelpful way
- Moving resources in a very unhelpful way, intentionally
- Trying to cajole a reticent group into action

A chief Artificer who is;

- In charge of the Authority's team working on the [*macrospell/Astir/etc*]
- Looking for a weakness in the Authority's plan
- On the verge of a magical breakthrough

Things

- Something unrecognisable
- A door that shouldn't be open
- An immense magical gemstone
- Forgotten bones
- A construct of vast size
- A dropped key
- Files meant to be burned
- A bribe
- Something you think is yours
- A volatile potion

Authority Attack!

The Authority is raiding [*a small town/a Cause stronghold/an off-planet colony/a major city*] in order to [*search for something/capture and occupy it/destroy Cause morale*]. It falls to the players to fend off the assault and save the day, even though [*one of the players calls this place home/a grand Cause secret is sequestered here/this place was once sacred to the Authority*].

Places

A warehouse, where:

- A prototype Astir is waiting
- The Authority have found a way in
- Evacuees have found shelter
- Something isn't right

A street, where;

- Drastic action is about to be taken
- Something hidden is being uncovered
- A stand-off occurs
- Innocents are left vulnerable

The outskirts, where;

- A heated skirmish is building
- Something is amiss
- A declaration is made
- An escape route is being protected

People

A civilian leader who is;

- Held hostage by the Authority
- Hiding out with something important
- Leading evacuation efforts

An Authority channeler who is;

- In no way ready to lead this mission
- Out for revenge
- Trying to prove themselves to their superiors

A civilian who is;

- In the wrong place at the wrong time
- One of the players (better find yourself an Astir)
- Taking matters into their own hands

Things

- A childhood home
- An unfinished miracle
- A stockpile of arms
- A broken gate
- A system of canals
- A hoisted flag
- A missing shipment
- A hole in the wall
- A number of gold bars
- A delicate alchemical process

APPENDIX

Risk & Peril Examples

Risks

Risk (distracted) - Something has caught your eye, and it's very distracting. Maybe you could make some space and collect your thoughts?

Risk (targeted) - Missile lock! Evade, evade! Could you counterspell the targeting systems, or put something between you and the missiles?

Risk (suppressed) - You're being held at bay by suppressing fire. Maybe you could take them out, or find some cover.

Risk (on fire) - Your Astir is on fire. It's really hot all of a sudden. You could find some water, or do something else to extinguish the flames.

Risk (bleeding) - That's a nasty cut you've got - you could bandage it up, or try to close the wound with magic...

Risk (chilled) - Brrr! You or your Astir are all frosty. Find a way to turn up the heat, or chip away that building ice.

Risk (flirty) - Can love bloom on the battlefield? You're hoping, but maybe you just need a minute to cool off.

Risk (scared) - Getting in an Astir can be pretty frightening. Maybe someone could talk you down, or maybe you just need to face your fear.

Risk (disrupted) - Your Astir's systems have been messed up, knocked out of alignment, etc. You could magically re-align them, or manually open things up and fix the problem.

Risk (angry) - That was too damn close! You're real mad about it! You could get rid of the target of your frustrations, or just try to get some space from them.

Perils

Peril (exhausted) - You're running on empty. Little short of a real rest will fix that.

Peril (wounded) - That's more than a little bruise or cut - you need real medical attention for this one.

Peril (broken limb) - Whether it belongs to you or your Astir, this needs proper treatment - and for your Astir, maybe replacement.

Peril (impaled) - You'd better leave that where it is. It's going to get in the way, but it'd get worse if you took it out...

Peril (furious) - Something REALLY got to you, huh? You're mad in a way that sticks even when the fire dies down, and need some real time to work things out.

Peril (bad rep) - Your reputation with someone or something has taken a real hit. It's going to be trouble until you do the work to fix things.

Peril (in love) - It turns out love can bloom on the battlefield, and it's got you good. There's a few ways you could resolve this one.

Peril (burnout) - Overheating has seared the inside of your Astir, destroying parts. This calls for some real internal repairs.

Glossary & Shorthands

Sortie: A period of time in which the players have left their Carrier to fight, scout or otherwise act with an objective in mind.

Mission: A larger goal that would take multiple Sorties to achieve.

Campaign: A full game of Armour Astir, consisting of several Missions and ending in resolution in some way of the core conflict.

Trait: The 6 stats that cover your characters abilities and are used to make moves.

GRAVITY: A measure of one characters admiration and understanding of another.

Cause: The group that you and yours represent in your fight against an Authority.

Authority: The primary antagonistic group of your game.

Dangers: *Dangers* are effects that make you vulnerable to harm, physical or otherwise. *Dangers* are split between minor '*risks*' and more serious '*perils*'.

Defenceless: Being *defenceless* means that you must ***bite the dust*** when threatened by harm, physical or otherwise.

Approach: The five approaches: mundane, arcane, divine, profane and elemental. Approaches offer **confidence** or **desperation** when using ***exchange blows*** and ***strike decisively*** and are determined by your playbook or by an Astir or Golem. Some weapons have their own approach, which overrides your usual if you choose to use it.

