

FIREBORN

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



PLAYER'S HANDBOOK

FIREBORN™

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

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OF MEN & DRAGONS

FIREBORN is a world on the edge of a storm. One it has weathered before at the cost of great losses: the loss of countless lives, of the world's great civilizations, of magic. The scions alone know that there was a mythic age, know what happened to the world at its end, and know what needs to be done to stop it from happening again. They know . . . because they were there.

Scions are at once human and more than human. While born of flesh and blood, their souls are far older. Within their bodies are the reincarnated spirits of dragons from an ancient past. Throughout the ages, scions have been reborn in human form, each time remembering less and less of their former selves. As magic fled the world at the end of the mythic age, so did the wyrms' strength of spirit. As the last ice age receded and the modern age began, the memory of the mythic age was all but gone.

Now, that's changing. None are sure why . . . a prophecy fulfilled, the stars aligned, a ritual completed? Regardless, karma, the force that Westerners call "magic," that wise men of the East call "ki," and that the ancient Egyptians called "ka," has returned. And with it all manner of beasts and wonders.

But magic is dangerous and unknown, and the modern mind is far from accepting of the impossible. That, after all, is what monsters, magic, and myth must be: impossible. Everyone knows that. We've been told that from the beginning. And surely, if anything was out there, the police and the government would know. They'd tell us how to protect ourselves.

But they haven't, because they don't know. Second-class citizens are hunted by beasts in the slums. Superstitious drifters draw pentagrams in railyards to keep the rain and the dogs away. Tales of werewolf maulings appear in the tabloids with alarming regularity and amazingly clear photos, and most folks don't talk to their neighbors anymore.

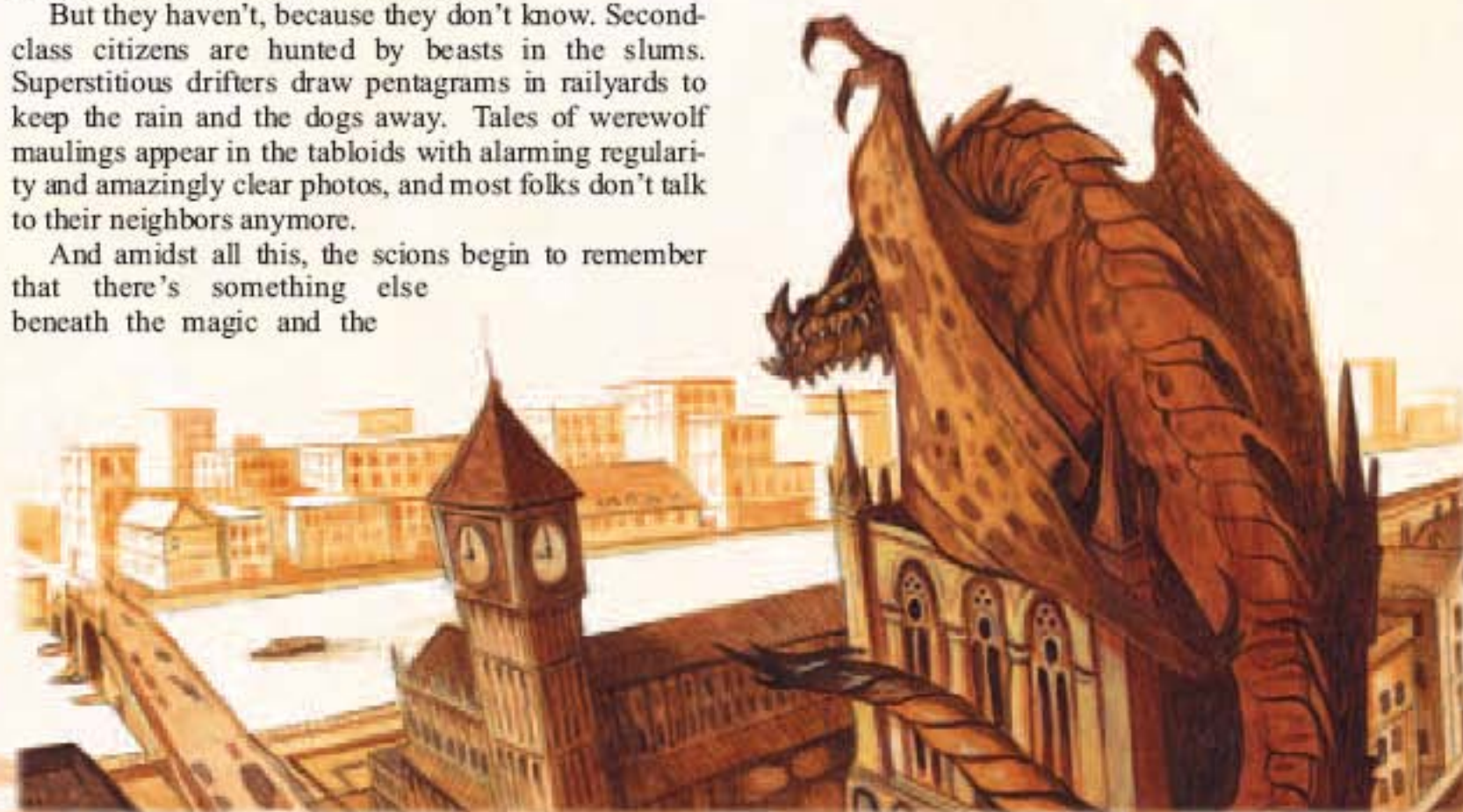
And amidst all this, the scions begin to remember that there's something else beneath the magic and the

beasts and the fear. Something older than man and dragon alike, something that, in an age of myth and legend, almost consumed the world. That thing has awoken, and it is hungry once more.

The scions grow in power, one flashback at a time, and hope that they'll be able to remember what happened in the mythic age, and how to stop it. They're at a disadvantage from the outset, because the secrets they strive to remember are ones that their enemies, lying in wait throughout the ages, never forgot.

DUAL-ERA ROLEPLAYING

The action in FIREBORN takes place in both the modern day and a mythic age. The base setting for campaigns is modern London just a few years from now, a place of cosmopolitan dealings, venerable age, and dark mysteries. Magic has returned to the ancient city that was once known as *Lough's Dun*, and only the most ignorant or unbelieving refuse to admit it. Society is changing in response, whether in the boardrooms of great corporations or the battlegrounds of the dirty streets. Characters in the modern age may have many directions and goals, including monster hunting, political machinations, treasure seeking, avoiding the authorities, and anything else the Game Master throws at them. Between and during adventures in the modern age, however, comes every scion's main priority: rediscovering who and what he was.





INTRODUCTION

This re-discovery occurs via a game mechanic called **flashbacks**, in which players remember and play out, collectively, a dramatic event that occurred to their previous selves in the mythic age. During these flashbacks, the characters take the role of immensely powerful dragons of all shapes and kinds. The times and locations of the flashbacks can be spread throughout several aeons and across many lands, all collectively known as the mythic age. During these visions, the players control their dragons as if playing them in the here and now, slowly learning more about their capabilities and the world they used to inhabit. Mythic age flashbacks may give their modern age selves clues to important events occurring in the modern day, a chance to meet and interact with figures that may play roles in their futures, or even an opportunity to leave behind powerful items for their human selves to find and use.

With every flashback, the scions in the modern age remember more of their previous powers and can access greater amounts of draconic strength. This slowly manifests as an ability to alter their bodies to more closely resemble their draconic forms, as well as to call on powers and legacies. These are the legendary abilities that allowed beasts of myth to turn their enemies to stone, to summon storms and lightning to do their will, to immolate their foes in flame or shroud their minds in fear.



BOUND BY FATE

In both ages, the players are part of a group called a **brood**. Broodmates are more than family; they are bound to one another throughout all time. Broods learn from one another, protect each other, and in some cases limit each other. The bonds created within those broods were forged through long aeons of growth, change, experience, and even death and rebirth. Because of the brood, a dragon's spirit is never alone. In essence, the souls of a brood grow and merge to become facets of a single being, greater than the sum of its parts. Throughout the centuries and into the modern age, that connection remains. Scions may slumber for most of their lives before finding their broodmates, but once the connection is made, it can neither be ignored nor forgotten.

With this history to bind them, the players have a motivation, a necessity, to work together to survive and grow. Some broodmates support one another and work together as a well-oiled unit, while others may work at cross purposes, and some may even find themselves undesirably allied with hated enemies.





FIREBORN GAME SYSTEM

ASPECTS: THE FORCES OF NATURE

Earth, Air, Fire, and Water: the four cornerstones of all the worlds of FIREBORN, whether spiritual or physical. Every creature in FIREBORN is a composite of these elements, called their aspects. Of course, we're not suggesting that living beings are actually made up of these four substances. However, there is something intuitive about the four elements and the roles they play. Likewise, this is a game about dragons. The dragons are, above all else, forces of nature given living form. What better way to represent them than via the most primal elements from myth and legend?

While many roleplaying games try to define portions of human ability in rigid categories, such as strength, reflexes, intelligence, wisdom, and so forth, *Fireborn* takes a more holistic approach. Your aspects are not concrete stats reflecting your character's exact capabilities; rather, they represent potential, focus, and natural talent. They are a reflection of a character's inner nature, and

represent how much of his focus and energy can be directed to accomplish a specific task at hand.

Each character's aspects are individually rated with a score between zero and six. Zero represents a complete lack of capacity in the relevant area (such as a character who is crippled or suffering from a mental defect), three represents an average human's capacity in the modern age, and six represents the maximum capacity of a human . . . but not an animal, supernatural creature, or scion, all of whom can perform superhuman feats.

DYNAMIC D6

FIREBORN uses a new dice system called Dynamic d6 to represent the constantly changing attention of participants in an action scene. Combat and contests are fluid, dynamically changing exchanges, whether the battlefield is physical, mental, or social. The Dynamic d6 system builds on and accentuates that rhythm. As the name suggests, the system uses six-sided dice. When making a test, a character rolls the number of dice he has in the relevant aspect. So a character jumping across rooftops

would roll his Fire dice, a character dodging bullets would roll his Water dice, a character intimidating a foe would roll Air, and a character resisting a mind-control spell would roll Earth. Each four, five, or six that comes up is a success. If the character gains enough successes to meet the task's threshold (TH), he succeeds.

AIR

Reasoning, aggressive logic, awareness, insight, and planning are all governed by the aspect of Air. While predominantly an aspect that expresses itself mentally, not physically, Air can come into play during physical activities that involve careful thought and awareness, like attempting to move stealthily or when interacting with others. Leaders, scoundrels, and mystics all rely on Air, as it denotes characters with keen minds, slippery personalities, or intense demeanors.

FIRE

Action, movement, strength, and primal passions are the domain of the aspect of Fire. This aspect steers aggressive physical action like combat or contests of physical skill, as well as active exertion like lifting or jumping. If you want to smite your enemies and laugh over their corpses, Fire is your best bet. Individuals with high Fire are typically strong, ferocious, have good instincts in battle, and have the attitudes to match. They often resort to violence—and it works.

EARTH

Willpower, concentration, and sense of self are all part of the aspect of Earth. Earth helps you maintain focus while remaining aware of your surroundings. Add to that the fact that Earth controls your resistance to being affected by spells, your ability to ferret out lies and deception, and the amount of karma you can utilize, and Earth becomes a potent aspect indeed. Individuals with a high Earth score may be reliable, balanced, wise, or stoically confident.

WATER

A character's stamina, resistance to disease and minor injuries, and defensive reflexes are controlled by Water. Just as a river flows around a rock in its path or absorbs debris and keeps flowing, so the aspect of Water protects its possessor by allowing him to absorb blows or dodge them. A person with a high Water score might appear robust and healthy or incredibly swift and agile; the hows and whys aren't as important as the fact that the aspect of Water is what keeps you alive.

SKILLS

The dynamic part comes in when you add skills. Aspects are natural talent and potential, but one character with a high score in Fire might be an expert martial artist, while another has never been in a fight in his life but is hell on wheels in the driver's seat. To represent this training and experience, add skills.





INTRODUCTION

To understand how skills work, keep this in mind: aspects are more than just talent, they also represent your resources, your attention, the amount of energy you can devote to any one act. If you are a trained athlete, yes, you may have excellent strength and agility, but your training comes into play when you use your sense of balance (Water), your timing and hand-eye coordination (Air), and your resistance to pain and weariness (Earth) to increase your performance.

Skills take all that into account. Rather than the traditional "Attribute + Skill" roll, FIREBORN characters make a choice every turn. Any time you wish to use a skill as part of a test, you can roll that many more dice in the aspect being tested . . . but those dice have to come from somewhere else. When swinging a club at a dreaded beast or a drunken brawler, you can move dice, say, from Water to Fire. The number of dice you can move is equal to your skill in, in this case, Melee. If you're a novice combatant, you may be able to move one or two dice to Fire to assist with the test. If you're an expert, you can go for the gusto, really pounding your foe by moving your entire pool of Water dice into Fire. But whether you're a newbie or a veteran, your attention to swinging that club has to come from somewhere; if you moved all your dice from Water, that means you just left yourself open to a counterattack.

Moving dice back and forth is done several times in a combat; where your dice are situated, whether offensive or defensive, physical or mental, is called your stance.

ACTIONS & REACTIONS

Each turn during an action scene, a character declares and carries out one mental action and one physical action. These may be combat actions, like intimidating a foe or swinging a sword; or they may be unrelated to the melee occurring around you, like jumping a gap or casting a healing spell. Once a character has performed her actions, her turn ends and the next character's turn begins.

Each type of action you can perform is governed by one of several skills, which are divided up into mental and physical groupings. All actions are tested with your active aspects, Fire and Air.

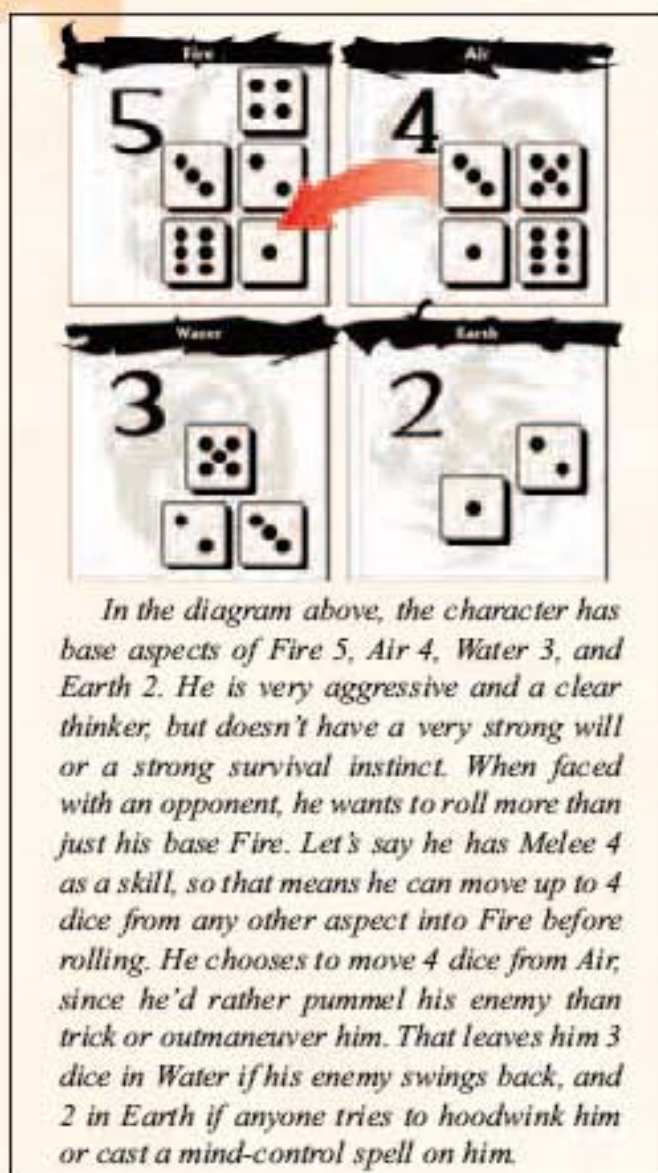
Meanwhile, you can also perform reactions when other characters attack or otherwise interact with you. Like actions, reactions are governed by skills; unlike actions, reactions are tested using your reactive aspects, Water and Earth. Examples of each type of action and reaction are listed below. The skill that would govern each act is also included in parentheses.

Physical Actions: Throwing a punch (Melee), pole vaulting (Athletics), sprinting after a motorcyclist (Quickness), firing a bow (Ranged).

Mental Actions: Programming a computer (Tech), casting a spell (Casting), bribing a bureaucrat (Interaction), picking a lock (Tech), finding a hidden clue (Senses), aiming a bow (Ranged).

Physical Reactions: Blocking a kick (Melee), resisting poison (Stamina), dodging gunfire (Quickness).

Mental Reactions: Seeing through a politician's lies (Interaction), resisting an intimidation attempt (Will), finding the flaws in a logical argument (Knowledge), spotting an unexpected foe (Senses).



MOVES & SEQUENCES

Heroes in FIREBORN don't just swing a sword or jump a chasm or cast a spell. They feint, dodge, grit through pain, and slash with a weapon, all at once. This is represented by the use of moves, the most basic element of action in combat. A move is any discrete unit of action that can be done during a character's physical action in combat. Moves can be strung together to create sequences, allowing you to perform dynamic, cinematic feats. Characters can even learn specific fighting styles, which focus on particular weapons or combat attitudes, and allow the

character to perform tailor-made, powerful sequences with dramatic and damaging payoffs.

AND NOW . . . FIREBORN!

You've glimpsed a taste of the setting and game mechanics behind FIREBORN. If you like what you've read so far, turn the page and begin your journey through the mythic past and reawakened present. Prepare to face dire foes the likes of which have not walked the surface of the earth for aeons, and be ready to rediscover the fire within. For you are no mere human . . . you are FIREBORN.



SCION CREATION

CHAPTER
ONE





CREATING YOUR SCION

The scions of *Fireborn* are the heart of the game. Trapped between the mythic and the modern, it can be easy to lose sight of the human equation traveling from dragon to mortal, sublime to mundane. The scions have to walk in both worlds, however, a bridge between very different lives. Their struggles to integrate those two disparate existences are what make the game engaging; their efforts at saving both worlds are what make the game exciting; and their eventual successes or failures are the game's real rewards.

This chapter gives you the tools you need to create a scion, beginning with a character concept and moving all the way through choosing your scion's favorite weapon and deciding what kind of car he drives.

SCION CREATION STEPS

Character creation in *FIREBORN* consists of the following steps:

1) CREATE CHARACTER CONCEPT

This is where you define the idea for the character you want to make. You will choose gender, background, and the life events that have shaped the person you want to play. You may also begin to decide what your character's goals and aspirations are.

2) PURCHASE ASPECTS

Aspects are the four core elements that define any character. Each aspect influences a portion of the character's personality and defines his level of proficiency at specific types of actions.

3) CHOOSE BACKGROUND

While a scion may have the soul of a dragon, she has still lived a life as a human. In this step you choose your scion's background, which provides both roleplaying information and a starting skill package.

4) CHOOSE SIRE

All scions, whether consciously or not, claim descent from a mythical sire. These claims have little to do with genetic ancestry and far more to do with a scion's inclinations and guiding principles. Sires determine a scion's bonus edges, bonus skill ranks, fighting style, and taint response.

5) DEPENDENT TRAITS AND FINISHING TOUCHES

Not every con man uses the same rap, and not every professional has the same skills. At this step the nitty gritty of your character is finished. A number of traits dependent on your aspects are calculated, bonus points for skills and edges are spent, and possessions are acquired.

CREATE CHARACTER CONCEPT

The heritage of the dragons is a proud and powerful one. For countless millennia, they were the unrivaled masters of the Earth, a status that has left its mark in countless mythologies around the globe. Some appointed themselves as the protectors and guiding hands of mankind since its first tentative steps on this world. Others appointed themselves as tyrannical overlords. Regardless of their role regarding humanity and the rest of the world, however, not even their knowledge and vision could ferret out every insidious enemy, nor overcome every seed of taint. With the end of the mythic age, the dragons learned failure, and soon after, oblivion.

Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, the stars have aligned above London, and an unknown cabal of human magicians has repaired the rent in the world that let magic escape. The binding energy called **karma** has returned, and with it the consuming forces that threaten reality itself. To counter them, the dragons have awakened . . . this time in human form, the better to defeat the enemy that burrows within mankind.

This is your world now. It is the battleground for an ancient war, and you are a soldier in it, willing or not. What sort of warrior is your character going to be? What skills and talents will he bring to the fight? Will he enter combat with the bloodlust of a ferocious beast, or will he abstain from bloodshed except in the most extreme cases? Will he embrace his **broodmates** as long-lost brothers and sisters, or hate them as reminders of his own inhumanity? No longer outnumbered by the pawns of the enemy, and now more resistant to the corrupted form of karma called **taint**, you have a chance to restore balance to the world. But first you have a few questions that need answered. Can you remember who you are in time? Do you have the wisdom to make the right choices in the face of overwhelming odds, great sacrifice, and the temptations of taint? Will you reject your true nature, or accept it, thereby gaining the power to defend your kind and all of humanity . . . and for that matter, do you care about saving the world to begin with?

CORE CONCEPT

At this stage, think of your character as an average person in a far-from-average world. You know nothing





of the dragons and mystic civilizations of the mythic age. You have read the stories in the papers, and odd things have happened to nearly everyone you know in London and its environs. Things are changing, to be sure, and something that seems to fit the definition of “magic” has flooded the world. Most everyone you know is becoming more cautious, more unnerved, by recent events . . . except you. Listed below are some general topics to consider.

YOU ARE FIREBORN

You might not know it yet, but you’ve had the soul of a dragon since the day you came into this world. You’ve always been an exceptional individual. Maybe everything you try works out easily for you, giving you extreme confidence. Or perhaps nothing comes as easily as it should, and you’re frustrated because you seem to be able to remember, somewhere in the back of your mind, a time when the mundane and everyday problems that plague you now were as nothing. As a child, perhaps you uttered disturbing truths and wise perspectives that should not have come from one so young. As a teenager, your passions and interests may have taken you to greater heights than others, but could also have distracted you from having a normal life.

Regardless of how you choose to express it in your character’s personality and past, remember that he has always been denied a normal existence. Normal humans can sense that there’s something different about scions. Eventually, many scions respond to this alienation by becoming cold, emotionless creatures to all but their closest friends. Other scions may have gained notoriety or popularity because of their skills, charisma, or passionate natures, but their fans and cronies can only get so close. Scions are not necessarily socially inept; indeed, some are supernaturally charming, and may be quite gifted in social situations. Rather than forging intimate bonds with others, however, these scions are far more likely to view people as tools to be manipulated than as friends to be cherished.

THE LIFE OF A LONDONER

FIREBORN is set in the streets of modern London, a city that is at once one of the most cosmopolitan in the world and yet layered in age, myth, and magic. The first question to ask yourself, then, is where your character came from. Is he a Londoner, born and bred? Or from elsewhere in the United Kingdom, but has migrated to the big city? If an outsider, whether a UK citizen or a foreigner, why did he come to this ancient metropolis? Undoubtedly, there was an unconscious draw to this place for your character. Did he come when the rumors of magic started flying about, or was he here before that? Does he view this city as a hellish, accursed witch-haven, or as a glorious new center of mystery and power?





CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

THE DRAGON IS IN THE DETAILS

There are, of course, the more basic questions as well. A few are listed below to get you started:

- Is your scion a male or a female?
- What is your scion's name?
- What is his family like? Does your scion have parents? Siblings? Significant others?
- What were his plans and dreams for the future, and what was the plan to make them happen?
- What is your scion's career? Does he enjoy his work, accept it, or despise it?
- What does your scion do for fun? Whose company does he enjoy? What are his passions?
- What does your scion hate? Or fear?

When your character discovers his draconic nature, there will be many more questions to answer. Those will build upon the steps that follow, however, so keep any such ideas in the back of your mind. For now, move to the next step in character creation: purchasing aspects.

PURCHASE ASPECTS

Consider which aspect or aspects should influence your scion the most, using the descriptions offered on page 5 of the Introduction. For example, a scion with a high base score in Fire might tend to default to physical action to solve his problems. When faced with a mental challenge, he may be the one who begins looking for physical evidence, traveling from place to place to interrogate subjects, and otherwise being very active in achieving that goal.

By the same token, a scion with a high score in Air might solve a physical challenge by finding a way around the problem, thus avoiding it altogether. Alternatively, he might plan and use tactics to overcome the obstacle, such as making optimal use of his surroundings or finding a weak spot by which the obstacle can be removed or destroyed.

Each score in an aspect represents a number of six-sided dice. The scion rolls that many dice when that aspect is used to take action. For each die with a result of four, five, or six, one success is generated. Zero represents a complete lack of capacity in the relevant area (such as a character who is crippled or suffering from a mental defect); three represents an average human's capacity in the modern age, and six represents the maximum capacity of a human. Numbers beyond six are possible, as you'll see in the next chapter, but are not achievable by humans.

Example: A scion with Earth 4 rolls four six-sided dice when making a test that calls for Earth. If the dice come up 1, 2, 5, and 6, the outcome is two successes.

ASPECT COSTS

You purchase aspects for your character using a simple point-buy system. The costs of each aspect score are shown in Table 1-1. Normal humans usually have 19 points. Scions, on the other hand, begin with 28 points to spend on their aspects. For more information on the varying beginning points of different creatures or characters, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.



ASPECT SCORES



PURCHASE COSTS

Aspect Score	Cost
0	+2
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	7
5	10
6	16

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Aspect Score	Performance
0	Crippled
1	Well-below average; poor
2	Below average capability
3	Average human capability
4	Exceptional human capability
5	Extreme human capability
6	Maximum human capability



TABLE 1-1



CHOOSE BACKGROUND

Prior to realizing his nature as a scion, every character had a life of his own. He had a career, hobbies, friends, suffered through some hard times and celebrated the rare good ones. He may have joined the military or been a political protestor. He may have worked an average Joe job to bring in a little extra cash, or jumped straight into the corporate world, making absurd amounts of money. Soon enough, that life will be left behind, but it will have given him the most basic tools to face his future.

The background you choose for your scion represents your character's former path in life and the skills that he has acquired to this point. Backgrounds are presented below in the following format:





NAME

A paragraph describing the experience, behavior, perspective, and motivations of a typical character with this background.

Primary Skills: Starting characters begin the game with 4 ranks in **primary skills**. You will have a chance to gain more ranks in those or other skills later on in character creation.

Secondary Skills: Starting characters begin the game with 2 ranks in **secondary skills**. You will have a chance to gain more ranks in those or other skills later on in character creation.

Edges: Backgrounds provide a list of edges, from which you may choose one. Your character begins at the first rank of the edge chosen. In addition to the edges listed, any background allows for the Aspect Affinity edge. You will have a chance to gain more ranks in this or other edges later on in character creation.

Fighting Style Ranks: This is the number of ranks of fighting styles your scion may begin with. This number may increase later during character creation.

Wealth: Backgrounds provide a wealth rank. As with skills and edges, wealth can be improved later, if your character concept includes lots of cash to spend. Be careful, though; just because you start out as a wealthy London socialite doesn't mean your circumstances can't change suddenly and drastically. In these dark times, nothing is sacred, not even your hard-earned bank account. A quick summary of the lifestyles associated with each wealth rank is listed on Table 1-2. For more information on wealth and lifestyles, see "Wealth," page 99.

WEALTH SCORES

Wealth Score	Lifestyle
0	Homeless
1	Poverty
2	Working Class
3	Middle Class
4	Affluent
5	Millionaire
6	Filthy Rich

TABLE 1-2

BACKGROUNDS

Choose one of the backgrounds below and write it on your character sheet. Once your background is chosen, write 4's and 2's as appropriate on your character sheet in the blanks next to any background skills. Then choose one edge available to your background, and write it in the box labeled "Edges" with a rank of 1. Write down the number of fighting style ranks on a piece of scratch paper. Finally, write down your character's wealth in the sheet's "Wealth" box.

ACTIVIST

You are one of the few people in the world willing to truly stand up for what you believe in. You've made your opinion your life, attending rallies, traveling to protests, and writing letters to politicians in the hope of influencing social and political agendas. It's a great deal of work with little reward, but at least you can say that you stand for something and do whatever it takes to make it happen.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge: Law, Knowledge: (choose one), Research, Stamina

Secondary Skills: Quickness, Trickery

Edges: Allies, Forcefull Will, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 1

ARCHEOLOGIST

You've always been fascinated by the past. Whereas other kids were thrilled by playing cops and robbers or reading sci-fi, you preferred to read about Roman conquests and watch historical dramas on the BBC. Whether you're digging for bones or potshards, your heart lies buried deep in the earth with the people and cultures that came before.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Ancient Cultures, Knowledge: History, Knowledge: Mythology, Knowledge: (choose a language), Research

Secondary Skills: Knowledge (choose two languages), Tech: Engineering, Travel

Edges: Hoard, Network, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 3

ARTIST

As an artist, your creative side is always out in front. You have a vision that drives you to express yourself in some concrete form, be it sculpture, painting, or music. You may have a day job, but art is where your soul is.

Primary Skills: Craft: (choose one), Knowledge: Art, Knowledge: Mythology, Senses, Will

Secondary Skills: Craft (choose two), Interaction, Stamina

Edges: Forcefull Will, Karmic Release, Windfall

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 1

ATHLETE

Your body is a finely tuned machine, and you take joy in pushing it to its full potential. You have worked hard and trained to become the best at your chosen sport, but aside from a college scholarship and a few low-level sponsors, you've yet to be recognized.

Primary Skills: Athletics, Quickness, Stamina

Secondary Skills: One of the following: Melee, Ranged, Senses, or Will





BACKGROUND SUMMARIES



Activist: You always put your causes first. And there are so damn many of them . . .

Archeologist: Look to the past to uncover answers about the future.

Artist: Creating is as high on your priority list as, say, eating, sleeping, and breathing.

Athlete: You're stronger, faster, and better than your peers. Always have been, always will be.

Biker: The city's all right for a fortnight, but you always end up back on the road.

Cat Burglar: Sure, the money's good, but it's the thrill that gets you purring.

Collector: Some people would be surprised at the treasures you can find in junk piles, auctions, and garage sales. "Some people" isn't you.

Con Artist: You do a public service by parting idiots from their money.

Cop: Monsters, magic, and muggings . . . being a cop in London has never been harder.

Covert Operative: You can trust no one, not even the government that recruited you.

Craftsman: You're no pansy-ass artist. The stuff you make is actually useful.

Dilettante: You have more money than talent, but that doesn't keep you from the art world.

Doctor: You save lives, any way you can.

Drifter: Where you lay your head is home.

Ex-Military: They said they'd prepare you for anything. They lied.

Journalist: Someone's gotta dig through the city's crap to come up with the answers.

Lawyer: You don't believe in the system anymore . . . so what do you believe in?

Mechanic: You know plenty of uses for a good, heavy wrench.

Metropolitan: You only play in the most expensive playgrounds.

Mystic: There's a new power rising up through the sewer grates, and you know its true name.

Paramedic: You thought you had seen it all on your calls. Every day, you find out you were wrong.

Priest: You protect and guide your flock, but lately it's felt like you're all walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

Private Investigator: You've gotten so desensitised from uncovering other peoples' dirty laundry, you forget what normal relationships are like.

Programmer: There's as much danger and mystery online as there is in the alleyways.

Radical: You're no sheep. You're going to make them listen, whatever it takes.

Scientist: Science is your religion, and lately it feels like someone killed God.

Sensei: You teach the defenseless to fight for themselves. If the stories you hear are true, they'll need more help than you can give.

Student: There's always something new to learn, but the cost of admission isn't always monetary.

Thug: You make sure no one messes with your employers, and they make sure no *things* mess with you.





Edges: Action Junkie, Deft, Glory Hound
 Fighting Style Ranks: 1
 Wealth: 2

BIKER

You love the feel of the wind on your face, tugging at your jacket as you speed down the road in style, with a few other like-minded pals at your side. You travel the country on your bike; it's a thing of beauty, you've invested a fortune in its upkeep and look, and you couldn't be happier with how the money's spent. Sometimes people hassle you, but you can give as good as you get. You've also managed to pick up a few tips on how to get things done on the wrong side of the law, even if you haven't broken any laws yourself.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Geography, Knowledge: Street, Melee, Travel

Secondary Skills: Senses, Tech: Mechanics, Trickery

Edges: Aggressive, Allies, Brutal

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Wealth: 2

CAT BURGLAR

You've always had a taste for the good life, but it was never within your grasp—at least not until you decided to take it for yourself. You became a master at the second-story break-in, using shadow and silence as your chief tools of the trade. Now you may have the money to do what you like, but it's the thrill that keeps you coming back for more.

Primary Skills: Stealth, Tech: Electronics, Tech: Mechanics, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Quickness

Edges: Deft, Dervish, Rapid

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 4

COLLECTOR

You're a middle-class collector, a self-made master of your chosen field. You know what you like, and you'll pay to have it. Whether it's art, nostalgia, or simply an obsession for a complete set of everyday items, you have the collecting bug in a bad way. In your digging, whether by happenstance or hard work, you've managed to accumulate a few fairly valuable items.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: History, Knowledge: (choose one), Interaction, Research, Senses

Secondary Skills: Craft (choose one), Will

Edges: Forceful Will, Network, Windfall

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 3

CON ARTIST

Some folks have a gift for knowing exactly the right thing to say or do in order to make others do what they want. You're one of those people. Instead of devoting yourself to someone else's cause, however, you chose to devote your talents to the person who matters most: you. You've mastered the bait and switch, the hook, the blind, every trick in the book. You make a living (barely) off the gullibility of others—and you enjoy the hell out of it, too. You're sure that a big scam will land in your lap any day now.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Street, Knowledge: (choose one), Interaction, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Quickness, Senses, Stealth

Edges: Network, Rapid, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 2

COP

You get out there and do your thing each day, dealing with brutal criminals, selfish low-lives, and unlucky innocents who end up in the wrong place and wrong time. Every day, it seems like more of the people you used to see on the streets have disappeared, or worse, turned up mauled and mutilated by some mysterious creature. They've finally equipped you with guns, but even that is little comfort when you hear the horror stories of your fellow officers in the *really* bad parts of town. You don't often get the appreciation you feel you deserve, and you've grown a little hardened to human suffering, but in the end you know you're needed—and if that isn't enough, there are plenty of folks willing to offer you kickbacks to turn a blind eye to their operations, both mundane and mystic.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Law, Knowledge: Street, Melee, Ranged

Secondary Skills: Interaction, Senses, Trickery, Travel

Edges: Aggressive, Daunting, Network

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Wealth: 1

COVERT OPERATIVE

Your country called, said you were one of the special ones, and asked you to serve. They taught you everything you needed to know, and sent you to protect your country's most precious commodity: its secrets. You know the ins and outs of disguise, self-defense, and how to see without being seen. You're in this now until you're retired or killed—you wouldn't know how to live any other way. Your latest assignment is to keep your eyes open, pure and simple, and find out what is going on in the heart of London.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Stealth, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Melee, Ranged, Senses





CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION



Edges: Dervish, Network, Seductive
Fighting Style Ranks: 3
Wealth: 2

CRAFTSMAN

You've loved making things ever since you were a kid in shop class. The feel of smooth wood under your fingertips, the way fabric drapes and flows, the acrid smell of heated metal: You wouldn't claim to be an artist, as function is more important than beauty to you, but the joy you take in your creations is just as strong.

Primary Skills: Craft (choose one), Stamina, Tech (choose one), Will

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Craft (choose two)

Edges: Forcefull Will, Karmic Release, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 2

DILETTANTE

Modern art is your life, and always has been, even though what little artistic talent you have wouldn't fill a tiny gallery, much less build a career. Luckily, while you weren't born with talent, you were born with money, and plenty of it. What you can't provide to the art world creatively, you make up for monetarily, offering patronage and support to let others unearth ancient works, restore failing masterpieces, or create their own visions.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge: Finances, Knowledge: High Society, Knowledge: Art

Secondary Skills: Craft (choose one art form), Research

Edges: Aggressive, Glory Hound, Network

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 5

DOCTOR

You are fascinated by the human body, both inside and out. How it works, its strengths and vulnerabilities, the miraculous machine of flesh and bone that everyone walks around in every day. You went through years of school and residency to earn your license, and now you're helping others and making a good living doing it. The tales of incurable viruses and strange new diseases are troubling, though. You can't keep up with all of the new theories bouncing around in the latest medical journals, and it's getting harder and harder to diagnose some of the ailments your patients are coming in complaining of. It's still hiding in the back of your mind, but someday soon a disturbing reality will dawn on you: science and modern medicine aren't the only forms of healing out there, and mundane viruses and diseases aren't the only threats to health.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Medicine, Research, Will

Secondary Skills: Knowledge: Science, Senses, Stamina

Edges: Deft, Glory Hound, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 4





DRETFER

The king of the highways, the duke of the boulevard. Those are better titles than most have given you. You've always had that itch to travel, so when you got old enough you packed up and hit the road, with no more of a plan than to stop when you got tired and work when you needed money. You rarely used to stay in one place for long, but something about London has you sticking around. Maybe it's all the good heating grates and hand-out corners that have opened up, thanks to the disappearances of the homeless; maybe it was a couple of your friends that have gone missing, and you want to find 'em so they can pay you that money they owe. Or maybe you're sick of running away from whatever it is that's been hounding you, at least in your imagination, all these years.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Street, Knowledge (choose one), Quickness, Stamina, Stealth

Secondary Skills: Casting, Senses, Trickery

Edges: Casting, Karmic Release, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Wealth: 0

EX-MILITARY

Your formative years were spent, and some would say wasted, serving in your country's armed forces. You got out, a bit smarter, a bit harder, and a lot meaner. You've been trained to fight and kill, skills that once set you apart from others; they used to eye you warily, like some beast they were forced to share a cage with and didn't want to unduly irritate. All of a sudden, in the last few years, that wariness has become respect. The things *outside* the cage have become much more fearsome than you, and you've been inundated with offers to act as a bodyguard, bouncer, or to just stand around somewhere and look tough. You're sure you can handle the crazies, the gangs, even the cultists . . . but you're beginning to wonder how you're going to deal with the real bad stuff out there. Word on the street is, some of the things you're being paid to watch out for aren't even *human*.

Primary Skills: Melee, Ranged

Secondary Skills: Either two of the following: Tech (choose one), Medicine, or Stealth; or one of the following: Athletics, Will, Quickness, or Senses

Edges: Arsenal, Fluid Fighter, Weapon Specialist

Fighting Style Ranks: 3

Wealth: 2

JOURNALIST

You demand the truth, and you deliver it to those who might not have the means to get to it themselves. If you're noble and virtuous, you use the written word as a sword against power-mongers and users. If you're a risk-taker and rebel, you might do your job for the thrill of the next scoop. You may even just love watching the

high and mighty squirm, or get off on seeing your name in print. Whatever your tack, London is filled with more secrets these days than you can point a tape recorder at. There's never been a better time for a journalist to make his name. Just be careful what secrets you go digging for. Mess with the wrong people, and your disappearance might be the next big story.

Primary Skills: Craft: Writing, Interaction, Research, Senses

Secondary Skills: Knowledge: (choose two), Quickness, Stealth

Edges: Forceful Will, Rapid, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 2

LAWYER

Combine the showmanship of an actor with a mind for fine detail, mixed with an unequalled passion for research, and you have a lawyer—in other words, you. You've always been drawn to the law, the intricate web of rulings and precedents upon which our whole society is based. You used to be confident that it worked, too; whether for everyone or just those with money depends on your perspective. But it doesn't matter who you know or how much money you've got, anymore. The law just isn't equipped to deal with the chaos that is London. You have two choices: yank the strings of the law into the right shape so it *can* deal with this new, strange world, or step outside the law and apply your training before a different kind of court.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge: Law, Knowledge: (choose one), Research, Will

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Trickery

Edges: Forceful Will, Glory Hound, Seductive

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 4

MECHANIC

You've always had a gift for knowing how things work, able to take apart that junker you got when you were a teenager and turn it into a fine machine. You learned to tinker and fix things because it needed done, and eventually folks started paying you for it. It's not a pretty life, but it'll do. You can take your customers for a proverbial ride if you need extra money, and you can tell when the parts dealer is trying to scam you. Your shop isn't in the best part of town, and you have to run off gangs and thugs a few times a month. Those aren't the real problems, though. Cars, creeps, con men, those you can handle. It's the other stuff in life you can't fix.

Primary Skills: Tech: Mechanics, Tech: Electronics, Travel

Secondary Skills: Interaction, Melee, Trickery, Will

Edges: Aggressive, Daunting, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 2





CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION



BORN OF FIRE



In FIREBORN, dragons are neither gods nor monsters, but can be both oppressors and saviors. They are seen as the embodiments of primal force, created by coalescing elemental energies during the birth of all things. Perhaps, as the world formed, magic melded the four core aspects of creation—earth, air, fire, and water—into a living creature. That creature, the first dragon, would have been a living elemental. Whatever their origins, dragons have been of and in the world since its beginning. They feel ties of kinship to it, their flesh and blood sharing a genesis with the planet around them.

Dragons are only ever “born” once, and they can never truly die. In the mythic age, draconic culture viewed a dragon’s death as a new beginning as much as an end. The dragon’s ka, or spirit, was destined to return, given life in a body shaped from the elements, infused with magic, and quickened by the earth’s primal energies. This perspective was reinforced by the fact that each time a dragon returned, its form remained unchanged.

That is, until the mythic age ended. The dragons’ spirits were lost, dispersed. Those that died after the mythic age died a final death—or so it seemed. Only now, as magic returns, has the truth been revealed. The dragons have been reincarnating all along, simply unable to remember their previous lives. Rather than being reborn in their old bodies, the souls of the wyrms, drakes, and serpents of old have been slumbering, waiting, in the unlikeliest of vessels . . . the bodies of humankind.



SIDEBAR 1-2



METROPOLITAN

You were born in this city, and you know it like the back of your hand. Penthouses, glittering spires, beautiful churches, exclusive clubs: it’s all yours, your own private playground. Given your position and assets, you’ve gained insight into things that most folks don’t have the time, the money, or the guts to delve into. A less privileged person might worry that this dark dabbling would come back to bite you in the ass, but you’re not concerned. If problems arise, you’ll have the money to take care of it. Everything has its price.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Finances, Knowledge: High Society

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Casting, Interaction, Melee, Travel

Edges: Action Junkie, Circumspect, Network

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 5

MYSTIC

The ways of the spirit world are open to you, and you know the forces that linger beyond the sight of the average person. Maybe you’ve been practicing for years, a fake and a fraud until magic started working again. Maybe you’re just a fast learner, and caught the wave as soon it swept in. In either case, you’ve got skills and knowledge that are in high demand. Magic has a way of weeding out the incapable, so you must have real talent if you’ve lasted this long. You seem to have a knack for magic that even your teachers lack. Whenever they make errors in their rituals or cast difficult spells, assuming they don’t hurt themselves, they seem to *harm* the world somehow. Your spells, even when they fail, don’t do anything except . . . not happen. Which leaves you to wonder, if your failed spells aren’t hurting the world around you, are they doing something to the world inside you?

Primary Skills: Casting, Ka, Will

Secondary Skills: Knowledge: History, Knowledge: Mythology, Knowledge: Occult

Edges: Casting, Circumspect, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 2

PARAMEDIC

Nobody ever thinks it’ll happen to them: car wrecks, fires, heart attacks, it’s all the same. When it does, though, you’re the person they need. You love the adrenaline rush, even as you cope with things most people would find too horrible to think about, much less witness. Some days, though, you’re not even sure why you do it. A lot of the calls lately haven’t been emergencies, either ‘cause there’s not much left of the victim to save, because he’s already dead with no mark on him, or because he looks unhurt, but is stark, raving mad. None of those are anything you can do anything about, despite your training.

Primary Skills: Athletics, Quickness, Travel

Secondary Skills: Interaction, Medicine

Edges: Action Junkie, Defender, Karmic Release

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 2

PRIEST

Some call you Father. Some call you Rabbi. Others might refer to you as the high priest or the elder. The title doesn’t matter. You follow your god or gods with fervor and compassion, assisting fellow believers and performing the necessary rites to guide the souls in your care safely to their divine goal. It’s a demanding job, but the rewards have always been well worth the effort. In the past decade, you’ve helped more people and made more converts than you believed possible. You’re determined to use your faith to shepherd them through these





trying times, whether they're the end that was foretold or the beginning of a new world.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge: Religion, Knowledge: Mythology, Stamina, Will

Secondary Skills: Casting, Research, Stamina

Edges: Allies, Defender, Forcefull Will

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Wealth: 3

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

You've always known there were three sides to every story: his, hers, and the truth. You've made it your business to figure out the truth when you're asked to do so—after all, somebody has to tell it like it is. You know the ins and outs of uncovering dirty laundry, of getting secrets to tell themselves to the right ears. It was pretty easy, until a few years ago. Now people are asking you to find their lost kids, to figure out if that “freaky cult guy next door” is casting hexes on their dog, and to follow unfaithful spouses into the best and worst neighborhoods, neither of which are very safe to someone like you. Folks are willing to pay for the added risk . . . but you're beginning to wonder if the money is worth your skin or, if the rumors are accurate, your soul.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge: Law, Senses, Tech: Electronics

Secondary Skills: Research, Stamina, Stealth, Trickery

Edges: Forcefull Will, Network, Resilient

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Wealth: 2

PROGRAMMER

When you got your first computer, it was like someone had just handed you the keys to the candy store. You dived in, not just into games and web surfing, but into the code. You wanted to know how it all ticked, and wouldn't stop until you'd figured it all out. Now, even though you spend most of your time in a dark room surrounded by flickering screens, you're more free than most people you know. You can have a well-paying job doing easy work if you want it (your bosses don't know the difference between a 4-hour hack job and a 40-hour programming epic), or you can delve into the underside of hacking and cracking and make yourself some extra cash lifting files and sabotaging systems. Every once in a while you stumble onto some scary stuff out there on the web, magic rituals that seem far too sound, pictures of creatures that seem far too real. If any of that stuff really *is* out there, you're better off staying in.

Primary Skills: Knowledge: Modern Cultures, Knowledge (choose one), Research, Tech: Electronics, Will

Secondary Skills: Casting, Trickery

Edges: Glory Hound, Network, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 3

RADICAL

The system doesn't work for you. In truth, you don't believe it works for anyone, except those powerful enough and corrupt enough to pour their stolen money into it to get what they want. You refuse to use the tools of the moneyed few to fight their game; instead, you're hitting them where it hurts most: the pocketbook. And you're not above using every trick in the book to do it, either. It seems like folks are getting spooked by recent events, and that's bad for their business . . . but good for you.

Primary Skills: Ranged, Stealth, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Knowledge (choose two), Quickness, Tech: Machinery

Edges: Action Junkie, Brutal, Follow-through

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Wealth: 2

SCIENTIST

You have a gift for research, a grasp of science, and an obsession for detail that makes you an excellent candidate for your field. You love experimenting to find new phenomena or the causes behind effects we're already familiar with. The future is at your fingertips, and you are determined to get us there, one theory at a time. That is, if the world doesn't end first. Whatever is happening, you're sure there's a scientific explanation for it. Either that, or there needs to be an expanded definition of science.

Primary Skills: Research, Knowledge: Science, Tech (choose one), Will

Secondary Skills: Knowledge (choose two), Medicine, Senses, Tech (choose one)

Edges: Forcefull Will, Glory Hound, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 3

SENSEI

You've mastered your chosen path, progressing so far as to become an instructor to your fellow students. Whether you have your own school or teach under another master, your skill and devotion have always been impressive to your students. Lately, however, you've begun to think about the origins of your art. In the modern day, it has been relegated to a performance style, a sport, or at best a path towards self-discovery. But it was once a vital tool, developed so that the poor and defenseless could stand up to the stronger and the better-armed. It's beginning to look as if that tool will be necessary again.

Primary Skills: Melee, Quickness

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Ka, Stamina

Edges: Karmic Release, Karmic Restraint, Weapon Specialist

Fighting Style Ranks: 3

Wealth: 1



CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

STUDENT

You're the eternal student. Why graduate? Everything you need is at the university. Maybe you're addicted to knowledge, maybe you've got a good deal as one of the school's athletes. A few quacks at the university even claim to know something about magic, and if you got started down that road, you found there was much more to learn on the streets than there was on campus.

Primary Skills: None

Secondary Skills: Choose any four Knowledge skills any six other skills

Edges: Action Junkie, Casting, Mentor

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Wealth: 1

THUG

You grew up on the streets, making the most of a hard life by learning how to be harder and tougher than anyone else out there. Some might call you a brute, but that's only because they've got nothing else to throw at you. If you work for the right people long enough, watch their moves and learn their tricks, you'll have others working for you one day. Your lifestyle may not be strictly legal, but playing by the rules is for people who can afford it.

Primary Skills: Melee, Ranged, Stamina

Secondary Skills: Trickery, Will

Edges: Action Junkie, Brutal, Follow-through

Fighting Style Ranks: 3

Wealth: 2

CHOOSE SIRE

Compared to the mythic age, our modern world is fairly devoid of ritual and religion. To give them direction as karmic beings, therefore, all scions claim a sire from the mythic past, whether consciously or unconsciously. Rather than actual ancestry, a dragon's sire acts as an example of his guiding principles. If there were a spokesperson or narrator for the scion's life, he would speak in the sire's voice.

Players can research the stories and myths behind their sires, if they like, and include aspects and imagery

from them in their characters' lives. Characters may feel inexplicably drawn to the culture from which their sires' stories emerged, even if the culture is unrelated to their own. The effect of a sire on a character is profound, if subtle. Such choices color the lives of scions in myriad ways, not all of which are consciously realized.

Each sire represents some goal, value, or virtue that the mythical dragon was supposed to have embodied in life. There may be conflicts between two sires and their begotten, usually due to incompatible philosophies, overlapping areas of interest, or because of a gap between the two cultures that spawned them.

In addition to being an easy way to identify one's outlook, sires also offer systemic benefits. Each sire gives its followers (or **begotten**) a list of edges from which they may choose one bonus edge rank.

It should be noted that only scions in the modern age have sires. Dragons in the mythic age do not. The very concept of a sire is alien to many dragons: they are their own mentors, their purposes being to grow and learn throughout their many lifetimes. The inspiration provided by a symbol or mindset that leads to a higher level of skills and a talent for mundane edges is a purely human phenomenon. Also, of course, many sires of the modern age did in fact exist in the mythic age. A living dragon cannot be a sire to another.

Some more spiritual scions may come to feel that the lack of guiding principles was why the dragons failed to save their age; other scions may consider a belief in sires to be a dilution of draconic power, and reject it as "ancestor worship" and "totem kow-towing." Regardless, when playing in the mythic age, remember that your characters will not have chosen sires. However, this does not mean that players and Game Masters cannot develop a narrative in which the scions' previous selves served the figures that would eventually become their sires; the players' dragons in the mythic age do not gain the systemic benefits that their scion selves do, but the roleplaying connection made can be quite rewarding.

Sires are presented in the following format:



NAME

Translation: The literal translation of the name in the language of the sire's source culture.

Source Culture: The human society in which the concept of the sire supposedly originated. More accurately, in the cases of dragons that actually did exist in the mythic age, this is the culture that inherited and furthered the sire's name, acting as midwife for the birth of the sire's identity into the modern age.

Concepts: The imagery, themes, and emotions commonly identified with the sire.

Edges: The list of edges from which a starting scion that is a begotten of this sire may choose.

Fighting Style Ranks: This number is added to the total ranks from which the scion may choose his starting fighting styles.

Bonus Karma: Whereas backgrounds provide monetary wealth, belief in or aligning with a sire grants spiritual wealth in the form of bonus karma. This number is added to the starting scion's max karma pool.

EXAMPLES:

- *Sample begotten of the sire.*

The first paragraph describes the legend or myth associated with the sire. The second paragraph describes the tendencies of that sire's begotten.

SIREs

Choose one of the sires below and write its name on your character sheet on the line provided. Once your sire is chosen, choose one edge from its list and write it on your character sheet, in the box labeled "Edges," with a rank of 1. If the edge you picked is one already provided by your background, increase its rank to 2. Write down the number of fighting style ranks your sire grants on a piece of scratch paper. Finally, write down your character's bonus karma in the "Max Karma" area of the karma box on your character sheet.

BASILISK

Translation: Little King

Source Culture: Phoenician

Concepts: Debauchery, fear, masculinity, poison

Edges: Action Junkie, Alluring, Glory Hound

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Bonus Karma: 4

EXAMPLES:

- *The "girl next door" who is seen as a bad influence on the neighborhoods' boys.*
- *The older brother that gives his under-aged sibling alcohol with all the best intentions, but unfortunate results.*
- *The girlfriend who keeps her boyfriend late*

for work time after time on Monday mornings, eventually getting him fired.

In Christian art, Basilisk is the very emblem of sin and the spirit of evil. His precise physical appearance has never been agreed upon, perhaps because of his unfortunate tendency to cause death to any who looked upon his visage. It was believed that if he could see his own reflection in a mirror, the Basilisk would burst apart with horror and fear. Everywhere he went, his poisonous breath scorched grass and burst rocks, turning fertile land into desert. But was the very nature of the Basilisk evil? Ancient legend suggests a deeper truth. The early, pre-Canaanite Phoenicians told tales of a phallic serpent god that may have been linked to Basilisk. His love of sensuality and companionship led him to seduce countless women who lived near the river sacred to him. These prolific actions put him at odds with the other local deities, who cursed him with an appearance so horrible that no lover would ever be able to look upon him again.

It is easy to condemn the actions of Basilisk's begotten. Chaos seems to follow their every action. Somewhere during their growth, their souls confused the wise concept of "following bliss" with the less serene "acting on impulse." What's more, they are enablers that tend to have negative influences on their friends. When a plan goes horribly wrong, it is often the begotten of Basilisk who have neglected their responsibility.

BEHEMOTH

Translation: Dumb Beast

Source Culture: Judeo-Christian

Concepts: Abundance, change, desire, repression

Edges: Confident, Karmic Release, Seductive

Bonus Karma: 3

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

EXAMPLES:

- *A sex addict that claims she doesn't have a problem.*
- *The church-going, rural housewife that keeps an impressive stash of trashy romance novels under her bed.*
- *A missionary that experiments with the mind-altering drugs, heathen philosophies, and sexual practices of the foreign cultures he is supposed to be converting.*

Theologists have used up hundreds of pages and countless hours debating whether Behemoth was in fact a pregnant elephant or an engorged hippopotamus. According to legend, he was the largest animal that ever walked on land. Some say he was a creature created solely to be eaten at the banquet at the end of the world. The truth, of course, is none of these. Behemoth was a huge dragon, beautiful and powerful, ruling over lesser creatures and humans alike. He built a legacy in ancient

CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

SIRE SUMMARIES

Basilisk: Insidious sowers of discord.

Behemoth: Revelers in secret lust and excess.

Caranoch: Clever, patient survivors.

Cernunnos: Passionate idealists with a respect for nature or the divine.

Chimera: Righteous warriors who revere femininity.

Dambala: Shadowy questers of human potential.

Hydra: Volatile, unpredictable vengeance-seekers.

Jormungand: Grim, uncaring opportunists.

Ladon: Wise, caring seekers of wisdom.

Lebe: Pragmatic laborers and unintentional shamans who make their living off the land.

Mabinogion: Inspired leaders and creators.

Naga: Devoted extremists with flexible morals.

Nehebkau: Murderous philosophers who see death as nothing but a form of change.

Ouroboros: Confident overseers of balance in all things.

Quetzlcoatl: Brilliant but grounded inventors and mentors.

Ryu: Bold, courageous young protectors.

Tiamat: Alluring manipulators who respect only strength and power.

Typhon: Fervent seditionists who prefer anything but the status quo.

Xiao: Do-gooders upon whom fortune smiles.

Zahhak: Savvy warriors of the social battleground.

Zu: Ambitious, capable, and often misguided tech-heads and worshippers of all things modern.

times of abundance and pleasure—some believe the stories of Bacchus came in part from the memories of Behemoth. He was a creature of desire, and saw no reason why others shouldn't be the same (*after his whims were satisfied*). So strong was this tendency toward debauchery and "amoral" acts that, even into the modern age, the authors of the Old Testament elevated him to become a symbol of the greatest of evils.

The begotten of Behemoth have inherited not only his desires and tendencies, but also his fate as a creature constrained and reshaped by the fears of mainstream culture and religion. They secretly shed their inhibitions and subvert the bindings that keep them and their peers trapped in archaic traditions. When the time comes, they'll step out of their roles and openly embrace the desires of their true natures.

CARONACH, THE SERPENT OF LOUGH DERG

Translation: Devil of the Lake of the Red Eye

Source Culture: Celtic

Concepts: Evasion, patience, obstinacy, trickery

Edges: Dexterous, Resilient, Survivor

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Bonus Karma: 5

EXAMPLES:

- *A teenage socialite that weasels money out of her wealthy father but constantly evades his demands that she be responsible with it.*

- *A city bus driver that never gives the surrounding cars a choice (or chance) to merge.*

- *A radical bookstore owner that takes a third mortgage on his house to keep his small shop from surrendering to a big box franchise.*

When a band of religious militants (now metaphorically and collectively known as St. Patrick) slaughtered all the serpents on an emerald isle that would eventually become Ireland, they left their greatest foe for last. Caronach, the Serpent of Lough Derg, was a dragon sacred to the mother goddess. When others had given up their struggles against the invaders, her begotten say, Caronach kept up the fight. She confused and tormented her pursuers by leaving her shed skins behind. Many an occasion led to her near capture, had she been willing to be tamed and therefore spared, but ever she refused to surrender. She was finally trapped and slain on the shores of Lough Derg, where her blood turned the lake red, giving it its name. Many believe, however, that she escaped, and awaits a time when the mother goddess will reclaim the earth.

Caronach's begotten are just as stubborn as their sire. They will resist, to the bitter end, even causing themselves more harm than good in the process. They will not be told what to do, nor will they be controlled. Their response to such attempts may range from punishing the

SIDEBAR 1-2



perpetrator with childish pranks to simply ignoring him. In the end, they always get their revenge, simply by continuing on, unaffected, unconcerned, unchangeable.

CERNUNNOS

Translation: The Horned One
Source Culture: Celtic
Concepts: Fertility, nature, rule over life and death
Edges: Aggressive, Animal Affinity, Brutal
Fighting Style Ranks: 4
Bonus Karma: 1

EXAMPLES

- *The traveler who keeps fears of her own mortality and stagnation at bay by regularly picking up and moving, spreading the seeds of her experience and stories as she goes.*
- *The office slave whose car is always laden with camping gear, so he can escape to the wilderness at a moment's notice.*
- *The urban-dwelling club freak who only feels alive when making or moving to beats that conjure primal images of the tribe or the hunt.*

When the earliest Celts walked in the shadows of untamed and dangerous forests, they muttered their prayers for protection to Cernunnos. He was among the most beautiful of dragons. His scales were a shimmering green, his face afire with golden eyes, his head topped with sweeping, wickedly dangerous horns. As an aspect of the Green Man and the father of nature, his coloring changed along with the seasons and his moods could vary with the speed of the changing weather. A creature to be worshipped and adored as much as feared and avoided, Cernunnos was all things but one: human.

Cernunnos attracts a variety of followers. To some, his representation of living in the moment among the wilds speaks to their own wild passions and thrill-seeking habits. Others seek a deeper understanding and communion with the ideas of spirituality, life, and the natu-

ral world. And to yet others, his symbolism of aggressive, masculine sexuality resonates. Something they all share, however, is a recognition of divinity.

CHIMERA

Translation: Young She-Goat
Source Culture: Greek
Concepts: Femininity, rage, righteous fury, rebellion
Edges: Defender, Durable, Follow-through
Fighting Style Ranks: 2
Bonus Karma: 3

EXAMPLES

- *A lawyer who has devoted his life to protecting abused children and battered women.*
- *An equal rights activist who tirelessly works to improve a society in which she has little faith.*
- *An eco-terrorist who will use any means to fight the true evils of the world: corporate polluters.*

In popular myth, the fire-breathing Chimera came from a family of distinguished monsters: daughter of Echidna and Typhon, sister to the Hydra, Cerberus, and the Nemean Lion. She was a "pet" of King Amisodarus of Caria. He raised her to terrorize the surrounding region. King Iobates of Lycia sent the hero Bellerophon, with the aid of Pegasus, to kill Chimera. He bore a spear tipped with a lead blade, which he hurled into her throat just as she was about to immolate him with her fiery breath; instead of killing Bellerophon, however, the heat of the flame melted the lead spearhead, which trickled down Chimera's throat and killed her.

There is, however, an older and deeper myth of Chimera, followed by her begotten. It is the story of an innocent, female dragon, hunted and ruthlessly slain by the glory-seeking Bellerophon. Patriarchs of the modern age

transformed her to represent the evils of women. Ultimately, the story of Chimera and Bellerophon became a false illustration of the triumph of good over evil.

Chimera's followers know better. They see her fire as the rage within for the demise of the mother goddess.





CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

They believe in equality and justice, and fueled with the fury of Chimera's legacy, they fight, sometimes blind with the rage that they've inherited from her.

DAMBALA

Source Culture: Voodoo

Concepts: The hidden, potential, shadow, the full circle of human nature

Edges: Circumspect, Strong, Thought Savant

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Bonus Karma: 5

EXAMPLES:

- *A stoic or cynic with brilliant dreams and ideas that he keeps for himself rather than share.*
- *The manic-depressive whose bouts of genius are countered by suicidal lows.*
- *A middle-aged blue-collar worker who has been through hell and back in his life, and has come out the other side with the poise and wisdom of an elder.*

Dambala has made his way into modern consciousness through the Haitian-inspired Voodoo beliefs of New Orleans. His roots, however, are deep and exceedingly ancient. Birthed in shadow by the opposing embodiments of chaos and order, he is the serpent of the sky, creator of all the waters of the earth, the hills and valleys, and even the stars and planets in the heavens. It was the shedding of his skin that brought forth the first rainbow, his polar opposite. He so loved it that he made it his wife. Dambala rules over the aspects of creation that are unilluminated; he knows the parts of our minds that we hide from even ourselves.

Dambala influences both his begotten's dark and light energies—fear, grief, and anger, as well as empathy, nobility, and wisdom. They recognize and celebrate the strengths of both sides of their natures, and are capable of the most extreme measures of the two. When in synch with Dambala, whether the dark side or light, they triumph. When they do not give in to their sire's guidance, they fail. He is the drug, the focus, that holds them together.

HYDRA

Source culture: Greek

Concepts: Chaos, independence, vengeance, volatility

Edges: Daunting, Dervish, Dexterous

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Bonus Karma: 3

EXAMPLES:

- *A gifted athlete, adored by his fans and respected by his peers, who lashes out at those closest to him.*
- *A gang leader that defends the helpless*

within his territory, if only to make sure that no one but him gets to brutalize them.

- *A mistreated assistant that tenders her resignation by deleting all of her boss's important files.*

History has not been kind to the Hydra. The second of Hercules' twelve labors, today she has been all but demoted to a large water snake. But she was another proud offspring of Echidna and Typhon. A dragon of great power, she had nine heads (eight mortal and one immortal), poisonous blood, and deadly breath. The battle between Hercules and Hydra was fearsome. Each time he managed to cut off one of her heads, two more grew to take its place. It may well have been the end to the slow-witted Hercules had it not been for the help of Iolas, his nephew. Iolas discovered that by cauterizing the necks, new heads would not appear. With this advantage, Hydra was ultimately killed. This, however, was not her end. Knowing the blood of the Hydra was poisonous, Hercules dipped his arrows in it—an action that nearly killed him later. Even in death, Hydra worked to exact her will.

Hydra's begotten have long memories and short tempers. For them, it's not about fairness, it's about getting satisfaction—the consequences be damned.

JORMUNGAND

Source Culture: Norse

Concepts: Gluttony, Ragnarok, serpent encircling the world and biting its tail.

Edges: Fluid Fighter, Hoard, Strong

Fighting Style Ranks: 5

Bonus Karma: 0

EXAMPLES:

- *A Shock DJ, spewing his toxic verbal sludge on the masses.*
- *A public relations executive that has no trouble convincing children that smoking is fun, and good for them!*
- *A corrupt politician taking advantage of his public position for personal gain.*

Jormungand, the Midgard Serpent, is the son of the god Loki and his giantess wife, Angrboda. At his very birth the gods feared him, for he grew at such an alarming rate they foresaw that one day he would bring great evil to both gods and men. By the time Odin took him from his parents and cast him into the sea, Jormungand had already grown to such a mass that he filled all the oceans of the world, forcing his own tail deep into his mouth. He lies there still, biting his tail, coiling all of mankind in his mass, twisting and writhing in fury as he tries to make his way to land. His venom poisons the souls of the sailors that die at sea, and his thrashing is responsible for fatal storms and tidal waves. It is said

that he will wait there until Ragnarok, the end of the world, at which time he will fight his nemesis, Thor, where they will destroy each other.

The followers of Jormungand are opportunists; they survive and thrive on the backs of others. Like their sire, they consume without respect for the resources that provide them so much. They wait, test the wind, then act. When the smoke clears from the battlefield, Jormungand's begotten will be there to stab the hero in the back and claim victory in his stead. They have no love or concern for humankind, and are indifferent about the morality of the means to their ends.

LADON

Translation: He who embraces

Source Culture: Greek

Concepts: Intelligence, protection, wisdom, the Golden Apple of Knowledge

Edges: Deft, Karmic Restraint, Sage

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Bonus Karma: 5

EXAMPLES:

- *A quiet observer whose few words are among the most meaningful.*
- *The concerned guy who acts as a surrogate big brother to all his female friends.*
- *The blind homeless man that always beats you at chess, and somehow knows when you're cheating.*

Ladon was often sought after for insight and perspective. His wisdom earned him a place as the guardian for the Golden Apple of the Hesperides, the fruit of knowledge that Hercules was sent to steal as one of his twelve labors. Hercules killed Ladon with arrows poisoned by the blood of the Hydra, nearly killing himself in the process. The beautiful Hesperides were heartbroken by Ladon's death, who had been both a brother and a protector to them. The distorted weave of mythology has sadly transformed Ladon's memory from that of a wise guardian into that of a monster with 100 heads, each speaking with its own insane voice.

Ladon's begotten share many traits with their sire. They possess a quiet wisdom and intelligence regardless of education, occupation, or religion. For the greater good and as a natural instinct, they utter the truth as they see it, regardless of what their listeners want to hear.

LEBE

Source Culture: Dogon

Concepts: Agriculture, life force, resurrection, soil

Edges: Animal Affinity, Forcefull Will, Thought Savant

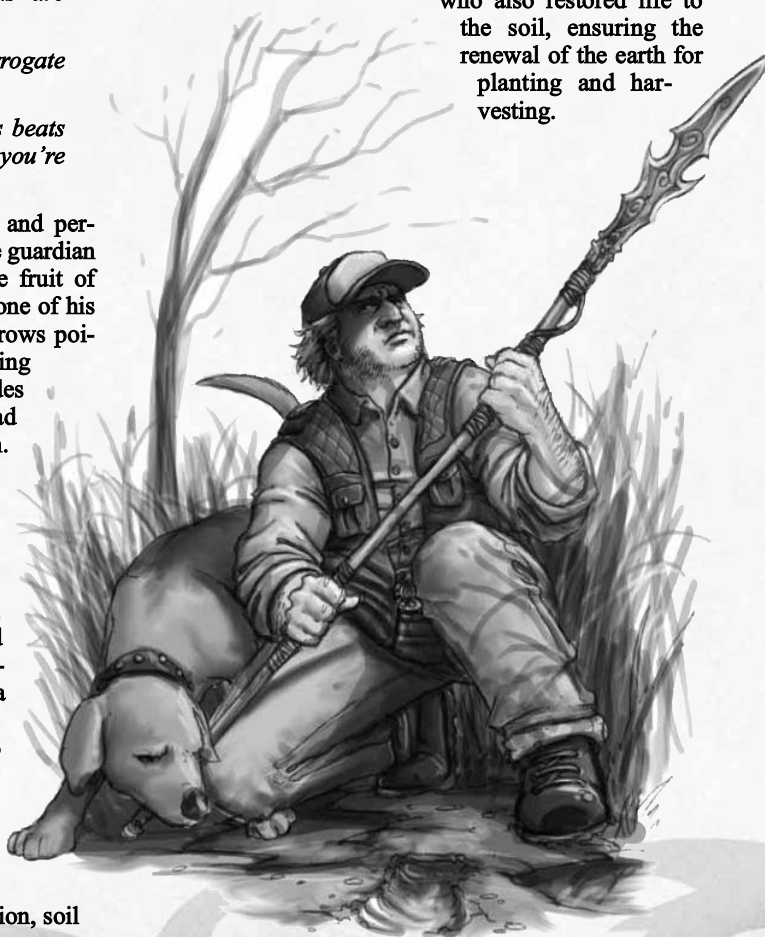
Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Bonus Karma: 4

EXAMPLES:

- *A biologist searching through the natural resources of the rainforest in an effort to cure cancer.*
- *A farmer that uses the most efficient, modern techniques, but still ventures into his fields in the dead of night to perform the rituals of the old ways.*
- *A hunter that tracks, kills, and dresses his own food, and can't stand bleeding-heart hippies who refuse to eat a piece of meat.*

In ancient times, the cult of Lebe spread through much of Western Africa with the Dogon people of modern Mali. Worshipped as a god of the soil, he was said to be the resurrected soul of the first Dogon ancestor. Lebe visited his devoted followers in the night, appearing as a dark dragon that licked their skin to purify them and infuse them with a fertility-rich life force. It was Lebe who also restored life to the soil, ensuring the renewal of the earth for planting and harvesting.



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Lebe's begotten refer to themselves as Hogon, and are amongst the most surprisingly mystical of scions. They have a profound connection with the Earth and, specifically, respect for the resources it provides. Waste disgusts them, but so does foregoing the bounty of nature. One should not casually or callously abuse that which the Earth provides, but no disrespect is greater than refusing its gifts. Hogon therefore feel a strong sense of obligation to and ownership of the areas they call home. They tend to fervently practice meditation and rites of purification as demonstrations of their commitment to Lebe.

MABINOION

Source Culture: Welsh

Concepts: Creativity, myth, inspiration

Edges: Confident, Karmic Release, Network

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Bonus Karma: 3

EXAMPLES:

- *The family figurehead who stresses the importance of learning and passing on the family's history.*
- *An author who seems to enter a psychotic episode when she writes, and later claims that she's not creating a fictional world, but rather channeling one from somewhere else.*
- *A leader who shapes the world around him, for better or worse, to fit his vision of an ideal reality.*

Mabinogion has captured the hearts and souls of countless followers, without them ever knowing it. She is the strong, red dragon that stands firmly behind the creativity and richness of the collective imagination of the ancient Celts. The Welsh alone have realized her role, if only in part, and have placed her emblem as a national symbol. She stands proudly, wings erect, claws bared, tongue out and tail poised, bright crimson on a field of green and white. She watches, waiting for her chance to inspire those whose minds and hearts are open. Mabinogion influenced the tale-telling of the Celtic bards, the ingenuity of Stonehenge, and the strength and determination of Boadicea.

Today, Mabinogion continues to influence a more diverse tribe in the form of her begotten. While others search for meaning or fear their fates, the begotten of Mabinogion fight, love, and die with passion and confidence, knowing that they are simply part of a larger story. When their time is done and their final reincarnation has been destroyed, they know that their lives and deeds are what will live beyond them, becoming new legends in their own right.

NAGA

Source Culture: East Indian

Concepts: Betrayal, changing currents, shapeshifting, water

Edges: Arsenal, Dexterous, Rapid

Fighting Style Ranks: 3

Bonus Karma: 2

EXAMPLES:

- *The extremist that sends his fiancé on an airplane with a suitcase he loaded with explosives.*
- *The cult leader that "saves" his followers by leading them in mass suicide.*
- *The polygamist that marries lonely women to steal their life savings.*

Naga was little more than a snake until she licked up drops of Amrita, a nectar of immortality and divine consciousness. The Amrita awakened her inner awareness and Naga was transformed into a bewitching dragon, having the head and upper body of a beautiful woman and lower half of a monstrous but graceful serpent. She held dominion over water, cruelly causing floods and droughts at her whim. Naga claimed the power of life and death over entire villages, and could go from giving them her blessing of benediction one year to utterly destroying them the next. Humans worshiped her out of obligation and fear.

The followers of Naga are supremely devoted. They believe they will one day give their lives and souls to a cause, whether they call it by her name or some other. They are mavericks, heeding to the needs or desires of none but themselves and their agendas. While notoriety for one's power and the achievement of victory are desirous, it is the act of exercising that power, the striving for victory, that bring the begotten of Naga to a state of rapture.

NEHEBKAU

Translation: He who harnesses the souls

Source Culture: Egyptian

Concepts: Death, transformation, the rising sun

Edges: Alluring, Brutal, Weapon Specialist

Fighting Style Ranks: 5

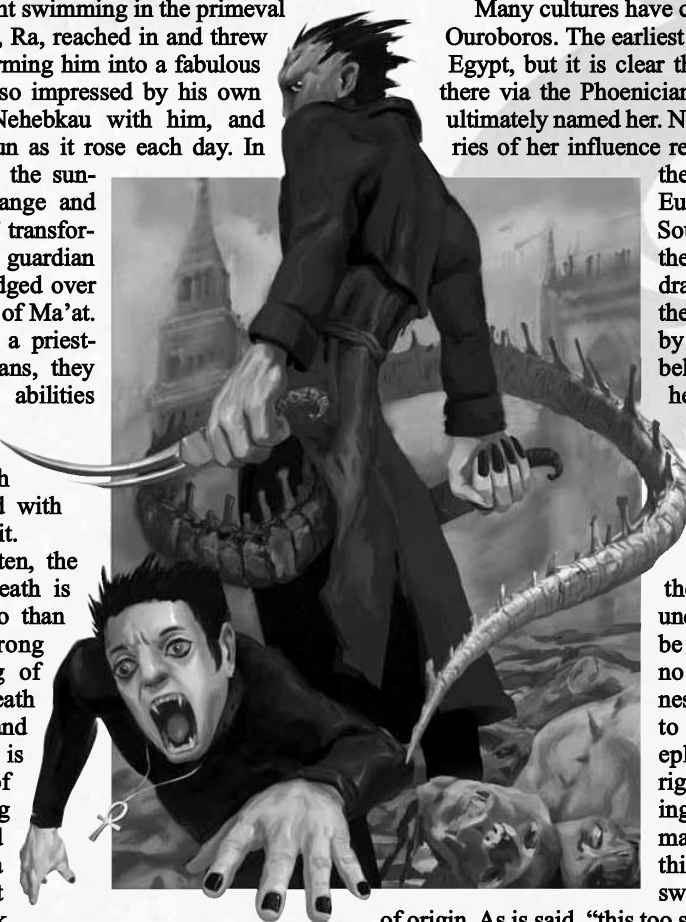
Bonus Karma: 0

EXAMPLES:

- *The butler that really did do it, and is supremely satisfied that he did.*
- *The divine assassin that accepts each job as a holy quest.*
- *The battered wife that wakes up one day, packs a bag, and is never seen again.*

Nehebkau was a serpent swimming in the primeval waters when the sun god, Ra, reached in and threw him into the sun, transforming him into a fabulous winged dragon. Ra was so impressed by his own creation that he kept Nehebkau with him, and together they rode the sun as it rose each day. In time, Nehebkau took on the sun-rise's symbolism for change and became the harbinger of transformation and of death. As guardian of the underworld, he judged over the deceased in the Halls of Ma'at. While he did not claim a priesthood among the Egyptians, they did respect his magical abilities and invoked his name often in their rites. His name is associated both with spells of death and with spells of protection from it.

To Nehebkau's begotten, the line between life and death is very thin. They, more so than any others, have a strong sense and understanding of their karmic heritage. Death holds no fear for them, and for some, bestowing it is simple. The followers of Nehebkau feel a strong connection to duty, and after accomplishing a goal, move on to the next without looking back. More than any other scions, the begotten of Nehebkau sleep soundly after spilling blood.



Many cultures have claimed the mysterious Ouroboros. The earliest references come from Egypt, but it is clear that she made her way there via the Phoenicians to the Greeks, who ultimately named her. Not to be contented, stories of her influence reach the far corners of

the world: India, Japan, Europe, North America, South America. She is the eternal symbol of the dragon biting its tail—the dragon that survives by eating itself. Some believe she exists in the heavens, surrounding all of existence, defining the boundaries of the universe.

Ouroboros' begotten believe in the eternal renewal of the universe. They understand that there can be no good without evil, no light without darkness. Although some try to influence this ephemeral equation of right and wrong, ensuring the ultimate balance, many understand that all things will eventually swing around to the point

of origin. As is said, "this too shall pass." Ouroboros, however, will always be.

OUROBOROS

Translation: Devouring its tail

Source Culture: Universal

Concepts: Cycles of nature, eternity, reincarnation, no end and no beginning

Edges: Durable, Resilient, Mentor

Fighting Style Ranks: 2

Bonus Karma: 3

EXAMPLES:

- A political adviser that works under countless leaders, furthering his agenda regardless of regime change or social trends.
- A world traveler that circles the globe, returns home, and realizes that everything has changed and everything has stayed the same.
- The middle child that grew up watching the conflicts between older and younger siblings, and always knew what to say to keep the peace.

QUETZLCOATL

Source Culture: Aztec

Concepts: Calendar, innovation, peace, sacrifice

Edges: Karmic Restraint, Sage, Survivor

Fighting Style Ranks: 0

Bonus Karma: 5

EXAMPLES:

- A charismatic but pragmatic priest, well-connected to his flock.
- A craftsman or artist that furthers his agenda by incorporating inspiring (or rebellious) images and themes in his work.
- A working-class bloke that commands respect from his co-workers; he can end fights with stern words, practical wisdom, or tough fists, whichever is most appropriate for the situation.

Quetzlcoatl is one of the noblest dragons found in myth. If it was a positive element of Aztec culture, he is said to have provided it. If it was a negative element, he



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is said to have opposed it. Anyone so virtuous and helpful must eventually be targeted by those who wish to use others for their own gain, however, and so it was with Quetzlcoatl. His brother Texcatlipoca tricked the peaceful dragon into looking into the evil Smoking Mirror. Thinking that the warped reflection he saw within was his true self, Quetzlcoatl was driven insane by grief. The once chaste, pious serpent fell into a rage of debauchery and destruction, channeling his self-hatred into a revulsion for all those things that he had once supported and helped create. After recovering from the mirrors' effects, Quetzlcoatl could not bear to look at what he had done. He traveled east in shame, with a promise to one day return and reclaim his heritage.

The followers of Quetzlcoatl have been through the wringer, paid the price for their nobility and sacrifice, and aren't eager to go through it again. For some, their sire's tale is a learning experience, preventing them from making the same mistakes. For others, the fate of Quetzlcoatl was not able to be avoided, but the story at least provides some hope of an eventual reconciliation. Many are atoning for a past sin, real or imagined.

RYU

Source Culture: Japanese

Concepts: Courage, honor, lightning, realized potential, respect

Edges: Action Junkie, Karmic Release, Strong

Fighting Style Ranks: 4

Bonus Karma: 1

EXAMPLES:

- *A vigilante street fighter.*
- *A young, Olympian-hopeful athlete.*
- *An idealistic but determined politician.*

The tale of Ryu reaches out to many scions, in that it almost directly mirrors their own experiences. Ryu is said to have been a Japanese peasant boy whose father was kidnapped by an evil sorcerer-king and locked in a high tower. The boy braved many dangers to find a magic pearl that, when swallowed, gave its consumer magical powers. Giving no thought to his own fate, he consumed the pearl and transformed into a powerful dragon with power over lightning. Using his newfound powers, he destroyed the sorcerer-king and his tower, rescuing his father. Once the deed was done, however, there was no return; Ryu was forever after to remain a dragon, and the guardian of the power of thunder and lightning. Though his father grieved, Ryu embraced his new form and the role that came with it.

Ryu's begotten are the shining knights of the scions. Their courage brings with it all of the attendant weaknesses: many are naïve, single-minded, and lacking in imagination. However, of all the scions, they are among the most willing to follow the path fate has set out for them. When they begin to realize their draconic natures, they see that they are also realizing their true selves, and

are likely to embrace it without reserve. This trait is not to be underestimated; the most dangerous warrior is the one who will use his weapons without hesitation.

TIAMAT

Source Culture: Babylonian

Concepts: Contrasts (chaos vs. law, creation vs. destruction), cycles, feminine power, seas, the creation or gathering of servants

Edges: Allies, Confident, Forceful Will

Fighting Style Ranks: 1

Bonus Karma: 4

EXAMPLES:

- *A cutthroat businesswoman that uses all of her assets to get to the top.*
- *An artist that is as renowned for his beautiful images depicting the female form as he is for mistreating his models.*
- *A mother who raises her children to be strong, then cuts them loose to face the world on their own.*

In Babylonian mythology, Tiamat is a creator goddess, the embodiment of the oceans of the world in all their inevitable power. Like many mythical figures, she is a study in contrasts; she is the mother of all life and even of the other gods, but tales also tell of her viciousness, insanity, and an eventual need to destroy all that she had created. While mighty in her own right, her preferred method of war was to create creatures to do her bidding and to overwhelm her foes with her dominating mental presence. It was said that none could resist her commands.

Tiamat's begotten care little for concepts like good and evil, viewing the world instead in terms of creation and destruction, strength and weakness, power and obligation. Some may be feminist and others sexist, but all have strong views, one way or another, about the female gender. Her followers tend to have a lot of ambition, whether as leaders and manipulators of others or as independent creators.

TYPHON

Translation: Violent Storm

Source Culture: Greek

Concepts: Rebellion, storms, volcanic activity

Edges: Aggressive, Dervish, Dexterous

Fighting Style Ranks: 4

Bonus Karma: 1

EXAMPLES:

- *The child that sasses back.*
- *The documentary film-maker that exposes the government and big businesses for what they truly are.*

- *The annoying question-asker that never seems to have an end to his inquiries, but also never has any answers himself.*

Typhon was the youngest son of Gaia and Tatarus, and as Husband to Echidna, spawned a monstrous brood of his own. He is said to have been of such a size that his hundred horrible, snake-like heads touched the stars, dripping poison from every eye, lava and red-hot stones falling from every mouth. His winged body was completely feathered and his legs were sinuously serpentine. The gods took one look, transformed into animals, and ran for their immortal lives. Eventually, the gods of Olympus realized the futility of flight, and turned to do battle. Typhon was eventually trapped beneath a mountain, and supposedly lies there to this day, belching forth lava, smoke, and ash and releasing the violent destructive winds and storms of the world.

Scions following Typhon generally lack respect for authority figures. While they don't have it together enough to be the leader, they have no desire to be the follower either. Although some have realized that it is easier to get through life by keeping their thoughts to themselves, many embrace the attention and notoriety their actions bring them.

XIAO

Source Chinese
Culture:

Concepts: Fortune, narrow escapes, rain, righteous rewards

Edges: Deft, Durable, Survivor

Fighting Style Ranks: 2
Bonus Karma: 3

EXAMPLES:

- *A devoted teacher that gives his heart and soul to the seemingly ungrateful pupils he teaches; that same teacher's life is later saved by a pupil he inspired to become a doctor.*
- *A miracle-making social worker who inherits a small fortune from an unknown and distant relative.*
- *A bike messenger that always tries to shoot the gap between traffic, and always manages to make it.*

Xiao was a boy from a village that was suffering from severe drought and starvation. One day, while gathering grasses near a river, he found a pearl. His family soon realized that any jar it was kept in overnight would, magically, be full to brimming with rice by morning. Xiao and his family gladly shared their good fortune with everyone in the village, but two neighbors let greed and envy get the better of them. Catching them in the act of stealing the pearl, Xiao swallowed it to prevent its theft. He was immediately overtaken by an unquenchable thirst. He ran to the river, drank it dry, and was turned into a dragon. In his dragon form he was able to bring the long-awaited rain to his village, but withheld rain from those that would have stolen the pearl.

Xiao's begotten are the noble good. They do for others what none would do for them. Additionally blessed with divine luck, the followers of Xiao believe that what goes around, comes around. And for them, this is expressly true. When they have exhausted themselves with benefiting others, they will reap unexpected, serendipitous rewards.

ZAHNAK

Source Culture: Persian
Concepts: Control, corruption, deceit

Edges: Alluring, Forceful Will, Seductive

Fighting Style Ranks: 1
Bonus Karma: 4

EXAMPLES:

- *The young VP who influences her family-owned-and-operated employers to become involved with questionable business practices.*
- *An advisor that distracts a ruler from the political chaos forming around him.*
- *The coup leader whose country bleeds while his personal wealth grows.*

To the ancient Persians, Zehnakh's very name evoked an ugly image of evil and

cruelty. In the *Avesta*, the holy book of the Zoroastrians, he was described as a three-mouthed, three-headed, six-eyed, cruel dragon with a thousand senses. His two secondary heads demanded a daily feeding of two human brains. He was of a "foreign race," who appeared under the guise of leading the Persian king to glory against invading tyrants. His true purpose was soon realized when he first enslaved, and then ate, the king. Were it not



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for the hero who slew him, Fereydun, he would have eventually destroyed all goodness in the world.

In the spirit of their sire, Zahhak's begotten feed on the minds of others. They are able to weave lies of such deceit that they can control and influence anyone from weak individuals to entire nations. Their strength comes not just in the form of manipulation, but also in the form of understanding—they know what people want to hear, and are able to use that knowledge to their own, manipulative benefit.

ZU

Source Culture: Sumerian

Concepts: Self-deception, technology, unpredictability

Edges: Confident, Weapon Specialist, Windfall

Fighting Style Ranks: 3

Bonus Karma: 2

EXAMPLES:

- *The guy from a group of harmless, pot-smoking high school friends that grew up to be a successful lawyer and cocaine addict.*
- *The recent college grad who spends most of his entry-level paycheck on the latest high-tech gadgets, and not on the rent for the apartment he shares with his best friend.*
- *The "dark hacker" that really does just want to crash a bunch of systems and cause a lot of headaches.*

In a time of antiquity, it is said that the children of Enlil, the god of air, came to him with laughter and excitement. Wonder of wonders, they had found a new creature. When he asked the creature its name, it simply purred, "Zu." Zu soon grew to become the divine storm dragon, the incarnation of the southern wind and the thunder clouds. Enlil gave to him the job of guarding a set of tablets that held all the knowledge in the world. While initially a faithful guardian, Zu came to covet the tablets and the power they could grant their owner over the entire cosmos and the affairs of man. The storm dragon stole them, only to be overcome by their power and barely defeated before his unwise machinations nearly caused the world to regress to a state of primordial chaos.

The story of Zu resonates with many living in the modern age. He has great power, but wants only more.

He sees access to knowledge and cannot understand why he should not have it. He proclaims his loyalty to a master in name, but not in heart or in spirit. He demands that technology and power be used, regardless of the natural processes that would normally govern sweeping changes.

DEPENDENT TRAITS AND FINISHING TOUCHES

This step is where the nitty gritty and personal details are added to your character. In order to put the finishing touches on him, you return to that place from which it all started: his aspects. Remember, aspects are more than just receptacles for dice. They represent the nature of an individual, his true potential. Table 1–3 shows the various traits that aspects influence. Bonus points should be recorded on scratch paper until they are used; all other dependent traits are recorded on the character sheet.

All dependent traits that call for your aspect score as part of a calculation use your **base aspect score**. Just as the dice in an aspect can change from moment to moment, your base aspect scores can change from adventure to adventure, both through character advancement and mishaps. Any time you change one of your base aspects, adjust all dependent traits accordingly.



DEPENDENT TRAITS

Racial modifiers may affect some of these items. A scion, for instance, gains a racial modifier to his karma. All relevant modifiers for scions are included in the explanations below. For a complete list of racial modifiers, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.

NUMBER OF MOVES

When weapons are drawn and bullets start flying, Fire and Water are the aspects that most characters turn to. When moving, attacking, or defending, a character can link together a series of moves to create sequences.

DEPENDENT TRAITS

Aspect	Effect on Dependent Traits
Fire	Determines the number of moves the character can make as part of a physical action
Water	Determines the number of moves the character can make as part of a physical reaction
Air	Determines the character's karmic range
Earth	Determines the size of the character's max karma pool
Fire + Air	Determines the character's initiative dice .
Earth + Water	Determines the character's health chart
Fire + Water	Determines the character's number of bonus physical skill ranks
Air + Earth	Determines the character's number of bonus mental skill ranks

TABLE 1-3

The maximum number of moves a character can link together in an active sequence is equal to his base Fire score; the maximum number of moves a character can link together in a reactive sequence is equal to his base Water score.

KARMIC RANGE

Your base Air score determines your **karmic range**, which is a measure of how well you can remain in telepathic contact with your broodmates and how far-reaching your spells and powers are. For more details on karmic range, see page 173.

KARMA POOL

Supernatural creatures tend to have a lot of **karma** available to them, while humans tend to create karma almost as quickly as they spend it. Both are significant advantages. Of all the creatures in the world of FIREBORN, only the scions of the modern age have both. Their humanity means that their karma replenishes quickly, but their draconic souls and their countless lifetimes have also allowed karma to coalesce around them in great quantity. For more information on using karma, see Chapter Seven: Karma and Magic.

Most humans have a maximum **karma pool** equal to their base Earth score. Because your character is a scion, however, she begins with a maximum karma pool equal to her Earth x5. Write this number in the "Pool Size" and "Current Karma Points" sections of the karma box on your character sheet (make sure to add any bonus karma you gain from your sire to both totals).

INITIATIVE DICE

When an action scene starts, a character makes an **initiative test** by rolling the sum of his base Fire and Air scores.

HEALTH CHART

A character's **health chart** is dependent on a combination of Water (his reflexes, health, and sense of self-preservation) and Earth (his willpower, resistance to pain, and sense of determination). Any dangerous attack against a character is translated into either a **minor wound** or one or more **wound dice**.

MINOR WOUNDS

Minor wounds are the bashes, cuts, and scrapes that average folks rarely suffer, but that heroes and fighters suffer daily. You can shrug off a minor wound without suffering any penalties, but if enough of them add up, you can start taking more serious damage (this is explained in more detail in Chapter Five: Combat). A character can suffer a number of minor wounds equal to his base Earth score. On your character sheet's **health chart**, fill in the boxes in the minor wounds pullout until you have a number of empty boxes remaining equal to your base Earth score.

DICE WOUNDS

More serious damage in FIREBORN is represented by dice penalties. The more wounds a character suffers, the higher the penalties to all of his rolls (this is explained in more detail in Chapter Five: Combat). Your character's base Water score determines your character's ability to soak up damage. A staggering blow against a character with a low Water score might be a glancing blow against a character

Health Chart		
< 4	no effect	☐
4+	minor wound	☐
8+	-1	☐
12+	-2	☐
16+	-3	☐
20+	-4	☐
24+	-5	☐
28+	-6	☐

gradies

DIAGRAM 1-1



CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

with high a Water score. On your character sheet's health chart, fill in the damage column according to the instructions in each row.

***Example:** Dave is making Giles, a hard-on-his-luck but tough-as-nails scion. He has Water 4 and Earth 5. Looking at the health chart, he sees that Giles will be able to suffer 5 minor wounds. He darkens in the minor wounds circles until he has 5 remaining. Then he looks at the damage column. On the first row, which defines what hits result in no noticeable effect, he writes "< 4," because his base Water score is 4. That means that hits that do less than 4 points of damage have no effect on Giles; he shrugs them off without a second thought. Moving down the list, he comes to the minor wounds row, and writes "4+." That means that hits that do 4 or more points of damage inflict minor wounds to Giles. He continues down the chart, adding his base Water score to the total in each box, as shown in Diagram 1-1.*

BONUS POINTS

Your career and training (represented by your background) and outlook on life (represented by your choice of sire) aren't everything. In fact, they're just the beginning. To represent the diversity of character interests, experiences, and talents, each starting scion gains a number of **bonus points**. These may be spent to improve his skills.

IMPROVING SKILLS

The sum of the scion's base Fire and base Water scores is the number of points available for improving physical skills. The sum of the scion's base Air and base Earth scores is the number of points available for improving mental skills. Each point spent increases a skill by one. No starting scion may have more than 4 ranks in any skill. Use a piece of scrap paper to write down your bonus point totals, then spend them by writing the new skill ranks down on your character sheet in the "Skills" section. For more information on skills and their use, see Chapter Two: Skills and Edges.

CROSS-SPENDING

If you wish, you can use physical bonus points to improve mental skills, and vice-versa. When you spend bonus points in this fashion, every 2 points spent increases a skill by one.

EXPERIENCE

Not every scion is young and inexperienced. Some of the Fireborn knocked around the world for many decades before karma, and memories of their true selves, returned. These gaffers may claim *Experience as starting characters only*. However, learning your trade and hardening yourself to the world comes at a cost: each new experience, each skill you learn in your current lifetime, separates you that much more from the countless lives you've lived before, the source of your

karma. When claiming Experience, you may lower your max karma pool by one point in exchange for one bonus point. This is the only way that a starting scion can have skill ranks higher than 4. Be careful, however; in FIREBORN, karma is one of your most potent weapons. It is a combination of luck, fortune, and willpower. When you're out of karma, no matter how high your skill ranks, it becomes much more difficult to avoid harm and misfortune.

BONUS RANKS

EDGES

Even if scions are often-times outcasts or loners, they are still driven, talented people. Whereas most starting human characters would have a single, rank 1 edge, scions begin with 3 ranks in edges. One is granted by the scion's background, and another is granted by the scion's sire (if the two edges chosen are the same, the scion combines them to end up with rank 2 in that edge). All scions receive a bonus third edge rank to assign however they wish. A scion may increase the rank of an edge granted by a background or sire, bringing it to rank 2 or 3, or could use it to acquire rank 1 in any other edge of his choice.

As your character fights, grows, lives, and remembers, he will get the chance to improve his edges, gain new ones, and explore even more fantastic abilities.

GROUP MIND

All scions begin with rank 1 in the Group Mind power. This allows them to communicate with their broodmates telepathically. You can only communicate with a broodmate if he is within your karmic range, however. For more information on how Group Mind works, see page 82.

FIGHTING STYLE RANKS

Scions attract trouble like blood attracts sharks. Maybe it's the sense of a monster among them from the schoolyard kids, maybe it's the fact that animals are scared of you, maybe it's the sense of competition because you've always been good at things without needing to try. In any case, most scions learn to handle weapons and self-defense pretty quickly (this is not to say you can't play a pacifist scion if you want, but there's a war coming, and you probably won't do your brood much good if you can't at least take care of yourself in a fight).

Combine the fighting style ranks granted by your background and your sire. The total number is the number of fighting style ranks your scion begins with; you may choose any fighting style of that rank for which you qualify, or you may divide up the ranks and spend them on several lower-ranked fighting styles.



For a list of fighting styles, see the “Catalog of Pain,” page 130.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Once your dependent traits, skills, fighting styles, and edges are chosen, it's time to move on to the finishing touches. These are the details that personalize your scion. What are a few favorite experiences from her childhood? Does she have a stuffed animal she still talks to? What's her favorite TV show? What kind of music is she obsessed with? How does she feel about reptiles? What are her daily habits? If she could be any animal, what would she be? What does her flat look like? What part of town does she live in?

Some of these questions can be answered independently. If you want your scion to be a stunning looker that attracts all the right attention at all the wrong times, so be it. If you want her to be tough-as-nails on the outside but a softie on the inside, that's up to you. But outside of all of the character-defining, thought-provoking traits, there's still the shallow, materialistic, status-symbol role of possessions.

POSSESSIONS

Your starting scion is assumed to have the basic material possessions defined by his wealth. These include a place to live, whether it be a cardboard box or a penthouse; a wardrobe, ranging from cast-off army surplus to cutting-edge clothes tailored just for him; and the basic amenities of modern life, like books, keepsakes, TV and stereo, and the like. Anything beyond that, including vehicles and weapons, must be purchased using your wealth rank. Before you go on your shopping spree, though, take a few moments to think about what those everyday possessions look like. Envision your character's style as defined by that oh-so-important factor, his stuff. Does he have a few original art pieces inherited from a great-grandfather, or do his wall-hangings consist of posters left over from his days at University? Is his collection of reading material from a library that went out of business, from his days as a rare book collector, or from countless “subscribe now, pay later!” magazine subscriptions? These tiny nuances may not matter much when evil sorcerers are

WHAT ABOUT ZEROES?

You may notice when calculating dependent traits that characters with base scores of 0 in any of them are going to be in a world of hurt. A character with Fire 0 would be able to perform no physical moves as part of a physical action, for instance, and a character with Water 0 would have a nonexistent health chart.

To allow such characters to remain a nominal part of the game, 0s should be considered 1s for the purposes of calculating dependent traits only. The fact that the character will be unable to even make tests in that aspect without making a stance change, on the other hand, is simply something they'll have to live with.

SIDEBAR 1-3

trying to harvest your soul for lunch, but they make the everyday moments in between high adventure that much more immersive and rewarding.

INITIAL PURCHASES

Weapons aren't seen as mundane possessions in London, which until recently prevented even its policemen from carrying firearms. Cars are likewise less common than in many cities, seeing as how the Tube or a bike can get you where you need to go just about as quickly and far more cheaply. The young and well-off are likely to have computers, but even that isn't a given.

To begin the game with these or any other specific items that your GM deems are not readily available, you must use your Wealth rank. This works exactly the same as using available wealth in play (see page 100), but you



CHAPTER ONE: SCION CREATION

do not need to subtract from the available wealth you'll have in the first adventure. Instead, simply choose one item (or collection of items) for each Wealth rank you have, starting with the lowest rank and proceeding to the highest. For instance, a starting scion with Wealth 3 would be able to choose one Wealth 1 item, one Wealth 2 item, and one Wealth 3 item (which might be a knife, a laptop computer, and a 4-door car, respectively). If a scion wishes to begin with several cheaper items instead of one of each Wealth cost, he may instead trade in any Wealth pick for five items of the next lower Wealth cost, which may in turn be traded in for five items of the next lower Wealth cost, and so on. For example, the scion from the example above might instead trade in his Wealth 3 pick for five Wealth 2 items or 25 Wealth 1 items. Of course, the police may have some questions for you when they find 25 survival knives in your flat—but if the police show up, that's probably the last of your worries.

You may choose street cost items with your Wealth picks, as well, but only if you have skill ranks in Knowledge: Street equal to the street cost of the item (see page 101).

SCION CREATION EXAMPLE

Andy has decided to make a FIREBORN character. His first step is to decide on a character concept. He likes the idea of playing someone with a mysterious past that's far smarter and more capable than he seems. Maybe a foreign emigrant that barely knows the local language and customs, or a smelly bum that utters surprisingly wise advice at tense moments. Whereas most other scions in his brood will be young, Andy's character will be older and more experienced. His shtick, he decides, will be to take everything in stride . . . even the fact that he's a dragon. After all, the culture shock of remembering the mythic age isn't much worse than being an outcast in modern society.

Now that Andy has his concept, he purchases his aspects. He wants his scion to be sturdy and observant. He doesn't mind if others take a more dramatic role, so long as he can protect and watch out for them, take a beating, and give useful advice. Reading through the

aspect descriptions on page 5 in the Introduction, he decides that Water and Earth should be his strong points. He spends 20 of his 28 aspect points on those two aspects, giving him base scores of 5 in each. With his eight points left, he gives himself a 4 in Fire (he wants to be able to dish out some pain when fists start flying). That leaves him with one point left, which would give him a base score of 1 in Air. Andy stops for a moment to consider that. On the one hand, having a base score of 1 in any aspect can severely limit a character; it wouldn't take much in terms of penalties for him to be unable to use Air at all without making a stance change to move dice into that pool. So he could spend his eight points on base scores of 3 each in Fire and Air, creating a much more balanced character. On the other hand, Andy likes the idea of someone who seems completely unintelligible, even not quite with it, but still capable when it really matters. Embracing this image, Andy goes ahead with the 1 in Air. His character concept has changed from an experienced and savvy middle-aged scion to that of a near savant. He records the base aspect scores he has chosen in the section marked "A" on his character sheet, as shown on diagram 1–2.

Next, Andy must choose a background. He looks over the list and decides that he likes the sound of being a collector, drifter, or radical. The drifter has the skill set and edge choices he thinks are most appropriate for his character, so he picks that one and writes it in the character info section marked "B" on his character sheet. In the section marked "C," he records the skill ranks granted by his background: 4s in his primary skills, 2s in his secondary skills. He also chooses an edge (Resilient) and writes that in the section marked "D," and writes down on a piece of scratch paper that he will have 2 fighting style ranks to spend.

Now that he has a pretty solid concept, including a background, Andy starts thinking about his character's name. He likes the sound of Augustus, and from there decides that his scion is a not-quite-right in the head German emigrant who came to London a few years ago . . . right about the time that magic returned to the city. When that happened, something started calling to him, so he left his job, wife, and family, and has been living on the streets in the West End ever since.

Satisfied with that spontaneous foray into Augustus' history, Andy returns to the crunchy bits. It's time for him to choose a sire. It's no contest; he reads the sum-

The diagram shows a character sheet for a FIREBORN character. The top section is titled 'FIREBORN' and 'SCION CREATION'. Below this is a section for 'Character Info' with fields for Name, Background, and a section marked 'B'. The 'Aspects' section is marked 'A' and shows scores for Fire (4), Air (1), Water (5), and Earth (5). The 'Skills' section is marked 'C' and shows ranks for Primary (4) and Secondary (2). The 'Edges' section is marked 'D' and shows 'Resilient'. The 'Health Chart' is a table with columns for Health, Wound, and Stun. The 'Fighting Styles' section is a table with columns for Style, Rank, and Notes. The 'Equipment' section is a table with columns for Item, Cost, and Notes.

mary for Caranoch, and decides that that's the one for him. Coincidentally, Caranoch offers the Resilient edge as a bonus sire edge; Andy chooses that one and, since he already has rank 1 in it from his background, increases its rank to 2 on his character's sheet. Caranoch adds no bonus fighting styles, so he has nothing to write down for that, but she does provide a significant increase of +5 to her begot-tens' karma pools, which he writes in section "B" under his max karma pool.

Finally, it's time for dependent traits and finishing touches. Thanks to his Fire and Water scores, Andy notes that Augustus will be able to perform action sequences with four moves and reaction sequences with five moves. His karmic range will be quite short, Trivial; but his karma pool will be a sizeable 30 (5x his base Earth score of 5 for a subtotal of 25, plus the 5 bonus karma from his sire). His initiative dice will be the sum of his base scores in Fire and Air; he doesn't need to write that down anywhere, as both are clearly marked in his aspect score boxes. Next, Andy fills out his character's health chart. His base score of 5 in Water means that he'll have pretty high damage thresholds. He writes "5" in the first row of the left-most column, "5+" in the second row, "10+" in the third row, and so on until the left-most column is filled in. Then, because he has a base score of 5 in Earth, he darkens in the minor wound pullout column until he has five boxes open with which to sustain minor wound.

Next, Andy gets to the bonus points. He adds his base scores in Fire and Water to get a total of nine, so he can distribute up to nine points among his physical skills. Since he already has 4 ranks each in Quickness and Stamina, he decides to improve his Athletics, Melee, and Ranged skills, giving 3 skill ranks to each. He has fewer mental bonus points to distribute, only six. He sees Augustus as being pretty aware of his surroundings, even if he hides it well, so he spends two points each on Senses and Trickery to increase them to a total of 4 skill ranks in each. That leaves him with two points to spend; he sinks both into Ka, as that seems appropriate for the party's "wise man" figure.