Tag: A tag is a small note that provides some narrative or mechanical information that can be easily added to an object or character to provide detail or customisation.

Weapon: Something used to inflict harm on someone else (by design or otherwise).

Gear: Any piece of useful equipment that isn't used to hit someone over the head.

SUPPLY: An abstract representation of trade goods, tools and parts stored on board your Carrier.

Construct: A magically-powered machine or vehicle. Constructs typically require a Channeler to pilot and fuel them, though some are automatons. Golems, familiars, and Armour Astirs are all constructs.

Armour Astir: Astirs are powerful enchanted constructs, typically between 30 and 60 feet tall, that must be piloted by a Channeler who provides the magic required for them to function. They're mechs. You know what these are.

Golem: A magically-powered vehicle, usually smaller than an Astir. Golems fill a role that can be loosely considered cavalry. Simple enough for a conventional magical power source, meaning anyone can pilot them if they aren't autonomous.

Familiar: Familiars are small, autonomous Constructs that assist their master with a narrow field of tasks. Like a drone, or funnels/bits.

Artifact: A part of your Astir that can be activated with the ***subsystems*** move to give you Advantage on a roll, before or after you make it.

Advantage: To roll an additional die and take the highest two.

Disadvantage: To roll an additional die and take the lowest two.

Confidence: To roll with two additional dice and take the highest two, ignoring any **disadvantage**.

Desperation: To roll with two additional dice and take the lowest two, ignoring any **advantage.**

Magical Objects

2d6	Object
11	*A set of cooking utensils that are always spotlessly clean.*
12	*An orb that floats by the head of its owner, providing them with wisdom.*
13	*A coin that always lands as it is called.*
14	*A basket of porcelain spheres that move to form a model of the solar system when laid on black cloth.*
15	*An ornamental sword that any onlooker views as tailor made for them.*
16	*A jar of sand that wards the bearer against fear.*
21	*A clay tablet that can capture a perfect rendering of any scene it is held up against.*
22	*A map that may be temporarily written on with your fingers.*
23	*A thin crystalline needle that constantly points at the closest source of invisibility magic.*
24	*A hammer that will drive nails through anything.*
23	*A silver token that prevents the holder from knowingly lying.*
26	*A small vial of liquid that burns through everything except glass.*
31	*A gold-painted ring that alters divination magic cast by the wearer to show more hopeful or lucky futures and outcomes.*
32	*An iron rose that sprouts thorns in the hands of someone who has broken a vow or promise.*
33	*A gem that can capture words from the bearer's target.*
34	*A shield that can hold back any flood.*
35	*A feathered cloak that projects a waterproof barrier around the wearer.*
36	*A box that only opens during an eclipse.*
41	*A knife and fork that vibrate gently in the presence of poison.*
42	*A set of hand-made dice that only ever roll 3's.*
43	*An adhesive that will bond any two things.*
44	*A solvent that will separate any two things.*
45	*A mask with jewelled lenses that feeds false information about the wearer to anyone who would use mind-reading magic on them.*
46	*A lock that merges with any surface it is pushed into, until unlocked.*
51	*A wax strawberry that becomes poison once a trigger word is spoken.*
52	*A flag that slowly ruins the soil wherever it is planted.*
53	*A never-ending ball of string.*
54	*A fake paper Astir that folds up to fit in your pocket.*
55	*A thin stone disc that floats freely wherever it is left, and can support a few kilograms of weight.*
56	*A keyring that guides the holder to lost keys.*
61	*A leather collar that hides the wearer from magic that detects living creatures.*
62	*A crown that repairs itself and reshapes itself to fit any head.*
63	*A short knife that is capable of cutting through any non-magical rope, cord or chain.*
64	*A gauntlet fitted with a jewel that can conjure a storm overheard.*
65	*A pair of gloves that can touch in the intangible.*
66	*A pair of picture frames that act as a portal to each-other.*