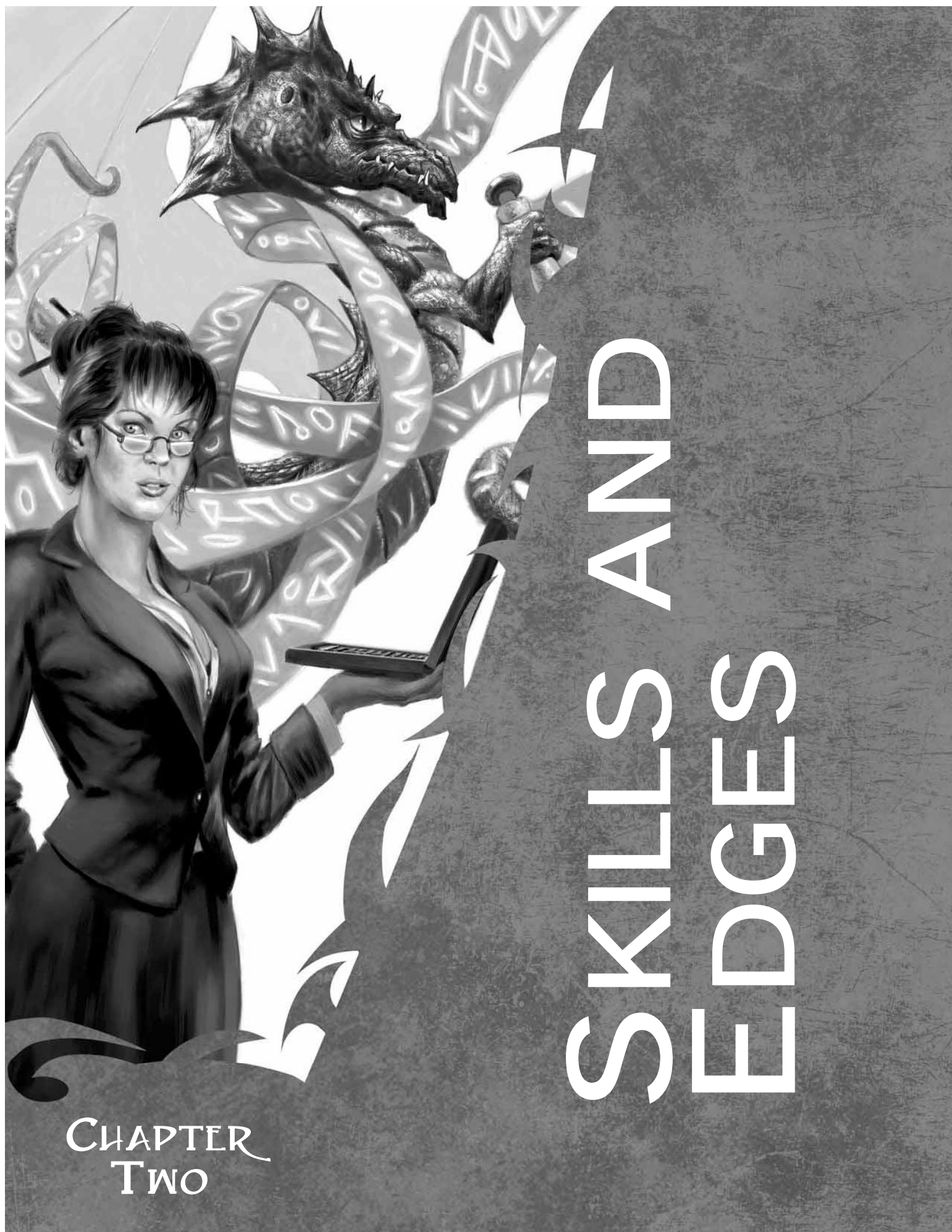


Continuing to the next step, Andy sees that he can have more skill points after all; by claiming experience, he can trade in karma for skill ranks. Since he has so much, he goes ahead and does that, lowering his karma pool by six to gain six bonus points. He chooses to improve Quickness, Stealth, and Trickery by two each, bringing his total ranks in each skill to 6. He's a lot more spry than he looks. Andy marks his skills up on his character sheet, and erases the "30" under his karma pool section, replacing it with 24. That still seems like plenty of karma.

He notes that all scions have rank 1 in Group Mind, so he writes that down in the section marked "D." Fighting Style ranks are next. Because his strength is in Water over Fire, Andy chooses the Luring Blade style for Augustus. He'll be using a baseball bat and trash can lid more often than a sword, but that's all right . . . the style will still work for him. As for his final bonus rank in edges, there's no sense complicating things when Andy knows that he wants his character be tough. He applies his bonus rank to the Resilient edge, giving him rank 3. Checking the rules for that edge, he sees that it gives him the ability to soak up three additional minor wounds, so he erases three boxes in the minor wound pullout of his health chart.

The final step in scion creation is finishing touches. Andy will come back and figure out some of those personal details later; for now, he wants to get figure out his possessions. That's pretty easy for a drifter, who has an available wealth of 0. Augustus starts with the clothes on his back. Andy settles in to writing up his character description, hoping the GM will give him an opportunity to find something heavy to use as a weapon before the action starts.

DIAGRAM 1-2



SKILLS AND EDGES

CHAPTER
TWO

SKILLS

One of the goals of the mechanics used in FIREBORN is to keep a seamless flow throughout a session, switching from narrative scenes to action scenes, and back, without having to look up a whole new set of rules. Therefore, many of the terms and systems mentioned here are described in more detail in Chapter Six: Action and Combat.

Skills are presented in the following format:

NAME [MENTAL OR PHYSICAL; ELITE?]

The “Mental” or “Physical” descriptor above tells whether the skill is primarily physical, and therefore tested with Fire and Water, or primarily mental, and therefore tested with Earth and Air. Some skills can be made elite with an edge, allowing the character to apply his ranks in the skill to the use of special weapons, vehicles, or other activities that require specific training; if a skill can be made elite, that is listed here as well.

Each skill entry begins with an explanation of what the skill is used for in-game. Where appropriate, related but overlapping skills may be mentioned to contrast their uses. Finally, descriptions of appropriate active vs. reactive uses of this skill are given, as well as whether or not it might ever be tested in aspects other than its primary ones (the mental aspects if it is a physical skill, or the physical aspects if it is a mental skill).

Use: If the skill has multiple uses or subskills, they are listed here.

OPPOSED SKILL TESTS

As described in the game system introduction (see page 5), many tests in FIREBORN are unopposed tests: You roll the dice in your relevant aspect pool, and if you score a number of successes equal to or greater than your threshold, you succeed. Some tests, however, will be opposed: One or more other parties will be trying to prevent you from doing something (a conflict) or trying to do it better than you (a contest). In these cases, the parties make an opposed test to determine the outcome.

In an opposed test, it matters not only whether you succeeded or failed, but also whether you did it better than the character opposing you. In an opposed test, you still have to score a number of successes at least equal to your threshold, but you also have to beat your threshold by more than your opponent.

In the vast majority of cases, the parties in an opposed test will be rolling against the default threshold of 1, and the winner will be simply the character who scores the most successes on the test. In some cases, though, one or both characters may be rolling against a threshold greater than 1—and they may each be rolling against different thresholds. In these cases, both parties

3 UNSKILLED PENALTY 3

Even when a skilled character does not use his skill ranks to make a stance change in support of a test, he still has a much better chance of succeeding than someone completely unskilled in the task at hand. A character suffers a **–2 unskilled penalty** whenever he attempts a task that is governed by a skill in which he has no ranks.

3 SIDEBAR 2-1 3

make the test as normal, then each sets aside a number of success dice equal to his threshold. The remaining successes are compared, and the one with the most successes remaining is the winner of the opposed test. The difference between the winner’s remaining successes and the loser’s are the winner’s **net successes**.

Remember that a character must always score enough successes to match his threshold to succeed at a test at all—regardless of whether he does better or worse than an opposing character. If a character in an opposed test fails to score enough successes to match his threshold, he suffers whatever consequences would normally follow, just as if it had been a standard unopposed test.

Note that this process is only necessary when the playing field is not level—the opposed test is not equally difficult for the parties involved—or when it’s important to know not just who performed better, but also whether either or both performed well enough to succeed at the task at all. In all other cases, both parties simply make the test as normal and the character who scores the most successes wins the opposed test.

Example: *Shaylea has been chasing a twisted aberrant, a minion of the Dwellers, for what seems like days. They reach the base of a cliff and the aberrant begins to climb. Shaylea pursues. The GM calls for an opposed Fire (Athletics) test and announces that the threshold is 5. Shaylea scores eight successes and the aberrant scores six. First, both the player and GM set aside five successes to account for the difficulty of the climb. Shaylea has three successes remaining and the aberrant is left with one. Both Shaylea and the aberrant can successfully climb the rock face. Shaylea has more remaining successes, however, and she wins the opposed test with one net success.*

SKILLS

ATHLETICS [PHYSICAL]

This skill covers a wide range of activities that are primarily governed by physical strength and fitness. You use this skill to climb, jump, run, swim, bash down doors, lift heavy weights, and perform many sports and

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

games that emphasize athletic prowess. Physical tests that are determined more by balance and agility, rather than physical strength, typically use the Quickness skill.

Tests that use the Athletics skill are almost always physical tests. Athletics tests are also usually active, such as when you attempt to climb a wall, jump a chasm, or swim across a river, and therefore these tests generally use the Fire aspect. They are only necessary when there is a chance of failure; moving across a cobblestone street, for instance, does not require an Athletics test. Moving across a slick cobblestone street while being shot at by angry mobsters, on the other hand, might.

Athletics tests often require you to know how far your **stride** distance is, which is calculated through a combination of size and gait (see page 138). The tests themselves are made against **terrain thresholds**, which represent the difficulty of moving your stride distance (or a portion or multiplier of that distance, if you're doing something other than walking) through or over the given terrain. Just as with sequences in combat, physical tests are made using moves (see page 134). For each successful move you wish to perform in the sequence, you must gain a number of successes equal to

the terrain threshold. If you don't succeed at performing any moves, you either don't manage to get anywhere, fall, or suffer some other effect depending on the terrain.

***Example:** Kurt Blackwood, a scion with a stride of 40 feet, is attempting to climb a knotted rope up a wall. The terrain threshold for the climb is 2, so Kurt needs to gain 2 successes on a Fire (Athletics) test to perform a single Climb move (a Climb move allows him to cover a distance equal to one-quarter his stride, or 10 feet). If he gains 4 successes, he could perform two Climb moves, meaning he would climb 20 feet; 6 successes would get him 30 feet, 8 would get him 40 feet, and so on.*

Let's say Kurt wants to get to the top of a 20-foot-high wall and then get on his feet on the roof. As described in Chapter Six, Kurt's sequence might look like this: Climb + Climb + Ready. He can get 10 feet up with the first Climb move if he gains 2 successes, another 10 feet up with the second Climb move if he gains another 2 successes, and can get on his feet and be ready for action with a final, fifth success. If he gains 3 successes, he manages to perform the first Climb move but not the second . . . the extra success is wasted. If he only gains 1 success, that means he doesn't perform any of the moves in his sequence, and he has a chance of falling, as described under "Climbing," below.

Terrain thresholds can depend on your choices. Some moves work better than others in a given situation, so choosing the right moves can make a difference. Your GM might also give you several choices or ask how you want to try to cross the distance, climb the wall, etc. If you choose the easier or safer path, your terrain threshold will be lower.

Reactive Athletics tests are most likely to occur when other characters or the environment are acting against you while you are employing the skill. For example, climbing a wall would typically be a Fire (Athletics) test. However, if a strong wind or an enemy's attack threatened to dislodge you from the wall, the GM may call for a reactive Water (Athletics) test to determine whether you maintain your position or fall. Reactive tests can be based on the same thresholds listed for active tests in the skill descriptions.

CLIMBING

You can use the Climb move, governed by a Fire (Athletics) test, to climb ropes and trees, free climb walls or cliff faces, or swing from ropes, vines, or chandeliers. Humans and other creatures without climb **gaits** climb at one-quarter their walking speed; in other words, each successful Climb move allows you to cover one-quarter the distance covered by a single Stride move. The terrains shown on Table 2-1 can be used as guidelines. Especially long climbs may require Water (Stamina) tests, as described under "Stamina," page 44.

CLIMBING TERRAINS

If you fail a Climb test, the GM typically allows you

NARRATIVE SCENE TESTS

Obviously, using this micro-view of skill testing would take a long time if you used it for each section of a, for instance, 1,000-ft. rock climb. For long-term tests, the GM simply adds a multiplier to the distance covered and the time used, and asks characters to resolve with a single test. A good estimate is to multiply the distance gained by x10 for each minute of game time, or x100 for each 10 minutes of game time. Let's use the previous example, putting Kurt on a 1,000-ft. rock face instead of a wall. If Kurt gains 6 successes on the terrain threshold 2 rock face, he would normally cover ground equal to three Climb moves, or 30 ft. The GM doesn't want to hold up the game to worry about each short span of the rock face, however; he wants to get a general idea of how long it takes the scion to get halfway up, which is when the monster hunter watching him through his rifle scope will start sniping at him. So the GM applies the x10/1 minute rule: in one minute of game time, the scion manages to get 300 feet up the face. One more test, assuming he doesn't fall, should get him halfway up the cliff face, at which point the GM will cut into an action scene.

The same system can be used for swimming or any other long-term test.

SIDEBAR 2-2

to make an immediate Water (Athletics) test at the same threshold to catch yourself. If you succeed at this reactive test, you simply make no progress with that attempt. If you fail, and are not otherwise secured (such as by a safety line), you fall. If you do not hit ground immediately, and are tumbling down a slope or falling parallel to a surface with adequate handholds, you may make a Grab move the next turn to stop your fall. The terrain threshold applied to the test is at least equal to that of the climb, though the GM may set it higher depending on the circumstances.

CLIMBING TERRAINS

TH	Terrain
1	A gradual slope of less than 45°, a ladder, or a tree with many sturdy branches.
2	A rough slope of 45° or steeper, a rope ladder, a tree with a few sturdy branches, or a low stone wall with plenty of gaps between the jutting stones.
3	A knotted rope against a solid surface, a tree with few, small branches.
4	A knotted rope in an open space, an unknotted rope against a solid surface, or a chimney-climb up a smooth vertical shaft.
5	A rough surface with abundant handholds, such as a rocky cliff face or an uneven stone wall.
6	A rough surface with some handholds, such as a cavern wall.
7	A rough surface with few or very small handholds, such as a brick wall, or an overhang with abundant holds.
8	A smooth surface with few handholds, or an overhang with some handholds.
10	A smooth surface with no handholds, or an overhang with few handholds.
12	An overhang with no handholds.
+3 to TH	Surface is wet or slippery.

TABLE 2-1

JUMPING

You can use the Jump move, governed by a Fire (Athletics) test, to make lateral and vertical jumps, either

from a standing start or with a running start. When making a horizontal jump, you can jump a distance equal to your reach (two feet for size 0 creatures) with every success you score. When making a vertical jump, you can jump a distance equal to your reach for every four successes you score. The distance for either type of jump is increased by 50% if you get a running start. This means that the distance traveled with a single Jump move is variable, unlike all other Athletics moves, which allow you to travel concrete distances. It may be easier to think of Jump tests in terms of the number of feet you can jump depending on the number of successes you score.

JUMPING DISTANCES

Type of Jump	Distance in Feet for Size 0
Standing jump	Successes x2*
High jump	Successes/2*

*+ one-half this distance with a running start

TABLE 2-2

If you score more successes than you need for a particular jump, you can choose to land in the spot you were aiming for or jump some or all of the additional distance, as indicated by your number of successes. If you do not meet the threshold for the jump, you still cover a distance equal to your reach for each success, you just do not reach your goal. In some cases, this leads to a nasty, possibly fatal, fall.

If you end up one reach short on a lateral jump, and can fall at least your height before hitting another surface, you can attempt to catch yourself on a ledge with a Water (Athletics) test (see the rules for climbing, above).

Example: Link, a scion, makes a Fire (Athletics) test and scores 4 successes. He would be able to jump 8 feet from a standing start (12 feet with a running start), or 2 feet straight up with a high jump (3 feet straight up with a running start).

STRIDING

You can use the Stride move, governed by a Fire (Athletics) test, to move forward at a steady pace. Humans and other creatures with land gaits stride at their normal speed; in other words, each successful Stride move allows you to move your speed. If you want to cover more distance or hustle, rather than just walk, that is represented by creating a sequence of Stride moves.

As mentioned above, you only need to make an Athletics test when there is a chance of failure. Stride tests are probably the least common of Athletics tests, as moving forward over level ground is something that most characters don't have a problem with. When speed is of the essence, however, you may very well find your-

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

self testing even your ability to move on your own two legs. In such cases, terrain thresholds may be applied, as shown on Table 2-3.

STRIDING TERRAINS

TH	Terrain
1	Level ground without obstacles.
2	Ground is particularly rough or full of small holes.
3	Ground is covered with ridges, mounds, and trenches.

+1 to TH Per six inches of water covering ground.

+2 to TH Ground is slippery.

TABLE 2-3

STRIDING TERRAINS

If you fail a Stride test, the GM typically allows you to make an immediate Water (Athletics) test at the same threshold to catch yourself. If you succeed at this reactive test, you simply make no progress with that attempt. If you fail, you fall and are **prone**.

SWIMMING

You can use the Swim move, governed by a Fire (Athletics) test, to tread water or swim. Humans and other creatures without swim gaits move through water at one-half their Stride speed. Table 2-4 lists terrain thresholds for swimming in various conditions (halve the threshold, to a minimum of 1, if you are only trying to tread water or float).

SWIMMING TERRAINS

TH	Terrain
1	Calm water
2	Rough water, light current
3	Turbulent water, moderate current
4	Stormy water, heavy current

TABLE 2-4

SWIMMING TERRAINS

After every 30 minutes of floating or treading water, and every 10 minutes of swimming, you must make a Water (Stamina) test or sustain 1 **weariness die** (see "Taking Damage," page 147). The threshold of the test

begins at 1 and increases by 1 with every test.

If you get no successes on a Swim test, you must make a Water (Stamina) test. If have already made Water (Stamina) tests due to swimming for extended periods of time, the threshold is the same as your last such test. If you succeed, you simply make no progress with that Swim attempt. If you fail, you sink below the surface and may begin to drown. You can hold your breath for a number of minutes equal to your successes on a Water (Stamina) test. After this time has elapsed, you suffer 1 **wound die** each turn from drowning until you die.

Example: Link jumps into a wide river and attempts to swim across. There is a light current, so the terrain threshold is 2. The first turn, he makes a Fire (Athletics) test and gains two successes. That allows him to cover the distance granted by one Swim move, or one-half his Stride rate. The following turn, he makes the test again and only gains one success—not enough to perform even a single Swim move in this terrain. He immediately makes a Water (Stamina) test and fails this, too. Link sinks below the surface of the river. He gains 5 successes on the Water (Stamina) test allowing him to hold his breath, which means he can remain underwater for five minutes—after that, he'll start to drown. He can make a new Fire (Athletics) test each turn to recover and begin swimming again.

After he's been swimming for 10 minutes, he'll have to make a Water (Stamina) 1 test to continue. Ten minutes after that, he'll have to make another test at threshold 2, and so on.

LIFTING/CARRYING

The weight that you can lift or carry is determined by your base Fire score. Increase your listed lifting or carrying capacity by an amount equal to your original capacity for each superhuman rank you have in Fire, and double the capacity for each size category you are larger than 0 (likewise, halve your listed capacities for each size category you are smaller than 0).

LIFTING AND CARRYING CAPACITIES

base Fire	Lift (lbs.)	Carry (lbs.)
1	50	10
2	75	20
3	100	30
4	200	40
5	400	50
6	600	60

TABLE 2-5

You can carry up to your standard capacity without suffering any negative effects. For every factor of weight you're carrying beyond your standard capacity,

however, you suffer a -1 disadvantage penalty to all physical tests.

You can lift more than your standard capacity by making a Lift test. For every success on the Fire (Athletics) test, you can lift 5% more than your standard load.

Example: A human with Fire 3 has a carrying capacity of 30 lbs., while a size 1 creature with Fire 3 has a carrying capacity of twice that, or 60 lbs. and a size 2 creature with Fire 3 has a carrying capacity of twice that amount, or 120 lbs. If any of them had superhuman Fire scores, 3(3) for instance, they would add 3x their capacities to their original capacity (before any doubling), giving them lifting capacities of 120 lbs., 240 lbs., and 480 lbs., respectively.

Any of them could carry more than these capacities, but would begin suffering disadvantage penalties to all physical tests if they did so. The human, for instance, would suffer a -1 physical disadvantage penalty if he carried anywhere from 31-60 lbs; a -2 physical disadvantage penalty if he carried anywhere from 61-90 lbs., and so on.

CASTING [MENTAL; ELITE]

You use this skill to cast spells. For more information on spellcasting and magic use, see Chapter Seven: Karma and Magic. You can also use this skill to identify spells being cast by others. The threshold for such tests is twice the rank of the spell being cast.

CRAFT [MENTAL OR PHYSICAL]

You use these skills to create art, perform in front of an audience, or build, repair, or create objects, substances, and materials with no moving parts or technical components. You must purchase each subskill in this group separately. Mental Craft subskills are generally the artistic crafts, including alchemy, cooking, gemcutting, painting, pottery, sculpture, weaving, and writing. Physical Craft subskills include armorsmithing, blacksmithing, carpentry, fletching, masonry, and weapon-smithing. The list of possible subskills within this category is virtually endless, and players and GMs are encouraged to develop their own to supplement those listed here.

To create items that must merely be serviceable, you may make a single test, requiring an amount of time as listed on Table 2-6. A single success means that you have created a usable, if unimpressive, item. For each success you gain on the test beyond the first, you may decrease the item's creation time by 10%. No successes means you make no progress, and have in fact ruined your materials.

The process to create a potential work of art, on the other hand, is more detailed. The quality of an item is determined separately from its completion. Each item

CRAFT TASKS

Time	Item
10 minutes	A horseshoe, a pair of socks, a simple meal, a clay bowl.
1 hour	A wagon hitch, a wooden stool, a cod piece, a batch of bricks, a poem.
3 hours	A pot helm, a vial of acid, a hunting knife, a portrait.
6 hours	An armoire, a tunic, a quiver of arrows, a scene of a play.
12 hours	A breastplate, a five-course meal, a burial urn, a vial of poison, a chapter of a novel.
24 hours	A 20-ft.-tall bronze sculpture, the foundation of a large house, a low stone wall surrounding a half-acre of land.

TABLE 2-6

CRAFT QUALITIES

Quality	TH	Example (Writing)
Hack	1	A highschool research paper.
Novice	3	An article for a college newspaper.
Acceptable	5	An editorial for the <i>London Times</i> .
Professional	7	A sci-fi novel picked up by a major NYC publisher.
Masterpiece	9	A work that could become part of the literary canon.

TABLE 2-7

created (or group of items, like a quiver of arrows or a box of candles) requires one Fire (Craft) or Air (Craft) test per hour of the project, with a minimum of one test for items with 10-minute creation times. Additionally, a project's creation time doubles for each quality threshold above Hack that you wish to attain.

Items can have qualities ranging from Hack to Masterpiece, as shown on Table 2-7; in order to create a Hack item, all you need is the minimum of one success on each test while creating the item. To make a Masterpiece, on the other hand, you must gain *at least* nine successes on *each test* you make while creating the

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

INTERACTION TESTS

Threshold	Information	Example
1	Basic feelings	Anger, confidence, fear, joy, suspicion.
2	Level of feelings	Whether target is annoyed, simmering, pissed, or on the verge of violence.
3	Cause of feelings	What exactly you said that pissed the target off.
4	Complex interactions of feelings	The target is pissed off but also fearful that he'll look bad in front of his mates.
5	Source of feelings	The target is pissed off because he recently got laid off from a long-term job, and he needs to prove to himself and his mates that he won't let anyone push him around, not after what that bastard of a boss did to him.
6	Best way to counter the feelings	Make a stand against the target, showing him that you're no pushover, but give him a chance to agree with you by starting to complain about your own loser job.

TABLE 2-9

item. Even a single TH 8 test would lower the piece's quality to merely Professional. On the other hand, regardless of the number of successes you make on each test, if you do not spend the extra time to perfect it, it can never be more than Hack quality.

INTERACTION [MENTAL]

This skill represents your awareness and understanding of the feelings, emotions, and motivations of others. It also suggests your ability to use that understanding to affect others' thoughts or behavior. Interaction includes common social skills, such as persuasion, oration, seduction, and even small talk. Use it actively to gain

insight into the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of others. Use it reactively to sense and counter attempts at deception or social manipulation.

Intimidation and outright deception are covered by other skills (Will and Trickery, respectively). Air (Interaction) tests are typically unopposed unless the subject is actively trying to conceal his feelings or otherwise misdirect or confound your efforts. When this is the case, the subject rolls an Earth (Interaction) test to oppose you. At a base threshold of 1, you can sense the surface or immediate feelings or motivations of a stranger. More complex information or more inscrutable subjects increase the difficulty, as shown on Tables 2-8 and 2-9.

These interaction modifiers are cumulative. For example, if you are trying to sense the underlying feelings, conviction, or motives (TH 5) of a subject of a different species (+2) that you are well-acquainted with (-1), the difficulty threshold would be 6.

INTERACTION MODIFIERS

TH Modifier Condition

-2	The subject is someone you've known all your life (or is a broodmate).
-1	The subject is someone you are well-acquainted with.
+/-0	The subject is someone you have never met or have only met a few times.
+1	The subject is from a different culture.
+2	The subject is a different species.

TABLE 2-8

KA [MENTAL]

This skill represents your karmic awareness and spiritual memory. Use it to sense taint and karma and to connect the people, places, and things you encounter in the modern age with those you remember from past lives, including the mythic age. The test is active, and therefore uses your Air aspect if you are actively searching for or trying to identify these karmic traces and connections. Otherwise, this recognition is reactive, and you make Earth (Ka) tests to use this skill. You can also use the Ka skill to sense and measure an opponent's karma in combat (see "Sense Karma," page 133).

KA MODIFIERS

TH Modifier	Condition
-7	Target is a broodmate or one of your hoard items.
-5	You had a close connection to the target in a past life.
-3	You've succeeded at a Ka test against the target before.
-1	You encountered the target in a past life.
+/-0	Target is at Trivial range
+1	Target is at Minor range
+3	Target is at Moderate range
+5	Target is at Major range
+7	Target is at Profound range
+9	Target is at Hemispherical range

TABLE 2-10

KA THRESHOLDS

TH	Task
5 – taint rank	Sense a tainted area's, object's, or creature's taint rank.
5 – karma rank	Sense an infused area's or object's karma rank.
5	Recognize the nature of one of a creature's previous incarnations.

TABLE 2-11

KNOWLEDGE [MENTAL; POSSIBLE ELITE]

This skill represents both formal learning and practical experience in a wide variety of areas or fields. You must purchase each subskill in this group separately. Knowledge tests can often be made using practical or vocational skills. For example, there is no Knowledge: Engineering subskill listed because a character with Tech: Engineering would know just as much about designs, schematics, and blueprints, but would also have the training to use that knowledge in practical applications.

The following is a list of available Knowledge subskills. The list is not inclusive and players and GMs are

KNOWLEDGE TESTS

Threshold	Knowledge Level
1	Common: known even to many laymen.
3	Uncommon: known only to a few laymen but to most experts.
5	Specialized: rarely known to laymen, known to many experts.
7	Advanced: unknown to laymen, known to some experts.
9	Obscure: unknown to most experts, known only to a few masters.

TABLE 2-12

encouraged to create their own.

Ancient Cultures: The ways, customs, and traditions of ancient ethnic, national, cultural, or social groups. This skill can only be used with mythic age cultures if it is promoted with an edge.

Art: An understanding of the history, styles, and trends of art, both old and new.

Finances: A grasp of the monetary and business world and its ins and outs.

Geography: Lands, political borders, topography and terrain, climate, and demographics.

High Society: A familiarity with etiquette and expensive tastes, as well as an encyclopedic knowledge of who's who among the rich and famous.

Language: Knowledge of a foreign language. One rank represents tourist proficiency, three ranks represent working fluency and literacy, six ranks represents native fluency and command of regional dialects. All characters are assumed to have rank 5 in their native language.

Law: Understanding of the laws, legal procedures, and political workings of the nation in which you reside; also, a basic understanding of those same topics as they exist in other nations throughout the world.

Modern Cultures: The ways, customs, and traditions of ethnic, national, cultural, or social groups that exist today or existed within the last 100 years.

Mythology: Mythology and folk tales from around the world.

Occult: Knowledge of past and present groups, history, practitioners, and traditions of the occult.

Religion: Knowledge of the scriptures, mythologies, sacred places and events, and doctrines of world religions.

Science: Theoretical and practical knowledge of physics, biology, chemistry, and other hard sciences, as appropriate to the era. Includes an understanding of how to use that knowledge in studies and experiments.

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Survival: Hunting, tracking, fire-building, orienteering, and knowledge of flora, fauna, and weather.

Street: A measure of your savvy when dealing with unsavory characters, and your understanding of how the black market works. See Chapter Five: Equipment for more on how to use Knowledge: Street.

Knowledge tests are almost always active and mental, based on your Air aspect. You most often make Knowledge tests to determine whether or not you recall some specific fact or piece of information. See Table 2–12 for the threshold to know information depending on its specificity or obscurity.

MEDICINE [MENTAL]

This skill represents your ability to treat characters afflicted by injuries, poison, disease, or other ailments. Medicine tests are typically active and mental, based on your Air aspect. The difficulty of a Medicine test depends on the complexity of the procedure you are performing.

First Aid: The minutes just after a fight are critical for wounded characters, and the immediate use of **first aid** can speed the recovery process. The window in which a character can benefit from first aid begins at the end of the action scene in which a character's wounds were sustained, and lasts for a number of minutes equal to the character's base Water score. During that time, a character administering first aid can do two things: treat minor wounds, or treat wound dice.

When you treat a patient's minor wounds, you eliminate a number of minor wounds equal to the number of successes you score on your Air (Medicine) test. This test takes about one minute.

When treating wound dice, the TH of the test is equal to the patient's current wound penalty. The test takes a number of minutes equal to the TH. If you are successful, the patient's wound dice drop by 1.

It may be obvious, but it bears noting that a character receiving first aid cannot be healed of more wound dice than he sustained in the preceding fight, no matter how well the aiding character rolls. That is to say, old wounds can't be healed with first aid just because the character got in another fight.

RE-ROLLS

Treating a wounded, poisoned, or diseased character is one of many actions and effects in FIREBORN that grant **re-rolls**. Each re-roll you gain allows you to re-roll a single unsuccessful die (a one, two, or three) on the appropriate test. Unsuccessful dice may be re-rolled as many times as you wish until you run out of re-rolls or all dice have come up as a four, five, or six.

SIDEBAR 2-3

You must have a first aid kit to perform first aid without penalty. If you're forced to use improvised materials (e.g., strips of cloth torn from clothing, sticks for splints, etc.), you suffer a –1 **materials** penalty to the roll. If you do not even have improvised materials, you suffer a –2 materials penalty to the roll.

Stabilize: If you wish, rather than trying to heal a dying character with first aid, you can merely try to make sure he doesn't get any worse (see "Taking Damage," page 137). This is a **full-turn action**, and the threshold of the Air (Medicine) test is only 1.

Long-term Care: You can also use the Medicine skill to improve the healing rate of wounded patients. At the beginning of each healing period (see Healing, page 138), you make an Air (Medicine) test. For every success you score, the patient receives +1 **re-roll** on his Water (Stamina) test to heal at the end of the healing period. In addition, if you score a number of successes equal to or greater than your patient's current wound penalty, the duration of the healing period is halved. You must have a medical kit to perform long-term care without penalty. If you're forced to use a first aid kit, you suffer a –2 materials penalty to your test. If you're forced to use improvised materials, you suffer a –4 materials penalty to your test. You cannot provide long-term care if you lack even improvised materials.

Treat Poison: You can make an Air (Medicine) test to treat a character who has been poisoned. You can treat a character for poison on a turn-by-turn basis as a full-turn action, so long as the patient takes no physical actions. For every success you score, the patient gains +1 **re-roll** on his next Water (Stamina) test to resist the poison. You must have a first aid kit to treat poison without penalty. If you're forced to use improvised materials, you suffer a –1 materials penalty to the roll. If you do not even have improvised materials, you suffer a –2 materials penalty.

Treat Disease: You can make an Air (Medicine) test to treat a character who has been infected with a disease. You can treat a character for disease on an hour-by-hour or day-by-day basis. For every success you score, the patient gains +1 **re-roll** on his next Water (Stamina) test to resist the disease.

You must have a medical kit to treat disease without penalty. If you're forced to use a first aid kit, you suffer a –2 materials penalty to your test. If you're forced to use improvised materials, you suffer a –4 materials penalty to your test. You cannot treat disease if you lack even improvised materials.

MELEE [PHYSICAL]

This skill is used to attack and defend in close combat, both armed and unarmed. The Melee skill can also be used with a mental actions to identify an opponent's relative combat skill. For complete combat rules, see Chapter Six: Action and Combat.

QUICKNESS [PHYSICAL]

This skill represents physical agility, dexterity, and speed. You use Quickness on any tests that emphasize these characteristics, such as balancing, tumbling, acrobatics, and gymnastics. Quickness tests are usually physical, but may be either active (Fire) or reactive (Water). Make active Fire (Quickness) tests when you are trying to walk a tightrope, perform an acrobatic roll, or slip out of a pair of handcuffs. Make reactive Water (Quickness) tests when you are dodging or otherwise testing your reflexes.

BALANCING

You can use the Balance move, governed by a Fire (Quickness) test, to walk along narrow surfaces without falling. This is similar to climbing using Athletics. Humans and other creatures without climb gaits move at one-quarter their walking speed while balancing; in other words, each successful Balance move allows you to cover one-quarter the distance covered by a single Stride move. Use the terrain thresholds on Table 2-13 as guidelines.

BALANCING TERRAINS

Threshold	Terrain
1	A fallen tree trunk.
3	A balance beam.
5	A tightrope.
+2 to TH	The surface is wet.
+4 to TH	The surface is icy.

TABLE 2-13

DASHING

You can use the Dash move, governed by a Fire (Quickness) test, to move at double your normal speed using any form of movement in which you have a gait. For instance, humans can use Dash to run, moving at double their stride with each successful Dash move. However, speed comes at a cost; any terrain penalties the character must face to cross the ground are doubled.

ESCAPING RESTRAINTS

You can use the Escape move, governed by a Fire (Quickness) test, to squirm out of restraining or confining implements. Except for Presses during a Grab, all of the restratins listed on Table 2-14 inflict a disadvantage penalties equal to their THs to all physical tests . . . including the test to escape from the restraint.

ESCAPE THRESHOLDS

TH	Restraint
3	Rope bindings
4	Manacles
5	Handcuffs
6	Straight-jacket
X	Number of Presses achieved on a Grab against you.

TABLE 2-14

RANGED [MENTAL]

This skill represents your proficiency and accuracy with all ranged weapons, including bows, firearms, and thrown weapons. For complete combat rules, see Chapter Six: Action and Combat.

RESEARCH [MENTAL]

This skill represents your ability to find information quickly and efficiently, whether through libraries, the Internet, or good old-fashioned legwork. With only very unusual exceptions, Research tests are mental and active, based on your Air aspect. The difficulty threshold of a Research test is based on the relative obscurity or specificity of the information you're looking for and the complexity of the tools at your disposal. A Research test typically requires a number of hours equal to the threshold of the test. Extra successes scored beyond the threshold can be spent to reduce this time by one hour each.

RESEARCH TESTS

Threshold	Level of Information
1	Common: most anyone could figure it out.
3	Uncommon: most anyone can find it if they know where to look or who to ask.
5	Specialized: takes some work to find, but isn't hidden or restricted.
7	Advanced: requires access to restricted or specialized source.
9	Obscure: requires access to secret, prohibited, or secured source.

TABLE 2-15

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If you have ranks in a Knowledge skill corresponding to the information you're looking for, you can make an Air (Knowledge) test before you begin your research. For every two successes you score, you gain 1 re-roll on subsequent Air (Research) tests to discover relevant information.

SENSES [MENTAL]

This skill represents the acuity of and your ability to use your vision and hearing, as well as smell, taste, and touch. Senses tests are always mental, but they can be either active or reactive. You make Air (Senses) tests when you are actively searching or listening for some-

SENSES TESTS

SENSES THRESHOLDS

Threshold Test

1	Search a room to find a large item.
2	Hear sounds of combat from the next room.
3	Hear an argument from the next apartment.
4	Search a room to find a small item.
5	Search a room to find a hidden item.
6	Spot the bulge of a concealed handgun.
7	Hear a quiet conversation across the room.
8	Spot a single rider on the edge of the horizon.
9	Hear a whispered conversation in the next room.
10	Find a needle in a haystack.

SENSES MODIFIERS

TH Modifier Circumstance

+1	Challenging: noisy room, dim lighting, moderate distance.
+3	Formidable: sounds of combat, nearly dark, long distance.
+5	Nearly impossible: cacophony, darkness, extreme distance.

TABLE 2-16

STAMINA THRESHOLDS

STAMINA THRESHOLDS

Threshold Test

1	Walk for an hour without stopping.
2	Jog for an hour without stopping.
3	Dig for an hour without stopping.
4	Run for an hour without stopping.
5	Fight for an hour without stopping.

STAMINA MODIFIERS

TH Modifier Condition

+1	Each multiplier of your carrying capacity above the first that you're bearing.
+1	Each day beyond the first without food.
+2	Each day beyond the first without water.
+1	Each 20 degrees above or below 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

TABLE 2-17

thing. You make Earth (Senses) tests when you are not actively searching or listening for something, but you nevertheless have a chance to spot, hear, or otherwise notice it. The GM may choose to make Earth (Senses) tests for you in secret, so that you won't learn anything you shouldn't based on how well you roll.

Many Senses tests in the game will be opposed tests. For example, an enemy that is trying to sneak up on you would make an Air (Stealth) test opposed by your Earth (Senses) test. If you begin to actively search for the foe, you switch to Air (Senses).

STAMINA [PHYSICAL]

This skill represents your health, fitness, and endurance. Stamina tests are usually reactive. You make Water (Stamina) tests to continue extended physical tasks, such as long-distance running and swimming. Failing such a test causes you to suffer weariness dice equal to the amount by which you failed the test. If you reach 6 weariness dice, you collapse from exhaustion and are **down**. For more details on the effects of weariness, see "Taking Damage," page 137. You also make Water (Stamina) tests to resist the harmful effects of poison and disease.

STEALTH THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Conditions
1	Concrete or grass, lots of cover, darkness.
2	Tile, some cover, and shadows.
4	Water or brush, minimal cover, normal light.
6	Dead leaves, no cover, bright light.

TABLE 2-18

STEALTH [MENTAL/PHYSICAL]

This skill represents your ability to avoid the notice or attention of others, whether you're hiding or sneaking. The skill is largely based on your awareness of yourself, your environment, and any potential observers, so Stealth tests are usually mental, even though they obviously have a physical component. This is an example of the Dynamic d6 system's flexibility, as characters skilled in Stealth move dice from Fire or other aspects into Air, drawing upon their training and experience to fully harness both their mental and physical faculties.

While moving stealthily, you travel at one-half your normal speed, regardless of the type of move (Stride, Dash, Climb, etc.) you are using.

Stealth tests are usually active: In most cases, you must be actively attempting to sneak or hide to roll a Stealth test. They are opposed by the Earth (Senses) tests of any potential observers—or Air (Senses) if the observers are actively searching.

In the vast majority of cases, both the sneaking character and any observing characters make the opposed test against the default threshold of 1. Table 2-18 lists a brief range of more challenging environmental conditions. These conditions would require the sneaking character to spend successes equal to the threshold before comparing his successes to the observers' (see Opposed Tests, page 35).

In some rare instances where split-second reflexes and reactions are more important than proactive awareness and decision-making, reactive Stealth tests may be in order. In this case, however, such a reflexive action will be almost entirely physical rather than mental.

Example: A scion information broker named Scour is infiltrating an abandoned mental asylum, which he believes is being used by government agents to perform tests on the psychically aware. He's moving quietly down a dark corridor, and makes an Air (Stealth) test to determine how sneaky he is, gaining 4 successes. Two soldiers are on guard duty wandering the corridors, so the GM makes Earth (Senses) tests for them, gaining 2

TECH THRESHOLDS

ELECTRONICS THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Task
1	Write a basic computer program.
2	Disarm a car alarm system.
3	Rebuild a computer from scratch.
4	Disarm a home alarm system.
5	Hack into a corporate network.

ENGINEERING THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Task
1	Plan and supervise the construction of a small house.
2	As above, but a three-story house or a primitive fortification wall.
3	As above, but an industrial-grade warehouse or a small bridge.
4	As above, but a large-scale building with dozens of floors or a miles-long irrigation system.
5	As above, but a skyscraper or a mid-size bridge.
6	As above, but a major dam or a suspension bridge.

MECHANICS THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Task
1	Replace an air filter or car battery.
2	Pick a simple mechanical lock.
3	Repair a busted carburetor.
4	Sabotage the plumbing in a building.
5	Crack a safe.
6	Rebuild a car from scrap.

TABLE 2-19

successes; that leaves Scour with 2 net successes, enough for the TH 1 conditions, so they don't notice him immediately. He has just about reached an intersection when the two soldiers round the corner, only a few yards away from him. If Scour doesn't hide right away, they

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

TRICKERY THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Bluff, Lie, or Con	Reality
1	"I just need a quarter for bus fare."	I panhandle this corner all day.
2	"Hey, buddy, can you give me change for a five?"	I'll pocket the bill you think I gave you, and walk away with the change as well.
3	"Here, let me write you a check . . ."	I opened a false checking account.
4	"Baby, I need a few thousand by tonight, or the mob will break my knee-caps"	I've been wooing you for weeks so I can pull this scam on you, then disappear."
5	"If you sign over your savings, I'll make you rich."	I'm gonna take your money and never look back.

TABLE 2-20

are going to notice him standing there in the middle of the corridor, no matter how stealthy he is! In this case, there's no time for careful or deliberate action—Scour must make a Stealth test to hide, flattening himself against the wall and making use of whatever shadows and concealment are available. This reaction is based almost entirely on reflexes, so it calls for a Water (Stealth) test.

TECH [MENTAL]

This skill represents your knowledge of and proficiency with technical devices. In the mythic age, it may allow you to pick a mechanical lock or disable a fiendish trap, while in the modern age you can hack computers or bypass electronic security systems. The Tech skill allows you to create, use, manipulate, or even sabotage technical devices. Tech tests are usually active and mental, based on your Air aspect.

There are three Tech subskills, each kept purposely broad: Electronics, Engineering, and Mechanics. Electronics covers the use of anything that requires circuit boards or software, including computers, digital security systems, and the more high-tech onboard car systems. As a side benefit, Tech: Electronics assumes a strong knowledge of programming, hacking, and computer use (or vice versa, depending on how you envision your character). Engineering covers the use of large-scale physics in construction, such as when designing canals, building bridges, or laying deviously destructive traps with large components (like, say, 10-ton stone blocks). Mechanics covers nearly anything else that Craft, Tech: Electronics, and Tech: Engineering don't: pretty much anything involving engines, moving parts, plumbing, or electricity. Sample thresholds for Tech tests are given on Table 2-19. However, it should be noted that any test to bypass security, pick a lock, hack into a system, etc., is only as difficult as the quality of

the materials and craftsmanship of the device you're attempting to overcome. Writing a computer program can range from incredibly easy, if you're trying to get the computer to add numerals, to incredibly difficult, if you're trying to create a simulation of a living ecosystem. The same holds true for all of the tests listed on Table 2-19.

TRAVEL [PHYSICAL; POSSIBLY ELITE]

This skill represents your ability to use common methods of conveyance of your era. In the modern age, you can drive a car, find your way around London on the Tube, or operate a small motorboat. In the mythic age, you can ride a horse, camel, or similar beast of burden and pilot a canoe or small sailing boat. The skill is mental when you're route-finding, physical when you're actually steering a vehicle or hauling on an animal's reins. Routine use of this skill does not usually require a test; don't roll the dice unless conditions or circumstances put the outcome of a task in doubt. Some vehicles require the Vehicle Use (Elite) edge, page 55, to be piloted without penalty.

For complete rules on vehicle combat, see page 155.

TRICKERY [MENTAL]

This skill represents your ability to lie, cheat, and steal. You use Trickery to pick a pocket, stack the deck, bluff your way out of a jam, pretend to be someone you're not, or con a rube out of all his money. Trickery tests are usually active and mental, based on your Air aspect. If you are attempting to deceive or misdirect someone, they oppose with an Earth (Interaction) test or Earth (Trickery) test, whichever the target has more skills in. You can also use Trickery to conceal things, such as an object on your person. In this case, your Air

(Trickery) test is opposed by the observer's Earth (Senses) test—or Air (Senses) if he's actively searching for the concealed item. By the very nature of this skill, unopposed tests are extremely rare—if there's no one to notice your deception, you don't need to roll. If someone knows and expects a con or trick from you, the GM may allow them to make an active Air (Trickery) test to try to figure out how your scam works.

WILL [MENTAL]

This skill represents your strength of personality and mental focus. It can be used to win a battle of wills or resist harmful mental affects, including many spells. Rules for intimidating opponents with Air (Will) tests are found in Chapter Six: Combat. You make Earth (Will) tests when you are resisting the efforts of others to intimidate or mentally coerce you, whether those efforts are magical or mundane. Unopposed Will tests are almost never required—if there is no effort to oppose you, no roll is necessary.

EDGES

All characters have aspects, backgrounds, skills, and dependent traits. While these factors all help determine who you are, however, they don't in and of themselves give you any unique abilities—and scions are most definitely unique. This portion of character creation, then, is where you gain the edges that set your character apart from the rest of the world.

Edges are either talents or connections that give a character a step up on the competition in daily life. Allies, mentors, networks, and even aspect affinities are all examples of edges. They are all tied to the everyday mortal world and, while useful, exhibit no supernatural effects whatsoever. Because FIREBORN uses humans as its baseline, edges are those things that any normal human could reasonably expect to have. Anything beyond normal human capability, even if it's merely the instinct of an animal or the nobility of a hero, is covered by a **power** or **legacy**.

PURCHASING EDGES

After your first three ranks in edges, which are granted as bonus ranks during character creation, edges must be purchased with **advancement points** (APs). Edges can either be ranked, meaning they have several ranks of effectiveness, or they can be independent, meaning they do not advance in rank. Ranked edges must be purchased in order, from the lowest rank to the highest, at a cost equal to their rank. Independent edges, meanwhile, can be purchased independently, but have greater costs to reflect the ease with which they can be gained.

EDGE COSTS			
Ranked Edges		Independent Edges	
Rank	Cost	Rank	Cost
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	3
3	3	3	6
4	4	4	10
5	5	5	15

TABLE 2-21

RANKED EDGES

ACTION JUNKIE

When danger threatens, you are often in motion before you know what you plan to do. Your instincts may not lead you away from danger, but they make sure life doesn't remain healthy for anyone who attacks you, either.

MECHANICS

You may choose to forego your mental action on the first round of combat. If you do, you gain +1 re-roll per rank in Action Junkie on your test to determine initiative placement.

You may not purchase this edge if you have ranks in Thought Savant.

AGGRESSIVE

Your character has a strong natural tendency toward Fire, and the temper to prove it. When engaging in aggressive physical activity, his natural talents shine through.

MECHANICS

Each time you purchase a rank in this edge, choose a different physical skill. You gain 1 re-roll on all tests with that skill.

ALLIES

Allies are individuals who feel they owe you, somehow, some way. You may have done them a good turn in the past, paid their rent, saved their dog, dated their daughter, or otherwise managed to put yourself in their good graces. Not all allies are equally loyal, of course, and even the most loyal will turn away if you continually abuse their trust or goodwill. They are there to help in times of trouble, not be convenient scapegoats for daily

EDGE SUMMARIES

RANKED EDGES

Action Junkie: You're quick on the draw.

Aggressive: You're a doer, not a thinker.

Allies: You have a group of friends to call on in a pinch.

Arsenal: You're ready for the next world war.

Aspect Affinity: You've got a knack when making tests in one of the aspects.

Brutal: You don't hold back when swinging a weapon.

Casting: You can use the Casting skill to the fullest.

Circumspect: You can pay attention to a few things at once.

Daunting: You're one scary hombre.

Defender: You'll take a bullet for your brood.

Deft: Your strikes are well-placed.

Dervish: The more foes, the better.

Fluid Fighter: Big swords, big swings.

Follow-through: You don't let extra energy from a swing go to waste.

Forceful Will: You're good at getting your way.

Glory Hound: You relish taking down a foe.

Hoard: You find or inherit an infused item.

Karmic Release: You can let loose more karma than you bid, if you need to.

Karmic Restraint: You can retract karma from a bid, if you don't need it.

Mentor: You've got an experienced ally.

Network: You can tap your network for info.

Rapid: You're fast on your feet.

Resilient: You can take a beating.

Seductive: You're fluent in the universal language: lust.

Survivor: You can easily dodge multiple attacks.

Thought Savant: You're quick-thinking.

Windfall: You come into some sudden cash.

Weapon Specialist: You are one with your weapon of choice.

INDEPENDENT EDGES

Rank 1

Animal Affinity: You're a natural with critters.

Confident: You're difficult to intimidate.

Dexterous: You have good balance and reflexes.

Durable: You're a hard worker.

Sage: You're an expert on one topic.

Strong: You're built like an ox.

Trivia: You know a little about everything.

Rank 2

Brawler: You have a wicked left hook.

Freight Train: Once you get going, you're hard to slow down.

Golden Arm: Whether you're chucking fastballs or daggers, you're a good thrower.

Paranoid: You're always on the lookout for trouble.

Skill Expertise: You've practiced long and hard at one skill.

Stealthy: You're good at fading into the background.

Sure Shot: Pistols get a little bit deadlier in your hands.

Weapon Use (Elite): You can use an elite weapon's combat traits, or use an exotic weapon with a penalty.

Vehicle Use (Elite): You can pilot an elite vehicle without penalty.

Rank 3

Adaptive: You're good at new tasks.

Skill Specialty: You've practiced for certain circumstances.

Weapon Use (Exotic): You can use an exotic weapon's combat traits, and can use it without a penalty.

Rank 4

Fortune Favors the Bold: You gain automatic successes for using cinematic descriptions.

Rank 5

Aspect Advancement: Increase a base aspect score by one.



adventures, and certainly not to fund your every misadventure with their savings. Eventually, the ties that bind become mutually entangling, so the player may occasionally be called upon for help by the ally, as well.

MECHANICS

GMs and players should work together to design an ally, so that it fits both the player's concept and can integrate smoothly with the GM's campaign. For examples of humans at various APs and supernatural creatures of various APVs, see the *Game Master's Guide*.

At rank 1, your ally is an AP 0 human. For each additional rank you purchase, you may either gain an additional AP 0 human ally, "trade in" a human ally for a 10 APV supernatural creature, "trade in" a supernatural creature for one 10 APVs higher, or advance an existing ally by 10 APs.

ARSENAL

Some people have known the end was coming for a long time, and are prepared with the weapons to keep them and theirs alive throughout it. Others have had a lifelong love affair with blades, guns, and other weapons of all kinds. A passionate collector can amass a bewildering array of "collector's item" weapons, and can do so quite cheaply and not too illegally.

MECHANICS

When you purchase the first rank of this edge, regardless of your Wealth or Knowledge: Street ranks, you immediately gain one weapon of no more than Cost 1 and Street Cost 1. You maintain a connection with the person or organization that provided the weapon, such that you have a ready source for purchasing ammunition, arranging to have the weapon cleaned or repaired, or even selling it for some quick cash. They won't sell you more than one weapon of this sort at a time, however.

For each additional rank you purchase, you may gain one additional weapon, increasing the possible Cost and Street Cost of the weapon by one with each rank.

ASPECT AFFINITY

You find yourself drawn to a given aspect, feeling particularly comfortable with actions or situations that draw heavily from it. You find ways to use that aspect in nearly every situation, and consider it one of your greatest strengths. Some would say that your ability to pull off complex maneuvers and overcome extreme challenges with this aspect verge on the supernatural; you know, however, that you're so good at it simply because it was what you were born to do.

MECHANICS

You cannot have Aspect Affinity in more than one aspect. The aspect must be selected the first time you choose this edge. For each rank you purchase in Aspect

Affinity, you gain +1 re-roll per scene when making a test or check with that Aspect.

BRUTAL

When the adrenaline starts pumping, you refuse to let up. You used to get into trouble for taking a fight too far, but in times like these no one seems to complain. You don't stop pounding on the other guy until he stops moving, and then you pound him some more.

MECHANICS

For each rank you purchase in this edge, you may add 1 to your melee or thrown weapon damage, up to a maximum equal to your base Fire score. The extra damage stacks with that granted by Deft. This edge may not be used to increase the damage of light weapons.

CASTING

Perhaps you've studied ancient rituals or modern street magic. Or maybe things simply happen around you when you're under duress that you can't explain. Regardless, you've somehow tapped into the power of karma, and it expresses itself in the form of magic.

MECHANICS

You gain the Weave Magic action and Cast move. Without this edge, you may not use either one; further, without this edge you may have an effective skill rank in Casting of no more than 1, regardless of your actual skill ranks. For each rank you have in this edge, your effective skill rank in Casting increases by 1, up to a maximum of your actual skill ranks in Casting.

CIRCUMSPECT

You're one of those people who lives in a whirl of activity every hour of the day. You aren't happy unless you have multiple things demanding your attention.

MECHANICS

Normally, a character suffers a cumulative -1 disadvantage penalty on each Earth test he makes in a turn after the first. For each rank you purchase in this edge, this penalty is lowered by 1.

DAUNTING

Your reputation may precede you, or death may look out through your eyes. It's not what you do to your opponent that wins the fight for you, it's the promise of what will come next. This edge is common among vicious creatures, brutal thugs, and evil-doers whose most powerful weapon is fear.

MECHANICS

Normally, if a character fails to Intimidate a foe, he may not attempt to Intimidate him again in the same



CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

adventure. Likewise, if he does not connect with his follow-up attack, he may not attempt to Intimidate him again in the same adventure. For each rank you have in Daunting, you may attempt the Intimidate move on a target one additional time per adventure, regardless of previous failed attempts or failed attacks. Additionally, any time you **drop** a foe, you may make an Intimidate test without using a mental action.

DEFENDER

Most combatants are constantly repositioning themselves to defend against attackers. You do the same dance, but keep your allies' positions in mind, as well. When attacks are directed at your charges, you think of them before yourself, either because you're such a stand-up guy or because they pay you so well.

MECHANICS

Normally, a character must use the Defend move to block a single attack directed at another. For each rank you purchase in this edge, you gain the ability to block an additional attack against adjacent allies when using the Defend move. Each additional reaction counts as a new Water test, with all the normal restrictions that go along with it (see page 130).

DEFT

You are careful and deliberate, but deadly. When fighting, time seems to slow for you, allowing you to guide your weapon with absolute precision.

MECHANICS

For each rank you purchase in this edge, you may add 1 to your melee or thrown weapon

damage, up to a maximum equal to your base Air score. The extra damage stacks with that granted by Brutal. This edge may not be used to increase the damage of heavy weapons.

DERVISH

You move through large melees like a dancer, taking death for a twirl and handing him off to others before he can get a grip on you. The more opponents there are to attack, the more partners you can introduce him to.

MECHANICS

Rank 1: You gain 1 re-roll per scene, usable on any attack tests targeting multiple foes.

Rank 2: You gain an additional re-roll per scene, usable on any attack tests targeting multiple foes. Additionally, you can string together separate fighting style sequences to attack multiple foes in melee, just as if you were stringing together basic moves to attack multiple foes (see page 146).

Rank 3: You gain an additional re-roll per scene, usable on any attack tests targeting multiple foes.

Rank 4: You gain an additional re-roll per scene, usable on any attack tests targeting multiple foes. Additionally, you can attack multiple foes using fighting style sequences that are only designed to attack single opponents. The restrictions for this use of the edge are as follows: You must decide which attack moves will be directed at which opponent before rolling dice, and you may only use fighting style sequences that have only additional damage as a payoff, which is divided evenly among the various foes.

Rank 5: You gain an additional re-roll per scene, usable on any attack tests targeting multiple foes.

FLUID FIGHTER

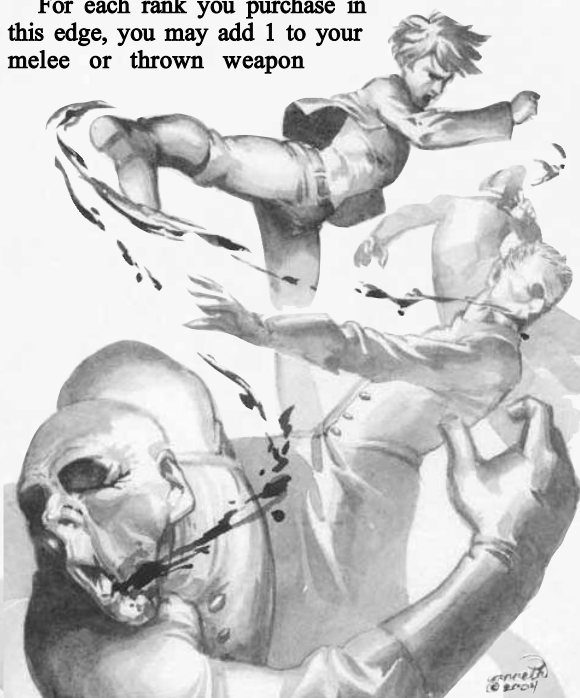
Your strength or center of balance gives you the ability to do the impossible with weapons. You're quick on the draw, rapidly recover from a backswing, and can even learn to handle massive weapons with little effort. Gravity is a secondary concern when you're wielding weapons. You can make weapons seem to float on air right until they find their targets, but they hit just as hard.

MECHANICS

Rank 1: When drawing weapons, you may use one fewer Ready move. Additionally, choose one weapon. When making multiple attacks in an attack sequence, you may use one fewer Ready move before attacking with that weapon.

Rank 2: You may use one fewer Ready move when using oversized weapons.

Rank 3: When drawing weapons, you may use two fewer Ready moves. Additionally, you may choose one additional weapon. You gain the same benefits for that weapon as those described in rank 1.





Rank 4: You may use two fewer Ready moves when using oversized weapons.

Rank 5: When drawing weapons, you may use three fewer Ready moves. Additionally, you may choose one additional weapon. You gain the same benefits for that weapon as those described in rank 1.

FOLLOW-THROUGH

When your opponent leaves you an opening, or an attack goes better than expected, you can readjust rapidly to take advantage of the situation.

MECHANICS

When you gain more net successes in melee combat than a sequence calls for, you may apply the extra successes to damage as if they were Presses (giving you +2 damage per Press), even beyond the number of moves you may perform in a sequence as allowed by your base Fire score. You may apply a number of extra successes in this manner equal to your rank in this edge.

FORCEFUL WILL

You've learned how to use your body language to take advantage of those who lack your internal resolve.

MECHANICS

At rank 1, choose either your gaze, voice, or touch. You gain 1 re-roll on social tests when using primarily that form of body language. For each additional rank you purchase in this edge, you may either gain an additional re-roll on social tests when using primarily that form of body language, or you may select a new form of body language to which you may apply your re-rolls.

GLORY HOUND

Downing a foe does more than tip the odds in your favor or boost your ego. It inspires you to new heights of skill and prowess.

MECHANICS

You regain one additional point of karma when you drop a foe. You may regain a maximum amount of karma in this way per scene equal to your rank in this edge.

HOARD

Luck, fate, or a mysterious family heritage have landed something in your lap that others must work hard to find: an infused item from your dragon self's hoard. An infused item gained in this manner is never a free lunch, however. It may be accompanied, at the Game Master's discretion, by a vengeful previous owner, a jealous family member, or a sordid past that will haunt the character.

MECHANICS

When you purchase the first rank in this edge, you gain a rank 1 hoard item. For each additional rank you purchase in this edge, your hoard item's rank increases by 1 or you gain an additional rank 1 hoard item. For more details on hoard items, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.

KARMIC RELEASE

You can feel karma ebbing and flowing. You've learned to open the floodgates to pull on a little extra when it will make the difference between life and death.

MECHANICS

This edge may only be used if you are participating in a **karma bid**. After seeing the results of the bid, but before the test is resolved, you may spend more karma than you bid. In any one scene, you may spend additional karma up to your rank in this edge.

If you initiate the karma bid, you must start the bid with at least one karma.

You may not purchase any ranks in this edge if you have ranks in Karmic Restraint.

KARMIC RESTRAINT

You can feel your own karmic flow as if it were the pumping of your blood or the movement of your breath. You can release it in small amounts, watch the results, and draw it back into you as necessary.

MECHANICS

This edge may only be used if you are participating in a karma bid. After seeing the results of the bid, but before the test is resolved, you may spend fewer karma than you bid. In any one scene, you may retract karma up to your rank in this edge.

If you initiate the karma bid, you must still bid at least one karma when the bid resolves.

You may not purchase any ranks in this edge if you have ranks in Karmic Release.

MENTOR

Because of your natural aptitude, or because you stand out from the crowd, or perhaps because you're such a hopeless case, you have gained a mentor. He sees you as an investment of his time, and possibly someone to carry on whatever school of thought he is teaching you after he has moved on. The mentor does not necessarily have to be aware of your draconic nature, but is loyal and capable of supporting you in times of need. The mentor likely has an outlook and skill focus similar to (but more advanced than) yours. As such, he can provide training in specific areas of expertise.

Taking a mentor is a significant investment on your character's part. Just as in real life, time and effort have



CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

to be invested in relationships and education if any real benefit is to be had. A character must take time to work with his mentor, following his advice, performing assigned tasks, and generally trying to learn from him. There is a significant amount of in-game upkeep that must be performed, potentially handicapping the character's independence.

MECHANICS

Whereas an ally is a peer and friend, a relationship with a mentor is a significantly more intense relationship. The higher the rank in this edge, the more investment of time and freedom it will require on the part of the character. Players who are unwilling to spend their time roleplaying this relationship or devoting Wealth toward it should not receive the benefits of the edge, and would be better off considering something else.

GMs and players should work together to design a mentor, so that he both fits the player's concept and can integrate smoothly with the GM's campaign.

At rank 1, your mentor is a 10 AP human who has claimed the maximum possible Experience and has a maximum of Wealth rank of 1 and a loyalty rank of 1. For each additional rank you purchase, your mentor gains 10 APs, his Wealth rank increases by 1, and his loyalty rank increases by 1. Alternatively, if your character starts play with this edge at a higher rank, you may "trade in" APs that a human mentor would have in order to have a supernatural creature as a mentor instead, with an APV equal to the APs of the human.

LOYALTY

Rank 1: Your mentor will inconvenience himself or his plans in order to provide you with some type of minor aid, like advice, training, or loaning equipment.

Rank 2: Your mentor is loyal to you and will aid you in any way short of directly endangering himself.

Rank 3: Your mentor is extremely loyal to you, and will aid you even if it means some amount of moderate risk to himself.

Rank 4: Your mentor is incredibly loyal and protective of you. He is willing to aid you no matter what the circumstances are, oblivious to the danger to himself.

Rank 5: Your mentor sees you as the single most important person in his life. He is willing to sacrifice anything to protect you, even his own life or those of his family and friends.

NETWORK

You have a network of contacts and informants in a specific subculture that can provide you with a stream of reasonably steady and reliable information.

MECHANICS

When you purchase the first rank in this edge, choose a specific subculture in which your network operates. Examples of subcultures include: criminal, police, occult, hackers, international trade, local government,

local media, local commerce. You gain one re-roll per adventure per rank you have in this edge when making Air tests to uncover information through your network. When you choose Network: Criminal, you may instead use this edge to increase your available street credit by one per rank per adventure. You must use a full narrative scene in order to gain the benefits of this edge. You may divide up the re-rolls among separate tests, if you wish.

For each rank that you purchase in this edge, in addition to more re-rolls, you also expand your network to include another subculture.

RAPID

You might've grown up racing others for scraps on the street, or gotten quite adept at rushing into the Tube car at the last instant. Whatever the cause, you're quicker on your feet than most.

SEDUCTION THRESHOLDS

Threshold	Behavior of Victim
1-2	An attacker continues to attack, but does so to subdue rather than kill.
3-4	An attacker continues to attack to subdue, but gives you an opening to run away, if it can be done covertly. If you do not run away, he continues to attack. A captor would do his best to make you comfortable.
5-6	An attacker attacks another target if available, avoiding doing harm to you completely, if he can. He will avoid harming you unless you attack him directly. A captor would help you and your friends as much as possible, short of letting you go.
7-8	An attacker refuses to attack you, and may not make a stance change to Water in reaction to your first attack against him after the seduction. A captor would turn a blind eye to your escape, but not your friends'.
9+	An attacker actively defends you, and may not make a stance change to Water in reaction to your first attack against him after the seduction. A captor would let both you and your friends go if you take him with you.

TABLE 2-21

MECHANICS

For each rank you have in this edge, choose a form of movement in which you have a gait (flight, swimming, land, climbing, etc.). Your gait in that form of movement increases by one category, to a maximum of Speedy.

RESILIENT

You were never very good at getting out of the way, but as a result you're used to taking hits. Part willpower, part bone density, you can take more hits before your performance is affected.

MECHANICS

For each rank you purchase in this edge, you may sustain one additional minor wound.

SEDUCTIVE

Some call you gorgeous. Some call you smooth. Others can't quite explain it, but their eyes follow you when you walk into a room. You've got that "certain something," and it is a potent weapon when used against the right people.

MECHANICS

You exude sexual confidence and animal magnetism. As such, when making social tests against characters of the appropriate race and gender, you gain one re-roll per scene per rank in this edge.

You can also use seduction in even the most unlikely situations, throwing off foes in the midst of combat. Once per adventure per rank you have in this edge, even in a violent or dangerous situation, you may make an Air (Interaction) test opposed by an appropriate target's Earth (Will) test. Success means that the target may behave completely irrationally due simply to your sex appeal. Sample effects are listed on Table 2-21. This edge must be used carefully; at the GM's discretion, certain unbalanced individuals may merely become more violent when successfully seduced. Regardless, the moment any falseness is detected, the seduced character will likely be angry and vengeful.

SURVIVOR

You had to dodge a lot of backhand blows as a child, or maybe you grew up in a warzone. Plain and simple, you know how to get out of the way.

MECHANICS

Normally, a character suffers a cumulative -1 disadvantage penalty on each Water test he makes in a turn after the first. For each rank you purchase in this edge, this penalty is lowered by 1.

THOUGHT SAVANT

When combat begins, you see the battlefield as a series of logical probabilities and potential actions. By focusing on mental actions exclusively, you can move faster than your foes and outthink them.

MECHANICS

You may choose to forego your physical action on the first round of combat. If you do, you gain 1 re-roll per rank in Thought Savant on your Air (Senses) test to determine initiative placement.

You may not purchase this edge if you have ranks in Action Junkie.

WEAPON SPECIALIST

You've trained long and hard in a specific form of weaponry, and with it, you have become as deadly as fire and as swift as rain. By exerting your skill, you can cause great pain in the field of battle. Specific unarmed attacks (fist, kick, etc.) may be chosen. In addition to the rank requirements listed below, you must also have the Weapon Use (Elite) or Weapon Use (Exotic) edge as appropriate for the weapon (see page 55).

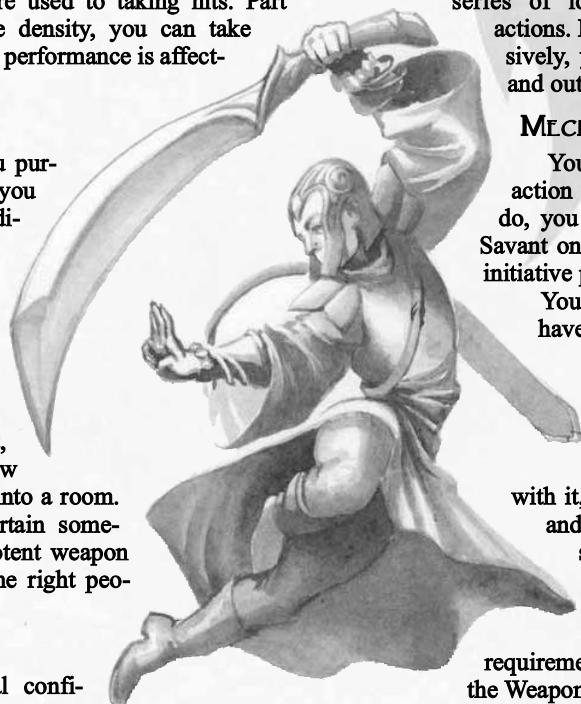
MECHANICS

For each rank you have in this edge, you must have the same rank in either Melee or Ranged (whichever is most appropriate for your chosen weapon). You must also have selected all appropriate Weapon Use edges as necessary to wield the weapon at maximum effectiveness. For each rank you have in this edge, you may choose one of the following benefits, usable only when wielding your chosen weapon. Each benefit may be selected multiple times.

- One automatic success on Initiative tests when wielding weapon.
- One automatic success per scene on an attack or defense test when wielding weapon.
- +1 damage with weapon.

WINDFALL

You do much better than the average person employed in your chosen field. You've either made some wise investments, gotten a nice inheritance, or won the lottery. When you choose this edge, decide in





CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS & EDGES

what form your funds came and in what state they are currently in; these factors may come into play if you need to get money quickly, access your funds while on the run from authorities, or come up with a special form of payment for those terrorists holding your brood mate hostage. At the Game Master's discretion, the wealth from this edge may require some amount of upkeep; if you do not use it wisely, it may dissipate over time.

MECHANICS

For each rank you purchase in this edge, your available wealth increases by 1.

INDEPENDENT EDGES

Independent edges, while just as useful as ranked edges, do not have multiple ranks. However, their AP costs are configured as if the character paid for prerequisite ranks. You may devote APs to an independent edge even if you don't spend enough to purchase it, such as for the purposes of determining your awakened rank. However, APs devoted to an independent edge have no effect and grant no abilities until the edge has been fully purchased.

RANK 1 EDGES

ANIMAL AFFINITY

You grew up around animals, or have a knack for soothing them. You gain 2 re-rolls on social tests against animals.

CONFIDENT

You have a good sense of your capabilities, and you've been through enough to know that you can handle whatever life throws your way. You gain 2 re-rolls on tests to oppose the Intimidate action.

DEXTEROUS

You've always been light-fingered and fast on your feet. You gain 2 re-rolls on all non-combat tests (usually Quickness or Trickery) in which agility and dexterity apply.

DURABLE

Endurance might as well be your middle name. You gain 2 re-rolls on all non-combat tests (usually Stamina and Will) in which stamina and physical endurance apply.

SAGE

Some people memorize batting averages. Some know exactly which bands are hot. And others memo-

rize the lineages of ancient Sumerian kings. Choose a specific topic within a Knowledge area in which you have ranks. You gain 2 re-rolls on all Knowledge tests relating to that topic.

SKILL ADVANCEMENT

You've trained at a skill, getting just a bit better. Increase your skill ranks in one skill by 1. You may select this edge as many times as you like, applying it to the same skill or different skills, although no skill may exceed a rank of 6.

STRONG

Whether you're naturally strong or just work out on the weights regularly, you've got more muscle than other folks of your height and weight. You gain 2 re-rolls on all non-combat tests in which physical strength applies. Additionally, you gain +25% to your carrying capacity.

TRIVIA

If there's a bit of random knowledge to be had, odds are you know it. When you make Knowledge tests regarding subjects in which you have no Knowledge skill ranks, your unskilled penalty is decreased by 1. You may purchase this edge twice, bringing your unskilled penalty on Knowledge tests to 0.

RANK 2 EDGES

BRAWLER

You've got a left hook that hits like a truck. You gain 1 re-roll on attack sequences using the Fist Strike move, and your Fist Strike does +1 damage.

FREIGHT TRAIN

You know how to throw your full weight behind a blow, sending your opponent flying back. You gain 1 re-roll on attack sequences using the Slam move, and you count as one size category larger when determining distance pushed.

GOLDEN ARM

You should have been a pitcher in the major leagues. You gain 1 re-roll on attack sequences using the Throw move, and your thrown weapons do +1 damage.

PARANOID

By the pricking of your thumbs, something wicked this way comes. You gain 1 re-roll on Senses tests to detect enemies trying to get the drop on you, and 1 re-roll on initiative checks when being ambushed.





SKILL EXPERTISE

Choose a skill in which you have ranks. You gain 1 re-roll when using that skill in narrative scenes (not during combat). Choose a different skill each time you purchase this edge.

STEALTHY

You regularly startle people who didn't hear you enter the room, and about half the time you don't even mean to. You gain 1 re-roll when using the Ambush move.

SURE SHOT

You've got a natural talent with a pistol, and a killer's instinct for firing true. You gain 1 re-roll on attack sequences using the Fire Pistol move, and your pistol shots do +1 damage.

WEAPON USE (ELITE)

Choose an elite weapon. You may use that weapon's combat traits. Alternatively, choose an exotic weapon. You may use that weapon without penalty. Choose a different weapon each time you purchase this edge.

VEHICLE USE (ELITE)

Choose an exotic vehicle. You may pilot that vehicle without penalty. Choose a different vehicle each time you purchase this edge.

RANK 3 EDGES

ADAPTIVE

You pick things up quickly, and you've never been afraid to try something, even if you have no clue what you're doing. When you make tests using skills in which you have no ranks (other than knowledge skills), your unskilled penalty is decreased by 1. You may purchase this edge twice, bringing your die penalty to 0.

SKILL SPECIALTY

Pick a skill in which you have ranks. Whenever you use that skill in a specific circumstance, you gain 1 re-roll on the test. Some examples of skill specialties are presented below; ultimately, the validity of a skill specialty is up to the GM. You may purchase this edge multiple times, choosing a new skill or new specialty each time.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

Athletics: Climbing, jumping, running, swimming.

Melee: Kicks made with a specific fighting style, blocks made with a specific version of a weapon.

Stamina: Distance running, healing, resisting poisons.

Quickness: Dodging punches, dodging melee weapons, escaping from restraints.

Ranged: Fire moves made with a specific weapon.

MENTAL SKILLS

Craft: Choose a specific type of product of your craft; for instance, a character with Craft (Weaponsmith) might choose katanas, morningstars, or punching daggers.

Interaction: Detecting lies, resisting taunts, seduction.

Knowledge: Choose a specific area of expertise within your Knowledge subject.

Medicine: Diagnosis, first aid, supernatural plagues

Research: Ancient texts, old periodicals, online sources.

Senses: Ear for voices, night vision, spotting still creatures.

Stealth: Hiding while still, shadowing, silent foot-falls.

Tech: Automotive engines, circuit boards, portable electronics.

Travel: Sportscars, SUVs, rapid acceleration.

Trickery: Disguises, shoplifting, bluffing.

Will: Opposed psychic battles, resisting intimidation, resisting mindreading.

WEAPON USE (EXOTIC)

Choose an exotic weapon. You may use that weapon without penalty and may use its combat traits. If you already purchased the rank 2 edge Weapon Use (Elite) for this weapon, this edge only costs 3 APs. Choose a different weapon each time you purchase this edge.

RANK 4 EDGES

FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD

When the GM grants you **cinematic bonus dice**, you instead gain an equal number of automatic successes.

RANK 5 EDGES

ASPECT ADVANCEMENT

Through diligent training, extensive exercises, and very motivating and life-threatening experiences, you have improved upon your natural capabilities. Choose one aspect. It permanently increases by 1, to a maximum of 6. You may purchase this edge multiple times, choosing the same aspect or different aspects each time.

If Aspect Advancement is purchased, changing a character's base score in an aspect, all dependent traits change along with it, just as if it had always been higher. For example, if you purchase Aspect Advancement and increase your base Fire score by 1, the number of moves you can link together to create an action sequence increases by one, and you gain a bonus physical skill point. The same process occurs any time you improve an aspect during character advancement.





DRAGON CREATION

CHAPTER
THREE

The mythic age is a time of wonder and danger. Great civilizations verge on collapse, insidious evil stirs beneath the earth, and, of course, grand dragons patrol the skies and seas. Your character was one of them. Over the course of several flashbacks, your scion will gain ephemeral glimpses of her lost majesty. These visions grant insight, memory, and power to the scion, who gradually awakens to her full potential.

You should create your dragon character sometime after your first adventure as a scion but before your first **flashback**. Your GM will tell you when it is appropriate to do so. Your dragon has the same soul as your scion, but the form, experiences, personality, and powers of the two characters may be quite different, creating interesting opportunities for both to grow and change. On the other hand, perhaps your dragon is very similar to your scion in physical ability and mental outlook, in which case it may represent the pinnacle of self that your scion attempts to reclaim.

DRAGON CREATION STEPS

First, choose whether you'd like to use **mirrored** dragon creation or **advanced** dragon creation. In the mirrored process, you assume that your scion and your dragon are very similar. You derive your dragon's scores and abilities based on your scion's; this method is simple and involves a minimum amount of work. The advanced method allows you to create your dragon from scratch.

Both types of dragon creation follow these steps:

1) CREATE CONCEPT

Much like you did when you created your scion, decide on your dragon's basic characteristics like history, morals, and role in the world.

2) PURCHASE OR ADAPT ASPECTS

Purchase aspect scores (or adapt them from your scion's aspect scores, if you are using the mirrored method), much as you did when creating your scion. Dragons are more powerful and are expressions of raw

elemental force; they therefore have higher aspect scores than most other creatures, barring only the most powerful supernatural beings.

MIRRORED OR ADVANCED?

CHOOSING A DRAGON CREATION PROCESS

Now that you have adventured in your human form for a while, you should have a feel for where you want your character to go. Would you like his mythic age draconic form to directly mirror his human personality and skills, signifying that he remains true to his draconic essence (and continues to head in that direction)? Or would you prefer that he be distinctly different in the two ages, demonstrating the changes a reincarnated personality can acquire through different lifetimes and representing the many ways a soul can develop?

Another important question is how much effort you want to put into this second facet of your character. Choose wisely, for while a scion's human spirit grants her flexibility and potential, dragons are unswerving creatures of pure power. Once a dragon's strengths and weaknesses are chosen, those factors will remain with her throughout the campaign.

SIDEBAR 3-1

However, each mythology represents dragons differently; the creatures exist as anything from vicious beasts to sacred deities. Likewise, while dragons are universally described as having at least a token serpentine appearance, their precise shapes varied as widely as their roles. Your dragon's **breed** reflects his appearance, at least, as well as his physical abilities, and may have some bearing on which cultures he most influenced in the mythic age.

5) CHOOSE LEGACY

A dragon's **legacy** is his defining feature, and will eventually become the trademark ability of his reincarnated self in the modern age. Legacies set dragons apart from mortals and allow them to empower their allies, devastate their foes, or command the forces of nature. They represent the peak of dragon capability, and echo throughout history in legends and myth.

6) DEPENDENT TRAITS AND FINISHING TOUCHES

Just as with your scion, dependent traits are calculated, bonus points for skills are spent, and possessions (in this case, a lair and hoard) are acquired.

3) CHOOSE OUTLOOK

Whereas humans have backgrounds and professions, dragons have **outlooks**. Your dragon's outlook determines his beginning skill ranks, his **fighting styles** and **spell picks**, and his **hoard rank**.

4) CHOOSE BREEDS

One of the mysterious factors that links the world's various cultures is that, with few exceptions, their history includes some sort of dragon myth. The dragons of the mythic age played a sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, but always intense, role in humanity's development. The actions of your character in dragon form may have planted seeds that remain in cultural memory today, millennia later.

CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION

MIRRORED DRAGON CREATION

This simple process allows you to recreate your scion in draconic form with minimum effort. The mirrored dragon creation process involves little decision-making; simply apply the following adaptations to your scion character's scores, and you have your dragon. Reference this section as you proceed through the dragon creation steps later on.

- 1) Increase each of your scion's aspects by one.
- 2) Your highest aspect gains a **superhuman** score of 6, your lowest aspect gains a superhuman score of 1, and your other two aspects each gain superhuman ranks of 4. In the case of ties, simply choose which aspect to increase. For a description of superhuman aspects, see "Purchase Aspects," below.
- 3) Do not choose an outlook. Instead, your dragon has the same skill ranks as your scion, but with a +2 to each one (to a maximum skill rank of 6). This includes skills with rank 0, so your dragon will have skill ranks in each skill. In the case of skills with subskills, like Knowledge and Tech, choose an appropriate subskill. Dragons cannot have ranks in Knowledge skills that are unavailable in the mythic age. Change inapplicable Knowledge skills to relevant Knowledge skills of your choice (good default choices include the culture and geography surrounding your lair, history, a type of supernatural creature of your choice, and legends). Your dragon's Hoard rank is the same as your scion's Wealth rank.
- 4) Determine your dominant and minor breeds (see "Choose Breed," below) based on your highest base aspect score, as shown on Table 3-1, below. Your breeds determine your appearance and physical abilities (flight, slashing claws, and the like).

MIRRORED BREEDS

Highest Aspect	Minor Breed	Dominant Breed
Air	Spirit	Drake
Earth	Abyssal	Beast
Fire	Fire	Drake
Water	Sea	Serpent

TABLE 3-1

- 5) Rather than prioritizing your powers by choice, simply put them in order, from first to last, as listed under your breed description. Now write down all three edge choices from your scion's background, and give your dragon 5 ranks in the first, 4 ranks in the second,

and 3 ranks in the third; additionally, write down the two ranked edge choices granted by your sire (each sire offers an independent edge; ignore that one), and give your dragon 2 ranks in the first and 1 rank in the second.

If you end up with a repeated edge with this system (because the same edge choices are offered by both your background and sire), you may use the higher of the two ranks and increase each edge of a lower rank by 1.

- 6) Choose your legacy.

7) Just as with your scion, dependent traits are determined and your possessions are chosen. You have no bonus skill points to spend, however.

ADVANCED DRAGON CREATION

The advanced dragon creation process allows you to create your dragon from the ground up, much as you did when you created your scion. Perhaps you wish your dragon and scion to be different from one another so you can explore the ways that your character grew and evolved over myriad lifetimes. Maybe the two differ because the scion's human experiences shaped him in key ways that the mythic age lacked. Or perhaps your scion fears his bestial, otherworldly side, and fights becoming it because he doesn't want to lose his identity or become something that he hates. Whatever the case, players who enjoy detailed character creation should use the advanced dragon creation process. It takes a little longer, but you get to tinker with every facet of your character. The rest of this chapter is devoted to advanced dragon creation. Continue with the steps below.

CREATE CONCEPT

The mythic age was a world of glittering spires, shining swords, and legendary beasts. It was a high age where magic and intellect combined to produce great works and mighty civilizations. Humans ranged across the oceans, settling new lands and discovering strange creatures. Knights clashed and wizards raked their enemies with claws of flame. Dragons and titans dwelled in far places, eyeing each other warily and watching the world move. It was a time of legend.

Yet, because it is no longer, reason suggests that the mythic age came to an end. What little you know from myth and memory tells you that it was likely a violent end, and that it teetered for some time before plummeting to its doom. It is up to you, the player, to determine when and where you think that end is. The Game Master will thrust your character, in his mighty draconic form, into all sorts of epic and mystical flashback scenes, the purposes of which will veer between obvious and obscure. As you relearn your identity through these mythic age encounters, ask yourself where your dragon fit into the world at large. Did you foresee the end and strive to stop it? Were you oblivious and proud, never fearing for your immortal consciousness? At which time period in the mythic age did the world begin to feel dark



and grim, and in which did your dragon still feel hope and curiosity? Perhaps you saw the entire mythic age as an end-time, with the plague of humanity crawling across the face of the world. Or perhaps the mythic age remained ever shining and full of potential, even up unto the very end, when the unknown finality struck the dragons, but not, apparently, resilient mankind. You alone can decide how your dragon lived, felt, and fought in that ancient time of glory.

To start, decide on a central concept for your dragon. What sort of character do you want your dragon to be? Think of some adjectives that others might use to describe him. Is he passionate, menacing, brutal, noble? This central concept can be similar to your scion's personality and characteristics, but does not have to be. Indeed, some of the greatest opportunities for change arise when a scion discovers that he was not always the being he is now.

That should be all you need as a concept for now. As you play through flashbacks, your GM will help you envision the mythic age and how you want your dragon to interact with its cultures and creatures. Dragons play a huge role in this age, and you will decide how your dragon affects it. How does he feel about the human nations in general? How does he feel about specific nations? Specific people? What will he do against the great evils that will soon arise? Does he see himself as a guardian, warrior, sage, mediator, or in some other role? Dragons are powerful and influence all those around them. Humans, titans, and other dragons take note of an individual's actions and revere or despise him based on his choices. How will your dragon want other beings to see him? How will your dragon interact with his brood and with other dragons?

As the flashbacks of the campaign unfold, you can begin giving more thought to your dragon's background. Though some of the flashbacks you experience may be times of great change in the mythic age, dragons themselves do not change very quickly—only humans and other mortal creatures have that capacity. What your

dragon did in the beginning of the mythic age was probably very similar to his behavior in the final battles. Each flashback, regardless of its era or location, will



provide a canvas for the picture you want to paint of your dragon. That image will be further focused upon, its details highlighted, covered over, or even relived by investigating, as a human, objects and legacies your dragon self left behind. You will learn, and decide, what your dragon did over the centuries, what wars he fought, who his allies and enemies were. The more richly detailed your dragon's background, the more influence it can have in both modern and mythic age adventures.

Regardless of your background knowledge, consider the following questions:

- What is your dragon's name? Dragon names are quite different than modern human names; use mythology as inspiration, or see "Sires," page 18, for examples.
- Was your dragon male or female? These traits do not have to match your scion's gender; indeed, a difference in gender can create interesting roleplaying opportunities.
- What is your dragon's moral and ethical outlook? What principles is he willing to fight for? To kill for? To die for?
- What does your dragon value? What does he scorn?
- Has your dragon ever been part of a family when in human form? Has he ever experienced love as a human? Did he sire children?
- What is your dragon's relationship to the dragons in his brood? Outside his brood? Did he have a mate? While dragons do not bear young, they still enter partnerships with other dragons that may last for millennia.
- Is your dragon in contact with the dragon that will become his sire in the modern age, if such a creature even existed? If not, is your sire a past incarnation of a dragon that faded from the world, one born toward the end of the mythic age, or perhaps a symbolic figure that



CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION

never existed? Could your dragon have inspired the stories behind the sire he now looks to for guidance?

- While dragons have different views on life than humans, you can determine some basic emotions. For instance, what does your dragon enjoy? What is he passionate about? What does he hate? What does he fear?

- What are your dragon's aspirations and goals? How does he plan to achieve them?

PURCHASE ASPECTS

Dragons have both aspect scores and superhuman aspect scores. Superhuman aspects grant automatic successes equal to their scores on any tests made with them. Aspects with superhuman scores are written as "Aspect X (Y)," where Y is the superhuman score.

Superhuman scores are not represented by dice and cannot be moved with stance changes. When penalties of any sort are applied to a test, superhuman scores are subtracted first. Superhuman aspects increase through scion advancement (see "Character Advancement," page 72), so modern age scions eventually gain them.

ASPECT SCORES

PURCHASE COSTS

Aspect Score	Cost
0	+2
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	7
5	10
6	16

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Aspect Score	Performance
0	Crippled
1	Well-below average; poor
2	Below average capability
3	Average human capability
4	Exceptional human capability
5	Extreme human capability
6	Maximum human capability

TABLE 3-2

Dragon characters begin with a set number of points to distribute among their superhuman aspects.

First, purchase normal aspects as if you were creating a scion. Instead of 28 points to spend on mundane aspect scores, however, you have 40. For convenience, the costs of the various aspect scores are repeated in Table 3-2. As with scion creation, you lose any extra points.

After purchasing your aspect scores, you may distribute 15 points to assign, on a 1-for-1 basis, your superhuman aspect scores. The only limitation on superhuman aspect scores is that they cannot exceed the associated aspect score. So a dragon might have Water 5(2) but could not have Water 2(5). When determining your base score for an aspect (which is important for determining dependent traits and in other game mechanics issues), do not include your superhuman aspect score. A dragon with Earth 4(2), for instance, has a base Earth score of 4.

CHOOSE OUTLOOK

A dragon's outlook plays, nominally, the same role as a human's background: it describes, in general terms, how your dragon views himself and his role in the world. Unlike backgrounds, however, outlooks have nothing to do with training or a chosen profession. Dragons take quite a long while to learn; for every new piece of knowledge gained, a memory of ancient, unused lore is likely forgotten. After several millennia, all of the peripheral aspects of a dragon's personality and skills tend to be lost in the vagaries of time. Dragons therefore focus less on details and individuals, and more on a broad picture. That broad picture defines the dragon's outlook. Your dragon's outlook determines which skills a dragon naturally excels at, or has spent centuries perfecting. He may see himself as a guardian or a warrior, an explorer or a sage.

Outlooks are presented in the following format:

NAME

Paragraph describing the activities, history, and motivations of a typical dragon following this outlook.

Primary Skills: The outlook's primary skills. The dragon has 6 ranks in each of these skills.

Secondary Skills: The outlook's secondary skills. The dragon has 3 ranks in each of these skills.

Style Picks: The number of ranks' worth of permanent fighting styles your dragon knows. You may come to each adventure with an additional selection of temporary fighting style ranks, also equal to this number. These represent the fighting styles your dragon has learned and forgotten at different parts of his life.

Spell Picks: The number of ranks' worth of permanent spells your dragon knows. You may come to each adventure with an additional selection of temporary spell ranks, also equal to this number. These represent the different spells your dragon has learned and forgotten at different parts of his life.

Hoard: The dragon's starting hoard score.

OUTLOOKS

Choose one outlook from those listed below.

OUTLOOK SUMMARIES

Adventurer: Thief, warrior, gladiator, or king, an adventurer is what he makes of himself.

Explorer: Explorers are always looking to the horizon, always uncovering new treasures.

Guardian: These duty-bound dragons protect their sacred charges with their lives.

Hoarder: Lust for treasure guides the hoarder's every thought and deed.

Mediator: Mediators are self-appointed distributors of wisdom and justice.

Mystic: The mystic taps the essence of karma and magic.

Observer: Observers travel unseen among the other races, watching, learning, or stealing as is their wont.

Sage: The sage worships knowledge above all else, and will do anything to procure or protect it.

Warrior: Straightforward and strong, the warrior sees his existence as a chance to prove right through might.

SIDEBAR 3-2

ADVENTURER

The adventurer follows no path but his own. Because the years and centuries blend together as one, there is no point but to live for each one as it comes, and forget it when it passes. To an adventurer, wealth is to be acquired through daring deeds and outrageous exploits, and is destined to be spent as dramatically and unthinkingly as it was gained. Magic is as valuable a tool as tooth and claw, and keen wits see an adventurer through scrapes just as well as a strong body.

Primary Skills: None

Secondary Skills: Choose any eight

Style and Spell Picks: Any total of 10

Hoard: 1

EXPLORER

Every time the explorer sees the sun rise over a new horizon, she is reborn. She keeps stagnation at bay by constantly traveling and learning, and revels in the discovery of new cultures and places. Explorers may journey to steal from ancient temples and scrawl their names in blood and fire across the landscape, or may walk as ambassadors to new lands, as leaders of wandering pilgrims, or as protectors of exiled refugees.

Primary Skills: Athletics, Research, Senses, Stamina

Secondary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge (choose two), Melee, Tech: Mechanics, Travel, Trickery

Style Picks: 8

Spell Picks: 2

Hoard: 2

GUARDIAN

Guardians are among the most committed and determined of their kind. Once their word is given, freely and without coercion, it will not be retracted, even in the face of the end of an age or the destruction of the soul. Each guardian has a sacred site or item to which he only allows the worthy; the location and nature of that site, and his purposes for guarding it, are secrets that no power on this Earth can pry from a guardian's jaws. Guardians that adventure in a brood have their own reasons for leaving behind their sites . . . some may have failed in their duties, others may be in training before taking on their charge, and some may not have abandoned their sites at all, but rather carry a sacred item with them.

Primary Skills: Ka, Melee, Senses, Stamina, Will

Secondary Skills: Interaction, Knowledge (choose two), Rituals

Style Picks: 8

Spell Picks: 4

Hoard: 3

HOARDER

All dragons covet treasure and cherish their hoards. Hoarders make the rest look like beggars and peasants. Unlike guardians, who defend their sites out of a sense of duty, hoarders are obsessed with amassing and protecting their hoards to satisfy their own greed. The power that comes with such a focus is undeniable, but many dragons pity their hoard-hungry fellows. Whereas other dragons explore, think, battle, and love, hoarders only venture from their well-defended lairs long enough to ransack a city, steal an ancient trove, or demand a sacrifice, then return to sleep and lounge on their mountains of wealth for long, lazy centuries. Hoarders are not to be underestimated, however; their greed has sharpened their cunning minds like a whetstone, and their hoards give them an awe-inspiring source of karma.

CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION



Primary Skills: Ka, Ranged, Rituals, Senses, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Casting, Knowledge (choose two), Melee, Will

Style Picks: 4

Spell Picks: 4

Hoard: 5

Secondary Skills: Knowledge (choose two), Medicine, Melee, Senses, Stamina

Style Picks: 8

Spell Picks: 4

Hoard: 2

MEDIATOR

Some would say that the mediator cares the most for humankind. After all, they are the ones who keep order, dispense justice, and offer wisdom to those hapless children still taking their tentative first steps into civilization. But each mediator's motivation is his own; some may truly care for the charges they have adopted, but many more look down upon the feeble fighting of the dirtborn, as they call them, and seek to raise them up to something greater out of a sense of responsibility, hubris, or even disgust. Their methods are as varying; some act as god-like figures, cultivating a village's or city's indecision and fear until the people therein cannot survive without the dragon's guidance. Others wander, humbly taking on human form, using words and wisdom to mediate conflicts and strength of arms or an indomitable will to enforce their judgments.

Primary Skills: Athletics, Interaction, Knowledge (choose two), Quickness, Will

MYSTIC

Even the least magically adept dragon has the potential to attain levels of arcane power that no human can hope to reach. The mystic is a dragon whose long centuries of study, dreaming, musing, and adventure has led her to one undeniable conclusion: the practice of magic is the noblest of all arts. A dragon does not catalogue, research, and experiment with the intensity of a human magician, obsessed as he is with power, wealth, and his own mortality. Instead, the mystic seeks intimacy with magic, treating it as she would a child, a lover, or a religion.

Primary Skills: Casting, Ka, Rituals, Will

Secondary Skills: Craft (choose two), Knowledge (choose two), Research

Style Picks: 2

Spell Picks: 14

Hoard: 3



OBSERVER

"Observer" is the most neutral term for an outlook that encompasses a huge range of motivations and activities. Observers specialize in, above all else, blending in with humanity and the other civilized races of the mythic age. Some use this ability to do what the name of their outlook suggests: observe, if only for their own curiosity. Many others, however, act as spies, insurrectionists, assassins, freedom fighters, crime lords, vigilantes, treasure thieves, and even advisors to kings.

Primary Skills: Interaction, Quickness, Ranged, Senses, Stealth, Trickery

Secondary Skills: Athletics, Casting, Knowledge (choose four), Medicine, Will

Style Picks: 5

Spell Picks: 5

Hoard: 3

SAGE

The wise men of secluded temples, of mountain aeries, of dying peoples, are often more than they seem. In some cases, they aren't even men at all. Sages cherish knowledge of all kinds, whether draconic or human, natural or supernatural. Some even delve into darker secrets, collecting lore of the unnatural. It is these who are known to kill for the secrets they hoard, to spy on the unsuspecting, to trade dangerous information to any who can pay.

Primary Skills: Knowledge (choose four), Research, Will

Secondary Skills: Casting, Craft (choose one), Ka, Knowledge (choose six), Rituals, Stealth

Style Picks: 4

Spell Picks: 8

Hoard: 2

WARRIOR

For warriors, battle is all. Through the eons, warriors have studied and perfected countless forms of combat. They place a large emphasis on courage, honor, and directness, and while far from naïve, they are loathe to use trickery when strength of arms is an option. Some warriors become mentors-in-disguise, training humans who have no inkling of the warrior's true nature. Others are students of humanity; after all, no other race in the history of the world has perfected war into such an art form, and in no circumstances is humanity more primal and interesting to behold than in war.

Primary Skills: Athletics, Melee, Quickness, Will

Secondary Skills: Ranged, Stamina

Style Picks: 14

Spell Picks: 2

Hoard: 2

CHOOSE BREED

Born of gods, ill-omened monsters that leave destruction in their wakes, keepers of power, guardians of the heavens, the material from which the earth and sky are made . . . the myths about the origins of dragons are widely varied indeed, and each may hold a grain of truth.

In FIREBORN, a dragon's outward appearance is little more than window dressing and a suggestion of possible capabilities. It is no indication of status, talent, age, or even geographical origin. All dragons come from the same source, though they gain different traits during their creations. Breed indicates what physical traits a dragon possesses. Dragons have two breeds: one is the dragon's dominant breed and the other is his minor breed. Together, these two breeds dictate a dragon's appearance and traits.

Your dragon's dominant breed determines the general shape of his body, the capabilities and dexterity of his forelimbs, and his gait. Your dragon's minor breed determines the nature of his other form traits (wings, protective hide, tail, and other miscellaneous features) as well as the powers he may choose from. Your dragon's breed does not affect his size; all adult dragons are size 4.

BREEDS

Every dragon has one dominant breed and one minor breed. After you select your dragon's breeds, you can describe your dragon by using his minor breed as an adjective preceding his dominant breed. For example, your dragon may be an abyssal serpent, an exotic drake, or a noble beast.

DOMINANT BREEDS

You have three choices for your dragon's dominant breed: beast, drake, or serpent. Dominant breed determines your dragon's overall body type, as well as its natural weapons.

BEAST

Beasts are quadrupeds. They are ferocious and, as the name suggests, bestial in appearance. Beasts look like massive predators, sleek and feral, with rippling muscles and physical power brimming from their bodies. They remind humans of great cats or similar hunters that bring down prey with speed, power, and stealth. Indeed, a beast may have some mammalian features, such as a lion-like mane, whiskers, or thick, wiry fur.

Beasts have great, muscled paws with retractable claws, granting them a gait of Speedy. The foreclaws are medium weapons that inflict 12 damage, but are not suited to fine motor skills; when in their natural forms, beasts are unable to use their claws for anything requir-



CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION

ing articulated hands or deft manipulation; even when in an alternate form with articulate hands, their inexperience with such things imposes a -2 disadvantage penalty on any test requiring deft manipulation (this includes most Craft and Trickery tests, Melee and Ranged tests when attacking with manufactured weapons, and any other tests that the GM deems appropriate).

A beast's rear claws are medium weapons that include a Grab move as a ready requirement, and inflict 18 damage. A beast's bite is a heavy weapon that inflicts 18 damage. They are built for land, and therefore have a flying gait of Slow.

DRAKE

Drakes are the image presented by most cultures when asked to illustrate or describe their dragons. Drakes are partially bipedal, walking with a hunched gait or running on all fours to gain speed. Their bodies are majestic and finely shaped; their unique anatomy combines cat-like, serpentine, and human-like qualities to create a form that is adept at both slaughter and dexterity.

A drake's limbs are capable of some precision, being only mildly inhibited by deadly claws the size of spears. All four of a drake's raptor-like claws are light weapons that inflict 9 damage, and its bite is a medium weapon that inflicts 12 damage. Due to their large claws, drakes in their natural form suffer a -4 disadvantage penalty on any test requiring opposable thumbs and articulate manipulation (this includes most Craft and Trickery tests, Melee and Ranged tests when attacking with manufactured weapons, and any other skill that the GM deems appropriate).

Drakes are not particularly quick on land; a drake's gait is Moderate, but when running on all four legs this increases to Fast. Drakes are the best fliers among dragons, with an airborne gait of Fast.

SERPENT

Dragons with the serpent breed resemble enormous snakes. Their great bodies are sinuous and streamlined, and they move across the ground in great slithering motions, moving either like true snakes or hunching their bodies vertically, like great caterpillars. A serpent often raises the front third of his body upright, moving himself with his massive tail. Serpents have small forelimbs with dexterous claws.

A serpent's claws are as adroit as a human's, though they are also light weapons that inflict 6 damage. He also has somewhat larger rear claws that usually remain tucked alongside the body, but when brought to bear against foes act as medium weapons that inflict 9 damage. Serpents have the smallest but most agile heads of all dragons, their bites being light weapons that inflict 9 damage. A serpent's land and flying gaits are Moderate, and it alone among the major breeds has a swim gait: Fast, with maneuverability 5.

MINOR BREEDS

After you select a dominant breed, select a minor breed from those described below. Each description provides several pieces of information, including the following:



Appearance: The descriptions include notes on the minor breed's effects on your dragon's physical appearance. Combining this information with that provided by the dominant breed descriptions, above, gives you a good idea of what your dragon looks like.

Powers: Each minor breed includes a list of powers. You may rank these from highest to lowest, giving your dragon rank 5 in one ability, rank 4 in another, and so on, down to rank 1 in the fifth power. You'll notice that each breed only lists four powers; the fifth, which can be placed at any rank, is a free choice. For more information, see Chapter Four: Powers. In addition to the powers listed under minor breeds, all dragons begin with rank 1 in Group Mind, with their broodmates as the members of that group mind, as a bonus power.

Form Traits: Physical traits specific to the minor breed. Your dragon's form traits determine the nature of his wings, tail, scales, and several miscellaneous characteristics. See "Traits," page 68, for more information.

3 ABYSSAL DRAGON 3

Abyssal dragons are subterranean creatures. They are quite alien, with gaping maws, small flaps of skin that act as wings, and stone-like, mottled flesh covering their massive bodies. They share a close tie with earth and stone, often burrowing through soil or holding power over rock. Python, a serpent god important in the mythology of the Greek Delphic oracle, is an example of an abyssal dragon.

POWERS

Alternate Form

Crushing Will

Earthstride

Shadow Spinner

Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	10
Flight	2
Sense	Touch
Skull	Gaping
Tail	Constricting
Misc	Articulate Tongue
Misc	Wallcrawler

3 CHIMERIC DRAGON 3

The diversity of traits and appearances within this single breed outdoes all other dragon breeds combined. Chimeric dragons are outlandish, unlikely creatures, and tales of them are the most likely to be scoffed at in the modern age. They were said to be formed spontaneously by the amalgamation of leftover body parts of animals preyed upon by rocs, phoenixes, or other legendary birds of prey. As such, they bear physical traits found throughout the animal kingdom. Chimera, Gorgimera, and Cockatrice are all examples of this breed of dragon.

POWERS

Alternate Form

Distant Mind

Metabolic Control

Gaze of the Predator

Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	4
Flight	3
Sense	Hearing
Any Two	

3 DIRE DRAGON 3

Dire dragons are the ultimate predators. They combine impossible speed with lethal fangs and claws, awakening a primal fear in nearly every living thing. Only flying creatures are safe from a dire dragon's hunting, as they alone of all dragons lack wings. Their small eyes and feral appearance belies a natural cunning that many foes overlook. France's Tarasque, with its tortoise-like shell and jagged teeth and claws, was such a creature.