Magical Weapons

2d6	Object
11	*A spear that binds those injured by casting chains from their blood.*
12	*A sheathe from which a blade of any length can be drawn.*
13	*A long Astir's cannon that fires shells full of magically contained magma.*
14	*A launcher filled with wands that cast blighting spells upon impact.*
15	*A javelin that trails flame behind it when thrown.*
16	*A wand that allows the bearer to draw down bolts of lightning.*
21	*A flintlock pistol with rounds guided by bound spirits.*
22	*An ornamented halberd that lets forth a terrifying roar when it takes a life.*
23	*Paired swords that unerringly track wounds left by the other.*
24	*An Astir-sized staff capable of spraying beams of frost.*
23	*A crossbow adorned with elemental crystals that charge its bolts with thunderous energy.*
26	*A bow, made from the wood of a tree grown in blessed grove.*
31	*A set of perfectly balanced bronze orbs.*
32	*Three silver arrows, each with a small plaque for a target's name.*
33	*A pair of alchemical mortars, designed to flood the world with toxin.*
34	*A rifle loaded with thick pieces of magical crystal.*
35	*A hollow mace, from which sticky tar oozes.*
36	*A ballista that trails a path of solid, tangible light behind its bolts.*
41	*A multi-chambered firearm designed to fire lead-encased scrolls.*
42	*A flat-tipped executioner's sword that leaves only closed wounds.*
43	*A brace of flintlocks that briefly crack open thin portals to a much more incendiary realm than ours.*
44	*An axe carved wholly from one huge, serrated fang.*
45	*A pouch of small gems that explode dramatically when shattered.*
46	*A blade that is magically incapable of leaving wounds.*
51	*A long whip embedded with venomous, weeping thorns.*
52	*A catapult that conjures a new payload into existence after every shot.*
53	*A ring of keys which can magically merge into a small blade.*
54	*A lightweight lance, embellished with golden seals that attempt to deflect any magic that would harm their bearer.*
55	*A thin glass orb filled with acid, that slowly repairs and refills itself after smashing against its holders target.*
56	*A silver dagger that can be safely hidden in the flesh of its bound owner.*
61	*A heavy mace that emits a dispelling field, designed to stop Astirs without causing damage that would make them unsalvageable.*
62	*A winged spear that grants the bearer limited flight in pursuit of their foe.*
63	*A contraption that fires searing javelins accurately in trios.*
64	*A matched pair of long-clawed gauntlets, which harbour a charge of frosty magical energy.*
65	*A crystalline wand, charged with spells that brand those struck.*
66	*A long-handled axe, enchanted to whip up heavy winds whenever it is swung in anger.*

ARMOUR ASTIR ARTIFICE

A short game about creating something magical (and terrible), for three players.
Created originally for #WizJam2k19

You are a coven of **MAGE-ARTIFICERS**, brought together to enchant an **ASTIR** - a magical construct that will, alongside its **CHANNELER**, push back the **ENEMY**.

One of you is **RADICAL**, and sees the **ASTIR** could be more than the others understand.

One of you is **BELOVED**, and knows everything about their **CHANNELER**.

One of you is **DILIGENT**, and understands well what threats the **ENEMY** poses.

Take turns describing a spell, enchantment or magical artifact that could be implemented into the **ASTIR's** design to the other **ARTIFICERS**. One **ARTIFICER** will support your pitch, and tell you why - the other will dispute it. Then, you roll to see how your magic turns out.

Alone, you roll a single d6, but;

If the **RADICAL** describes a potential transgression or misuse, good or bad, they add a d6.

If the **BELOVED** describes how the **CHANNELER** will feel about this and why, they add a d6.

If the **DILIGENT** describes how this counters a threat presented by the **ENEMY**, they add a d6.

Roll these dice, and check what the highest result is;

If it is a 1 or 2, it is flawed: whoever disputed the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing how it failed or caused someone harm once.

If it is a 3 or 4, it is acceptable: whoever designed the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing it being used to successful ends.

If it is a 5 or 6, it is perfect: whoever supported the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing how it was used to achieve something beyond what you thought possible.

When the three of you decide that the **ASTIR** is finished, give it a name. Finally, check how many designs were flawed, how many were acceptable, and how many were perfect. Finally, you will narrate how the **ASTIR** and its **CHANNELER** are remembered, far in the future:

If most were flawed, you are scavengers stood around the recent wreck. The **DILIGENT** narrates first, the **BELOVED** second, and finally, the **RADICAL**.

If most were acceptable, you are soldiers watching a parade of arms. The **BELOVED** narrates first, the **RADICAL** second, and finally, the **DILIGENT**.

If most were perfect, you are students touring an exhibit. The **RADICAL** narrates first, the **DILIGENT** second, and finally, the **BELOVED**.

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*If you have more than three players and want to add extra roles, consider; the **HAUNTED**, who will not see the same **MISTAKE** made twice, the **ARTIST**, who has a **VISION** for the future, the **PRAGMATIST**, who will not let us build beyond our **MEANS**, or the **IDYLLIST**, who knows swords must one day be **PLOWSHARES**.*

RELEASE NOTES

06/20:

- Additional art added! Dropped some placeholder stuff where there's still incoming art.
- GRAVITY clocks reduced to 6-step.
- Spotlight introduced to give dripfeed xp on failures! This has been a common complaint, so hopefully this should make failure feel a little more exciting.
- First Setting Hook added! Possibly more to come: please let me know if you find this useful and if it'd be worth my time to add more!
- Reworked Astir parts a little so that all 'usable' parts under the previous system are now 1-per Sortie but can be reused by spending mana with ***subsystems***. It seemed a little inconsistent that most things were single-use for free but Artifacts were infinite use at cost.

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Briar Sovereign is a nonbinary games designer and writer based in the UK. They love mechs, magic, and Kamen Rider: only two of which feature in this book, unfortunately.