POWERS

Alternate Form

Ferocity

Instinct

Mighty Leap

Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	12
Flight	0
Sense	Scent
Skull	Vicious
Tail	Razor
Misc	Spined

CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION



FIRE DRAGON

Fire dragons gave birth to, and personify, dragons' legendary kinship with flame. Their eyes smolder, heat radiates from their bodies, and their tempers tend to match their namesake. Their large scales' colorations are reminiscent of fire or ash, commonly red, orange, or black. The famed Salamander, which was immune to flame, was a fire dragon.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Child of Fire
Ferocity
Shadow Spinner
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	8
Flight	3
Sense	Hearing
Skull	Vicious
Tail	Sweeping

EXOTIC DRAGON

Exotic dragons are among the most beautiful and mysterious of their kind. They display colorations and traits as diverse as the animal kingdom. The main thing that they have in common is that they all possess non-reptilian features: fur, beards, feathers, beaks, and similar animalistic traits abound among exotic dragons. All exotic dragons also have poisonous bites and long, agile tails. Feathered serpents, such as the Meso-American Quetzalcoatl, fall into this category.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Clarity
Instinct
Rapport
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	4
Flight	5
Sense	Sight
Skull	Gripping
Tail	Articulate
Misc	Any One

FOREST DRAGON

Forest dragons, as their name suggests, live in wooded areas and are adapted to survive among trees and dense foliage. These creatures have mottled, color-changing skins covered with small scales, and tend toward slender, lithe bodies in order to better slide between trees. They are both predatory and territorial, enjoying a good hunt but cherishing their woodland homes enough that they do not overly terrorize the inhabitants. The wyvern of Mordiford, which hid in the woods as it grew, was a forest dragon.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Nobility
Gaze of the Predator
Rapport
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	6
Flight	3
Sense	Scent
Skull	Horned
Tail	Constricting
Misc	Camouflage

ICE DRAGON

Second only to dire dragons in their legendary ferocity, and a match for any fire dragon, ice dragons have otherworldly eyes, teeth, and claws that appear translucent, yet are sharp and clear as diamonds. They tend toward white coloring, the better to blend in with their environments, and are renowned for their ability to travel unhindered over and through nearly any terrain. Rather than succumbing to cold like a mundane reptile might, ice dragons revel in it, honing their minds and instincts alike to a frightening sharpness in the barren icy wastes of the world. Severe, fearsome creatures that populate Norse myth and folktales were probably based on ice dragons.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Adamant
Coldspawn
Instinct
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	10
Flight	2
Sense	Scent
Skull	Gripping
Tail	Razor
Misc	Camouflage
Misc	Wallcrawler

MANY-HEADED DRAGON

As their name suggests, these dragons each have multiple heads, all controlled by a single mind. Even more animalistic than dire dragons, many-headed dragons tend to be short-sighted and easily distracted. They are usually content to let challengers and prey come to them, emerging from their lairs every few decades to feed and collect additions to their hoards. The Lernaean hydra, which fell to Hercules during one of the hero's legendary tasks, is an example of this breed of dragon.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Crushing Will
Metabolic Control
Gaze of the Predator
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	8
Flight	2
Skull	Any*
Misc	Extra Head**

* Each of a many-headed dragon's heads may have a single skull trait of the player's choice.

** Many-headed dragons have two heads by default. Additional heads are possible, but each head lowers the dragon's flight score by 1 and its armor score by 1.

NOBLE DRAGON

Noble dragons are the classic creatures of high fantasy. They are both beautiful and terrible to behold, emanating danger, wisdom, and power, all in equal measure. Wings extend majestically from their backs, sturdy but supple scales of gold or silver color armor their flesh, and their eyes glow with magical power. Their exact powers vary widely, but are unfailingly mighty. Most are considered harbingers of good or messengers of the gods. It is thought that many of the dragons killed in Christian myth, such as the beast destroyed by St. George, were noble dragons whose identities have been warped by time and propaganda.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Nobility
Any Two

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	8
Flight	4
Sense	All (rank 1 in each)
Skull	Horned
Tail	Sweeping

SEA DRAGON

Sea dragons hold dominion over the oceans, lakes, and rivers, their sinuous bodies knifing easily through their native element. Fins aid their movement and their jaws are adapted to their environment, sporting needle-like teeth and retractable baleen. Naturally reclusive, sea dragons are known for having the most fantastic of hoards, for who would brave the deeps to steal it? The mysterious Loch Ness monster and the sea serpents of many cultures are examples of sea dragons.

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POWERS

Alternate Form
Distant Mind
Metabolic Control
Poison
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	6
Flight	2
Sense	Touch
Skull	Gaping
Tail	Constricting
Misc	Aquatic
Misc	Bio-luminescent

3 SPIRIT DRAGON 3

These dragons are elegant and mighty, filled with timeless grace. These are the only dragons able to fly without wings, their bodies held aloft effortlessly by their connections to the primal element of air. Their iridescent scales are fine and supple, and their eyes bright and wise. The Chinese *kioh-long*, depicted on many works of Eastern art, is among the most famous of spirit dragons.

POWERS

Alternate Form
Heir of Lightning
Ki
Nobility
Any One

TRAITS

Trait	Type
Armor	2
Flight	6
Sense	Hearing
Skull	Horned
Tail	Articulate

TRAITS

All creatures have traits. Your scion's traits, for instance, include his natural attacks, his gait, his size, and his creature type (natural, land, intelligent). All dragons have traits as well, including natural attacks and gait as determined by major breed, size (4 for all dragons), and creature type (supernatural, land, intelligent). A minor breed provides additional traits, including but not limited to: armor, flight, skull, and tail. Additional



traits, possessed by a wide variety of creatures of natural, supernatural, and unnatural origins, are listed in the *Game Master's Handbook*, but a summary of the traits you will need to play your dragon character are described below

ARMOR

A dragon's armor is his natural flesh, and can take many forms, ranging from supple scales, to thick hide, to a nearly impenetrable exoskeleton. A dragon never suffers weariness ratings or skill caps for his armor. A dragon can also wear manufactured armor crafted specially for his unique body type, but few choose to do so. For more rules on armor and its effects, see "Armor," page 150.

FLIGHT

Nearly all dragons can fly. The dire dragon is the only exception, luckily for the flying creatures of the world. Your dragon's wings can take any form you wish, from iridescent feathered spans to huge, bat-like membranous wings, to smaller fluttering skin flaps that stretch between limbs or ripple in the air. A dragon's flight value determines his airborne maneuverability, while his breed determines his airborne gait. For more details see "Flight," page 153.

SENSE

All dragons have keen senses, which gives them rank 1 in the Heightened Senses power in one sense.



SKULL

Dragons' skulls are usually reptilian, sometimes horned, and always bear dangerous dagger-length teeth. They are the ultimate predators, and their maws are appropriately deadly. Each skull trait grants a different ability or effect.

Gaping: The dragon's jaw can disconnect and become a gaping maw, slamming down on and trapping prey (or scooping it up if the dragon and prey are in the air or water). For each size category by which the dragon is larger than his target, he gains one automatic success on his bite attack.

Gripping: The dragon's jaw locks down on prey, making its grip extremely hard to escape. The dragon's Bite move also counts as a Grab move, and any Presses following it in the sequence increase the bite's damage by +2 and increases the Grab TH by one.

Horned: The dragon's head bears ornately curving or viciously sharp horns. The dragon gains a gore attack that has the same **weapon weight** as his bite, and does damage equal to his bite +3.

Vicious: The dragon's mouth is filled with row after row of razor-sharp teeth. His bite attack ignores all armor.

TAIL

Dragons' tails do far more than act as balancing elements, as is the case for most creatures. Some can hold and manipulate weapons, while others are weapons in and of themselves.

Articulate: The dragon's tail is thin but extremely adroit. The dragon cannot attack with the tail itself, but can use it with the same dexterity as a human hand. The dragon's tail is nimble enough to craft items, wield weapons, and hold favored hoard items up to the light for *just* the right reflection. It can be used to make Grabs as if it were a constricting tail, but does so as if it were two size categories smaller.

Constricting: The dragon's tail is heavily muscled and flexible, easily wrapping around opponents to crush them. The dragon can use his tail to make Grab tests, and gains 2 re-rolls when doing so. After an opponent is grabbed, the dragon may hold them in the Grab while he focuses his energy elsewhere. The tail can grab a foe up to one size category smaller than the dragon and still allow the dragon to act normally, though he cannot use any **positioning** moves other than Crawl. The tail can grab a foe up to two size categories smaller than the dragon and allow the dragon to act normally, including using the Dash and Fly moves.

Razored: The dragon's tail is agile and swift and bears a large, bony blade at the end, or barbs along its length. The dragon's tail has the same weight as his flo-reclaws and the same damage as his bite.

Sweeping: The dragon's tail is long, heavy, and muscular. The dragon's tail has a weight of heavy, does the same damage as his bite, and counts as one size category

larger than the dragon for purposes of the Weapon Sweep move.

MISCELLANEOUS FORM TRAITS

These traits are not universal to every dragon, and can affect a wide range of factors, from something as simple as the creature's appearance to as dramatic as the environments in which it can survive.

Aquatic: This form trait gives you rank 1 in the Aquatic power.

Articulate Tongue: The dragon's tongue is unnaturally long and articulate. It can be used identically to an articulate tail, but doing so prevents the dragon from speaking or casting spells.

Bio-Luminescent: The dragon can emit light from his body. The light is usually yellow, though it may be any color of your choice (make the choice when you create the dragon; it cannot be changed thereafter). The dragon controls the amount of light it emits with a mental action, from no light to a soft glow surrounding its body to a bright, 100-foot-radius illumination, and anywhere in between.

As a mental action with an Air (Will) 4 test, the dragon can create an effect identical to the Silent Flash (Flash) spell, centered on him (see "Flash," page 188). The dragon himself is immune to the effects of the flash, and each additional success on the test doubles the radius.

Camouflage: The dragon's skin coloration changes, like a gecko, to match its surroundings. The dragon gains 1 automatic success on Stealth tests. Each round, by using a mental action and remaining motionless against a background, he gains an additional automatic success, up to a maximum of 6. The automatic successes persist for as long as the dragon remains motionless. If he moves, the automatic successes become re-rolls instead. The camouflage can account for general ranges of shading and color difference, but all bonuses are lost if the dragon's movement or other circumstances cause his environment to change dramatically. A dragon in a forest, for example, would take on green and brown coloring, and can move from shaded meadows to sun-dappled copses without losing its re-rolls. Only if the dragon entered a different landscape, such as a glacier, would he have to readjust.

Extra Head: The dragon has an extra head. Each head is mounted on a long neck and acts somewhat independently. A single mind (the dragon's) controls the heads, so they do not think autonomously. Extra heads can be mammalian, serpentine, or insectoid, and each has a bite with the same weight and damage as the dragon's normal bite. Extra heads cannot normally have skull traits; the exception is Many-Headed dragons, the head for each of which has a skull trait of the player's choice. Due to the extra set of eyes, ears, and nostrils, the dragon gains 1 automatic success per head on Senses tests.

Spined: Sharp spines cover the dragon. These spines lie flat until reflexive or conscious muscle action causes them to swing out to impale his foes. The spines aug-



CHAPTER THREE: DRAGON CREATION

ment the dragon's other natural attacks, allowing him to deal +3 damage per Press move rather than the normal +2. They do even more damage when using the Grab move, dealing additional damage equal to half the dragon's foreclaw damage. In addition, the spines may impale foes as they attack him; for each successful Weapon Block move, the dragon inflicts damage to his attacker equal to half his foreclaw damage.

Venomous: One of the dragon's natural slashing weapons (foreclaws, hindclaws, bite, razor tail, or spines) injects or is coated in debilitating poison. Any venomous attack that connects injects toxins into the victim's bloodstream. On the dragon's next turn, the victim must make a Water (Stamina) test with a TH equal to the dragon's base Fire score. If he fails, he suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty per success by which he failed the test. Each turn thereafter, the victim must make another test to resist the poison, to a maximum number of turns equal to the number of wound dice caused by the attack. If the victim reaches a -6 disadvantage penalty from poison, his vital organs are paralyzed by the toxins, and he begins to suffocate as if drowning.

Wallcrawler: This trait gives you rank 1 in the Wallcrawling power.

CHOOSE LEGACY

A legacy is a grand, karmic ability. While those who fight supernatural foes tell war stories about the powers they've seen, they don't talk about legacies to anyone but God; and to him, they merely pray that they'll never have to face them again. These abilities represent the pinnacle of draconic power, the mightiest of all their capabilities.

Rather than requiring tests, legacies are powered by karma. This makes them both extremely powerful and extremely dangerous. In a world overrun by taint, they become more dangerous to use with each passing day, and yet the dragons' and scions' need for them against dangerous foes has never been so great.

You choose a single legacy for both your dragon and you scion. If your dragon does not have the prerequisite

power, you cannot use your legacy in the mythic age; however, as soon as you have ranks in the power with your scion, you will be able to use your legacy in the modern age. For a list of legacies and their effects, see "Legacies," page 87.

DEPENDENT TRAITS

Dragons determine their dependent traits just like scions and other creatures, as repeated on Table 3-3. The only major difference is that dragons' karma pools are equal to their base Earth scores x10, rather than x5.

BONUS RANKS

EDGES

One notable difference between a scion's background and a dragon's outlook is that an outlook does not limit a dragon to specific edges. Dragons are powerful and long-lived enough to have picked up whatever tricks they want. Choose any five edges for your dragon, ranking them one through five. Remember that you'll need at least 1 rank in the Casting edge in order to use your Casting skill effectively.

GROUP MIND

All dragons have rank 1 in the Group Mind power. This allows them to communicate with their broodmates telepathically. You can only communicate with a broodmate if he is within your karmic range, however. For more information on how Group Mind works, see page 82.

LAIR AND HOARD

Dragons have immense wealth, power, and means. They have enormous **hoards** full of countless items. Dragons begin with just about any worldly item they

DEPENDENT TRAITS

Aspect	Effect on Dependent Traits
Fire	Determines the number of moves the character can make as part of a physical action
Water	Determines the number of moves the character can make as part of a physical reaction
Air	Determines the character's karmic range
Earth	Determines the size of the character's max karma pool
Fire + Air	Determines the character's initiative dice
Earth + Water	Determines the character's health chart
Fire + Water	Determines the character's number of bonus physical skill ranks
Air + Earth	Determines the character's number of bonus mental skill ranks

TABLE 3-3

wish, but these mundane trinkets are mere baubles: interesting to look at and good conversation pieces, but ultimately useless. Dragons are really interested in **infused** and **enchanted** items.

Even though you're not deciding on which specific treasures your dragon possesses, it is important to decide on the overall nature of your hoard and lair. A dragon's hoard and his dwelling mean a great deal to him. They bring him comfort and peace and serve as a place of meditation and planning. A dragon's lair and hoard usually represent his personality, attitudes, and interests. For example, a dragon may be fascinated by human warfare. He makes his lair in a ruined fortress, which fell during a great battle. He has refilled the moat but has not repaired the walls or battlements, as he wishes to remember the location's violence and history. Weapons, armor, and other implements of war fill his hoard. Swords and lances bristle beneath shields and suits of mail. Plunder is heaped across empty chariots. Battle standards stand propped against the wall, their tattered and bloodied flags reminding the dragon of empires long fallen.

Even though this dragon's hoard has a definite theme, dragons are covetous and gather many items. The dragon above has weapons and armor overflowing, but could easily find a golden necklace, a chest of silver coins, or a butter churn, if he cares to look. Finding a magic or karmic item is more difficult.

When a dragon wishes to find an infused or enchanted item within the hoard ("let's see if I have a magic shield"), he uses his available hoard. This is very similar to the way a scion uses available wealth (see "Wealth vs. Cost," page 100). More information on finding specific infused or enchanted items can be found in the *Game Master's Handbook*.

DRAGON CREATION EXAMPLE

Matt is creating the dragon *Valerius*. He has 35 points to spend on aspects, and so buys Air 6, Earth 5, Fire 2, and Water 4. He now has 15 points to distribute (not using the point-buy system—simply distributing them on a 1-for-1 basis) among his superhuman aspects; he can assign these however he likes, but no superhuman aspect score can exceed its mundane aspect score. So, he can assign no more than 6 superhuman aspect points to Air, no more than 5 to Earth, no more than 2 to Fire, and no more than 4 to Water. Luke wants *Valerius* to be a masterful spellcaster, so he assigns 5 to Air and 1 to each of the other aspects. This gives *Valerius* final aspect scores of Air 6(6), Earth 5(4), Fire 2(2), and Water 4(3). He writes these totals down on the section of his character sheet marked "A" in Diagram 3-1.

Next, Matt chooses his dragon's outlook. The obvious choice for a spellcaster is mystic, so he goes with that.

He writes down 6s next to each of his primary skills and 3s next to each of his secondary skills. On a piece of scratch paper, he writes down that he has 2 fighting style picks and 14 spell picks, and in the section marked "B" he writes down that he has a Hoard of 3.

Next comes the big step: choosing his breeds. Matt wants his dragon to be agile but still somewhat tough, so he chooses the classic dragon breed: a drake. He writes down his claw and bite traits in the section marked "F," and records his gaits in the section marked "C." As his minor breed, he chooses abyssal. He writes that breed's powers down in the section marked "E," giving his favorite one, *Crushing Will*, rank 5, and descending to 1 from there. Then he writes down his dragon's armor value and flight maneuverability in the section marked "C," adds *Heightened Sense (Touch)* 1 and *Wallcrawler* 1 to his powers list, and writes down the details of his gaping skull, constricting tail, and articulate tongue in the section marked "F."

Next, Matt chooses the center of his dragon's powers, his legacy. As an abyssal drake that focuses on spells and misdirection, Matt likes the idea of the earth doing his dragon's bidding, so he chooses *Stone Lord*.

Matt then goes through all of the same steps for dependent traits that he went through when he created his scion, including bonus points for skills, filling out his health chart, and determining the size of his karma pool. Then he rounds out his character with a description of his hoard, and he's done.

Diagram 3-1: Dragon Character Sheet

Aspects: Fire 2, Air 6, Earth 5, Water 4. Final scores: Air 6(6), Earth 5(4), Fire 2(2), Water 4(3).

Skills: Physical (A), Mental (D), Social (F).

Powers/Legacies/Spell Picks: E (Crushing Will, Heightened Sense, Wallcrawler, etc.).

Fighting Styles: B (2 picks).

Preferred Sequences: G.

Weapons: F.

DIAGRAM 3-1



CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Scions in FIREBORN determine their own goals, but before anything else can be accomplished, a character must survive. Scions' enemies are legion. Your character will face ancient spirits and the Ones Who Dwell Below, human sorcerers and paranoid government agencies, and of course your greatest foe: taint.

The only way scions may truly confront their enemies is to embrace their draconic origins. They cannot accomplish this connection simply by willing it to happen. For a scion to rediscover himself, he must bring together three separate pieces of a whole: his humanity keeps taint at bay and allows him to survive in the modern world, his heritage grants him the power to defeat his enemies, and his hoard connects the two.

ADVANCEMENT POINTS

At the end of each adventure, the GM awards **advancement points (APs)**. The players use these points to improve their scions' abilities, making them more capable of defeating their foes and putting them in greater contact with their draconic ancestry. The number

of advancement points the GM confers is solely up to his discretion, but they are rewards for clever thinking, good roleplaying, and overcoming obstacles. The average number of advancement points for an adventure is 10 (2–4 points per game session).

The GM divides these points into **humanity points** and **heritage points**. The more good roleplaying, dramatic action, heroic events, and scion accomplishments occurred in the modern age, the more the advancement points consist of humanity points. The more the players focused their time and energy in the mythic age, or the more effort they spent uncovering and learning about the supernatural and their ancient histories, the more the advancement points become heritage points. Each player's breakdown may be different, depending on how focused he seemed on roleplaying in each age. The GM of course has ultimate control over the points the characters can achieve, as his adventures can favor one age over the other. Regardless of the characters' actions, the players' roleplaying, and the GM's adventure, players should get at least 1 humanity point and 1 heritage point for every adventure.

For instance, one adventure might involve the scions defending a modern-day orphanage from rampaging sewer beasts, followed by a flashback wherein they remember that one of the kids taken by the sewer beasts is the reincarnated form of a benevolent sorcerer. The adventure concludes in the modern day with a hunt

through the sewers and an assault on the creatures' lair. The GM might reward most of the party with 10 advancement points, 7 of which are humanity points and 3 of which are heritage points. The GM would write the reward as a split of humanity/heritage: 7/3. If the party had chosen to do more research on the sorcerer's history or find an enchanted item with which to assault the sewer beast, the GM might have given a split of 5/5, instead.

Players may spend humanity points to purchase ranks in edges. They may spend heritage points to purchase ranks in powers (once a scion has ranks in the prerequisite power for his legacy, he may use the legacy as well). And either type of advancement point may be used on fighting style picks or spell picks, as both dragons and scions make use of spell and sword, claw and incantation, in either age and any form.

Advancement points are spent exclusively on your scion; dragons change very little over vast reaches of time, and are assumed to be fully mature in flashbacks.

Just because a character (or player) focused more on one age than another does not mean he cannot go against the grain and train to improve abilities appropriate to the other age. Players may trade 2 of one type of advancement point for 1 of the other type. A player from the example above could trade in 4 of his humanity points for 2 heritage points, changing his split from 7/3 to 3/5, or 2 of his heritage points for 1 humanity point, changing his split from 7/3 to 8/1, and so on.

LIMITATIONS

Scions are in the process of becoming, growing toward their ultimate selves. What you, the player, know, and your scion does not, is what that form ultimately looks like: your dragon character. Whether you want your scion to head straight for that identity, or to veer in several other directions, is up to you. It is easier for a scion to proceed down paths he has already walked, however, so the following limitation applies to scion advancement: If your dragon does not have ranks in a power, your scion may still purchase ranks in that power, but each rank costs you advancement points as if it were one rank higher (a rank 5 power, in this case, would cost 10 advancement points).

AWAKENING

Unlike other characters in FIREBORN, scions follow unique advancement rules. This is expressed in the form of humanity ranks, heritage ranks, and hoard ranks. To determine humanity and heritage ranks, keep track of the total humanity and heritage points you spend improving your scion. For every 10 humanity points you spend, your humanity rank increases by 1. For every 10 heritage points you spend, your heritage rank increases by 1. Points that are exchanged between humanity and heritage points are counted toward their ranks after the

exchange. Meanwhile, your GM will give your scion opportunities to recover hoard items that were once possessed by his former self in the mythic age. Your hoard rank is equal to the highest ranking hoard item of that sort that you possess. When your humanity, heritage, and hoard ranks are all equal, you have reached an **awakening**. After achieving your first awakening, you are considered to have **awakened rank** 1. Another 10 humanity and heritage points, and possession of a rank 2 hoard item from your past, will bring you to awakened rank 2, and so on. What exactly an awakened rank does for you is described below.

SUPERHUMAN ASPECT SCORES

Each time your scion advances in awakened rank, he comes closer to his true draconic self. He gains a number of superhuman aspect points equal to his new awakened rank. You may spend 1 of these points to increase a superhuman aspect score by 1. Because a scion combines a dragon's power with a human's versatility, he may even surpass the superhuman aspect scores he possessed as a dragon. Remember, however, that an aspect's superhuman score cannot exceed its base score.

Example: Jared's scion attains awakened rank 1. He puts one superhuman aspect point into Fire, giving him Fire 3(1). When he reaches awakened rank 2, he gains 2 superhuman aspect points. He may divide these however he wishes, perhaps putting both into Fire, giving him Fire 3(3). When he reaches awakened rank 3, he cannot put any more superhuman aspect points into Fire unless he uses humanity points to raise his base Fire score.



UNEQUAL RANKS



A scion's awakened rank is a measure of his overall power and experience. You have some control over your scion's awakened rank, focusing more on his human side or his draconic side, but the more disparate the two become, the further he gets from reaching his maximum potential. A scion's awakened rank is equal to the lowest rank among his heritage, humanity, and hoard ranks. For instance, when his heritage, humanity, and hoard are all rank 1 he gains an awakened rank of 1. A scion with heritage rank 3, humanity rank 4, and hoard rank 2 has an awakened rank of 2. When a scion gains an awakened rank, he gains several benefits. Those benefits can be taken away; for instance, if a scion's hoard is plundered and his most treasured item stolen, his awakened rank may decrease.



SIDEBAR 3-3



DRACONIC FORM

With each advancement in awakened rank, a scion remembers more of what he was and becomes able to express those memories physically. He gains a number of **draconic form** points equal to the awakened rank he just achieved. He may use these points to select traits (choosing from among those his mythic age dragon form possesses) according to the costs shown on Table 3-3. Once a scion spends points to select a trait, he may **manifest** it.

MANIFESTING DRACONIC TRAITS

When a scion reaches awakened rank 1, he gains the Manifest move, which can be used as either a mental action, in which case it requires an Air (Will) test, or a physical action, in which case it requires a Fire (Stamina) test. The test's TH depends on the trait the scion attempts to manifest. If the scion does not meet the TH on the first turn, he may either release the manifestation or may keep the successes he has gained, continuing the manifestation the next turn.

Scions may manifest multiple traits separately or simultaneously. If a scion attempts to manifest multiple traits on the same turn, the total TH for the test is the sum of each trait's TH, +1 for each trait beyond the first. If a scion attempts to manifest a trait when he already has one or more traits manifested, the TH increases by +1 for each trait he already has manifested.

If a trait is manifested during a narrative scene, it remains for the entire scene or until dismissed. If it is manifested during an action scene, the scion's form reverts to normal at the end of the action scene.

Traits are presented in the following format:

Trait: The trait the scion wishes to manifest. The scion manifests these traits as they exist in his draconic form; for instance, if he manifests a draconic skull, and his draconic form had a vicious maw, the scion's bite has the same weight and damage, and ignores armor.

Cost: The trait's cost in draconic form points.

Threshold: The TH of the test required to manifest the trait.

AQUATIC

Same as your dragon.

ARMOR

The scion's flesh hardens into the scales that were once his birthright. This trait costs 1 draconic form point per point of armor value it provides. Additional points of armor value may be purchased after the first for 1 draconic form point each, up to a maximum of the dragon character's armor value. The TH to manifest armor is equal to the armor value.

BIO-LUMINESCENT

Same as your dragon.

BODY

The scion's skeletal structure takes on the shape and physique of his dragon form. A scion whose draconic self was a serpent becomes sinuous and quick, gaining 1 automatic success on Quickness and Stealth tests. The muscles and limbs of a scion whose draconic self was a beast become bulky and powerful, giving him 1 automatic success on Athletics and Stamina tests. Finally, scions who were drakes in their previous existence manifest the graceful but muscular aspect of a drake's physique, gaining 1 automatic success each on Melee and Ranged tests.

DRACONIC TRAITS

Trait	Cost	Threshold
Armor	Varies	Varies
Wings	Varies	Varies
Aquatic	1	3
Bio-luminescent	1	3
Body	1	3
Camouflage	1	3
Fore claws	1	3
Hind claws	1	3
Wallcrawler	1	3
Tail	2	6
Spined	3	6
Skull	3	6
Venomous attack	3	6
Extra head	5	9
Increase size	5	9
Full draconic form	12	12

TABLE 3-3

CAMOUFLAGE

As with your dragon, except that camouflage has no effect if you are clothed.

EXTRA HEAD

Possibly the most disturbing of traits that may be manifested. Thankfully, the head that forms is one of your draconic heads, not another human one.

FORECLAWS

The scion's hands become dragon claws. These claws' capabilities and damage depend on the dragon character's dominant breed.

FULL DRACONIC FORM

The scion's form changes completely to that of his draconic self, including all traits but retaining the scion's aspects, skills, edges, and powers. This form is not quite as large as the scion's original draconic body, attaining size +2. This form can be increased to size +3 with the Increase Size trait manifestation.



HINDCLAWS

The scion's feet become dragon claws. These claws' capabilities and damage depend on the dragon character's dominant breed.

INCREASE SIZE

The scion's size category increases by 1, but he keeps his humanoid body.

SKULL

The scion's head reshapes into a large draconic skull capable of using a Bite Strike move. The bite's capabilities and damage depend on the dragon form's major breed and skull trait.

SPINED

Same as your dragon.

TAIL

While difficult to conceal, a tail is a useful appendage in a scion's world, whether it be used for battle, magic, or simply shock value. The tail's capabilities and damage depend on the dragon character's tail trait.

VENOMOUS ATTACK

Same as your dragon.

WINGS

From the scion's back or arms spread the wings that once carried him high above the ground. This trait costs 1 draconic form point per flight maneuverability rank the scion wishes to have, and his gait is sluggish. Additional ranks of flight maneuverability or flight gait may be purchased for 1 draconic form point each, up to a maximum of the dragon character's flight maneuverability and no flight gait maximum. The TH to manifest wings is equal to twice the flight maneuverability they provide.

PREFERRED FORM

Upon achieving a new awakened rank, instead of purchasing new traits to manifest, a scion may spend draconic form points on a preferred form. A preferred form may include a number of already-purchased traits with a total cost equal to twice the draconic form points the scion spends on it. He can split his draconic form points up among preferred forms and new traits, if he wishes.

The TH for a scion to manifest a preferred form is equal to the number of traits it includes. In addition, if a scion has manifested a preferred form and wishes to manifest additional traits, the entire preferred form counts as one trait when determining the TH required to manifest the additional traits.

Example: Jared's scion character attains awakened rank 4. He gets 4 draconic form points and decides to spend these on developing a preferred form. This preferred form can have up to 8 points worth of traits, chosen from among those Jared has already purchased. He wants to be able to do some damage, so he selects fore claws for 1 and skull for 3. He needs some maneuverability, so he adds his wings at maneuverability 1, which costs 1. Finally, he throws in camouflage for stealth. He can manifest this preferred form with a TH 4 test, since the form includes four traits.

While selecting a preferred form limits the scion's available traits, it allows him to easily manifest a battle-ready form with an instant test rather than slowly transforming while his enemies pound on him.

USING KARMA TO MANIFEST DRACONIC FORM

On his turn, a scion may spend karma to instantly manifest draconic traits, without using a physical or mental action or making a test. The cost in karma to manifest a trait is equal to its draconic form point cost.





CHAPTER
FOUR

POWERS AND LEGACIES

POWERS

Powers set the more primal and powerful creatures of the world apart from mere humans, whether they be wild animals, supernatural creatures, or scions. Powers allow their users to move with incredible speed, manipulate shadows, and inspire awe or terror.

Powers are far more common in the mythic age than in the modern. Dragons, titans, fey, and other creatures all possessed such powers, as did certain mortals who forged dark pacts or unlocked arcane secrets. People in the mythic age expected their champions and guardians to have such advantages, and are unsurprised when they are made evident. Sages catalogued various powers, and peasants could say with pride that their lord's alliance with the faerie king allowed him to overpower his foes with the force of his presence. Most mythic age humans knew few specifics about powers, except that they exemplified otherworldly might.

After the mythic age's fall, powers passed from the world along with dragons, Atlantis, monsters, and magic. These creatures and powers became memory, which became stories, which became legend. Recently, before magic's reemergence, few believed in these old tales. Magic, dragons, exalted civilizations—these were superstitious answers to the unsolved questions of science, and became fodder for novels, comic books, and movies. Magic and monsters were not even tales to scare children, for the children did not believe them. The mighty dragons of an epic time were relegated to deli signs and tee-shirt decals. Shards of the supernatural existed, but few paid them any heed.

Now that magic has returned, people are dusting off their old books and again telling the stories. Creatures are appearing, beings with powers beyond human ken. Whereas edges let a person do things that *seem* impossible, powers let him do things that *are* impossible. Powers are a combination of physical makeup and magical ability; some supernatural creatures are born with powers, others develop them. Powers remain strange and unusual in this world, but more and more Londoners are experiencing strange events and encountering disturbing creatures; just by paging through the local tabloids, a Londoner can find new tales each day that highlight many of these abilities.

Powers work much like mundane edges. Each has five ranks, and each rank grants greater abilities. All dragons possess powers, and scions eventually develop them. Powers can only be attained by supernatural creatures. Some humans make pacts with dark forces, or sacrifice their own humanity, in order to gain the benefits of powers. Such people must inevitably give up more than they gained. For more information on humans gaining access to powers, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.

POWER SUMMARIES

Alternate Form: You can take on a limited number of other forms.

Aquatic: You are adapted to movement and survival in water.

Child of Fire: Your blood runs hot with the power of fire.

Clarity: You think with superhuman speed.

Coldspawn: You embrace the chill of ice and snow, and can generate freezing cold.

Crushing Will: You can bend others to your will.

Distant Mind: Your ability to use Group Mind is unparalleled, and you can send your psyche wandering without your body.

Earthstride: Earth parts before you like water.

Ferocity: You deal death with a passion, and are hard to keep down.

Gaze of the Predator: Your power is in your eyes.

Group Mind: You share a bond with others that allows you to communicate with a thought.

Heightened Senses: You have the use of one or more senses beyond the human norm.

Heir of the Storm: Lightning and wind are your inheritance.

Instinct: When danger threatens, your primal responses kick into action.

Metabolic Control: You can control your body's resources, making you quicker or tougher as circumstances demand.

Mythic Leap: Tall buildings, single bounds . . .

Nobility: Your presence awes friends and foes alike.

Rapport: Beasts and men are soothed by your words.

Shadow Spinner: You can weave the strands of the absence of light and the absence of life.

Skin of Stone: Your skin wards blows and absorbs damage.

Wallcrawler: You're as comfortable on walls or ceilings as you are on sidewalks.



CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

ALTERNATE FORM

This body is but one physical expression of your soul; the faces you can wear are many. Alternate Form is one of two powers that all dragons have in common.

MECHANICS

You gain the Transform action. For each rank you have in this power, you may take on one alternate form, the exact nature of which you choose when purchasing the rank in this power. If you are a supernatural creature, the form can be any natural or supernatural creature that you have seen. If you are a natural creature (or scion), the form can be any natural creature that you have seen. Each time you take on the form, cosmetic details remain the same. For instance, a dragon with a human alternate form has the same eye color, hair color, flesh tone, and build. A human with an alternate form of an eagle would have the same coloration each time he transforms.

When you take on a new form, you take on its size category and its traits; you lose all of your traits and are no longer your original size. You keep your original aspects, skill ranks, edges, and powers, though their use may be made more difficult or impossible. For instance, it's impossible for a human in tiger form to use the Seductive edge on a member of his original species, or for a dragon to breathe fire in a form without a mouth. Likewise, using the Craft skill without opposable thumbs is quite difficult. As a rule of thumb, if a skill is not on an animal's skill list, you suffer at least a -4 disadvantage penalty when using that skill in the animal's form.

Wound dice and weariness dice translate into the new form along with you. You may designate any held or carried unliving object to be absorbed into the alternate form, but any absorbed items still count as weight carried for the purposes of disadvantage dice.

***Example:** Corvyr, a scion, is being pursued by a cabal of sorcerers and is carrying 50% of his body weight, giving him a -2 disadvantage penalty to all physical tests. Just before he transforms into a crow to escape his pursuers, he drops his backpack, reducing his load to 25% of his body weight (and, consequently, reducing his disadvantage penalty to -1). When he takes on the alternate form, he designates his weapons and survival gear, which he is still wearing, to be absorbed into the form. The disadvantage penalty inflicted by the equipment translates over as well. Keep in mind that the percentage of your carrying capacity represented by the equipment's weight refers to your original form, not the new (possibly smaller, possibly larger) form.*

Transforming can be accomplished as a physical action with a Fire (Stamina) 1 test or as a mental action with an Air (Will) 1 test. The TH of the test increases by 1 for every size category by which the forms are different. Failure means that you remain in your original form. Anything being worn, like clothing, backpacks,

and even metal armor, can be damaged when assuming a larger alternate form if not designated to be absorbed or first removed (in the case of metal armor, the weak points, like straps and buckles, are what give way first). If you attempt to take on a new form in a confined space, you may burst weak enclosures while attaining your new size, or may automatically fail the Transform action if your GM dictates that the enclosure is too durable to break out of. You may attempt to break out of such enclosures with a Fire (Athletics) test.

AQUATIC

You are as at home in the water as you are on land.

MECHANICS

Creatures that gain the Aquatic power due to the Aquatic trait were born for existence in the water. They have visible gills, are streamlined, and have several fins to aid in swimming. Creatures that do not have Aquatic as a trait are just as adaptable to water, but less obviously so: their gills are hidden beneath their skin, and shut when exposed to air so their lungs can take over. Likewise, webbed fingers and toes may appear when exposed to water, but recede again when the creature is on land.

Either way, you can breathe water as easily as air, and so can never drown from submersion in water. You gain a swim gait equal to your land gait. For each rank you have in this power, you may reduce the terrain threshold of a swim by 2, to a minimum of 1.

Characters with ranks in this power are never **disadvantaged** due to swimming.

CHILD OF FIRE

If you have a true parent, it is fire itself. It smolders within you and you can sense when it is nearby. You take little to no damage from heat or fire, and can even generate it within you.

MECHANICS

Rank 1: You stage down all **burn** wounds by five dice. You gain the Immolate mental action, which does not require a test. This action causes your body temperature to rocket, your eyes to burn orange-red, and smoke to waft from your nose. It also allows you to ignore all penalty dice from cold or heat. Once activated, Immolate lasts for one scene.

Rank 2: You stage down all burn wounds by six dice. You may use Immolate to cause your blood to boil in your veins and rush beneath your skin with volcanic force. When a foe connects with a melee attack against you with anything smaller than a heavy weapon, your blood gouts forth and scalds him, inflicting 5 burn damage for each wound die inflicted. The liquid fire may be dodged with a Water (Quickness) test with a TH equal to your base Fire score.



Rank 3: You stage down all burn wounds by seven dice. You may use Immolate to cause lurid flames to burst from your body. The flames may damage your clothing or equipment, but do not harm you. This ability supersedes the rank 2 effect, with the following changes. Even if the attacker misses you, the flame still inflicts 5 burn damage, and the burn damage cannot be dodged. If the attack hits, the flame inflicts 5 burn damage for each wound die inflicted, and the burn damage cannot be dodged.

Rank 4: You take no damage from burn wounds. Additionally, you may use a mental action to build up the power of fire within you. You may build up flames for a maximum number of turns equal to your base Fire score. When you release the flames the next turn as a mental action, they explode outward from you in all directions, doing 5 burn damage to everything within 5 feet. For every turn you spent building up the flames beyond the first, the burn damage increases by 5 and the radius of the effect increases by 5 feet. Characters in the area may make Water (Quickness) tests with a TH equal to your base Fire score, reducing the damage by 5 if the test is successful and by an additional 5 for each extra success.

Rank 5: Instead of taking damage from burn wounds, you absorb power from flame. For each burn wound die you would suffer, you instead heal one minor wound. The flame you generate from the Immolate action does not cause this effect.

CLARITY

Your senses are quick and your mind is quicker, allowing you to ignore distractions and use your keen mental abilities to instantly separate important signals from useless noise. Your heightened insight gives you an advantage over your opponents, allowing you to instantly comprehend a chaotic situation. At higher ranks, you can seemingly react to a situation before it even occurs.

MECHANICS

You may activate Clarity during the initiative phase in order to make a quickened initiative check. You may roll one quickened initiative die per rank you have in this edge. If you roll a success, you act in the quickened initiative phase. If you do not, roll initiative as normal. In either case, you may only take one mental action (and no physical actions) on the first round of the action scene.

Your rank in Clarity is used as a tiebreaker in all initiative tests or checks.

COLDSPAWN

You revel in killing cold. Like it, you can steal life with a touch. While your broodmates' blood runs hot in their veins, yours is as cold as Hell.





CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

MECHANICS

Rank 1: You stage down all cold wounds by five dice. You gain the Freeze mental action, which does not require a test. This move causes your body temperature to plummet, a thin skein of ice to form over your eyes, and your skin to become a pale, dead blue, which grants you 1 automatic success when using the Intimidate move. It also allows you to ignore all penalty dice from cold or heat. Once activated, Freeze lasts for one scene.

Rank 2: You stage down all cold wounds by six dice. You may use Freeze to cause your blood to freeze in your veins and thin ice to form around your skin. Your skin gains an armor value of 1 and you become immune to bleed payoffs.

Rank 3: You stage down all cold wounds by seven dice. You may use Freeze to cause an aura of cold to surround your body, which does not harm you. Attackers that hit you with anything smaller than a heavy weapon are numbed from the cold, suffering -1 fading penalty to all physical tests for each wound die they inflicted.

Rank 4: You take no damage from cold wounds. When you use Freeze, the aura of cold causes any character within your reach, regardless of whether or not they hit you with an attack, to suffer a -1 fading penalty to all physical tests.

Rank 5: Instead of taking damage from cold wounds, you absorb power from intense cold. For each cold wound die you would suffer, you instead heal one minor wound. The cold that you generate from the Freeze action does not cause this effect. Additionally, you may use a mental action to build up the power of ice and cold within you. You may build up cold for a maximum number of turns equal to your base Air score. When you release the cold as a mental action, it explodes outward from you in all directions, doing 5 cold damage to everything within 5 feet. For every turn you spent building up the cold beyond the first, the cold damage increases by 5 and the radius of the effect increases by 5 feet. Characters in the area may make Water (Stamina) tests with a TH equal to your base Air score, reducing the damage by 5 if the test is successful and by an additional 5 for each extra success.

CRUSHING WILL

Your will is almost a tangible force. It reaches from your mind and clutches opponents, twisting them to your own ends. When you make yourself heard, you can command and control others.

Characters cannot have ranks in both Crushing Will and Nobility.

MECHANICS

You gain the Command mental action, which is governed by Interaction. It can be used to convince characters to follow your commands, ranging from the likely to the absurd. Targets may resist your Air (Interaction) test with Earth (Will). For each rank you have in this

power, you may affect one additional target, using Command as a **mass attack** (see page 130). It is quite difficult to use Command while in an action scene. You must be able to communicate with the target, have his full attention, and he must be willing to listen to you. For example, commanding a SWAT trooper to drop his assault rifle while he's storming your home definitely does not work; on the other hand, commanding a cowed and beaten gang member to run away probably does. Acts that you command a target to do can take no longer than one minute per rank you have in this power; after that amount of time, the target realizes that he was manipulated (see below). The types of things you can successfully command a target to do depend on the net successes you gain on the opposed test, as shown below.

Threshold 2: Convince a character to do or think something that he might reasonably do or think, given the circumstances. For example, you can tell a security guard to go for a bathroom break, get a politician to accept a bribe "just this once," or convince an unhinged old woman that the werewolf down the street is merely a hallucination.

Threshold 4: Convince a character to do something he might or might not do, such as tell a security guard to go for a quick hamburger or a scholarly student to leave off studying for a while.

Threshold 6: Convince a character to do something he probably would not do, such as tell a security guard to give you the keys to the bank vault or a businessman to donate all his assets to a nameless charity.

Threshold 8: Convince a character to do something he certainly would not do, perhaps involving violence inflicted on a stranger. For instance, you might tell a security guard to hand over his gun so you can shoot an uppity teenager, or you might command a priest to kidnap a child.

Threshold 10: Convince a character to do something he cannot imagine doing, such as behavior that is harmful to himself or his loved ones. This powerful and morally questionable effect could convince someone to do something as extreme as take his own life or slay his own child.

You must decide on the command before the opposed test; if you fail to meet the required TH, the target will still follow some level of command, but only up to the level of TH you achieved.

Note that the target of this ability always remembers you and the command. You cannot force him to forget you or the actions he carried out. The old woman remembers that you told her that the hairy man was imaginary (and that she believed you) and the security guard remembers that you compelled him to give you his pistol. There is nothing subtle or secret about this ability; the victims remember you as a being of incredible presence and will, and most of them know they were taken.

DISTANT MIND

The Fireborn are linked to their broodmates via a mystical connection that goes beyond thought and magic. Members of a brood need never be alone, and some would say that a brood is a single entity, not separate beings. While some Fireborn fight this connection, preferring their individuality, others cultivate it. Distant Mind is one way to do so, using your Group Mind abilities to share your abilities with others, protect yourself from mental attacks, and even separate your mind from your body.

MECHANICS

Rank 1: You gain 1 automatic success on all Ka tests involving creatures that are part of your group mind.

Rank 2: You gain an additional automatic success on all Ka tests involving creatures that are part of your group mind. You also gain the Distant Mind mental action, which is governed by Will. This action allows you to share a portion of your mind with a broodmate within range, lending him your ranks in a single skill. While doing so, you temporarily lose all ranks in that skill and your broodmate gains a like number of ranks, to a maximum of 6. The initial Distant Mind move requires an Air (Will) test 1. You must make an Air (Will) test each turn to maintain the connection, adding 1 to the TH each turn. You can lend multiple skills or spread your skill ranks among multiple recipients, but each skill or broodmate added to the mix adds 1 to the tests' difficulties. After using Distant Mind in this manner for multiple turns in a row, you may not use Distant Mind again until a like number of turns have passed.

Rank 3: You gain an additional automatic success on all Ka tests involving creatures that are part of your group mind. You may also use the Distant Mind action as a mental shield of sorts, reinforcing your mental awareness, filtering out all detrimental effects. On the first turn that you do so, you gain 1 automatic success on all Earth tests. However, you simultaneously suffer a -1 disadvantage penalty on all tests using any aspect other than Earth. Each turn that you continue to shield your mind, you gain an additional automatic success and an additional disadvantage penalty, to a maximum of +6 and -6. You may use Distant Mind in this manner indefinitely.

Rank 4: You gain an additional automatic success on all Ka tests involving creatures that are part of your group mind. You may also use the Distant Mind action to detach your mind from your body's sensations. Make an Air (Will) test; you may maintain this detachment for 1 minute for each success you achieve. While you are detached, you ignore all penalty dice when performing mental actions. Your physical actions, however, not only suffer any penalty dice as normal but also suffer an additional -1 for each

minute that you remain detached. After the detachment ends, you may not use Distant Mind in this manner again for a number of minutes equal to the number of minutes you spent detached.

Rank 5: You gain an additional automatic success on all Ka tests involving creatures that are part of your group mind. You may also use the Distant Mind move to travel separately from your body. This requires an Air (Will) 10 test, but you can attempt the test even when unconscious or dying. You may not perform any physical actions, but you may perform any mental actions for which a physical body is not required, and you do not suffer physical disadvantage penalties, weariness dice, or wound dice. Your Stride becomes equal to your base Air score x1,000 ft. While traveling in this manner, you are invisible to the human eye but may be noticed with Earth (Ka) tests, or specifically searched out with Air (Ka) tests, either one opposed by your Air (Stealth). If your body still lives when you leave it, it must make a Water (Stamina) test each hour with a TH of 1 + 1 per hour it is without your mind, or it dies. What happens to your mind after your body dies is up to the GM.

EARTHSTRIDE

The earth welcomes you into its arms to protect you, and opens before you to allow you to travel. You can earthstride, moving through solid material as if flying or swimming.

MECHANICS

You do not leave a tunnel and do not need to breathe while you are earthstriding. You cannot see through solid objects, so you are effectively blind while within the earth. The various ranks of this power give you different maneuverability values when earthstriding through different materials, as shown in the table below. If you have less than maneuverability 1 when in a certain material, you cannot earthstride through it. Loose particles includes sand, gravel, or dry earth. Soft stone includes sandstone and dense clay. Hard stone includes granite, marble, and similar stone types, as well man-

EARTHSTRIDE MANEUVERABILITY

	EARTHSTRIDE RANK				
	5	4	3	2	1
Loose particles	5	4	3	2	1
Soft stone	4	3	2	1	—
Hard stone	3	2	1	—	—
Soft metals	2	1	—	—	—
Hard metals	1	—	—	—	—

TABLE 4-1

CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

made amalgamations like cement or brick. Soft metals include gold or copper. Hard metals refer to iron or steel.

Note that many materials through which you may earthstride, especially in urban environments, are not uniform. When earthstriding through a sidewalk or a brick wall, you're likely to be slowed by the occasional steel girder or copper pipe.

FEROCITY

You are supernaturally adept at combat, fueling your attacks with equal parts hate and stubbornness. When others would fall, your ferocity keeps you fighting, holding off the inevitable while you hand your foes the defeat they so richly deserve.

MECHANICS

You gain Ferocity as a mental action, governed by Stamina. Ferocity lasts for one minute per success gained on an Air (Stamina) test, and requires a mental action each round to maintain. When using Ferocity, you ignore one wound die per rank you have in this edge. This means that at the points you would normally be **down**, **dying**, or **dead**, you may continue to fight. As soon as you reach one of those points, however, your effective rank in Ferocity begins to decrease by one each turn. When your effective rank in Ferocity reaches 0, you succumb to your current wound penalty.

Example: A character with Ferocity 3 is fighting against overwhelming odds, and reaches 6 wound dice (his Ferocity decreases his wound penalties by three, giving him a -3 wound penalty to all rolls). The next turn, his effective rank in Ferocity drops by one, meaning that his penalties are only decreased by two. Assuming he isn't wounded further, he now has a -4 wound penalty to all rolls. Within two turns, he'll reach Ferocity 0, at which point he will be down and suffering from a -6 wound penalty.

This power does give a character an ability to fight beyond death. For instance, if a character is at 8 wound dice while using Ferocity and takes another -1 wound, he is at 9 wound dice, a state that is normally not possible to achieve.

GAZE OF THE PREDATOR

You can bring a foe's primal fears to the surface simply by staring at him. The foe's reactions become rigid and jerky, his mind and body near paralysis.

MECHANICS

You gain the Predatory Gaze mental action, which is governed by Will. In order to use the gaze, you must be able to meet the target's eyes. If the target is attempting to avoid your gaze by doing anything short of closing his eyes, you can force him to meet your gaze with a physical action, making a Fire (Ranged) test opposed by the target's Water (Quickness).

Rank 1: You may use the Predatory Gaze action with an Air (Will) test opposed by the target's Earth (Will). For each net success you achieve, your target suffers a -1 fading penalty (your choice of physical or mental).

Rank 2: As rank 1, but you may direct your gaze at multiple creatures simultaneously. You must overcome their combined Earth (Will) tests in order to have an effect; you may

distribute net successes among your opponents as you wish.

Rank 3: As rank 2, but you may instead daze or stun opponents for a number of turns equal to your net successes on the opposed test.

Rank 4: As rank 2, but you may both daze and stun opponents; each turn that an opponent is both dazed and stunned costs 2 net successes.

Rank 5: As rank 3, but you may paralyze opponents for a number of turns equal to your net successes on the opposed test.

Because this power requires you to clearly see your target, and vice versa, you suffer the same threshold modifiers on your Air (Will) test from poor visibility that you would on Senses tests (see page 44).



GROUP MIND



You are never alone, so long as the members of your group mind live. You can communicate telepathically with them over great distances and with the speed of thought.

MECHANICS

You gain the Share Mind mental action, which is governed by Ka. The action can be used to forge a group mind with any willing creature who has the Group Mind power and has not yet joined a group mind.

Members of a group mind can communicate telepathically at a distance of up to their karmic range with an Air (Ka) 1 test. Range can add

modifiers to the TH, as described under “Ka,” page 40. Communicating telepathically does not require an action unless you use a stance change to support the test.

In addition to the obvious benefits of instant, silent communication, you also gain 1 automatic success per rank you have in this power on Interaction tests against members of your group mind. There may be some drawbacks to being part of a group mind, however; the things that affect one member of the group mind may impact its other members. When this is the case, the precise effect is described under the power, spell, or other ability that causes the effect. Once you have joined a group mind, it can only be broken with an Air (Ka) test with a TH equal to the sum of the base Earth scores of all of the group mind’s members (excluding your own, of course).

Each time you purchase a rank in this edge, you may join an additional group mind.

All scions and dragons begin with Group Mind at rank 1 as a bonus power.

HEIGHTENED SENSES

Your senses are preternaturally sharp. You can hear the sound of a feather falling, pick out the edges of a snowflake in a blizzard, or identify a criminal by the scent he left at a week-old crime scene.

MECHANICS

All Ranks: Choose one sense from the following list: hearing, scent (includes taste), sight, or touch. Each sense gives you advanced powers in the use of that

sense, as indicated below. For each additional rank you purchase, either choose an additional sense to heighten or increase the rank of a sense you have already heightened.

Hearing: For each rank you have in hearing, you gain 1 automatic success on Senses tests that involve hearing. You can also detect characters based on hearing only (needing no visual confirmation) to within 10 feet per rank you have in Heightened Hearing. This ability is hampered if the volume changes or intervening obstacles, such as tables or walls, are between you and the object of the noise—but you are still pretty good at it.

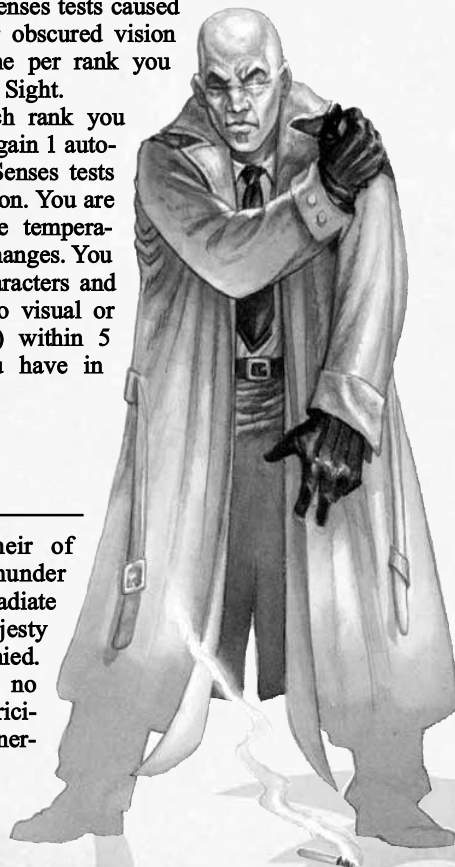
Scent: For each rank you have in scent, you gain 1 automatic success on Senses tests that involve scent. You can also detect characters based on scent only (needing no visual confirmation) to within 50 feet per rank you have in Heightened Scent. The range of this ability is halved if you are upwind of the creatures and is doubled if you are downwind. You can discern if liquid or food is spoiled, poisoned, or otherwise unsafe by sniffing it or tasting a small amount, can recognize individuals by smell almost as easily as you can by sight, and can track creatures by smell (see “Senses,” page 44).

Sight: For each rank you have in sight, you gain 1 automatic success on Senses tests that involve sight, including the Aim action. Additionally, TH modifiers to Senses tests caused by dim lighting or obscured vision are reduced by one per rank you have in Heightened Sight.

Touch: For each rank you have in touch, you gain 1 automatic success on Senses tests that involve sensation. You are sensitive to minute temperature and pressure changes. You can also detect characters and objects (needing no visual or aural confirmation) within 5 feet per rank you have in Heightened Touch.

HEIR OF THE STORM

You are the heir of lightning and thunder made flesh. You radiate power with a majesty that cannot be denied. You take little to no damage from electricity, and can even generate it within you.





CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

MECHANICS

Rank 1: You stage down all **electrical** wounds by five dice. You gain the Manifest Storm mental action that does not require a test. This move causes your body to darken to an ominous black silhouette and electricity to crackle across your skin, which grants you 1 automatic success when using the Intimidate action. It also allows you to ignore all maneuverability penalties from wind. Once activated, Manifest Storm lasts for one scene.

Rank 2: You stage down all electrical wounds by six dice. You may use Manifest Storm to cause the air around you to vibrate with electricity. When a foe connects with a melee attack against you with natural or metal weapons, the electricity lashes out at him, inflicting 5 electrical damage for each wound die inflicted. The electricity may be resisted with a Water (Stamina) test with a TH equal to your base Air score, with each additional success negating 5 shock damage.

Rank 3: You stage down all electrical wounds by seven dice. You may use Manifest Storm to cause winds and flashes of lightning to surround your body. The lightning may damage your clothing or equipment, but does not harm you. This ability supersedes the rank 2 effect, with the following changes. Anyone who attacks you with a ranged weapon suffers a -2 disadvantage penalty on the attack, due to the lashing electricity and swirling winds. Melee attackers suffer 5 electrical damage, regardless of the weapon used and even if they miss; the electrical damage cannot be dodged. Finally, if an attacker hits with a natural or metal weapon, the electricity inflicts 5 electrical damage for each wound die inflicted, and the electrical damage cannot be resisted.

Rank 4: You take no damage from electrical wounds. You may use Manifest Storm to build up the power of the storm within you, rather than releasing it. You may build up the storm for a maximum number of turns equal to your base Air score. When you release the storm as a mental action, it rushes outward from you in all directions, doing 2 electrical damage to everything within 10 feet. For every turn you spent building up the storm, the electrical damage increases by 2 and the radius of the effect increases by 10 ft. Additionally, characters in the area are subject to a Slam attack from the wind with a number of successes equal to your base Air score. Characters in the area may *either* make Water (Stamina) tests to attempt to negate the electrical damage, with a TH equal to your base Air score, reducing the damage by 2 if they succeed and by an additional 2 for each extra success; or they can make Water (Athletics) tests to resist the Slam attack.

Rank 5: Instead of taking damage from electrical wounds, you absorb power from high volts of electricity. For each electrical wound die you would suffer, you instead heal one minor wound. The electricity you generate with the Manifest Storm action does not cause this effect.

INSTINCT

Your reactions and mental processes exist on a level more akin to an animal's than a human's. When danger threatens, your hair stands on end and your spine may tingle; by the time you know what's happening, your body is usually already reacting to it.

MECHANICS

You may activate Instinct during the initiative phase in order to make a quickened initiative check. You may roll one quickened initiative die per rank you have in this edge. If you roll a success, you act in the quickened initiative phase. If you do not, make an initiative test as normal. In either case, you may only take one physical action (and no mental actions) on the first round of the action scene.

Your rank in Instinct is used as a tiebreaker in all initiative checks or tests.

METABOLIC CONTROL

You can control your body's metabolism. You can speed it up to move faster and improve your reflexes, or you can slow it down to reduce the effects of toxins or fight fatigue. At higher ranks you can enter trancelike states to survive without food or water for long periods, or even cause your wounds to knit on their own.

MECHANICS

You gain the Metabolic Control mental action. You can use the action, untested, to slow down or speed up your bodily processes for the turn, gaining 1 automatic success to either Quickness or Stamina tests (you choose which one when you use the action) and a -2 disadvantage penalty to all other tests. Each turn that you continue to use Metabolic Control, you gain an additional automatic success and an additional -2 disadvantage penalty to all other tests, up to a maximum number of automatic successes equal to your rank in this power. Additionally, ranks 2 and 4 in this power gives you additional abilities, as described below.

Rank 2: You may use Metabolic Control to enter a trance. While in a trance, your body appears dead and needs no food, water, or air, and you gain 1 automatic success on Stamina tests per rank you have in this power. You must make a Water (Stamina) test each day with a TH of 1 + 1 per day, or you awaken from your trance.

Rank 4: When performing the Treat action on yourself, you can make a Fire (Stamina) test in place of the normal Air (Medicine) test, and you need no supplies.

MYTHIC LEAP

At lower ranks of this power, you can use your legs to propel you over small buildings in several bounds. At higher ranks, you can defy gravity itself.



MECHANICS

The distance you can travel with a single Jump move doubles with each rank you have in this power. Also, characters with ranks in this power are never disadvantaged due to jumping.

NOBILITY

Your presence resonates majesty and grace. Other creatures stand in awe of your splendor, karma radiating from you in an ethereal aura that creatures feel but cannot see.

Characters cannot have ranks in both Crushing Will and Nobility.

MECHANICS

Your encouraging and powerful presence grants you an edge in interpersonal relations. For each rank you have in this power, you gain 1 automatic success on Air (Will) tests, but only on those tests in which you are attempting to make your presence known or your nature exposed in a direct and non-devious manner, like Intimidate moves or diplomatic talks.

Additionally, you gain the Noble Call mental action. You can use this action, untested, to accomplish varying effects depending on your rank in this power, as described below. The action requires that its targets be able to hear you.

Rank 1: You may use Noble Call to inspire your allies to great achievements. Upon uttering the call, you grant one ally 1 automatic success on all tests using a single aspect of your choice until your next turn. For each additional rank you have in this power, you may grant another ally 1 automatic success to all tests using the same aspect.

Rank 2: You may use the Noble Call action to challenge and deride your enemies. Upon uttering the call, you may cause one enemy to suffer a -1 disadvantage penalty on all tests using a single aspect of your choice until your next turn. For each additional rank you have in this power, you may cause another enemy to suffer a -1 disadvantage penalty on all tests using the same aspect. You may not inspire allies and deride enemies in the same turn.

Rank 3: You no longer need to utter a call to assist your allies, nor to challenge your enemies vocally in order to demoralize them; your presence, along with the mental action, is enough.

Rank 4: You no longer need to use a mental action to rally your allies or demoralize your opponents, though you may only do one or the other each round.

Rank 5: You may both rally allies and demoralize opponents in the same turn; you may affect five characters. As with rank 4, you do not need not use a mental action to accomplish this.

Characters may not be affected by more than one Noble Call effect at any one time.





CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

RAPPORT

You can weave empathic connections with living creatures. With sentient creatures, this allows you at most to gauge their reactions, see through their lies, and communicate your emotions via unspoken thought. Animals are far more susceptible to your influence.

MECHANICS

You gain one automatic success per rank you have in this power on all Interaction tests made to detect others' emotions or to sense lies. Rapport effects can be used up to a distance equal to your karmic range. Attempts to broadcast your emotions require an unopposed Air (Will) test as a mental action. Attempts to read others' emotions requires an Air (Interaction) test as a mental action opposed by the targets' Earth (Will). Attempts to force your emotions onto others requires an Air (Will) test as a mental action opposed by the targets' Earth (Will). The opposed tests have varying thresholds, depending on your goal. Using this power is a mass attack (see page 130).

It is much easier to read animals' emotions than those of sentient beings, as they only use their base Earth scores to resist unless specifically trained to use skills like Will.

Threshold 1: Sense the simple emotions (such as hunger, calm, or anger) of, or broadcast your own to, one creature per rank you have in this power.

Threshold 2: Sense the complex emotions (such as fear mixed with excitement, anger toward a specific individual, or calm with uncertainty buried beneath) of, or broadcast your own to, one creature per rank you have in this power.

Threshold 3: Force simple emotions onto one animal per rank you have in this power. You can only impose emotions that you are actually feeling, and the animals react without complex understanding. If you force anger onto an animal, for instance, it is more likely to attack the nearest creature than the one that you feel anger towards.

Threshold 4: Force complex emotions onto one animal per rank you have in this power. You can only impose emotions that you are actually feeling, and the animals react with complex understanding. If you feel fear for your friends and anger toward a foe, the animals will feel the same, doing their best to protect your friends and hurt your enemy.

Threshold 5: Establish an empathic link with a single animal. After you establish the link, you may give it a command as a mental action each turn. Using complex emotional prods, you can make the animal do whatever you wish, from tearing apart your enemies to running away to throwing itself off a cliff. You cannot see through the animal's senses, but you can get empathic feelings from the animal ("scared," "cold," etc.).

Threshold 6: As TH 5, but after you establish the link, you may see through the animal's senses as if they were your own. This requires a mental action each turn.

SHADOW SPINNER

You are always cloaked in shadows and meld into them. Darkness is your armor and your weapon. At higher ranks you can create shadows through mental focus.

MECHANICS

You may draw on and manipulate shadows within 10 feet per rank in this power, allowing you to accomplish the following effects.

Shadow Servant: You may blend among the shadows with a mental action each turn, gaining one automatic success per rank in this power on all Stealth tests when in shadowy surroundings.

Shadow Summoning: You may draw nearby shadows into tendrils of darkness that actively surround and conceal you. This requires an Air (Will) test 1 as a mental action. When encased in shadows, you may attempt the Ambush action against creatures that rely on vision to spot you, but you only have effective skill ranks in Stealth equal to the number of turns you've spent summoning shadows. You may only summon shadows for one turn per rank you have in this power, and the shadows dissipate as soon as you stop using mental actions to summon them (including to perform the Ambush action). Each round that you summon shadows, the TH of the Air (Will) test increases by 1.

Shadow Shards: You may draw nearby shadows into tendrils of darkness in your hands, forming blades or claws of ephemeral shadow. The shard is shaped however you wish, but is always considered a light weapon, cannot be disarmed, cannot be used to block, ignores all armor values, and causes intense pain to the spirits of living things. Forming and maintaining the shard requires a mental action and an Air (Will) test 0 + 1 per turn it is maintained, up to a maximum number of turns equal to your rank in this power. The shard inflicts varying damage each turn, equal to 2 per net success of the Air (Will) test made to maintain it. If the shard reaches damage 0, it dissipates. Once a shard dissipates, a new one cannot be formed until a number of turns pass equal to the number of turns the shard was maintained.

Each round, a shadow shard can be split into as many separate blades as you wish, dividing up the total damage from the original blade. They can even be thrown, in which case they dissipate as soon as they hit or miss the target.

SKIN OF STONE

You are supernaturally tough. Even if your reflexes can't get you out of the way in time, your thick skin is likely to turn aside the blow before it does much damage.

MECHANICS

The damage thresholds at which you suffer wound dice increase by 1 per rank you have in this power.



WALLCRAWLER

Your method of wallcrawling can vary, from suction cups to barbed microscopic hairs, but the effects are the same: gravity is an inconvenience, at most, so long as you're hanging onto a wall or ceiling.

MECHANICS

You gain a climb gait equal to your land gait. For each rank you have in this power, you may reduce the terrain threshold of a climb by 3, to a minimum of 1. Characters with ranks in this power are never disadvantaged due to climbing.

LEGACIES

Legacies are powered by karma. Usually, when karma is spent during an action scene, it is replenished at the end of that scene. Karma spent to activate legacies, however, does not replenish at the end of the action scene; it requires such a powerful investment of spirit and self that such karma can only be regained as if it were spent during a narrative scene: the slow, hard way.

ACTIVATING A LEGACY

As described above, legacies are powered by spending karma. For this purpose, you can spend an amount of karma on each turn equal to your rank in the prerequisite power plus your awakened rank. For instance, if your legacy is Aegis Bearer, you spend and deplete karma to lower the wounds you suffer. Aegis Bearer has a prerequisite of Skin of Stone. If you have rank 3 in Skin of Stone and awakened rank 1, you may spend up to 4 karma each turn using this power (in other words, you can negate up to 4 wound dice each turn).

RESISTING A LEGACY

Legacies include some of the most brutal attacks of the supernatural world. These attacks never take the form of opposed tests; the user of the legacy spends and depletes karma, making no test. Instead, legacies may be resisted by the target(s) as specified under each one individually. The TH for such tests is determined by adding the legacy user's base score in the legacy's governing aspect and the user's awakened rank, or "TH = base aspect score + awakened rank."

DRAGONS AND AWAKENED RANK

All dragons are considered to have awakened rank 5.

LEGACIES

Each legacy is presented in the following format:



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LEGACY SUMMARIES

Aegis Bearer: As long as his karma lasts, the dragon's legacy makes him invulnerable.

Baleful Gaze: The dragon's legacy can turn his foes to stone with merely a look.

Fire Wurm: The dragon bears the oldest and most feared legacy of his kind: the ability to breathe fire.

Ghost Walker: The dragon's legacy allows him to shift his entire body into the ephemeral.

Green Lord: Plants and animals hearken to the bearer of this legacy.

Karma Thief: The dragon's legacy is an ancient and feared one: the ability to steal the stuff of spirit.

Mind Tyrant: The mind tyrant uses his legacy to assemble mindless armies to do his bidding.

Poison Wurm: The dragon bears an insidious legacy, the ability to spew a poisonous gas.

Quickened Body: The dragon's legacy allows him to seemingly act outside of time.

Quickened Mind: The dragon's legacy allows him to seemingly think outside of time.

Shapeshifter: The dragon bears a legacy of chaos and flux, even unto the form of his body.

Stone Lord: The dragon's legacy causes earth and stone to move and reshape at his behest.

Storm Lord: The storm lord can call upon his legacy to harness nature's fury.

Telekinetic: The bearer of this legacy can fight, kill, and guard without lifting a claw.

Teleporter: The teleporter's legacy can bend space itself.

Undying Wurm: The undying wurm refuses to give up his incarnation; as long as he retains karma, he cannot die.

Wizard's Bane: Magic, even that woven by others, is putty in your hands.

NAME

The legacy's name. This is followed by a description of the power in plain language, with no game mechanics.

Prerequisite: The power you must have ranks in before you can manifest or use this legacy. Your rank in this power also determines the amount of karma you may spend each turn to activate this legacy.

Aspect: The aspect that governs this legacy. Also determines the TH for tests to resist the legacy's effects.

EFFECT

What the legacy allows your character to do in-game.

Karma

Effect

Amount of karma spent

In-game effect

AEGIS BEARER

Given enough karma to draw from, you are invulnerable. The beasts whose scales were like iron; the monstrosities whose hides turned aside fire, sword, and spear; the indestructible foes of old; these are your kin, perhaps even your descendants. You fear no weapon forged by man.

Prerequisite: Skin of Stone

Aspect: Water

EFFECT

Any attack, no matter how devastating, can be absorbed by this legacy. It may express itself as a field of kinetic energy, an instantly emerging, chitin-like subdermal layer, or the altering of flesh at a molecular level into a more durable substance. This ability expresses itself instinctively, even responding to attacks of which you are unaware. It has one use, which is described as follows:

Karma Effect

1	Stage down a wound you are about to suffer by one die. For each die beyond the first by which you wish to stage the wound down, the cost of this effect increases by 1.
---	---

BALEFUL BEHOLDER

Tales of your horrific gaze have filtered down throughout time and history, depicting you as the most hated and dangerous of monsters. And the stories are true. Your gaze can damage foes, blind them, or turn them to stone.

Prerequisite: Gaze of the Predator

Aspect: Air

SIDEBAR 4-2



EFFECT

You gain the Baleful Gaze mental action, which affects all creatures within 30 ft. that meet your gaze. Karma may be spent to cause the following effects with your gaze, as decided by the dragon:

Karma	Effect
1	Extend your gaze by 30 ft.
1	Inflct 5 damage with your gaze
2	Blindness
3	Dismemberment
4	Petrification

The dragon may divide up his karma expenditure on these effects as he wishes. For instance, a dragon that spends 7 karma might choose the petrification and dismemberment effects, or he might extend the range of his gaze by 60 feet with 2 karma and choose the 5 damage effect 6 times with his remaining karma (for a total of 30 damage). Targets may resist with a Water (Stamina) test. Each success lowers the effect to the next lowest one. For instance, in the first example above, a target that gets 4 successes on the test to resist could negate the petrification effect completely, still suffering the dismemberment effect, or could lower both by two, suffering blindness and 5 damage. Alternatively, the dragon could

spend more than the minimum karma on one or more specific targets to make the effects more difficult to resist *for them only*. For instance, if he wants to blind a specific foe, he could spend 6 karma on the blindness effect, even though it only requires 2 karma. The foe would then need to gain 4 additional successes on his test to lower the blindness to 5 damage.

FIRE WYRM

You can breathe a cone of flames.

Prerequisites: Child of Fire

Aspect: Fire

EFFECT

You may spend karma to cause a cone of fire, 60 ft. long and 15 ft. wide at its end point, to erupt forth from your mouth, enveloping anything in its path and dealing 10 burn damage. Karma may be spent to cause the following effects, as decided by the dragon:

Karma	Effect
1	Inflct an additional 10 burn damage
1	Extend or shrink the length of the cone by 30 ft. (to a minimum of 10 ft.)
1	Widen or shrink the diameter of the cone by 5 ft. (to a minimum of 5 ft.)



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- 1 Inflict a -1 fading physical penalty and a -1 fading mental penalty

Targets may resist with Water (Quickness) tests. Each success lowers the damage by 5 or the fading penalties by 1.

GHOST WALKER

You cross the boundary between the living and the dead, becoming an intangible, ghostlike creature unbound by physical constraints. This form gives you some powers over the dead, and resistance to the actions of the living.

Prerequisites: Distant Mind

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At Will: You can shift just your awareness into the realm of spirits and phantasms. You are considered to be permanently under the effects of the Second Sight spell (see page 187).

Spending Karma: You gain a mental action called Ghostwalk. Each turn that you use an untested mental action to ghostwalk, you take on a wispy, incorporeal form. You can move through physical objects and creatures, such as shackles, walls, and opponents. You can move in any direction, even down through the ground, but the only positioning move you can use is a Crawl. You cannot see through physical objects, so you are blind when your eyes are within an object (or the ground). You cannot physically harm opponents or be harmed by physical sources, such as swords, bullets, and the like. In fact, you cannot physically interact with the world in any way. Spells affect you normally, and you can cast spells to affect the physical environment (although you must somehow do so without using a mental action, as you must reserve your mental action each round for the Ghostwalk move). You can perceive the world, so edges, powers, and legacies requiring you to see your foe, and vice versa, remain effective (e.g., Imposing Will and Baleful Gaze). While ghostwalking, you are visible as a wispy, incorporeal form. You make no sound, unless you wish to speak. This form gives you automatic successes equal to your rank in Distant Mind on all Stealth tests and Ka tests to detect supernatural phenomena. The longer you Ghostwalk, the easier it is to remain in that form. You must spend 1 karma each turn you use the Ghostwalk action, for the first 10 turns. Thereafter, you must spend 1 karma each minute, for the first 10 minutes. Finally, thereafter, you must spend 1 karma each hour. You may also spend karma to accomplish further effects, as shown below:

Karma Effect

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Perform a Stride move while using Ghostwalk |
| 2 | Perform a Dash move while using Ghostwalk |

- Varies** Bring an object or unconscious creature that you are touching along with you, spending one karma per size category of the passenger (minimum 1). You may let go of the creature or object at any time, at which point it reappears in corporeal form.

If a creature exits (or is released from) the ghostwalk while inside a physical object, it remains trapped there in ghostwalk form until another ghostwalk retrieves it. If a creature exits the ghostwalk while only partially inside a physical object, it becomes shunted to the nearest open space capable of holding it and suffers damage equal to the number of feet traveled in this way (minimum 10).

GREEN LORD

You can feel the sap flowing in the trees, hear their roots thrumming underground. Because you know them, they make way for you and grow at your merest touch. The birds and beasts of field, forest, and stream give you their allegiance as well.

Prerequisites: Rapport

Aspect: Earth

EFFECT

At Will: Communicate telepathically with any detected animal as if it were a broodmate.

Spending Karma: You gain two mental actions, called Foster Growth and Summon Beasts. Foster Growth allows you to give of your own life energy, karma, to enhance the growth of nearby plants. You can affect plants within a radius in feet equal to your base Air score x10. Summon Beasts, on the other hand, allows you to ask animals to give of their life energy, or even their lives, to serve and protect you. You can sense and send out a call to animals within Trivial range as if they were broodmates. You must deplete your max karma pool to perform either move, as follows:

Karma Effect

- 1 Cause the rapid growth of all plants within the specified radius, increasing the terrain threshold by 1. For every point beyond the first by which you wish to increase the terrain threshold, the cost of this action increases by 1.
- 1 Summon the nearest 10 APVs worth of animals (as long as any are within Trivial range) to your aid. You may communicate with them telepathically as if they were brood mates, and are inclined to help you in whatever way necessary, short of endangering themselves. For every 10 APVs' worth of animals beyond the first 10 that you summon, the cost for this effect increases by 1.



- 1 Convince 10 APVs worth of summoned animals to help you in whatever way necessary, including endangering themselves. For every 10 APVs' worth of animals beyond the first that you wish to convince, the cost for this effect increases by 1.

Varies Specify the type of animals you wish to summon. The level of precision varies depending on the amount of karma spent:

- 1 Sense and choose from among general animal types within range (birds, insects, mammals, reptiles, etc.)

- 2 Sense and choose from among specific animal types within range (canine, feline, rodent, ursine, etc.)

- 3 Sense and choose from among precise animal types within range (a pack of wild coyotes, a wolf, a trained K9 police dog, etc.)

- 1 Increase the range at which you can sense and call specific animals by one karmic range category. For each category beyond the first by which you wish to increase your range, the cost of this effect increases by 1.

KARMA THIEF

Others draw clumsily on the karma within and about them, desperately clutching at the energy that fuels their powers or allows them to avoid harm. You can do more than simply pull at strings . . . you see the loom on which karma is woven, the grand design that it forms, and can reshape it to your liking.

Prerequisites: Group Mind

Aspect: Earth

EFFECT

At Will: You automatically succeed on Ka tests made to determine the karma strength of an area or creature.

Spending Karma: You gain a mental action called Transfer Karma. Essentially, you may use it to spend your own karma to steal or transfer the karma of detected targets. The basic range for this ability is Trivial, but it may be increased up to your karmic range. You must spend karma to perform any of these actions, as shown below:

Karma	Effect
1	Increase range of a Transfer Karma action by one category, up to your karmic range.

Varies Take karma from the pool of one detected target and transfer the same amount to yourself. To do so you must spend 1 karma for every 2 you wish to transfer.

Varies Spend karma up to your rank in Group Mind to increase one of your brood-mates' pools by an equal amount.

Varies Spend karma up to your rank in Group Mind to take an equal amount from the pool of one detected target and transfer the same amount to another detected target (other than yourself).

Unwilling targets may make an Earth (Will) test to resist the karma transfer. They lessen the theft by one for each success beyond the TH needed to resist. Regardless of the target's success, you must still spend the karma to use the action.

MIND TYRANT

Dragons have been labeled in myth and legend as despotic rulers of men, overlords that demand worship, sacrifice, and worse. As a tyrant, you are the living reality of that myth. Your will is undeniable, your presence extraordinary. So long as there are vulnerable minds among your enemies, they are just a step away from becoming your allies.

Prerequisite: Crushing Will

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At will: Communicate mentally with any detected intelligent creature.

Spending karma: You gain the Dominate and Claim mental actions, allowing you to hijack others' minds. You may use these actions on any detected creature within a number of feet equal to your base Air score x10. Once a creature has been dominated, it can be claimed. Dominating, commanding, or claiming any number of creatures requires a mental action. You must spend karma to do so, as shown below:

Karma	Effect
1	Dominate: See through a creature's senses for a turn.
2	Dominate: Speak through a creature's mouth for a turn.
3	Dominate: Control a creature's body like a puppet for a turn. It uses your skills and mental aspects, but uses its own traits and physical aspects.
4	Dominate: Give a creature specific commands, which it must carry out to the best



of its ability for a turn. It uses its own aspects, skills, and powers.

5 **Dominate:** Dominate a creature's mind entirely for a turn. It becomes steadfastly loyal to you. It will follow your mental instructions entirely, but will also act independently of you in what it thinks will be the most beneficial manner to your goals, and will protect you with its life. Once a creature has been fully dominated, it may not resist your domination on subsequent turns. You must still spend karma each turn to keep it fully dominated, however.

5 **Claim** a creature over whom you've established some level of domination. Once a creature is claimed, you may invest in it on a daily basis so long as it is within range of your insight. Spend 1 karma per 10 APVs of the creature each day. At any point during the day, if the creature is within your karmic range, you may command it at a level equal to your original domination, without spending additional karma. If you go a day without spending the appropriate karma, you lose your claim over the creature.

Targets may resist your initial domination and your claim, as well as each new command, with an Earth (Will) test. Each success beyond the TH to resist lowers the level of control by one. Once a creature has been fully dominated *and* claimed, the only way to remove it from your command is to take it out of your karmic range or kill you, such that you cannot renew the claim on the next day. It remains loyal to you until sunrise of that next day.

POISON WYRM

You can breathe poison gas, causing all those who breathe it in to asphyxiate.

Prerequisites: Metabolic Control

Aspect: Water

EFFECT

Spending Karma: By spending 1 karma, you can cause a streaming cloud of toxic gas to belch forth from your mouth, surrounding everything around you within a 30-ft. radius, causing all creatures within to be disadvantaged, and subjecting them to a lethal poison. All creatures caught in the cloud must immediately make a Water (Stamina) test with a TH equal to the dragon's rank in Metabolic Control plus his awakened rank. If a creature fails, he suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty per success by which he failed the test. Each turn he remains in the cloud, the victim must make another test to resist



the poison. If the victim reaches a -6 disadvantage penalty from poison, his vital organs are paralyzed by the toxins, and he begins to suffocate as if drowning.

Karma may be spent to cause the following effects, as decided by the dragon:

Karma	Effect
1	Expand the radius of the cloud by 10 ft.
1	Increase penalty to tests in the cloud by another -1.
1	Lengthen the duration of the cloud by one turn.
1	Increase the TH to resist the poison by one.

QUICKENED BODY

You can move with more speed than a human can process, making your actions seem to be a blur. Hummingbirds' wings seem like they're moving through molasses, to your eyes. The more karma you spend, the more foes you can smite in the blink of an eye.

Prerequisite: Instinct

Aspect: Fire

EFFECT

At Will: You gain full successes on Fire dice when rolling for initiative.

Spending Karma: Quicken body allows you to spend karma to act more quickly than any human, and most any supernatural creature, could imagine.

Karma	Effect
1	Gain 1 automatic success on a quickened initiative check.
1	Perform one additional move in an action sequence beyond the number allowed by your base Fire. For every additional move you add to an action sequence, the cost of this ability increases by 1.
5	For the duration of the action scene, you may perform an extra physical action at an initiative placement 5 lower than your original placement. For every additional physical action you wish to perform in a turn, the cost of this ability doubles. You suffer a -1 to each test after the first using any aspect, as normal.

QUICKENED MIND

You can think, and therefore react, with unearthly speed. In the span of time that it takes most people to blink, you can solve a differential equation, plan an entire chess game, count the bricks on a wall, or start killing.

Prerequisite: Clarity

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At Will: You gain full successes on Air dice when rolling for initiative.

Spending Karma: Quicken mind allows you to spend karma to do things with your mind more quickly than any human, and most any supernatural creature, could imagine.

Karma Effect

1	Gain 1 automatic success on a quickened initiative check.
2	For the duration of the action scene, you may perform an extra mental action at an initiative placement 5 lower than your original placement. For every additional mental action you wish to perform in a turn, the cost of this ability doubles. You suffer a -1 to each test after the first using any aspect, as normal.

SHAPESHIFTER

You can do more than simply switch between dragon and human form. You can control every cell of your body, every claw, scale, and bone, shaping and restructuring them at your whim.

Prerequisite: Alternate Form

Aspect: Fire

EFFECT

At will: You can change minor features of your natural form at will, from hair color to skin tone to anatomical proportions. This gives you an full successes on Trickery tests to disguise yourself or look like someone specific.

Spending karma: You can alter your form to take on the appearance and traits of any creature you wish. To do so, you must spend karma, as shown below. Once a form has been chosen, it remains for as long as you wish, but the karma thus spent cannot be renewed until you return to your natural form.

Karma Effect

2	Increase or decrease your size by one.
1	Increase your skin's armor value by one.





CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

1	Cosmetic alteration (coloring, head shape, tail length)
2	Organ alteration (from reptile to mammal)
3	Skeletal alteration (from quadruped to biped)
1	Increase any one gait by one, or give yourself a gait in a new form of movement
1	Increase your maneuverability in a form of movement by one
1	Grow a light weapon, damage 6
2	Grow a medium weapon, damage 12
3	Grow a heavy weapon, damage 18
Varies	Grow a draconic trait (cost = trait's form point cost)

STONE LORD

You can control earth and stone, reshaping it with your will and using it to assault your enemies.

Prerequisites: Earthstride

Aspect: Earth

EFFECT

At will: Shape stone and earth with your bare hands as if it were two densities lower (see "Earthstride," page 81).

Spending karma: When you spend karma to activate this legacy, earth becomes as malleable to your mind as clay is to a sculptor's hand. This legacy affects a number cubic feet of earth, stone, cement, or brick equal your base Earth score x10. You must be touching part of the region to be affected, and the region must be contiguous. One of the more common uses of this legacy is to cause an animated stone construct to erupt from the ground within the area. It may take the form of a creature, a giant limb, or any other shape you can imagine, but must always remain connected with the earth from which it sprang. As a mental action, you may direct a construct to perform physical actions. As a mental reaction, you may direct a construct to perform physical reactions (for instance, in order to defend itself from attacks). A construct is a size 0 creature with armor 10 and a single Stone Strike, a medium weapon that inflicts 10 damage. You use your base Earth score for all of its aspects, and your ranks in Will for all of its skills. You must spend karma to create and direct a construct, or perform other uses of this legacy, as shown below:

Karma Effect

1	Create a stone construct.
1	Increase the size category of a construct for one turn.
1	Make a single physical move with a construct as part of an active or reactive sequence.
1	Double the size of the area affected.
Varies	Send a shockwave through the area, sending shards of rock flying and scattering your foes. Anything touching the ground in the area suffers 10 points of damage per karma spent and is tripped. Affected creatures may lessen the damage by 5 for each success on their Water (Athletics) tests, and may avoid being tripped by scoring at least half the legacy's threshold.
Varies	Cause cracks, crevasses, and boulders to appear in the area, causing its terrain TH to increase by one per karma spent.

When you are not spending karma on a construct, it becomes an inanimate object. Anything it has managed to grab, for instance, becomes trapped in unyielding stone.

STORM LORD

Yours is the wind and the rain. Thunder is your roar and lightning is your claw. Humans may revere you as a sky or weather deity, and your powers support their claims.

Prerequisites: Nobility

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At will: Your flight maneuverability and flight gait both increase by one.

Spending karma: You gain a mental action called Gather Storm. When you spend karma to activate this legacy, you can paint the sky with clouds and sheer the earth with winds. Gather Storm affects the weather around you in a radius of feet equal to your base Air score x 500. The most common use of Gather Storm is to generate high winds and storm, but it can also be used to calm the weather about you. The longer you gather a storm, the easier it is to keep it active. You must spend karma and use the Gather Storm action to maintain a storm each turn, for the first 10 turns. Thereafter, you must spend karma and use the Gather Storm action to maintain a storm each minute, for the first 10 minutes. Finally, thereafter, you must spend karma and use the Gather Storm action each hour. You must be able to see





the sky to use the Gather Storm action, and must spend karma as follows:

Karma	Effect
1	Gather a storm.
1	Expand the radius of your weather control by 500 feet.
1	Increase the intensity of the storm by one rank (see below). For each rank by which you increase the storm, the cost of this effect increases by 1.
Varies	Call down bolts of lightning from the air to electrocute creatures, doing 10 electrical damage per point of karma spent. You may affect one creature per intensity rank of the storm. Creatures can reduce the damage by 5 with each success on a Water (Stamina) test.
Rank	Effects
1	Light rain, 10 MPH winds.
2	Heavy rain accompanied by lightning, thunder, and 20 MPH winds.

3	Extremely heavy rain accompanied by repeated lightning strikes, powerful thunder, and 30 MPH winds.
4	Enormous deluge of rain accompanied by mighty winds that crack trees, dangerous lightning strikes, and 40 MPH winds.
5	The most ferocious of tornadoes and hurricanes; rain completely obscures vision, lightning snaps power lines, thunder rocks the ground, and 50 MPH winds tear apart houses and fling trucks through the air.

Regardless of the level of destruction caused by the storm, the storm lord and those he is touching remain miraculously unharmed by its direct effects: the wind does not affect his maneuverability in the air or push him along the ground, thrown objects do not hit him, lightning does not strike him. However, if he is not outside, he is susceptible to damage like a house collapsing on him due to the storm's effects, drowning in a resultant flood, etc.

For more details on the effects of wind, see "Wind," page 155.





CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS & LEGACIES

TELEKINETIC

To put it simply, you can move objects with your mind. Some telekinetics claim to see ghostly versions of their own bodies performing their commands at a distance. Others use a spiritual schema in which they envision themselves as the things they move. Some, finally, consider themselves puppet-masters. They say that when they yank on the strings of karma that bind all things together, the creatures or items to which those strings are attached come along for the ride.

Prerequisites: Crushing Will

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At will: Using only your mind, you may generate 5 lbs. of pressure within one Crawl move of your location, allowing you to move 5 lb. objects and accomplish simple tasks. Because of the limited amount of pressure you can exert, you cannot use this ability to attack foes or attempt anything more complex than typing on a keyboard or buckling or unbuckling a belt.

Spending karma: You may generate an invisible construct of force that acts as you wish. The construct can exist and act upon anything in a radius equal to your base Air score x 10 ft. It is shaped however you wish, from exerting force the way a humanoid might to acting as a bubble repelling outside forces. As a mental action, you may direct a construct to perform physical actions. Any time you could make a physical reaction, you can make a mental reaction to cause the construct to perform a physical reaction on your behalf (for instance, to protect you from falling rocks). A construct is size 0, invisible, and immune to all attacks. You use your base Air score for all of its aspects and your ranks in Will for all of its skills. Its attack is equivalent to a light weapon that inflicts 5 damage with a Strike move, but can block any weapon of its size category. A construct can instantly relocate anywhere within range with a Ready move. You must spend karma to create and direct a construct, as shown below:

Karma	Effect
1	Create or maintain a telekinetic construct.
1	Increase the size category of a construct for one turn.
1	Make a single physical move with a construct as part of an active or reactive sequence.
1	Extend the range of your telekinesis by a number of feet equal to your base Air score x 10 for one round.
Varies	"See" everything within range of your telekinesis with an effect similar to

Heightened Senses (touch), with a rank equal to the amount of karma spent.

TELEPORTER

You have the power to bend space itself, stepping through the folds of physical reality and emerging somewhere else. You may disappear in a puff of smoke, summon a glowing portal that you alone can enter, or slash at reality itself with your claws, rending a hole in space and stepping through. Regardless of the distance traveled, whether it's across the room or across a continent, you can't simply rip a hole in space and expect reality not to react. Teleporting always has a dramatic visual and aural effect.

Prerequisites: Distant Mind

Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At will: You gain a mental action called Teleport. This untested action allows you (and only you) to instantly disappear and reappear somewhere else up to one Crawl move away.

Spending karma: You may teleport even farther. The new destination must either be a location you've been to before, or is relative to your current position (e.g., 500 feet due north, 1 mile straight up, etc.). If this relative position puts you inside a solid object, you are trapped for that turn in the non-space through which you travel when you teleport. You may attempt to teleport again the next round; if you can't (because you are out of karma, for instance), you remain trapped there until another teleporter can retrieve you. Because time does not pass normally in non-space, creatures or objects left there do not age. Anyone teleporting into or out of the vicinity becomes aware of creatures or objects left in no-space, and can retrieve them. You may accomplish the above, and more, by spending karma as follows:

Karma Effect

1	Teleport a Trivial distance.
2	Teleport a Minor distance.
3	Teleport a Moderate distance.
4	Teleport a Major distance.
5	Teleport a Profound distance.
6	Teleport a Hemispherical distance.
Varies	Teleport an unconscious creature or object that you are touching along with you, spending one karma per size category of the passenger (minimum 1).
Varies	Teleport an unconscious creature or object into non-space, leave it there,





and teleport back. This requires three turns, and you must spend one karma per size category of the passenger (minimum 1) each turn.

Varies Teleport quietly and subtly, without one of the dramatic visual and aural effects described above. Requires the expenditure of double the normal karma for the distance traveled.

UNDYING SERPENT

You are the demon in the night that never dies, the bleeding monstrosity that hunters track but can never take down. Karma does not simply empower you, it rebuilds you, keeping you alive despite the most grievous of wounds.

Prerequisites: Ferocity

Aspect: Water

EFFECT

At will: You gain full successes on all Water (Stamina) tests to heal wounds.

Spending karma: You gain a mental action called Regenerate. You can use it to repair your own wounds by spending karma. Healing one wound die costs karma equal to your current wound dice (for instance, if you are at 4 wound dice, it costs 4 karma to improve to 3 wound dice, and another 3 karma to improve to 2 wound dice). If you are suffering from no wound dice but have suffered minor wounds, you may heal up two minor wounds with 1 karma.

While not actually undying, you are quite close to fitting that title. You can use this move even when down, dying, or dead, so long as you had karma when you reached that state. If it becomes a question of which part of your body begins regrowing, assume that the largest existing portion of your head becomes your new body from which you begin healing. If you are

dead and have 0 karma, you die permanently.

WIZARD'S BANE

Something about your karma is hollow and hungry. When you open it to magic, it swallows the arcane energy greedily. You may be known as a master arcanist or as the bane of all wizards, depending on how you use this legacy and your attitude toward magic. Indeed, some draconic warriors of the past have embraced this legacy for its ability to disarm. This can be used to prevent pain and destruction, such as by negating overkill successes, or to cause it, such as by adding overkill successes to an enemy's spell.

Prerequisites: Shadow Spinner

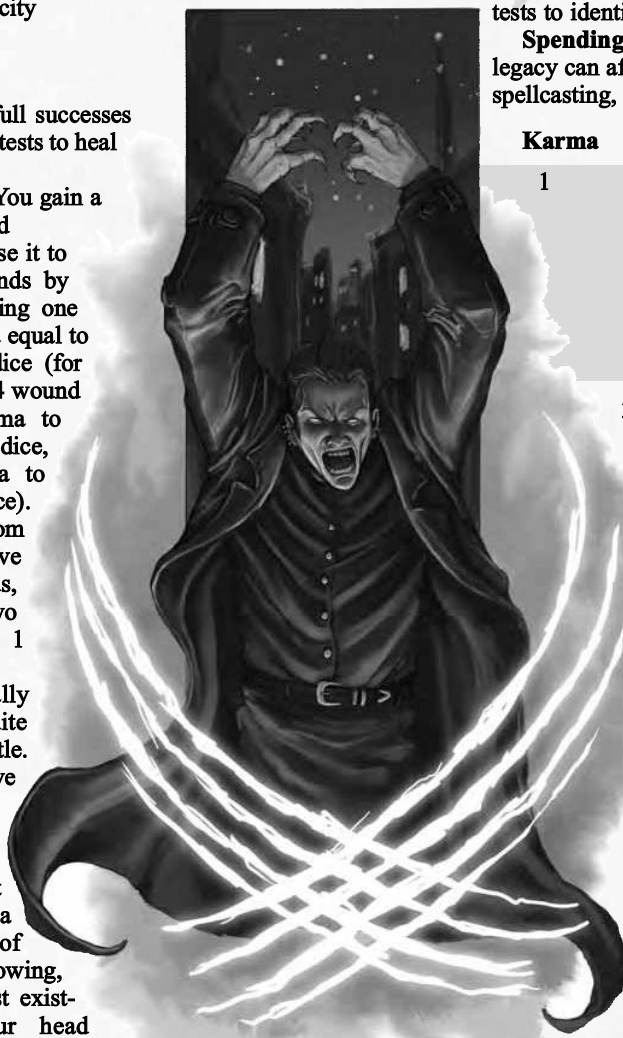
Aspect: Air

EFFECT

At will: Gain full successes on all Casting tests to identify spells and spell effects.

Spending karma: Dragons with this legacy can affect both their own and others' spellcasting, as shown below:

Karma	Effect
1	Decrease the damage caused by your own overkill successes by 5. For each additional 5 damage you wish to prevent beyond the first, the cost of this effect increases by 1.
3	Subtract or add one success from a detected casting or ritual in progress, within your karmic range, that is being cast by someone else. For each success you wish to add or subtract from the casting or ritual beyond the first, the cost of this effect increases by 3. Unwilling casters may resist this effect with an Earth (Casting) test.





EQUIPMENT

CHAPTER
FIVE

Regardless of how skilled or powerful your FIREBORN character is, you will probably want to give him gear to make his life a little easier. In many circumstances, having just the right tool at the right time can give you the edge you need to succeed. When magic fails you in the heat of battle—and it will, to be sure—then you may have an arsenal of high-powered (and highly illegal) assault weaponry at your disposal. Or, for instance, should you one day need to hack into the encrypted government databases keeping track of all known supernatural activity, you're certainly going to need a black market computer and software to assist you.

The same goes for vehicles. Hoofing it around the countryside by bus or rail is about as pleasant as swimming naked in the Thames, and taking wing above the crowded city streets or open fields is decidedly not advisable, so you are going to want some sort of mechanical conveyance with which to get around. The more money you burn on said conveyance the better your chances at pursuing your prey or, if such is your nature, running away from imminent danger.

WEALTH

Money in FIREBORN is not quantified, but rather represented by your character's Wealth rank. This is because the game's emphasis is on lightning-paced action and intensive roleplaying. Keeping track of every penny spent by your character would slow the game down and quickly detract from its other elements.

Your character's background determines your starting Wealth rank, ranging from 1 (penniless) to 6 (wealthy). Some NPCs may have a higher Wealth rank than 6, but characters should rarely, if ever, be able to acquire that much money without calamity befalling their savings (or them).

LIFESTYLE

Your character's Wealth rank determines how comfortable (or not) his lifestyle is, generally speaking, described in general terms on Table 5-1.

Feel free to detail the places your character lives or works, as well as any additional holdings that could conceivably be pertinent during the game. If you forget something don't sweat it. As long as it's reasonable for your Wealth rank the GM will most likely allow it in the event you suddenly "just happen to remember it." For example, if your brood is in Munich and they need a place to crash while healing their wounds, you might say, "I have a small apartment on Bundestrasse down by the river I sometimes use when I come here for business." Of course, your Wealth rank should support a claim like that. If something you come up with seems a little too convenient, however, don't be surprised if the GM overrides you altogether or at least gives the item in question an inflated Cost.

WEALTH RANKS

Wealth Lifestyle

- 1 *Homeless.* Everything you own is either on your back or in the grocery cart you push around. The streets are your luxurious bed and the waste bins are your pantry. You have absolutely no purchasing power, relying instead on the good will of other people. Everything is a significant purchase by your standards.
- 2 *Poverty.* You might live in the worst part of town paying dirt-cheap rent you can barely afford, or you might be a college student with a part-time job, or a recently divorced housewife living in a one-room apartment and working 3 jobs to make ends meet. Many inconsequential purchases for other people become significant purchases for you.
- 3 *Working Class.* You earn a decent but not great income. Some days you're living paycheck to paycheck; other days you might come out ahead if you're lucky or plan appropriately. And hey, there's always the chance that a relative will die and remember you in her will.
- 4 *Middle Class.* You make a good living and even have a savings account with money in it. While not rich, you can afford that new 200-gigabyte iPod or get a bank loan with decent interest in order to buy that new car. If you've got kids, your lifestyle inevitably dips closer toward the Working Class end of the spectrum.
- 5 *Affluent.* Your income is quite impressive. You may own two, possibly even three, properties, have wide-ranging investments managed by an accountant or broker, and your monthly disposable income allows you to make reasonable impulse purchases whenever the urge overcomes you.
- 6 *Millionaire.* The amount of money you earn on the interest in your savings account alone is enough to support you for many months. You have an excellent job with many responsibilities, are a popular actor, musician, or entertainer, or perhaps live off a trust fund set up in your name by a rich, now sadly deceased, uncle. You have properties on more than one continent and own the controlling shares in more than one company.

TABLE 5-1

CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT

WEALTH VS. COST

You can assume that you can easily afford items with costs two lower than your Wealth. It may take some time to find and purchase them, but they're yours for the asking; they are **inconsequential purchases**. For a Wealth 2 character, this might be a pack of smokes or lunch at the corner pub. For a Wealth 5 character, on the other hand, a trip to Morocco would be considered inconsequential.

Anything with a cost higher than your Wealth -2 is a **significant purchase**, and requires you to spend some of your **available wealth**. Since an item's cost cannot go below 0, this means that *everything* is a significant purchase for Wealth 1 characters. At the beginning of any adventure, your available wealth is equal to your Wealth rank. Any time you wish to make a significant purchase, you deplete your available wealth by an amount equal to the item's cost. For instance, a character begins an adventure at Wealth 4. He must pay **upkeep**, dropping his available wealth to 3. Then if he wishes to buy a used car of Cost 3, he may do so, but it drops his available wealth to 0. His Wealth is still 4 for the purposes of what is and is not considered a significant purchase, so he can still fuel up his new vehicle and pay for a tune-up, but he's going to have a hard time bribing a traffic cop or buying rare magic components.

Available wealth can be pooled among characters.

UPKEEP

Your character in FIREBORN must live according to his means. As mentioned earlier, the game's focus is high-energy action and mind-blowing sorcery, not housekeeping. Therefore you needn't worry about keeping track of every single item your character owns or any of the inconsequential purchases he makes. However, if you want to take advantage of the benefits of your lifestyle, you must spend upkeep each adventure. If you do not pay for upkeep during any one adventure, your accounts and bills go unpaid. Your available wealth drops by one for the next adventure. For Wealth 1 characters, this means that all of their available panhandling money goes toward merely staying fed and warm.

On the other hand, if you not only pay upkeep consistently, but make no significant purchases for an entire adventure, mark it in the Wealth section of your character sheet. You've been **living on the cheap**. After a number of adventures living on the cheap equal to your Wealth rank, your available wealth increases by one.

AVAILABILITY

The GM may raise or lower an item's cost depending on its regional availability, or because the vendor does-

n't especially like the character, or because the item in question is no longer manufactured, and so on. In some cases, a particular piece of equipment may have a higher or lower cost due to mitigating factors specific to the equipment.

HAGGLING

In some situations, you may negotiate with a vendor. This is especially true in parts of the world where haggling is a part of everyday life, and an inability or unwillingness to negotiate will quickly drive you into poverty. Haggling and negotiation isn't really about trying to pull one over on someone. Everybody knows that everyone else is trying to get the best price; it's simply a matter of knowing just how far you can push the other guy before he buys somewhere else or refuses his services. Therefore, when haggling, you make an Air (Interaction) test opposed by Air (Interaction). Whoever comes out on top may raise or lower the price as shown on Table 5-2 below.

		HAGGLING					
		COST					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
NET SUCCESSES	1-2	—	—	—	—	—	+/-1
	3-4	—	—	—	—	+/-1	+/-1
	5-6	—	—	—	+/-1	+/-1	+/-2
	7-8	—	—	+/-1	+/-1	+/-2	+/-2
	9-10	—	+/-1	+/-1	+/-2	+/-2	+/-3
	11+	+/-1	+/-1	+/-2	+/-2	+/-3	+/-3

TABLE 5-2

Example: A millionaire industrialist scion (Wealth 5, available wealth 3) must get out of Hong Kong before a ferocious pack of Brothers of Cernunnos catches up with him. It is after midnight, and the last international flights have already departed from Chep Lap Kok airport. He decides his best bet is to go to an old acquaintance's private airfield in the New Territories and pay whatever it takes to fly out immediately (normally cost 2). Fortunately, his friend has an ancient Cessna standing by on the runway. Unfortunately, Hong Kong law forbids private planes from taking off and landing this late at night, so if his acquaintance agrees to help out he's going to be putting his business at considerable risk. To make matters worse, the pilot only has enough plane fuel for one trip, and tomorrow he's scheduled to take a German tour group out on an air tour of Guangdong. If he helps out the scion, he'll lose the tour

money. The pilot also senses the scion's desperation and hopes to capitalize upon it. The Game Master decides these three mitigating factors combined add +2 to the cost of the flight, making the flight cost 4. The scion doesn't have that kind of money available, so he haggles. He rolls seven successes on his Air (Interaction) test, while the pilot rolls three, giving the scion four net successes. Referencing the table above, we find that that does not give the scion a cost decrease. He weighs his options, and realizes that if he doesn't spend karma now, he's going to be doing it fighting off some very angry Brothers of Cernunnos. He bids four karma, while the pilot bids one. That gives the scion seven net successes, enough to lower the cost of the flight to 3. The scion can afford that, so agrees to the deal. He ends up paying a bit more for the service than he intended, but nonetheless gets out of Hong Kong before the Brothers string his intestines out along the highway.

STREET CREDIT

When it comes to buying certain items, it's not a matter of how rich you are, but a matter of who you know and how well you know them. That's the foundation of the black market economy the world over. Palms must be greased, questionable contacts must be made, and plenty of favors exchanged along the way. The black market is also rife with double-crosses, shoddy goods, and danger.

Buying things on the black market uses a similar mechanic to buying items normally, but you must make contact with a dealer for each item. This is dependent on your ranks in Knowledge: Street rather than Wealth; in this case, your ranks in Knowledge: Street become your **street credit**, and you start your first adventure with that amount of available street credit. Anything with a **street cost** two lower than your street credit is an inconsequential street purchase. Anything higher requires you to spend your available street credit. Street cost items follow all of the same rules for Wealth, including haggling, upkeep, and living frugally, but represent time and effort rather than merely money. Like available wealth, street credit can be pooled.

Once you've made contact by spending available street credit equal to the item's street cost, you may purchase the item as normal with your available wealth, haggling if desired.

Remember that dealing with the black market is not a light undertaking. It is dangerous, and, moreover, has the potential to become a social quagmire. The more you associate with a black market vendor, the harder it will be to extricate yourself from your obligations and debts to him. Inevitably, the vendor will start coming to you with pre-emptive favors, asking you to do things for which he will later pay you back. It is also only a matter of time before you cross paths with law enforcement officials.

STREET COST ITEMS

Street Cost	Example
1	Stolen TV, drugs
3	Stolen car, pistol, people smuggling
5	Safe cracking gear, rifle, street-level hit
7	Stolen ship, submachine gun, home-made explosives, a prominent hit
9	High-tech explosives, machine gun
11	Stolen airplane, bazooka, a prominent hit
13	Biological agent, military-grade vehicle, presidential assassination
15	Nuclear device

TABLE 5-2

Example: The scion Tabitha Fairfield (Knowledge: Street 6, available street credit 6, Wealth 4, available wealth 3) wants to destroy a government facility in Scotland where captured fey are being experimented upon and tortured. Because it's a very large compound, she's going to need an estimated 100 lbs. of grade-A Semtex to turn it into rubble. That kind of explosive power is impossible to buy through normal channels, so she tells the GM she wants to try the street. After talking to some of her police contacts, she learns of a guy named Bloodrat working out of Piccadilly. To gain an audience with him and win his trust, she'll need to spend lots of time trading info, doing favors, and greasing the right palms (street cost 9). She uses her Network: Criminal edge to increase her available street credit to 8, then successfully haggles with her connection, lowering the street cost down to 8. She has pulled all the strings she can, and has finally gained her audience with Bloodrat; now she's going to have to figure out how to afford the explosives.

WEAPONS

Scions are very effective at unarmed combat, especially when their skills are combined with the judicious use of powers and magic. Yet they shouldn't entirely discount the use of weaponry. To be sure, the humans with whom they cross paths will use them without hesitation, and even their supernatural foes take up blades and guns when pressed.

WEAPON TRAITS

Weapons in FIREBORN are divided up into two broad categories: mythic and modern. While many mythic weapons can indeed be found in the modern age, their primary use was in much earlier parts of this era. Likewise, some modern weapons are little more than high-tech versions of earlier incarnations. Beyond these categories, each weapon has a set of traits that define its abilities and uses.

Type describes the primary use of the weapon (**melee**, **thrown**, **ranged**). Each weapon type has different rules for creating attack sequences (see “Physical Moves,” page 134). Melee weapons are handheld weapons, such as swords, axes, knives, baseball bats, and crowbars. Improvised weapons (such as brass candleabras, branches, and, say, lampposts) are also considered melee weapons. Basically, anything you put in your hand for clobbering your foe is a melee weapon. Thrown weapons include anything that is delivered to its target via a combination of aim and physical strength. Many melee weapons do double-time as thrown weapons. Examples include axes, throwing knives, or stones. Improvised weapons (like beer mugs, tables, foes, and chairs, to name a few) are also considered ranged weapons so long as they are chucked through the air during an attack sequence. Finally, ranged weapons are those weapons that exclusively fire projectiles or launch some sort of missile. While strength can play a part in the use of the weapon (such as drawing back a mighty bowstring or shouldering a LAW rocket), the majority of the weapon’s power comes from its mechanical structure.

Weight describes a combination of the heft, wieldiness, and size of a melee weapon (**light**, **medium**, **heavy**). A melee weapon’s weight determines its **ready requirement** (see “Ready Requirements,” page 140) as well as whether it’s one-handed or two-handed.

Damage is the amount of damage inflicted by the weapon.

Range is a weapon’s range increment if it is fired or thrown. For each range increment of his target beyond the first, the attacker suffers a –2 disadvantage penalty to his attack test.

Reload is used exclusively for ranged weapons; it describes, in Ready moves, how much time is necessary to reset the weapon between shots. Where applicable, it may also use a dash followed by the number of Ready moves required to replace an entire clip of ammo.

Ammo is used exclusively for firearms; it describes how much ammo the weapon carries in one clip.

Radius is used exclusively for explosives; it describes an explosive’s maximum blast radius in feet.

Burst? tells whether or not the user can perform the Burst move with this firearm. A user must have the Weapon Use (Elite) edge to use the Burst move, but only needs to purchase the edge once for all firearms, declaring the elite use to be “automatic weapons.”

Cost is an average measure of a weapon’s cost and availability. Because technology, resources, and money are very different in the mythic and modern ages, weapons that exist in both ages have different costs within those ages. Weapons with a “—” in one or the other column cannot be found in that age.

Street Cost is the weapon’s street cost during the modern age, if it has one. Weapons with a street cost cannot be purchased by normal means. Weapons with a “—” in this column are not black market items, and can be purchased normally.

Class describes the level of skill needed to wield the weapon effectively (**basic**, **elite**, **exotic**). Most weapons are basic, meaning that they require no special training to use properly. It’s pretty easy to swing a club or throw an axe; it almost comes naturally. Basic weapons can be used by anyone without penalty. Some weapons are elite, meaning they have traits that can only be used by wielders with the Weapon Use (Elite) edge. For instance, anyone can swing a katana, but only trained martial artists can take advantage of its weight and precision to make it move as gracefully as a wand but cut as deeply as an axe. Finally, some weapons are exotic. A wielder must have the Weapon Use (Elite) edge in that weapon just to use it without suffering a –2 unskilled penalty, and must have the Weapon Use (Exotic) edge to use its traits. For more information, see “Weapon Use,” page 55, and individual weapon descriptions.

WEAPON CATALOG: MYTHIC WEAPONS

Arrows, hunting: These are normal ammunition for bows of all kinds. In the mythic age, they are made of wood and fletched with real bird feathers. In the modern age, the shaft is fiberglass and the fletching has been replaced by plastic.

Arrows, war: These arrows are specially designed to do greater damage at shorter ranges. In the mythic age, they are made of wood and tipped with heavy steel arrowheads. In the modern age, they are made of aluminum and mounted with razor-sharp blades. They do +4 damage beyond the bow’s normal damage, but in most bows have half the normal range.

Atlatl: The atlatl is a curved handheld device for throwing spears with greater distance and accuracy than possible by simply lobbing them with your hand.

Axe: This is a handheld implement used primarily for chopping wood. It comes in a wide variety of styles and materials, ranging from stone to space-age micro-mesh steel.

Battleaxe: Designed for war and the lopping off of limbs from bodies, the battleaxe is a gruesome piece of weaponry. The heavy, broad head is a foot long and nearly as wide.

Elite: You gain 1 automatic success on attack sequences with dismemberment payoffs.

Blowgun: A blowgun is a narrow tube, one to three

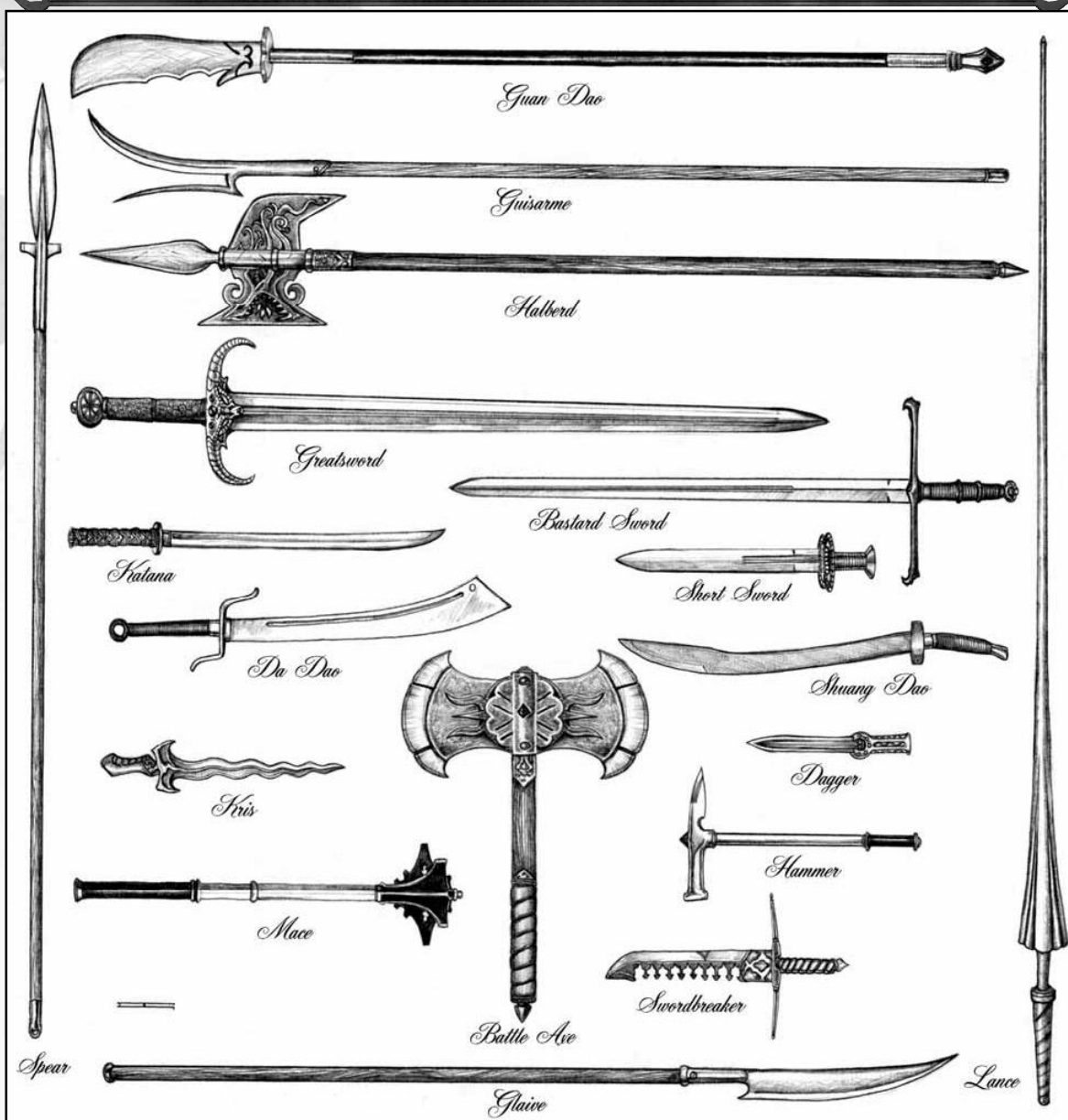
WEAPON CATALOG: MYTHIC

MELEE WEAPONS

Name	Damage	Range	Cost		Class	Street Cost
			Mythic	Modern		
<i>Light Weapons</i>						
Dagger	6	10 ft.	1	1	basic	—
Dagger, Ceramic	5	10 ft.	—	1	basic	1
Dagger, Sword Breaker	5	—	2	1	elite	—
Dagger, Main-Gauche	5	—	2	1	elite	—
Dagger, Throwing	4	30 ft.	2	1	basic	—
Fist	3	—	—	—	basic	—
Hammer	4	10 ft.	—	0	basic	—
Knife, Kris	7	—	2	1	elite	—
Knife, Punching	5	—	1	0	basic	—
Knife, Switchblade	5	—	—	0	basic	—
Sword, Short	8	5 ft.	2	1	basic	—
<i>Medium Weapons</i>						
Axe	8	10 ft.	1	0	basic	—
Club	5	5 ft.	0	0	basic	—
Crowbill	10	—	2	1	elite	—
Kick	4	—	—	—	basic	—
Mace	7	—	1	2	basic	—
Mattock	7	—	1	1	basic	—
Rapier	6	—	3	2	elite	—
Morningstar	7	—	2	1	elite	—
Spear, Medium	7	30 ft.	1	1	basic	—
Sword, Broad	12	—	2	1	basic	—
Sword, Katana	9	—	3	2	elite	—
Sword, Kiem	8	—	3	2	elite	—
Sword, Long	10	—	2	2	basic	—
Sword, Shuang Dao	8	5 ft.	3	2	elite	—
Wakizashi	7	—	3	2	elite	—
<i>Heavy Weapons</i>						
Battleaxe	18	5 ft.	2	2	elite	—
Da Dao	15	—	2	2	elite	—
Glaive	12	—	1	2	elite	—
Guan Dao	10	—	1	2	exotic	—
Halberd	14	—	2	2	basic	—
Lance	5	—	2	2	elite	—
Quarterstaff	5	—	0	1	basic	—
Scythe	10	—	1	1	basic	—
Pike	15	15 ft.	1	2	basic	—
Sword, Bastard	14	—	3	2	basic	—
Sword, Great	16	—	3	2	basic	—
Warhammer	12	5 ft.	1	2	basic	—

TABLE 5-3

MYTHIC MELEE WEAPONS



feet in length, made from a lightweight wood or bamboo. It fires tiny, feathered darts when you blow forcibly on one end.

Bola: The bola consists of two three-foot-long pieces of sturdy rope joined together at one end and with heavy wooden balls attached to the free ends. The wielder spins it around his head and then releases it at his target, entangling him on a successful strike.

Exotic: A bola is an exotic weapon. A successful hit with a bola inflicts -1 fading physical penalty per net success; the penalty stages up or down by 1 for each size

category difference between the attacker and target.

Bow, Great: The great bow, popularized by the samurai of feudal Japan, is more than six feet tall and fires arrows that are nearly as long. The upper half of the bow is longer than the lower half, with the hand grip about a third of the way up from the bottom.

Exotic: The great bow is an exotic weapon.

Bow, Standard: The bow has been consistently in use since the mythic age. It is easy to make, easy to transport, and easy to fire. A strung bow stands roughly three feet high and shoots arrows a foot and a half in

WEAPON CATALOG: MYTHIC

RANGED WEAPONS

Name	Damage	Range	Cost		Class	Street Cost
			Mythic	Modern		
50 arrows, hunting	normal	normal	1	1	basic	—
10 arrows, war	+4	½	1	2	basic	—
Atlatl	6	300 ft.	1	1	basic	—
Bola	Special	30 ft.	1	1	exotic	—
Blowgun	1	60 ft.	1	2	basic	—
Bow, Compound	14	500 ft.	2	1	basic	—
Bow, Gauntlet	2	75 ft.	2	2	basic	—
Bow, Great	12	400 ft.	2	2	exotic	—
Bow, Standard	6	100 ft.	1	1	basic	—
Bow, Long	8	300 ft.	1	2	basic	—
Bow, Recurve	10	200 ft.	2	1	elite	—
Crossbow	16	250 ft.	3	2	basic	—

TABLE 5-2

length. Standard bows have neither good range, sharp arrowheads, nor much in the way of damage potential.

Bow, Long: Longbows are as tall as the archers that fire them, with arrows that are about half that size. Construction materials include ash, yew, elm, and, in the mythic age, dragonwood or dragonbone.

Bow, Recurve: The recurve bow, composite bow, and horse bow are all similar weapons. Although much shorter than longbows, their more advanced designs impart just as much power to the arrows fired from them, giving them equal range with greater impact and more versatility. A recurve bow is so named because its ends curve away from the archer, while a composite bow is named because of its layered construction of various materials like bone, wood, and sinew.

Elite: When you fire the bow while mounted, you only suffer half the normal penalties. You may also fire war arrows without halving the range of your bow.

Bow, Compound: This modern version of the recurve bow relies on a pulley system to invest the bowstring with 10 times as much force as a normal longbow. It is also sturdy enough that war arrows can be fired without halving the range of the bow.

Bow, Gauntlet: A small crossbow mounted on a wrist shield. It is easily concealable and is quick to reload. The bow sits on the top of the wrist shield, while three additional bolts are mounted underneath. This weapon can easily be concealed beneath normal clothes; it is most effective when its bolts are tipped with poison.

Club: Weapons just don't get any more basic than this: a sturdy length of bone, wood, or metal used for bashing in heads and faces. It's not unusual to affix bits or spikes of jagged stone, metal, glass, shell, or wood to the bashing end. Modern clubs are usually re-purposed

baseball bats.

Crossbow: The crossbow is a mechanical bow that fires short unfletched arrows with incredibly high force. A crossbow bolt can easily puncture plate mail and it cuts through chain mail like a knife through cheese. The only drawback is it takes so long to load.

Crowbill: This is a fighting pick of mythic age origin. A warrior caste developed the weapon to punch through chain mail armor or reach through the joints in plate mail.

Elite: You may ignore half your target's armor value.

Da Dao: The "Big Sword" is a traditional Chinese martial arts weapon. It has a long curved blade, similar to a scimitar, but is wider and heavier. Sometimes it has nine steel rings looped through the blade's non-cutting edge, which competent martial artists can use in combat to disarm enemies.

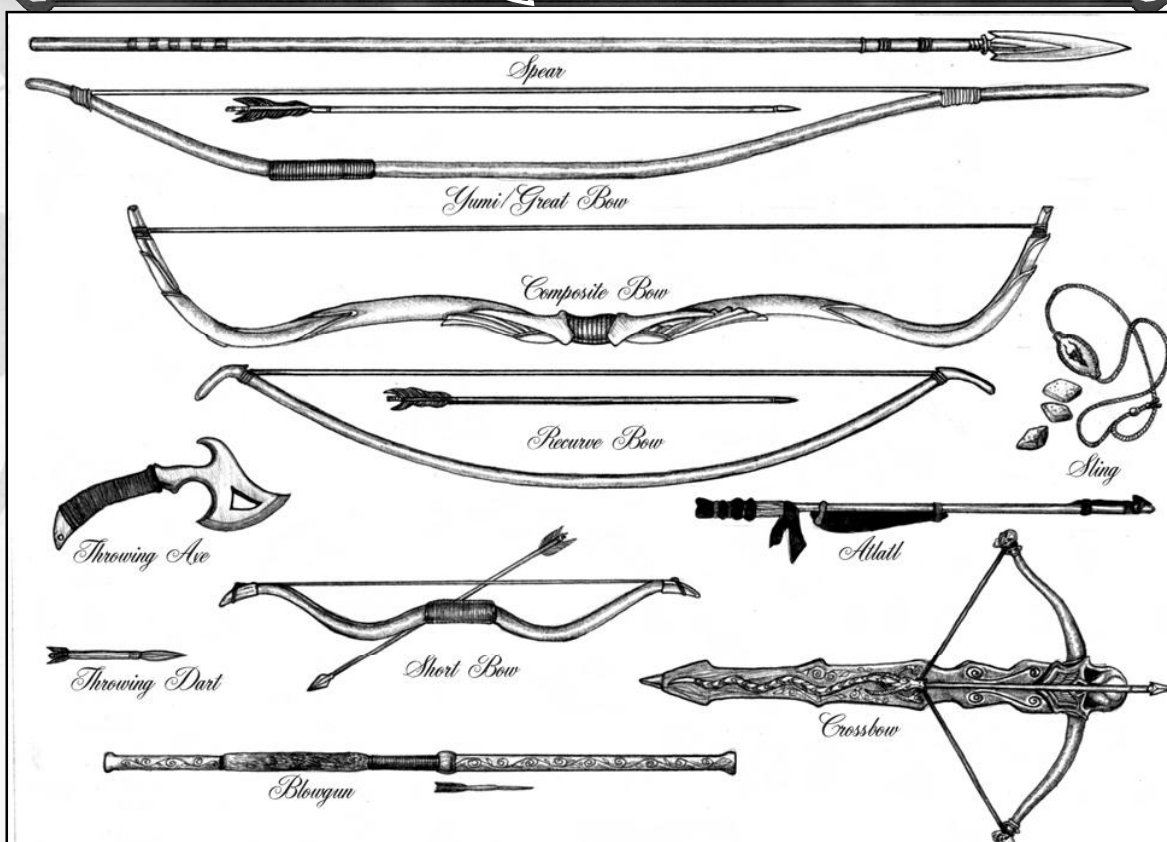
Elite: If you are using a Da Dao with rings affixed to its blade, you gain 1 automatic success on sequences with disarm payoffs.

Dagger: A double-edged blade weapon that is longer than a knife but shorter than a sword. It is easily concealable, and can be quickly drawn and used. The statistics for daggers can be used to represent comparable slashing weapons, like a butcher knife, cleaver, or hunting knife.

Dagger, Ceramic: These light blades are made of space-age polymer that does not set off metal detectors. They are otherwise inferior to normal blades, making their only conceivable use being to sneak past security checkpoints. As such, they are outlawed in Great Britain, available only through the black market.

Dagger, Main-Gauche: These fencing blades have bulky guards (sometimes simple and sturdy, sometimes

MYTHIC RANGED WEAPONS



ornate) to protect the wielder's hand when parrying.

Elite: You gain 1 automatic success on sequences with the Block move.

Dagger, Sword Breaker: Variants of this weapon exist in many cultures, ranging from the Japanese sai to medieval Europe's switchblade-scissoring swordcatcher.

Elite: You can use the weapon's quillions to catch an opponent's blade, giving you 1 automatic success on sequences with the Block move. If you have a sword breaker in each hand, you may block weapons as if you were wielding a medium weapon.

Dagger, Throwing: These light daggers are shaped and balanced for accurate throwing. They can be used in melee, but do less damage than normal daggers.

Fist: A closed hand.

Glaive: Originally a peasant's farming implement for cutting wheat, the glaive is a long pole with a large knife-like blade mounted on the end. Many versions of glaives exist, with spikes, hooks, and curving sickle-like blades added to the main blade. Foot soldiers used them to dismount enemy horsemen, keep unarmored rabble at bay, and hamstring enemy horses. Glaives increase your melee reach by one size category, but wielders suffer a -1 disadvantage penalty on attack tests against adjacent opponents.

Elite: You may ignore the -1 disadvantage penalty when using a glaive against adjacent opponents.

Guan Dao: This is an exotic-looking halberd. It has a five-foot-long pole, atop which is mounted a curved blade head pierced through with rings. Martial artists trained with its use are able to wield it with amazing deftness and agility. Mounted warriors also favor it.

Exotic: The guan dao is an exotic weapon. You gain 1 automatic success on sequences with disarm payoffs. Additionally, if you are mounted, you can wield this weapon one-handed.

Halberd: Also called the poleaxe, this traditional polearm is 12 to 15 feet long, on average, and has a spike-topped axe blade, hammer, or pick affixed to the end. The wielder gains 1 automatic success when using the halberd against foes that are one reach away, but suffers a -2 disadvantage penalty when using it against adjacent opponents.

Hammer: A staple of toolboxes everywhere, regardless of time, era, or age. It's a miniature club, really, good for knocking nails into wood or breaking things, like windows or an enemy's face.

Kick: A sturdy strike backed by the body's largest bones and strongest muscles.

Knife, Punching: Made for hiding in belt buckles and boot tops. The punching knife is a short stubby blade that has a t-shaped grip, which you wrap your hand around. The blade emerges from between your fingers, allowing you to punch an opponent with it.

Knife, Kris: The kris is a wavy-bladed dagger. While famous for its use in Asian cultures, it is thought that its true origins lie in the mythic age, when enchanted versions of the weapon were known as dragon teeth. Warriors who were given them as gifts were supposed to be especially favored by the Atlantean Senate.

Special: Wearing this blade during the mythic age gives you 2 automatic successes on social tests against citizens of the Atlantean Empire in which your perceived status is important.

Elite: Kris knives are notorious for their nasty wounds. You gain 1 automatic success on sequences with the bleed payoff.

Lance: Horsemen traditionally carried these long spears, which afforded them a deadly reach in battle. Later, as they began to wear heavier armor and weapons, the horse spear evolved into the lance.

Elite: Lances are essentially unwieldy clubs when on foot, and are nearly useless. On horseback, in the hands of a trained wielder, and given a clear line of charge, however, they can skewer foes. Lances can be wielded one-handed when on horseback.

Mace: This is a fancy club with a steel ball or cube stuck to the end of it. It's a pretty effective weapon, all told, capable of shattering wooden shields and splitting plate mail breastplates in half if the blow lands just right. This is especially true if there are spikes or studs welded into the head.

Mattock: A mattock is a miner's pick used on people instead of rocks. It's cheap, easy to make and acquire, and weighs just enough to be able to crush in an exposed skull or pierce a suit of armor. The mattock is sometimes called the "conscript's sword."

Morningstar: A morningstar, also known as a flail, is a club supporting a length of chain and a spiked ball. This is a useful horseman's weapon for cluttered battle-grounds, the momentum of the chain's spin giving him good striking power and reach, even if his horse is motionless. The weapon is also frighteningly good at disarming blade-wielding opponents.

Elite: Each Power move used before an attack increases damage by +6 instead of +5. You also gain 1 automatic success on sequences with disarm payoffs.

Quarterstaff: The quarterstaff is as tall, if not taller, than a person but only about an inch thick. In capable hands, this usually iron-shod staff allows its wielder to go toe-to-toe against all kinds of seemingly better-armed and armored opponents. Martial artists train with this weapon early, learning how to twirl it with lightning-fast precision and strike with incredible force.

Quarterstaves give their wielders 1 automatic success on sequences with Block moves.

Elite: You gain an additional automatic success on

sequences with Block moves, and you may wield the quarterstaff as if it were a medium weapon.

Exotic: Though the quarterstaff is not an exotic weapon, you may train in its use as such. Each Power move used before an attack increases damage by +6 instead of +5, and you may wield the quarterstaff as if it were a light weapon.

Rapier: This is a thin, very flexible sword. Fencers and swashbucklers favor the weapon, as it is designed for speed and absolute finesse when striking, rather than the brute force that other blades require. While razor-sharp, the blade's edge cannot cut very deeply through flesh. The rapier instead relies on stabbing and deep penetration within the foe in order to do damage.

Elite: You may wield the rapier as if it were a light weapon.

Scythe: Not really a weapon so much as a farming implement, the scythe is a huge, curved, single-edged blade attached to a big piece of crooked wood. It's a slow weapon limited to one attack motion—scything back and forth. In combat, there are certainly better weapons to use.

Spear: The spear is a versatile, sturdy weapon. The blade mounted on its end can be used to penetrate armor from a distance, its long haft can be used to gain leverage on foes, and its blunt end is useful for up-close-and-personal work. They can be thrown, wielded in melee, or used from horseback with equal efficiency.

Sword, Bastard: Although the bastard sword has the same type of blade as a regular longsword, its grip and hilt are large enough to accommodate "one and a half hands." In other words, you could easily swing it with one hand, yet when you really needed to whack the living daylights out of your opponent there is still enough space on the grip or pommel to grab it with both hands. The bastard sword can be wielded one-handed as a medium weapon or two-handed as a heavy weapon.

Sword, Broad: This wide-bladed sword weighs twice as much as a long sword, although it's not much longer. This is because it is designed primarily for hacking through plate and chain armor as quickly as possible.

Sword, Great: This weapon is long, anywhere between four and six feet in length, and weighs upwards of 20 pounds or more. The sword travels in great arcs and relies on momentum, making it useful for everything from smashing through an opponent's plate armor to intimidating a fellow Scottish clansman.

Sword, Katana: The signature weapon of the Japanese samurai warrior, this single-edged long sword is both lightweight (compared to other weapons of its ilk) and sharp.

Elite: Each turn, you may decide to wield the katana as if it were a light, medium, or heavy weapon.

Sword, Kiem: A kiem is a light double-edged blade that tapers to a razor-sharp point not unlike a saber. Kiem grips are slightly curved, giving their wielders better balance when using them one-handed, especially in combination with martial arts maneuvers.

Elite: You gain 1 automatic success on all Lightning Style attack sequences.

Sword, Long: The so-called “long” sword is the standard sword seen throughout history. It’s not really all that long, truth to tell, maybe four feet at the most depending on the culture that made it.

Sword, Short: The short sword is somewhere in length between a long sword and a dagger, and is a close-quarters fighting weapon. The European short sword evolved out of the Roman gladius. Later, it became known as a dueling weapon or an arming sword, worn by gentlemen and city people who couldn’t be bothered to carry anything heavier. Warriors sometimes use them in tandem with longer blades, wielding one in each hand.

Sword, Shuang Dao: Although the name means “double sword,” each shuang dao only has a single blade. The name stems from Chinese martial artists’ traditional use of the weapons in pairs. Shuang dao are about 3 feet long, lightweight, and flexible. Performers and elite martial artists attach long, colorful silk strips to the pommels of these weapons; the performers for show, the warriors to distract unwary opponents with strategically timed flicks, twirls, and spins.

Elite: You may wield the shuang dao as a light weapon, but only when wielding one in each hand.

Exotic: Fighting with two shuang dao with battle ribbons requires the Weapon Use (elite) edge. When doing so, you may Feint or Defensive Feint once each turn without using a mental action to do so.

Sword, Wakizashi: This is a Japanese short sword similar in appearance (but not size) to the katana. It is forged by the same process, and is comparably sturdy and sharp. Samurai warriors always carried wakizashi along with a katana according to the tradition of dai-sho, although they didn’t fight with them very often. The weapon was normally reserved for committing ritual suicide.

Elite: You may wield the wakizashi as a light or medium weapon.

Warhammer: A warhammer is a bloody great big nail pounder. It consists of a stout handle, about two or three feet long, and a solid brick of heavy metal or dense wood. Some versions are compact, with thinner hafts and smaller heads, while others are quite frightening, seemingly scaled for giants rather than men. A light hammer with a thick leather loop for the wrist is ideal for mounted combat, and uses the combat traits of a mace.

WEAPON CATALOG: MODERN FIREARMS

PISTOLS

Browning Hi-Power Mark VI Pistol: Fires a 9mm round and sports a non-glaring black matte finish. In recent years, this pistol has seen increased usage among law enforcement personnel.

Browning PRO-40 Pistol: Made from polymer plastics and titanium, the PRO-40 is a snub-nosed .40 caliber gun that packs quite a wallop at short-range. It’s popular with the street crowd, urban thugs, and gangsters because it’s easily concealable and quite affordable.

Colt Anaconda .44 Revolver: A .44-magnum “big bore” revolver that is guaranteed to give pause to anyone looking down its business end. It weighs 42 ounces, and if you run out of ammunition you can still use it to hammer your foes into submission.

Colt Python Elite Pistol: As .357 magnum revolvers go, the Python Elite is king. It is fast on the draw, what with its snub-nosed barrel, smoothly rounded trigger guard, and sleek walnut grip.

Heckler & Koch P2000 US Pistol: This is the pistol used by most of the European police forces. It’s compact and has a slender, easy-to-conceal profile.

Heckler & Koch USP Tactical Pistol: The USP Tactical is a .45 caliber pistol with high profile target sights. It’s a relatively cheap pistol to purchase and requires little effort to maintain well.

Luger P-08: Few weapons are as distinctive as the Luger, carried by Nazi officers in World War II.

Glock 22: This is a .45 caliber pistol designed explicitly for law enforcement. It carries 13 rounds in the clip and one in the chamber. It is noteworthy for its black matte finish, sleek shape, and impressive craftsmanship.

Glock 34: This is Gaston Glock’s answer to the .357 caliber magnum. It fires the same kind of round from a 15-round magazine.

Derringer: This is a compact, .45 caliber double-shot hold-out pistol that has been around for more than 100 years. It is about 4 inches in length, making it easily concealable.

RIFLES

British L96A7 Sniper Rifle: This bolt-action sniper rifle fires a 7.62mm round from its 24-inch-long barrel. It has an aluminum frame and lightweight plastic stock. It is reliable and sturdy in the field.

Browning LongTrac Hunting Rifle: The best-selling LongTrac hunting rifle fires a .30-06 round and has a 22-inch barrel, which combined with its stock and magazine gives it an overall length of 42 inches. This rifle was originally intended for deer, turkey, and bear

WEAPON CATALOG: MODERN

FIREARMS

Name	Damage	Range	Reload	Ammo	Burst?	Cost	Class	Street Cost
<i>Pistols</i>								
Browning Hi-Power Mark VI	22	100 ft.	1/3	12	no	1	basic	3
Browning PRO-40	23	200 ft.	1/4	10	no	1	basic	3
Colt Anaconda .44	24	100 ft.	1/6	6	no	2	basic	3
Colt Python Elite	24	150 ft.	1/6	6	no	2	basic	3
Derringer	18	100 ft.	3/6	1	no	1	basic	3
Glock 22	22	100 ft.	1/3	15	no	1	basic	3
Glock 34	23	100 ft.	2/3	18	no	1	basic	3
H&K P2000 US	22	100 ft.	2/4	13	no	2	basic	3
H&K USP Tactical	24	100 ft.	2/4	12	no	2	basic	3
Luger P-08	22	100 ft.	0/3	9	no	1	basic	3
<i>Rifles</i>								
British L96A7 Sniper Rifle	30	1000 ft.	1/5	12	no	3	basic	5
Browning LongTrac Hunting Rifle	32	800 ft.	3/10	5	no	2	basic	5
Colt M16-A4/AR15-A3 Tac. Carbine	28	900 ft.	2/4	30	yes	2	elite	5
Colt M4 5.56mm Carbine	28	600 ft.	1/4	30	yes	2	elite	5
Colt M4 Commando	26	500 ft.	0/4	30	yes	2	elite	5
FN Special Police Sniper Rifle	30	2000 ft.	3/10	4	no	3	basic	5
Galil Sniper Rifle	32	1000 ft.	3/10	20	no	3	basic	5
H&K G36C Compact Carbine	28	600 ft.	1/3	30	yes	2	elite	5
H&K SLB2000 Rifle	30	800 ft.	3/10	10	no	2	basic	5
H&K XM8-A2 Modular Carbine	28	900 ft.	2/6	10	yes	2	elite	5
Mosin-Nagant 1891/30 Rifle	28	2000 ft.	3/6	5	no	2	basic	5
Sako TRG-27 Sniper Rifle	32	3000 ft.	3/10	5	no	3	basic	5
<i>Shotguns</i>								
Browning Gold Deer Hunter	32	100 ft.	4/7	7	no	2	basic	—
Browning UT-129	30	150 ft.	4/11	11	no	1	basic	—
Franchi SPAS-12	34	100 ft.	3/9	9	no	2	basic	—
<i>Submachine Guns</i>								
Colt "Dragon-9"	26	400 ft.	2/4	30	yes	2	elite	7
H&K MP5	26	500 ft.	2/3	30	yes	2	elite	7
H&K UMP9	24	500 ft.	1/4	30	yes	2	elite	7
Sturmgewehr 44	26	500 ft.	2/5	40	yes	2	elite	7
Tommy Gun	24	400 ft.	1/6	50	yes	2	elite	7
Uzi Submachine Gun	22	300 ft.	0/5	32	yes	2	elite	7
<i>Machine Guns</i>								
Browning M1919-A6	36	1200 ft.	2/10	Belt*	yes	2	elite	9
U.S. Army M60 Machine Gun	38	1500 ft.	3/12	Belt*	yes	2	elite	9

* Belt-fed depends on the number of ammo belts/boxes hooked up to the gun. Each belt typically has 800 rounds of ammunition, or 80 bursts.



CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT

hunting but in recent years has become the rifle of choice for taking down the strange creatures that have arisen in the countryside around London.

Colt M16-A4/AR15-A3 Tactical Carbine: The AR15 looks a lot like the M16, but is used by civilian law enforcement. The standard magazine has 20 rounds, and the expanded has 30.

Colt M4 5.56mm Carbine: The “mini-me” version of the AR15/M16, the M4 carbine fires the same kind of 5.56mm round but with significantly shorter ranges due to its shorter barrel length.

Colt M4 Commando: This is the smallest version of the AR15/M16, smaller even than the M4.

FN Special Police Sniper Rifle: This is a 7.62mm rifle designed and built by a subsidiary of the Winchester gun-manufacturing corporation in America. It has a 4-shot detachable magazine, weighs 10 lbs., and boasts a 26-inch barrel.

Galil Sniper Rifle: The Galil is an Israeli Army weapon built out of a standard Galil rifle by cutting off the stock, lengthening the barrel, and adding a big scope to the top.

Heckler & Koch SLB2000 Rifle: The H&K weapon smiths’ answer to the Browning-manufactured hunting rifle. It has an exaggerated pistol-like grip to make aiming with it easier and weighs about 9 lbs.

Heckler & Koch XM8-A2 Modular Carbine: This high-tech, futuristic-looking gun has begun to replace the M4 Carbine in the field. It is 20% lighter on average than other carbines and fires a 5.56mm round.

Mosin-Nagant 1891/30 Rifle: This is nothing more than a modified infantry (or Dragoon) rifle from the 1920s. The Russians began using them in World War II, turning a small portion of them into sniper rifles. It’s both extremely sturdy and reliable on the battlefield, regardless of environmental conditions.

Sako TRG-27 Sniper Rifle: This is a 7.62mm bolt-action rifle widely considered to be one of the best sniper rifles in the world.

SHOTGUNS

Browning UT-129 Shotgun: This popular 12-gauge shotgun has been in use since 1969 and doesn’t seem to be going out of style anytime soon. Its high-tech design ensures that it is virtually recoilless in the field, making it popular with both hunters and urban warriors.

Browning Gold Deer Hunter Shotgun: The Gold Deer Hunter is an old-fashioned shotgun with a thicker barrel built for firing heavy 20-gauge slugs. It features a cantilevering scope, pump action (one in the chamber, four in the magazine), and weighs in at 6 lbs.

SUBMACHINE GUNS

Colt “Dragon-9” Submachine Gun: On the surface, this gun looks a lot like the world-famous M16 used by armies everywhere. The difference is that it has a much shorter barrel and fires a different type of round.

Heckler & Koch G36C Compact Carbine: The H&K compact carbine combines all the best features of a submachine gun and a pistol. It’s small (33 inches long) but high-powered (firing a 5.56mm round).

Heckler & Koch MP5 Submachine Gun: The MP5 is a staple of Third World military regimes, mercenaries, bodyguards, Special Forces, and commando teams everywhere. It fires 9mm rounds, in either 15- or 30-round clips.

Heckler & Koch UMP9 Submachine Gun: This simple submachine gun is employed by defense teams all over North America and Britain. It weighs less than 5 lbs., has a folding butt stock, and sleek curved 30-round ammo magazine for 9mm bullets.

Sturmgewehr 44: Another Nazi weapon from World War II. It was meant to be the de facto rifle replacement for the Germans, but the war ended before they could be put into widespread distribution.

Tommy Gun (Thompson Submachine Gun): The “Tommy Gun” is the machine gun popularized in stories and movies about the American Mafia. It first went into production in 1928 and was used continuously by law enforcement authorities until the mid-1970s. It has two hand grips, one for firing and one for stabilizing.

Uzi Submachine Gun: A notoriously finicky weapon because it is made from cheap, stamped metal and has few actual moving parts, it is nonetheless often used by street-level thugs because it’s so damn affordable.

MACHINE GUNS

Browning M1919-A6 Machine Gun: This is a belt-fed machine gun used in World War II and later during the Korean War. The gun has a built-in bipod and weighs 42 lbs.

U.S. Army M60 Machine Gun: This is a 7.62mm fully automatic machine gun. It has been in use since the Korean War. Weighing about 20 lbs., it comes with a tripod, a mounting bracket, and a universal sling attachment.

Franchi SPAS-12: This Italian-made shotgun is a popular law enforcement weapon. It fires a 12-gauge round, weighs about 10 lbs., and its magazine holds 8 rounds, plus one in the chamber.

WEAPON CATALOG: MISCELLANEOUS & EXPLOSIVES

ANTIQUE

Arquebus: A smoothbore muzzleloader used between the 15th and 17th centuries. It is about as accurate in battle as throwing an elephant at a tree. To be fair, if you do indeed get hit by one of these you can expect to lose a body part or three. While wildly inaccurate, they do pack quite a wallop. Sometimes referred to as a

MODERN FIREARMS



hackbut or hagbush.

U.S. Special 1861 Rifle Musket Refab: A reproduction of the sort of weapon that saw considerable use during the American Revolutionary War. It's a muzzle-loader, requiring gunpowder, a paper wad, and a steel ramrod to shove down the barrel. It does not have nearly the accuracy of later weapons.

LAUNCHERS

Colt M203 Grenade Launcher: This is a stocky under-barrel-mounted 40mm grenade launcher for the AR15, M16, and MP4 Carbine lines. It fires any standard grenade.

Heckler & Koch Grenade Machine Gun: This is a tripod-mounted, grenade-spitting machine gun. Weighing 64 lbs., it is best used when mounted on a vehicle or fired from a stable standing position using the shoulder harness. It fires any standard grenade listed in this chapter.

Panzerschrek Bazooka: This is the Nazi version of the U.S. army bazooka. The weapon is basically a hollow tube with a miniature electrical system built into it for igniting the missile.

XL-7 "Shaitan"-class RPG: An anti-tank weapon, the XL-7 is a rocket-propelled grenade launcher that was introduced during the Diamond Dogs War in South Africa. It is shoulder-fired and muzzle-loaded.

EXPLOSIVES

For details on using and evading explosives, see "Explosive Weapons," page 156.

Claymore Shaped Charge: A standard military-grade "shaped" explosive. The claymore has been in use for the better part of half a century. It's a block of plastic explosive contained inside a ceramic-backed plastic box. The ceramic plate forces the explosion outward with minimal explosive discharge to the rear. This is good for setting up ambushes with tripwires or for booby-trapping a battle line without putting the infantry at much risk.

Grenade, A14 "Battering Ram": The "Battering Ram" grenade is both a sticky bomb in that it has an

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WEAPON CATALOG: MODERN

MISCELLANEOUS

Name	Damage	Range	Reload	Ammo	Cost	Class	Street Cost
<i>Antique</i>							
Arquebus	30	150 ft.	—/20	1	6	exotic	3
U.S. Special 1861 Rifle Musket Refab	22	500 ft.	—/10	1	5	exotic	3

Explosives Launchers

Colt M203 Grenade Launcher	Special	800 ft.	6/16	4	4	exotic	11
H&K Grenade MG	Special	700 ft.	2/15	Belt*	3	exotic	11
Panzerschrek Bazooka	Special	500 ft.	—/10	1	3	exotic	11
XL-7 “Shaitan”-class RPG	Special	2000 ft.	—/16	1	2	exotic	11

<i>Explosives</i>	Damage	Radius	Cost	Class	Street Cost
Bazooka Round	30	5 ft.	5	—	11
Claymore Shaped Charge	40	See text	5	exotic	9
Grenade, A14 “Battering Ram”	30	5 ft.	4	basic	9
Grenade, Flashbang	See text	10 ft.	4	basic	9
Grenade, Fragmentation	30	10 ft.	4	basic	9
Plastic Explosive, C4 or Semtex	35	50 ft.	6	exotic	11
Rocket-Propelled Grenade	25	10 ft.	3	—	11

TABLE 5-7

industrial strength adhesive surface and a shaped charge in that the non-sticky side is a thick ceramic plate made to guide the explosion in a very focused blast away from it. In essence, it is a throwable claymore—you throw it at a surface, its weighed backside giving it a spin guaranteed to make it hit on its sticky side, then duck. The force of the blast can even cut through bank vault doors.

Grenade, Flashbang: Looks like a can of mace or spray paint. Flashbangs are just that: flash and bang. They are used to disorient foes, first with a blinding flash of light followed shortly by a 20-decibel sonic boom. This causes a –10 fading mental penalty, which is lessened by 1 with each success on either an Earth (Will) test or a Water (Quickness) test.

Grenade, Fragmentation: This is the standard explosive grenade. When it explodes, it sends fragments of metal spiraling outward to cause collateral damage. Pipe bombs, briefcase bombs, and the notorious clock-timed “ticking bomb” fall into this category.

Plastic Explosive, C4 or Semtex: A plastic-like explosive substance with a high yield. It is very moldable, and can be kneaded into any shape, including long ropey strands. All C4 or Semtex sold on the open market requires government licenses to purchase. Moreover, it is all chemically marked so as to be able to trace it

back to the purchaser and vendor in the event it gets used for illicit purposes. Plastic explosives are stable (neither fire nor kinetic impact can accidentally set them off), and can be used underwater.

ARMOR

Anything that protects a FIREBORN character from damage can be considered armor, although the forged suits of the mythic age and earlier modern history and the impact armors of the later modern age are designed specifically for the task. This part of the chapter describes wearable armor.

TRAITS

Just like weapons, armor has a set of traits to describe its abilities and limitations.

AV (or armor value) is the amount of damage the armor absorbs from each hit (before scaling up or down for size).

Skill Cap describes the maximum number of dice a character can move (and therefore, his effective maximum skill rank) to support any physical test.

Weariness Rating describes the intervals at which a character must make weariness tests while wearing the armor, or begin suffering weariness dice. The interval is measured in minutes if doing heavy labor (like fighting or building ramparts) and in hours if doing only moder-

ARMOR CATALOG

MYTHIC

Name	Armor Value	Skill Cap	Weariness Rating	Mythic Cost	Modern Cost	Street Cost
Hide	3	6	6	1	2	—
Leather	4	5	12	2	2	—
Chain mail	8	4	3	3	2	—
Scale mail	12	3	6	4	3	—
Plate mail	18	2	1	5	3	—
Shield, light	—	6	6	0	1	—
Shield, medium	—	5	3	1	2	—
Shield, heavy	—	4	1	2	2	—

MODERN

Name	Armor Value	Skill Cap	Weariness Rating	Modern Cost	Street Cost
Fire Suit	5/Special	3	3	4	—
Isolation Suit	Special	2	3	3	—
Kevlar Suit	15	3	1	3	—
Kevlar Vest	10	4	3	2	—
Shield, Kevlar	—	5	6	2	—

TABLE 5-8

ate labor (like marching or patrolling).

Cost is an average measure of an armor's cost and availability. Because technology, resources, and money are very different in the mythic and modern ages, armor that exists in both ages has different costs within those ages. Armor with a "—" in one or the other column cannot be found in that age.

Street Cost is the armor's street cost during the modern age, if it has one. Armors with a street cost cannot be purchased by normal means. Armors with a "—" in this column are not black market items, and can be purchased normally.

MYTHIC ARMOR

Hide: Armor made from cured animal skins. It gives the wearer minimal protection against weapons, but only inhibits movement by tiring out its wearer, not restraining his limbs.

Leather: This is advanced hide armor, made from boiled and hardened skins to provide better protection.

Chain Mail: Chain mail is composed of woven links of iron or steel. It is extremely heavy and unpleasant to wear.

Scale Mail: This is a suit of armor made from overlapping leaves of metal or wood attached to a thick hide shirt, giving it a scaly appearance (hence its name).

Plate Mail: This is the traditional armor worn by historic and legendary knights. It covers the entire body

from head to toe in carefully shaped steel plates. Beneath it are layers of chain mail, especially in the gaps and joints, and a padded arming doublet.

Shield, Light: Light shields include anything from metallic bracers to forearm-size wooden bucklers. Rather than providing an armor value, shields are simply very effective parrying devices. The light shield is considered a both a light and a medium weapon for the purposes of the Block move.

Shield, Medium: A piece of iron- or steel-banded wood, usually circular, worn over the arm to help protect the wearer from melee blows and ranged attacks. Traditionally, shields are adorned with family and/or liege lord crests, or if you go back in time far enough, taunting insults and images. A medium shield is considered a medium weapon for the purposes of the Block move, and provides 1 automatic success on sequences that include Block moves. The modern version of this weapon is made of clear Kevlar and is often used by riot police.

Shield, Heavy: Smaller heavy shields are either circular or triangular and are usually made of metal, but some larger versions are basically small portable walls. They weigh twice as much as their smaller counterparts; mounted soldiers may wield larger and heavier ones, which are supported in part by the stirrups and saddles of their horses. A heavy shield is considered a heavy weapon for the purposes of the Block move, and pro-



CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT

vides 2 automatic success on sequences that include Block moves.

MODERN ARMOR

Fire Suit: This military-designed suit of armor is worn by flamethrower corps troops and special commando units that may need to operate in burning buildings or under cover of wildfires while in the brush. It provides minimal protection against physical attacks, but stages down all burn wounds by six dice.

Kevlar Suit: This is a full suit of modern body armor made from the high-tech ballistic armor called Kevlar. The people most familiar with it rarely wear all the pieces because they weigh a ton. The suit is generally reserved for bomb squad members and demolition experts. Although good at resisting high-yield ballistic damage caused by explosive blasts, it is far from perfect. The wearer probably won't die if he's at ground zero, but there's no guarantee he won't lose a limb or two when the blast goes off.

Kevlar Vest: Chest and back armor. Police, bodyguards, professional soldiers, and political candidates favor it because it is not too uncomfortable and is easily concealable beneath clothing.

Isolation Suit: Also known as a Hazmat suit, this is a bulky, hermetically sealed device allowing the wearer to endure dangerous environmental conditions. It is resistant to radiation, biological contaminants, viruses, bacteria, and gaseous molecules. Among other things, it provides full immunity against the venomous gas of the Poison Wyrms legacy.

VEHICLES

Unless your characters in FIREBORN are going to walk everywhere, they're going to need vehicles. This section presents a variety of vehicles for your character to choose from as well as rules for driving them in situations that require skill tests.

TRAITS

The vehicle rules are designed as simply as possible in order to facilitate drama and speed rather than absolute realism. The vehicles here are the ones you might find tooling down a British highway or roaring down the Autobahn; more high-tech vehicles like attack helicopters and stealth fighters are beyond the scope of this chapter.

Chassis rates the vehicle's overall weight, size, and "health" (or in this case, structural integrity). When calculating a vehicle's health chart (or chassis chart), use the chassis score in place of both Earth and Water. In other words, a vehicle can sustain a number of minor wounds equal to its chassis, and a vehicle's chassis is used to calculate the damage required to inflict each

wound die. Since vehicles do not make tests themselves, their wound dice cause penalties on handling and speed tests. Vehicle damage is permanent until repaired.

Vehicles with heavier chassises are generally more likely to be slower and have poorer handling. If the "vehicle" is an animal, then it has the standard complement of aspects along with its other attributes. A rating of 0 is a vehicle with a negligible chassis (such as a bicycle), while a rating of 6 represents a large and heavy chassis (such as a construction vehicle).

Size describes, unsurprisingly, the size category of the vehicle. Just as with creatures, weapon damage against vehicles is scaled up or down for size.

AV is a vehicle's armor value. Most civilian vehicles have minimal armor, designed to protect against crashes and dents rather than actual weaponry. Most vehicles also provide some amount of **cover** to their passengers; if attackers are aiming for the people inside the vehicle instead of the vehicle itself, cover is the number of automatic successes that passengers gain on defense. If the attacker fails to hit the passenger but still has enough successes left to hit the vehicle, damage is dealt to the vehicle instead. The AV is listed before the slash, while the cover, if any, is listed afterward.

Handling represents the vehicle's ability to maneuver and accelerate. If the number listed here is positive, it is the number of re-rolls you gain on any Travel test with that vehicle. If the number is negative, it is the disadvantage penalty you suffer on any Travel test with that vehicle. Generally speaking, a rating of -6 means the vehicle handles exceptionally poorly, almost to the point of being impossible to maneuver, whereas a rating of +6 is absolutely perfect maneuverability.

Top Speed is an approximation of the vehicle's top speed. Like Wealth, it corresponds to a range of real-world numbers rather than specific miles per hour. Rather than being used to determine exact ground covered each round, speed helps you determine the general placement of all vehicles in a combat: which are pulling ahead, which are falling behind, and which are in between. For more details on speed and driving in action sequences, see "Vehicle Combat," page 155.

Class describes the level of skill needed to pilot the vehicle effectively (basic or elite). Most vehicles are basic, meaning that they require no special training to use properly. Some vehicles are elite, meaning the pilot must have the Vehicle Use (Elite) edge in that vehicle just to use it without a -2 unskilled penalty.

Cost is an average measure of a vehicle's cost and availability. Because technology, resources, and money are very different in the mythic and modern ages, vehicles that exist in both ages have different costs within those ages. Vehicles with a "—" in one or the other column cannot be found in that age.



VEHICLE CATALOG: MYTHIC

Name	Chassis	Size	AV/Cover	Handling	Top Speed	Class	Cost	
							Mythic	Modern
Calash or Sleigh	2	+1	2/3	-4	*	elite	3	4
Camel	5	+1	—	-1	2	elite	2	2
Canoe/Dingy/Raft	1	+1	2/1	—	0	basic	1	2
Carriage	3	+1	2/4	-4	*	basic	3	3
Cart	1	0	1/1	-3	*	basic	1	2
Chariot	2	0	2/2	-2	*	elite	2	3
Elephant	6	+2	—	-3	2	elite	6	5
Horse	4	+1	—	+0	3	basic	2	2
Longship	4	+2	10/5	+0	2	elite	3	4
Man-of-war	6	+3	10/5	-6	3	elite	5	6
Sailboat	3	+2	5/2	-4	4	elite	3	3

* Speed is equal to that of the speed of the animal pulling it -1

TABLE 5-9

VEHICLE CATALOG:
MYTHIC VEHICLES

Calash: The two-wheeled version of the carriage. Where the carriage is entirely enclosed, the calash is not. It has enough room for two people to sit, is drawn by one or two horses, and often has a canvas top that folds up and down. Large wheels ensure the conveyance sits high above the ground.

Camel: A camel has something of a horse's speed, and the endurance of an elephant, but its rotten temperament is all its own. Trained camel riders know how to get the most out of the beast, fortunately. Camels are common in the Middle East, northern Africa, and the arid parts of Asia (namely Tibet, northern China, and parts of Mongolia). In the mythic age, they appear in areas with similar climates, mostly around the equator.

Canoe/Dingy/Raft: A very small boat or rowboat. You're not going to get much speed or maneuverability out of this craft.

Carriage: This is a horse-drawn passenger vehicle.

Cart: Either an ox cart or a horse cart. There are two varieties of cart: two-wheeled and four-wheeled. They are used for moving stuff from one place to another, and are usually made from wood.

Chariot: The chariot first appeared in the mythic age, and popped up again in the Mediterranean for a few thousand years of the modern age. It is a two-wheeled war wagon pulled by horses, mules, or other tame animals.

Elephant: Not as commonly used as the horse in any age, the elephant is a powerful beast that doesn't move very fast but is extremely strong and reliable. They are intelligent animals, so much so that the rider doesn't

command the animal, but rather works with it.

Horse: Mustangs, brumbies, ponies, donkeys, mules, and hinnies. You can ride them, eat them, or put them to work for you. Domesticated horses have been around since the mythic age. Horses are absolutely terrified of dragons and anything remotely draconic.

Longship: This is a long narrow ship of the sort used by Vikings. The average longship is about 40 yards in length and approximately six to eight yards in width. It is a single-mast ship, typically powered more by the 20-40 oarsmen than the wind.

Man-of-war: This is a large wooden battleship powered by the wind. The typical man-of-war has a minimum of 40 artillery weapons and a crew of 250.

VEHICLE CATALOG:
MODERN VEHICLES

BMW K1200 GT: The K1200 GT is a heavy bike with sexy curves and a surprisingly quiet four-cylinder engine with a nearly 1200cc displacement.

Dodge Caravan: A five-door minivan, the Caravan has a workhorse of an engine and all-wheel drive.

Dodge Durango: Few SUVs come with as large an engine as this monster (350 hp). It has 105 cubic feet of storage space inside, can tow 9,000 lbs. of cargo behind it, and sports all-wheel drive.

Dodge Sprinter: This is a cargo vehicle, often seen on the streets of America and Europe and usually in the employ of government agencies. It boasts 500 cubic feet of storage and the ability to haul up to 5,000 lbs. of equipment.

Ferrari F40: A ground-hugging speedster, pure and simple. Although it lacks the sleekness of other Ferraris, it more than compensates with its four-cylinder engine.

VEHICLE CATALOG: MODERN

Name	Chassis	Size	AV/Cover	Handling	Top Speed	Class	Cost
<i>Motorcycles</i>							
BMW K1200 GT	2	0	2/1	+2	9	basic	2
H-D FL Panhead	1	0	3/1	+4	7	basic	3
Suzuki Marauder 800	2	0	2/1	+5	9	basic	2
Yamaha FJR1300	2	0	2/1	+5	11	basic	4
<i>Sports Cars</i>							
Ferrari F40	3	+1	5/5	+1	12	basic	5
Ferrari Testarossa	3	+1	4/5	+2	11	basic	5
Lotus Esprit S2	3	+1	4/5	+2	9	basic	4
<i>Trucks & SUVs</i>							
Dodge Durango	4	+1	7/6	-1	7	basic	3
Ford 450 Pickup	4	+1	6/6	-1	6	basic	3
Toyota Sequoia	5	+1	7/8	+0	7	basic	4
UK army jeep	3	+1	8/4	+1	5	basic	2
<i>Delivery Vehicles</i>							
Dodge Sprinter	3	+1	5/8	-4	3	basic	2
Peugeot Boxer	2	+1	4/8	-4	4	basic	2
<i>Sedans</i>							
Maserati Quattroporte	4	+1	6/6	+0	8	basic	4
Mercedes-Benz C440	4	+1	8/7	+0	7	basic	5
Peugeot 607	3	+1	5/7	+1	8	basic	4
<i>Family Cars</i>							
Dodge Caravan	3	+1	5/10	-3	6	basic	2
Ford Taurus Wagon	5	+1	6/8	-2	5	basic	3
Toyota Camry Solara	4	+1	5/7	-3	7	basic	3
Toyota Scion xB	3	+1	5/6	-3	5	basic	2
Volkswagen Bus	5	+1	6/9	-2	5	basic	2
<i>Sea Vehicles</i>							
Jet Ski	1	0	1/1	+6	3	basic	2
Speedboat	2	+1	3/6	+2	10	elite	4
Yacht	6	+2	5/6	+0	3	elite	6

TABLE 5-10

Ferrari Testarossa: This car is a streamlined needle, with a tiny nose and slightly larger back end. Its top speed is 180 mph, which is not too bad considering its hey-day was in the early 1980s, when that was considered blazing fast. It is the largest Ferrari ever made.

Ford 450 Super Duty Pickup Truck: One of the bigger pickup trucks on the market, the Ford 450 has a monster V8 engine and a one-ton cargo capacity.

Ford Taurus Wagon: This is a midsize station wagon, one of the best-selling cars in its category. It seats six to eight people, depending on seat configuration and their size. It has 24 cubic feet of storage space.

Harley-Davidson FL Panhead: A true classic with a 700cc engine.

Jet Ski: Also known as a “personal watercraft,” the Jet Ski can either be ridden like a motorcycle (and if it is large enough, can carry one or two passengers), or driven while standing up. This is a highly maneuverable vehicle and makes for some quite good aquatic stunts.

UK Army Jeep: Introduced during World War II, the jeep is one of those all-purpose vehicles that will seemingly never go out of style, regardless of how often the parent company updates the design and features.

Lotus Esprit S2: The British car manufacturer intro-

duced this spade-shaped car in the mid-1970s. Its clean, sharp lines are simple and, if not elegant, at the very least eye-catching. The engine sits in the middle of the vehicle, distributed beneath the driver and passenger seats, giving it an unnaturally low center of gravity. It has a top speed of 124 MPH. The car is best known for its appearance in the Bond film *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

Maserati Quattroporte: Sporting a 450-horsepower engine and incredibly aerodynamic curves, this is the definitive ultra-modern four-door sedan. It has options to include bulletproof windows and an armored chassis, increasing its cost by one and its AV/cover to 8/10.

Mercedes-Benz C440: If there's just one word to describe this luxurious product from the Mercedes-Benz Corporation, it's muscular. The four-door sedan has a 168-horsepower V6 engine with manual transmission.

Peugeot 607: A four-door sedan with sports car lines. It has comfortable bucket leather seats for five, a six-speed manual gearbox, satellite GPS navigation, and an integrated GSM phone in the dashboard.

Peugeot Boxer: This is another type of delivery vehicle of the ubiquitous breadbox-shaped variety.

Sailboat: A wind-propelled watercraft. Sailboats range from the very small to the very large. The traits used here are for a mid-size boat with a main cabin, sleeping quarters, and a dinette.

Speedboat: Most speedboats are made of streamlined fiberglass and possess very large outboard motors. There are, however, inflatable rubber varieties such as the kind used by the military; these have +1 maneuverability but a chassis of 1 and an AV/cover of 1/1.

Suzuki Marauder 800: An 800cc, 4-stroke touring motorcycle with a top speed of 110 MPH. It's not the fastest bike on the streets, but it is comfortable.

Toyota Camry Solara: The flagship midsize vehicle from the Toyota Company, the Camry Solara comes in either a hardtop or convertible model.

Toyota Scion xB: Despite the prestigious name, the Scion is nothing flashy: just a sturdy, budget minivan.

Toyota Sequoia: This full-size, four-door SUV has a large engine and quite a lot of presence. It can comfortably seat eight and has in excess of 120 cubic feet of storage space. It is becoming a popular vehicle in which to chauffeur VIPs, especially after the windows have been replaced with the bullet-proof and tinted variety, increasing its cost by 1 and improving its AV/cover to 8/10.

Volkswagen Bus: The VW Bus is a staple of hippie culture everywhere. If the delivery vehicles described earlier are breadboxes, then this is the loaf of bread: the bus is a softly curved rectangular machine that has three passenger benches sitting behind the driver.

Yamaha FJR1300: This motorcycle, with its 1300cc engine block and aerodynamic fittings, appears to be a combination of a sport bike and a touring bike. Its potent 145-horsepower engine is able to hit 110 mph in about 10 seconds flat. It has an overall top speed of 170 mph.

Yacht: This is a very large motorized pleasure craft. It has multiple cabins and quarters, a full-size dining area, at least two or three decks, and usually boasts a

crew of at least five, in addition to its coddled passengers. Yachts are capable of sailing around the world, stopping only to stock up on food and fuel.

EQUIPMENT CATALOG

Your character is going to need more than weapons, armor, and a vehicle. Presumably you'll want things like clothes, tools, techie toys, and reference materials (so you can research your past lives and your enemies' weaknesses, if they have any).

Backpack, Cloth: A backpack made from rugged canvas or thick cloth. In the mythic age, larger packs have a wooden frame that distributes the weight; in the modern age, frames are made from aluminum and titanium.

Backpack, Day: A small nylon pack with numerous pouches. Light and easily accessible on the fly.

Backpack, Leather: A primitive backpack made from strips of hide and tanned leather. Like a cloth backpack, larger versions may have wooden frames.

Backpack, Nylon: A high-tech backpack made from lightweight metals and nylon fibers. The frame is internal and flexible, conforming to the shape of the wearer's back and inhibiting maneuverability only slightly. Can be compressed to quite small, or expanded to hold supplies for a three-week trek.

Basket: Woven from plant and tree fibers, baskets come in all shapes and sizes. They're used for the carrying and storage of food and water.

Briefcase: Made from leather and plastic. It has mechanical brass locks that require either a key or a combination to open. The reinforced version has a chassis of 3 and AV 8.

Chest: A thick case or hand trunk made from either solid metal or thick pieces of wood bound in metal strips. Usually has a lock to prevent unauthorized access. The standard version has a chassis of 3 and AV of 5; the reinforced version has a chassis of 10 and AV 10.

Camera, Still: Any type of still image recording device, ranging from daguerreotype to digital.

Camera, Video: Any type of moving image recording device ranging from a magic lantern to a digital palm-size video camera.

Computer, Desktop: This can be any large computing platform, such as a client workstation or server. The typical desktop computer has hundreds of gigabytes of storage space, a high-quality monitor with broadcast resolution, and broadband or modem access to the Internet. If you don't have access to a library for Research tests, an Internet-capable computer with the appropriate data archives can be used instead.

Computer, Notebook: A portable version of a desktop computer. Any given high-end notebook is not as computationally fast or as powerful as the top of the line version of its full-size counterpart.

Computer, PDA: A small handheld computing device. More often than not, it has a built-in wireless

EQUIPMENT CATALOG

Name	Cost			Name	Cost		
	Mythic	Modern	Street		Mythic	Modern	Street
Backpack, Cloth	1	0	—	Manacles/Handcuffs	1	1	—
Backpack, Day	—	0	—	Metal Detector	—	2	—
Backpack, Leather	1	2	—	Mirror	3	1	—
Backpack, Nylon	—	2	—	MP3 Player	—	2	—
Basket	0	0	—	Musical Instrument	1—6	1—6	—
Briefcase	—	1	—	Night Vision, Goggles	—	2	—
Briefcase, reinforced	—	2	—	Night Vision, Scope	—	2	—
Camera, Still	—	1	—	Mortar and Pestle	1	1	—
Camera, Video	—	2	—	Phone, Analog	—	1	—
Chest	1	1	—	Phone, Cell	—	2	—
Chest, reinforced	2	2	—	Phone, Satellite	—	3	—
Computer, Desktop	—	2	—	Phone Tap	—	2	2
Computer, notebook	—	2	—	Pots and Pans	1	1	—
Computer, PDA	—	2	—	Rope	1	1	—
Gourds and Goblets	0	1	—	Shovel	1	1	—
Fake ID	2	2	2	Suitcase/Trunk, Secure	2	2	—
First Aid Kit	1	1	—	Suitcase/Trunk, Standard	1	1	—
Flashlight/Lamp	2	1	—	Survival Kit	—	1	—
Forensics Kit	—	2	—	Tankard	1	1	—
GPS, Civilian	—	2	—	Tent	1	2	—
GPS, Military	—	3	3	Waterskin/Water Bottle	1	1	—
Handbag/Satchel	1	2	—	Tools			
Jars and Jugs	1	1	—	Electrician/Blacksmith	2	3	—
Lockpicks	1	2	—	Mechanic/Carpenter	2	3	—
				Tools, Standard	2	2	—

TABLE 5-11

modern, allowing it to communicate with other devices within range or with local area networks.

Fake ID: Can be a driver's license, a passport, or anything else that has the bearer's personal information.

First Aid Kit: A small kit with all of the relevant medicinal aids of the time, ranging from poultices, salves, and a needle and thread in the mythic age to sterile bandages, antibiotics, and antivenin in the modern age.

Flashlight/Lamp: A portable light source. In the modern age, batteries last about five hours. Lamps use an unreliable oil that burns a pint in about an hour.

Forensics Kit: A forensics kit allows you to collect evidence at crime scenes without contaminating it; when later making Knowledge or Research tests with the evidence gathered, you gain 2 re-rolls.

Gourds and Goblets: A wide variety of drinking containers, ranging from dried, hollowed-out gourds to pewter goblets to designer glassware, depending on the age in which you buy them.

GPS, Civilian: Global Positioning Systems built for

civilian use are required by law to be less accurate than their military counterparts as part of global anti-terrorism efforts. As such, a civilian GPS can pinpoint a location down to the closest 20 yards.

GPS, Military: A military-grade Global Positioning System can pinpoint a person's location to the nearest foot. Broadcasts to and from the GPS satellites are on a secure 128-bit-encrypted wavelength.

Handbag/Satchel: An everyday handbag. Nothing special here aside from what you may find inside.

Jars and Jugs: Made from ceramic, wood, or metal. These are a variety of miscellaneous cooking and storage containers.

Lockpicks: Tools for illicitly opening locks. If you can't find a set for purchase, shoddy versions can be made that inflict a -2 materials penalty on Trickery or Tech tests when using them.

Manacles/Handcuffs: Heavy wrist or leg clamps connected by a short length of chain. They usually have a simple lock for opening and closing them. The higher

the quality, the harder they are to escape from, at minimum a Water (Quickness) 5 test.

Medical Kit: A more advanced version of the first aid kit. Allows for everything from disease and poison treatment to in-the-field emergency surgery procedures.

Metal Detector: A handheld portable sensor for detecting bits and pieces of metal in and on the ground. The kind sold to civilians are good for detecting metal to a depth of about 1 foot, while military-grade metal detectors have a depth range of about 2 feet. Law enforcement and security guards generally use handheld metal detectors to scan for metallic weapons on a person's body.

Mirror: A highly reflective surface, usually made from polished metal and glass. Rare in the mythic age.

MP3 Player: This is usually nothing more than a USB or FireWire hard drive in a compact case. It can be used to listen to collections of digital music or as a secondary storage device. Top-of-the-line MP3 players have a capacity of about 200 gigabytes.

Musical Instrument: Any of a number of instruments, ranging from traditional ones like recorders, flutes, and mandolins to modern ones like synthesizers, electric guitars, and the Theremin.

Night Vision, Goggles: A light-amplification device that allows a person to see as clearly at night as one does during the day. Their wearer does not suffer the normal penalties incurred from lack of light, but *does* suffer penalties in normal light as if it were poor lighting.

Night Vision, Scope: Similar to night vision goggles, but mounted on a weapon. Includes a telescope lens as well. When using the Aim action with a night vision scope, the wielder does not suffer the normal penalties incurred from lack of light; because she is not constantly looking through the scope, however, she does not suffer from bright light as the wearer of night vision goggles would.

Mortar and Pestle: A deep ceramic or wooden bowl and an oblong grinding tool of the same material. It is used to turn herbs into powder, usually for medicinal remedies or magical components.

Phone, Analog: A good old-fashioned phone of the sort that plugs into a wall. It has either a rotary dial (if it's really old) or a touchpad. Cables are variously copper or fiber optic.

Phone, Cell: A wireless phone. This is always a dig-

ital device, and is often loaded with extra "must-have" features like an address book, a note pad, a digital camera, and *Tetris*. If the phone uses a GSM chip, it can be used in any country that has the GSM frequency. Most of Europe falls into that category.

Phone, Satellite: Similar to a cell phone but with the power to connect to telecom satellites in orbit, meaning that it can be used anywhere on the globe.

Phone, Tap: A collection of tools for listening in on phone conversations. Comes in three flavors, depending on the type of phone you want to phreak: analog, cell, and satellite.

Pots and Pans: A variety of cooking implements made from metal, glass, or ceramics.

Rope: Hemp, silk, nylon, or cloth. Useful for climbing, rappelling, or tying up opponents.

Shovel: A blade meant for digging holes. In the mythic age, this is generally made from sturdy wood or bone, whereas in the modern age the blade is metal and the handle is wooden.

Suitcase/Trunk, Secure: A sturdy plastic, aluminum, or titanium suitcase. Has a secure mechanical or digital lock to prevent unauthorized access.

Suitcase/Trunk, Standard: A regular plastic, nylon, or cloth suitcase. Not at all secure and definitely not gorilla-proof.

Survival Kit: A compact package containing the basics for survival in inhospitable environments. Includes a heat-reflecting survival blanket, strike-anywhere matches with paraffin-soaked tinder, a small mirror for signaling search planes, nutrient supplements, and a small knife.

Tankard: A rather generic drinking mug. Large, sometimes decorated with colorful bits of ceramic and pewter, and capable of holding about three pints of alcohol. In the mythic age, tankards were made from boiled

leather, wood, or ceramics.

Tent: A hide, canvas, silk, or cloth shelter. The frame is made from either wood or metal. Most versions are highly portable, and the ones that aren't are usually transported on wagons or in vehicles. Some tents require stakes and rope to help keep them upright.

Waterskin/Water Bottle: A metal or plastic container for carrying liquids. Some are insulated for storing soup or hot drinks.

Tools (All): A toolset, either generic or explicitly designed for working with a specific field. Incomplete or minimal sets can be purchased for a cost of one lower.





ACTION AND COMBAT

CHAPTER
SIX

The sections that follow allow you to play everything from gritty shootouts in the modern age to epic clashes of sword and shield in the mythic age. Players in FIREBORN are constantly making dynamic choices, whether engaging in a contest of wills or a battle of steel, and with these rules, keeping a clear head can be as important as hitting with your blade.

DYNAMIC D6

The Dynamic d6 system at the heart of FIREBORN emphasizes moment-to-moment decisions. It simulates the changing attention that each hero and villain gives to his various aspects—physical and mental, active and reactive.

The following sections revisit the core concepts and rules of the Dynamic d6 system—aspects, skills, and stance changes—and present a few refinements that are specific to combat.

ASPECTS

As described in the introductory mechanics summary, four elemental aspects describe each character—hero or villain, ally or enemy—in the world of FIREBORN. **Fire** describes aggressive, active physical capabilities. **Air** describes aggressive, active mental capabilities. **Water** describes defensive, reactive physical capabilities. **Earth** describes defensive, reactive mental capabilities.

Each character's aspects are individually rated with a number between zero and six. Zero represents a complete lack of capacity in the relevant area (such as a character who is crippled or suffering from a mental defect), three represents an average human's capacity in the modern age, and six represents the maximum capacity of a human without supernatural aid. The aspect score indicates a number of six-sided dice to be rolled when attempting a test in that aspect. When the dice are rolled, each result of four, five, or six generates one success.

***Example:** A scion with Earth 4 rolls four six-sided dice when making a test that calls for Earth. If the dice come up 1, 2, 5, and 6, the outcome is two successes.*

Each aspect's **base score** is the permanent number associated with that aspect and written down on the character sheet. In the course of play, however, the number of dice associated with a given aspect can change. The number of dice assigned to a given aspect at a given time determines its current score, or **pool**.

SKILLS

While aspects describe the inborn capacity each FIREBORN character possesses, skills represent the abilities they have learned and practiced. A full list of the

skills available to FIREBORN characters is presented in Chapter Three. Skills are rated on a scale from zero to six, inclusive, with zero representing an effective lack of any learned talent whatsoever, two suggesting an amateur or hobbyist's understanding, four indicating professional competency, and six signifying an expert's grasp of the skill in question.

USING SKILLS: STANCE CHANGES

Skills allow characters to make **stance changes**, distributing their pools (or "moving dice") among their aspects in a constant effort to focus their abilities on the dangers and opportunities the world presents.

The mechanism for making a stance change is very simple. The player declares that he is undertaking an action and bolstering it with a stance change, then announces the number of dice he will move into the aspect that governs the action, and finally declares which aspect(s) the dice will come from. Although this process is fundamentally quite simple, a number of rules and limitations govern the process:

—When the Game Master calls for a test, he declares which skill(s) may be used in that test. If a character has a score greater than zero in any of those skills, he may make a stance change.

—A character's skill rank determines how many dice he may move when making the stance change. The maximum number of dice that may be moved to any aspect during a single turn is equal to the governing skill rank. Note that a character can only use one skill at a time, even though the GM may have offered multiple options. A character may not combine skill ranks to move ever-greater quantities of dice in a single stance change.

—In a single stance change, the dice being moved can come from any combination of aspects, but must all be moved to a single aspect: the one being tested.

—Unless some rule specifically provides for more, only one stance change may be made to bolster a given test.

—Unless some rule specifically forbids it or he has used up his stance change allotment for his turn, a character may always make a stance change to bolster any action or reaction he attempts. Some circumstances, like being ambushed, prevent stance changes during reactions.

—If a character moves fewer dice to the aspect than he has skill ranks, he may use later stance changes to move dice to that aspect until a total number of dice equal to his skill ranks have been moved to that aspect. For instance, a character

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

TRACKING STANCE CHANGES

Because aspect pools are shifted so frequently in the course of play, it is impractical to track these changes by erasing original aspect scores and penciling in new ones, if for no other reason than you'll soon wear a hole in your character sheet. There are at least two better ways to track the movement of dice between the four aspects.

The first method is to use a number of dice equal to the sum of all your character's aspects. Place the number of dice that correspond to each aspect on those aspects' marked regions of your FIREBORN character sheet. For example, if you have Water 2, physically place two dice in the Water box on your character sheet. When you use a stance change to move dice from Water to Fire, physically move dice from the Water box to the Fire box. Roll only the dice currently placed within a given aspect's box when testing that aspect, and always return the dice you rolled to the aspect they were sitting on before you picked them up. When the beginning of your turn comes around and it is time to reset, move the dice back to their original boxes, the base scores for which are recorded in writing in those boxes.

The die method described above ensures that you always have the appropriate number of dice ready to go, but it also requires you to keep your character sheet on a horizontal surface and avoid moving it around. If you prefer a different technique, a second method is to use paperclips to track aspect changes. Note that the character sheet identifies each edge of the paper with one of the four aspects. Put a number of paper clips on each edge to correspond to the base scores of those aspects. For example, if you have Fire 3, put three paperclips on the top edge of your character sheet. As you make stance changes, move the paperclips among the sides, moving them back to their original locations only when your aspects reset.

SIDEBAR 6-1

with two stance changes might be attacked by an incompetent enemy minion at the beginning of a turn. Despite his 5 ranks in Quickness, he chooses to only move one die to Water for defense, because he's not worried about the foe. Later on in the turn, the character is attacked by the minion's commander, and decides to move his maximum number of dice to Water to defend; since he already moved one die, that means he can now move a maximum of four dice to Water.

—A character must always complete his stance change before rolling any of the dice to resolve a given action or reaction. That is to say, when the player begins rolling dice, he gives up any further opportunity to change stance to bolster the action.

—After a player rolls aspect dice to resolve an action, the dice moved as part of the stance change remain associated with the new aspect until the aspects reset. (Each character resets at the beginning of his character turn. See "Character Turns," page 130.)

***Example:** A scion with Fire 4, Water 4, and Athletics 2 declares his intention to leap between two rooftops. Athletics is the skill that governs the action, and Fire is the relevant aspect. Because the consequences of falling four stories are dire, the scion makes a stance change to bolster his attempt, moving two dice from Water to Fire. He rolls six dice when he makes the attempt.*

The scion could not have moved more than two dice to Fire because he only has Athletics 2, though he could have elected to move only one die if, for example, he wanted to avoid depleting his Water pool too much.

Note that the stance change was made before any dice were rolled. The scion could not have rolled his base Fire of four dice, seen that he did not have any successes, and then made a stance change to gain additional dice to roll.

Finally, note that the scion will have pools of Water 2 and Fire 6 until his next character turn comes around and his aspects reset to their original values. If there's an enemy lurking in the shadows of the building the scion lands on, our hero, with his depleted capacity for physical defense, may be in trouble.

Most GM characters in both the modern and mythic ages may only make one stance change each turn. More experienced or powerful folk, including named GM characters and all scions, may make two stance changes per turn. Finally, some incredibly powerful creatures can make three stance changes each turn. The number of stance changes a character is allowed in each of his turns is called his **stance allotment**. When a character has used up all of the stance changes in his allotment, he may not make any more stance changes until the beginning of his next turn.

Stance changes are an enormous strategic asset in combat, especially in defensive situations. They should not be spent lightly, especially by characters who may come under attack before their next reset rolls around.

ACTIONS & REACTIONS

All activity in FIREBORN is performed using actions and reactions, which are either mental or physical. In combination, these terms combine to cover the full range of in-game endeavors. That is to say, every single thing a character in FIREBORN can try to do is either a physical action, a physical reaction, a mental action, or a mental reaction. Generally speaking, characters perform actions when it is their turn to act, while reactions are undertaken in response to someone else's actions.

The division between physical and mental acts is largely obvious. Acts involving movement or the manipulation of tangible objects are physical. Those whose outcomes are intellectual or emotional are mental. While many physical acts obviously have a mental component—one cannot win a tennis match without determination and knowledge of the rules of tennis—it is clear that lobbing a ball back and forth is more appropriate in the realm of the physical than the mental. Likewise, many mental acts involve physical exertions. It would be impossible to fast-talk a tourist without moving one's lips, but even so, con games are definitely more mentally than physically challenging.

Whenever an act seems to defy categorization as either physical or mental (or active or reactive), the GM makes the determination on a case-by-case basis. Acts that seem to straddle the line between physical and mental because they are emotional in nature, but may involve a character's physical appearance, should almost always be considered mental. Examples include intimidation and seduction. Although a bulky weightlifter typically has more success at intimidating your average Joe than a scrawny nerd would, the way the heavy carries himself and projects his will is ultimately of greater consequence than his appearance. Likewise, a physical beauty is likely to have more success at seduction than a homely individual, but the behavior, approach, and manner of the come-on often trump appearance alone. Acts involving stealth and the senses, although they clearly involve a physical compo-

nent, are heavily weighted toward attention and precision, and therefore also fall within the mental sphere.

Note that skills, like actions, are divided primarily into the physical and mental. Each skill has an active use and a reactive use, which determines what aspect should be rolled for tests requiring that skill. The skill descriptions in Chapter Two divide skills into the physical and mental, and differentiate between the active and reactive uses of each skill.

NARRATIVE SCENES

FIREBORN has two modes of play: narrative scenes and action scenes. Narrative scenes are used to describe any events in which second-by-second decisions are not essential. They set tone, let characters attempt long-term tasks, allow for interaction, and build drama. Action

scenes, meanwhile, are entered whenever split seconds can make the difference between success and failure, life and death.

Narrative scenes use all of the rules presented below for action scenes, but timing is usually less important and stance changes can be made by characters at will. This effectively gives characters much greater resources and probabilities of success in narrative scenes than in action scenes . . . so there are definitely times when it is to the players' advantage to remain in a narrative scene. On the other hand, as you'll see below, karma spent during a narrative scene is much slower to return than that spent during an action scene. Regardless of the pros and cons, if split-

second timing becomes an issue or bodily harm to a character is imminent, it's likely time to switch to an action scene. For details on using skills and stance changes during action scenes, see "The Action Scene," page 129.

TESTS

Tests determine the outcomes of actions and reactions—whether they succeed or fail.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

The following examples divide common acts among the above categories. The skill that would govern each act is also included in parentheses.

Active Physical: Throwing a punch (Melee), pole vaulting (Athletics), sprinting after a motorcyclist (Quickness), firing a bow (Ranged).

Active Mental: Programming a computer (Tech), casting a spell (Casting), bribing a bureaucrat (Interaction), picking a lock (Tech), finding a hidden clue (Senses), aiming a bow (Ranged).

Reactive Physical: Blocking a kick (Melee), resisting poison (Stamina), dodging gunfire (Quickness).

Reactive Mental: Seeing through a politician's lies (Interaction), resisting an intimidation attempt (Will), finding the flaws in a logical argument (Knowledge), spotting an unexpected foe (Senses).

SIDEBAR 6-2

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

QUICK ACTION RESOLUTION

In non-threatening narrative scenes, when characters can take their time and the GM wants to keep things flowing quickly at the table, it is not necessary for the players to worry about their stances. They can simply roll dice equal to the sum of the relevant aspect score and the relevant skill score, report the number of successes, and move on. The GM always has the option of asking for stances (so he knows how many dice the player has to dodge with when gunshots erupt through the door he just bashed in, for example), but may decide that pacing is more important than tension. In such cases, narrative tests can be resolved using this quick and dirty “aspect + skill” method.

SIDEBAR 6-3

THRESHOLDS

When a character makes a test, he rolls the dice in the appropriate aspect pool, usually after making a stance change. Each result of four, five, or six generates one success. All tests have a threshold (TH), which is the number of successes that must be equaled or exceeded for the action to be successful. The more successes you gain beyond the TH, the more confidently and capably you pull off whatever you were attempting to do. The easiest of tasks, which even untrained individuals can accomplish about half of the time, have a threshold of one.

The harder the task, the higher the TH. It is up to the GM's discretion on whether or not to tell the player the TH he has to meet. For instance, if the character needs to jump across a fairly wide chasm, he should be able to eyeball the jump and figure out the TH needed to make it across. If he needs to disarm an alarm system, he'll need to scope it out first, and even then the GM should probably give him a range of THs without telling him the exact number. Finally, some THs, like researching the name of an ancient sorcerer or seducing a rich bachelor with a mysterious past, should remain secret until the character succeeds at them.

OPPOSED AND UNOPPOSED

All tests in FIREBORN are either **unopposed** or **opposed**. A test is unopposed if it succeeds or fails on its own merits—that is, if no other character attempts to stop it. On the other hand, a test is opposed if someone does make an effort to prevent or resist it.

Example: A scion trying to hotwire a car makes an unopposed test because there's no one trying to stop him from doing it. A scion trying to sneak up on someone, on the other hand, makes an opposed test, because the person he's sneaking up on has the opportunity to react by spotting him.

UNOPPOSED TESTS

The formal procedure for making an unopposed test is as follows:

1. A character declares an action he intends to carry out.
2. The GM provides the player with whatever TH information he believes is appropriate. Based on that information, the player may make a stance change to bolster his roll.
3. The character rolls a number of dice equal to the governing aspect's pool and counts his successes.
4. The character may spend karma (see “Karma,” page 128) to add successes.
5. The GM informs the character whether he has met the TH and succeeded, or fallen short of the TH and failed.

Example: A scion with Air 4 and Tech: Mechanics 3 declares that he will attempt to hotwire the beat-up old Ford he's just broken into. The GM tells him that, from the character's experience, a car like this shouldn't be too tricky to get started. The scion makes a stance change to bolster his effort, moving three dice from Fire to Air. The dice come up 1, 2, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 6—three successes. The scion has the opportunity to spend karma on automatic successes, but he figures that if the threshold for hotwiring the old piece of junk is higher than three, he's got worse problems and he should save his karma. The GM announces that three successes are sufficient—the threshold for the attempt was just one, but he doesn't share that with the player—and the car roars to life.

OPPOSED TESTS

Opposed tests are like unopposed tests, but there's one important difference: Someone is trying to prevent the action from being successful. To foil the act, the opposing character makes a roll of his own, and whoever scores the most successes wins the test. As long as the character initiating the test scores at least one more success than the opposing character scores, the action is usually successful. The process looks like this:

1. A character declares an action that he intends to carry out, and, if he wishes, makes a stance change to bolster it.
2. A character with the opportunity to oppose declares that he will oppose the action, and may also make a stance change if he wishes.
3. Both characters roll dice equal to their governing aspects' pools and announce the number of successes they achieve.
4. The character who initiated the test may initiate a karma bid. If he passes, the opposing character may initiate a karma bid. If either initiates a bid, it must occur. Both characters secretly and simultaneously bid karma (see "Bidding Karma," page 128) to add successes to their respective numbers of rolled successes. If neither initiates a bid, proceed to step 5.
5. The successes scored by each party are compared, and the one who scored the most wins the test. The difference between the two is the number of net successes the winner scores. If the result is tied, the test is a draw. If the initiating character wins the test, the action is successful. Usually, the more net successes the succeeding character has, the better he performs (or more dramatically he prevents) the action.

Example: A scion (Air 4, Stealth 3) trying to infiltrate an eccentric's closely guarded mansion must approach a guard unnoticed. He makes an Air (Stealth) test, rolling seven dice. The GM makes an Earth (Senses) test for the guard, rolling four dice.

The scion scores three successes. The guard only generates two successes. The guard's two successes are subtracted from the scion's three successes, resulting in one net success for the scion. The GM announces that the scion is successful in sneaking up on the guard.

If the conditions for the scion had been more difficult, say because he was moving through brush, the scion and the guard would have first needed to spend successes equal to their thresholds. Any successes left over would then be compared to determine the winner of the opposed test.

In the course of resolving an opposed test, the GM may be called on to decide whether a given character is allowed to oppose it. The general rule is that the direct target of any action (the target of an attack, the victim of a con, and so forth) who is aware of the action in question has the opportunity to oppose it unless a specific rule forbids it.



CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

Example: A scion on a motorcycle is fleeing a car full of policemen. His Travel test to get away will be opposed by their Travel test to catch him, because they are the “target” of his attempt to escape.

A pedestrian crossing the street who suddenly finds himself in the path of the speeding motorcycle may well have the opportunity to leap out of the way, but when he makes his test to do so, it will not be an opposed test against the scion, because the pedestrian is not the target of the scion’s Travel test. (If the scion were trying to run the pedestrian down, that would be a different story entirely.)

When the GM rules that logic dictates it, sometimes even characters who are not the direct target of an action may oppose it.

Example: A slaver holding an attack dog’s leash may react to the dog’s attempt to bite one of his laborers. The slaver is not the direct target of the action—the slave is—but since he’s holding the leash and he’s aware of what the dog is doing, his opposition is logical.

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS OPPOSING

When multiple characters oppose a given action, the GM must decide whether the opposing characters are working together to oppose the action, or working individually to oppose on their own. If they’re working together, the sum of their opposing successes are compared to the initiating character’s successes. If they’re opposing individually, they individually compare their opposing successes to the initiating character’s successes and determine individual outcomes.

Example: A troll using a tree trunk as a battering ram attempts to break down the reinforced door that protects a guard post. The three men-at-arms inside want to keep the troll out, so they put their shoulders to the door to resist its attempt. The bulk and weight of all the men-at-arms at once is what opposes the troll, so the Game Master rules that any successes they generate will collectively oppose whatever successes the troll comes up with. Thus, if the troll gets five successes and the three men-at-arms get zero, three, and three successes respectively, they would manage to collectively oppose the troll’s action, even though they each would have failed to negate it individually.

Example: A scam artist pitching a multi-level marketing scam to a small group of potential marks in a coffee shop makes an Air test to convince them that his plan is the best thing since the double espresso. Each of the five marks must use their Earth to resist his con individually; this isn’t a situation where they can put their heads together to realize collectively that the pitch is a scam.

Attacks that target multiple characters use slightly different rules, as described under “Mass Attacks,” page 130.

QUALITY OF SUCCESS

All successes are not created equal; in FIREBORN it is possible to succeed marginally, brilliantly, or somewhere in between. **Quality** is a numerical description of just how successful the outcome of a successful test is.

For an unopposed test, the number of successes over the TH is its quality. For an opposed test, the winner’s net successes determine its quality.

In both cases, lower quality scores indicate marginal success, while higher scores express increasingly masterful accomplishments. Zero is obviously the lowest quality score possible for an unopposed test, since any quality lower would indicate failure rather than success. On an opposed test, the winner always scores at least one net success—a tie is always a draw, though this is often a de facto victory for the opposing character.

QUALITY THRESHOLDS

Successes over TH Quality

0–1	Marginal
2–3	Moderate
4–5	Superb
6+	Superhuman

TABLE 6-1

Example: A scion attempts to jump over a razor-wire fence. The GM rules that the threshold is two because of the fence’s height. If the scion achieves four successes, the quality of his success is two, because four (his successes) minus two (the TH) is two. He looks particularly suave while flying through the air and lands with considerable panache.

Example: A rent-a-cop prowls a house, actively looking for intruders. The cat burglar hiding behind the Grecian urn in the corner opposes the security guard’s Air (Senses) test with his own Air (Stealth) test. If the rent-a-cop generates two successes and the thief only generates one, for a result of one net success to spot the thief, the guard manages a marginal success. The overall result of the opposed test is still success for the searcher, but the GM rules that it requires a lengthier search than it might have otherwise.

In some cases, quality may not mean much; both marginal success and over-the-moon success at ripping a phone book in half with your bare hands still result in two pieces of phone book. In other cases—when trying to impress observers, for example—additional successes may mean a great deal.

BONUSES AND PENALTIES

Sometimes characters accumulate penalties, bonus dice, re-rolls, and automatic successes. When a character suffers from a penalty, he must subtract that number of dice—before they are rolled, obviously—from the pool of dice associated with the test. When a character gains bonus dice, he gains additional dice to roll on that test only. When a character gains re-rolls, he may re-roll a one, two, or three on a die. And finally, automatic successes give you, appropriately, free successes on a test, in addition to whatever dice you roll.

PENALTIES

Penalties are usually caused by wounds and weariness, but may also be caused by circumstantial modifiers or because a character is making multiple tests with a given aspect in a turn. Penalties are written as follows: “-X [—] penalty to all [move type, aspect, or skill] tests.” The X is the number of the penalty, while the — is the type of penalty. Most penalties are at least somewhat specific: -1 to all reaction tests, -3 to all Earth tests, -2 to all Senses tests, or what have you.

Most penalties are not long-term effects, and are therefore not worth recording. Your GM will simply tell you when to apply them. The exceptions are those caused by wound or weariness dice, and fading penalties. Wound and weariness dice are subtracted from *all* tests, whatever the aspect used, so they are recorded in the center column between all four aspects.

Fading physical disadvantage penalties affect your Fire and Water tests, and are therefore recorded in the space between your Fire and Water aspect boxes (see Diagram 6-1) for easy reference whenever you roll dice from those pools. Likewise, fading mental disadvantage penalties affect your Air and Earth tests, and are therefore recorded in the space between your Air and Earth aspect boxes (see Diagram 6-1) for easy reference whenever you roll dice from those pools. Whenever you pick up dice to make a test in a given aspect, check to make sure you’re not suffering any sort of penalty to that type of test. The penalty is the number of dice that should remain behind in the aspect box when you roll the rest.

Fading penalties, which are usually caused by short-term effects like mental actions, decrease by one each turn. However, they do stack with one another.

Penalties are negated by bonus dice and automatic successes, and vice versa. So if a character is suffering from a -2 disadvantage penalty to all Fire tests but gains +3 bonus dice to his Fire tests against a foe, he instead gains +1 bonus die on the test. If a character has both bonus dice and automatic successes on a test, the automatic successes are negated first by penalties.

BONUS DICE

Bonus dice are given to the player by the GM whenever he performs a move that grants them, or when he describes his character’s actions especially dramatically or cinematically. Bonus dice are written as follows: “+X bonus dice on your next [move type,

aspect, or skill] test against [opponent].” Bonus dice are usually granted by mental actions in preparation for a physical action. The player rolls both his aspect pool and the bonus dice (which are easily differentiated from his other dice, if the GM uses dice of a different color), counts the successes, then returns the bonus dice to the GM.

Bonus dice are negated by penalties, and vice-versa (as explained above).

RE-ROLLS

Re-rolls are usually granted by edges. They are written as follows: “+X re-rolls on [move type, aspect, or skill] tests.” The number of re-rolls granted refers to the number of unsuccessful dice a character may re-roll on each test or each scene.

AUTOMATIC SUCCESSSES

Automatic successes are most commonly granted by powers and superhuman aspect scores. They are the most powerful bonuses available in FIREBORN. Automatic successes are written as follows: “+X automatic successes on your [move type, aspect, or skill] tests.”

Automatic successes are negated by penalties, and vice-versa (as explained above).



DIAGRAM 6-1

KARMA

Karma is many things to many people, but in terms of game mechanics it is your best defense against harm and your most powerful weapon. If your FIREBORN character were a hero in a movie, karma would be the “something extra” that keeps him from getting hit when the bullets start flying and allows him to land blows against enemies with style and grace. For the average person in the modern or mythic age, karma is an ephemeral, rarely used resource that is called on at times of great need. For scions and many other supernatural creatures, karma is much more than that. It is the power of fate, fortune, inner resolve, and an almost divine prowess, to be drawn on at will.

A character’s capacity to wield karma is measured by his **karma score**. Most average folks in both the modern and mythic ages have low karma scores. Scions, dragons, supernatural creatures, and extraordinary heroes and villains all have higher karma scores. A character’s current quantity of available karma is referred to as his **karma pool**.

The most common use of karma is to generate extra successes on tests; more details on its nature and use are presented in the next chapter. For now, however, it is important to explain karma bidding and its role in FIREBORN’s action rules.

KARMA BIDDING

Any time a character rolls the dice to do something, he is making a test. All tests include an opportunity, called karma bidding, to spend karma in order to add additional successes to his total number of successes. Each point of karma spent adds one success, up to a maximum equal to the base score of the aspect being used in the test.

Whenever karma is spent in this way during an opposed test (see “Opposed Tests,” above), the parties to the contest must decide how much karma to spend—and thus, how many successes to add—simultaneously and

in secret. Neither side finds out how many points the other side is spending until both have made their final decision. Whoever initiates a karma bid must spend at least one karma. The other characters in the bid need not spend any karma at all. The attacker is given the option to initiate the karma bid, merely to streamline play. If he passes, the defender is given the option. If neither wish to initiate a bid, play continues without the bid. In many cases, it will be obvious when a bid is desired and when one is not necessary.

There are two easy ways to enact a bid. First, each party could scoop up a random number of unassigned dice into their left hands, then put their hands beneath

the table. There they secretly move a number of dice into their right hands equal to the amount of karma they wish to spend. Then they both bring their right hands above the table and simultaneously reveal the number of dice therein. A second option is for each player to put a die on the table, conceal it behind his hand, and turn the die so that the face-up number corresponds to the number of points he wants to spend. Since no more than six points of karma can be spent on any one test, each player would only ever need one die set aside for this purpose.

If karma is spent, it is deducted from the spending character’s karma pool. Characters whose karma pools are reduced to zero cannot bid karma until it is replenished (see “Regaining Karma,” page 171).

TESTS AND CHECKS

Most rolls that you make in FIREBORN will be tests; a test is defined as any roll of six-sided dice representing your character’s current score in an aspect, whether bolstered by skill ranks from a stance change or not. Karma may be bid on tests. There are occasional rolls you may be asked to make, however, which are called **checks**. These do not involve skills or stance changes, and may not even use your aspect scores. Karma may not be bid on checks, for any reason.



THE ACTION SCENE

Combat is a chaotic struggle. In order to sort out who does what to whom—and when—a system for ordering the struggle is necessary.

Scenes whose content includes combat or other highly active, complex character activities are called **action scenes**. Each action scene consists of a preparatory **initiative phase** followed by a cyclic series of **turns**, which continue until the action scene ends.

THE INITIATIVE PHASE

When it becomes clear to the GM that an action scene is about to start, he announces that the initiative phase has arrived. With that declaration, each character makes an initiative test, rolling the sum of their base scores in Air and Fire. Karma may then be bid on the test; the sum of each character's successes become his **initiative**, the number that will be used throughout the entire action scene to determine when he is allowed to act.

Some characters may use powers to act with superhuman speed; these characters roll **quickened initiative dice** before their normal initiative test. If they generate successes with their quickened initiative dice, they gain **quickened initiative**. If they achieve no successes, they make a normal initiative test. Because rolling quickened initiative dice is a check, not a test, karma may not be bid to gain successes.

The GM should make a record of each initiative once it is determined, and direct each character to act as his initiative arrives. When more than one character has the same initiative, the tie is broken first by their ranks in Clarity or Instinct, second by their pool for the initiative test. If acting characters remain tied after considering both of these factors, determine which one goes first by rolling off.

ACTION SCENE OVERVIEW

After the initiative phase is over, the actual action scene begins. This section provides an overview of the action scene, while the sections that follow elaborate on the topics introduced here.

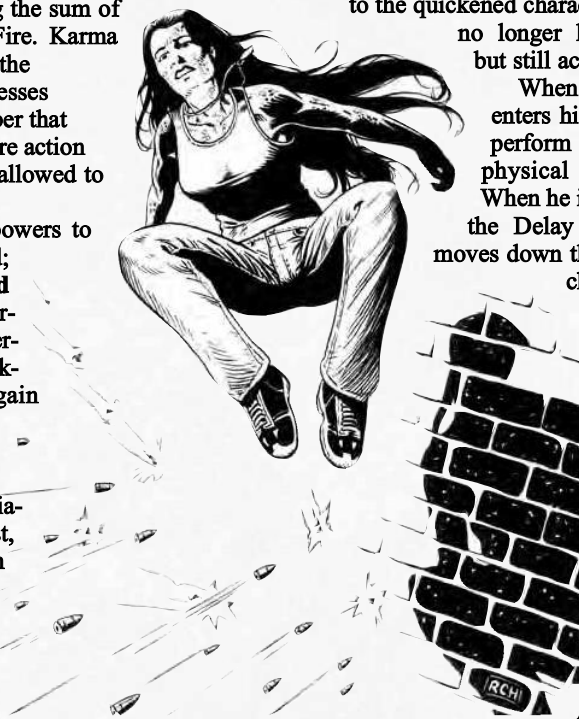
Each action scene begins with those that have quickened initiative, in order from the character with the highest quickened initiative to the one with the lowest. During a quickened character's first turn, only other characters with quickened initiative may make stance changes in response to his actions. Non-quickened characters are at the mercy of their current aspect scores. Once a quickened character's first turn is over, other characters may react to his actions normally.

Once all quickened characters have acted, all other characters act in order of their initiative. The character with the highest initiative acts first, the character with the next-highest initiative acts second, and so on, until all characters have acted. After that, the GM cycles back to the quickened characters; quickened characters no longer have quickened initiative, but still act in their previous order.

When a given character acts, he enters his **character turn**. He may perform one mental action and one physical action during his turn. When he is done, or if he delays (see the Delay action, below), the GM moves down the initiative list to the next character's turn. For effects that have durations listed in turns, a single turn lasts from the moment a character activates it until the beginning of his next turn.

In terms of concrete length, a single turn represents enough time for each character in the fight to do something dramatic and deadly. If it ever becomes critical to determine how many seconds pass in a given turn, the GM decides based

on the action and situation, with somewhere between five and 15 seconds being the default. Even so, a combat turn should be thought of as more an increment of dramatic time than an increment of actual, measured time.



CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

QUICKENED CHARACTERS

Quickened characters act in the split second before normal human beings can collect their wits and get their actions underway. It's the blink of an eye between a gunman pulling the trigger and the bullet's impact, when a lightning-fast scion who's the gunman's target can cover himself in steel-plated scales, immolate the gunman in a fiery inferno, or simply make sure that he's no longer standing in the bullet's path. Characters must generally have a specific power in order to be quickened.

There are three effects of quickened initiative:

- Quickened characters act before all non-quickened characters.
- Non-quickened characters cannot make stance changes in reaction to the actions of quickened characters' first turns. Quickened characters simply move too quickly.
- Because they are acting based on their most primal instincts and speed-of-thought responses, quickened characters cannot use the Delay or Interrupt moves.

The two most common sources that grant quickened capability, Instinct and Clarity, limit the quickened character to either a physical action or a mental action, respectively, on their first turns.

SIDEBAR 6-5

CHARACTER TURNS

When a character's turn begins, the first thing she does is **reset**. When a character resets, all dice return to their original aspects and her stance pool refreshes. It doesn't matter which dice come from where; simply move dice into your aspects' boxes until the number of dice therein is equal to each aspects' base score.

After resetting, the character declares and carries out one mental action and one physical action, or attempts to ignore the combat and perform other actions. Once a character has performed her actions, her turn ends and the next character's turn begins.

REACTIONS

While a character can only perform a limited number of actions during her turn, there is no limit to the number of reactions she can attempt during other characters' turns, so long as their actions affect her. However, for each test in a turn beyond the first that a character makes with a given aspect, she suffers a cumulative -1 disadvantage penalty to the test.

Example: Kribb the scion finds himself surrounded by three corrupt cops who mean to do him in. The first cop attacks and the scion reacts with a Water (Quickness) test to dodge. He suffers no penalty to the test, because this is his first Water test since his turn. The second cop attacks and the scion reacts again. He suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty to his Water (Quickness) test. If the third cop uses a mental action instead of a physical action, Kribb would probably make an Earth test to resist, suffering no penalty at all. But the cop presses his advantage, making a physical attack. Kribb makes a third Water (Quickness) test, suffering a -2 disadvantage penalty to the test. He desperately hopes he gets a chance to reset and eliminate those penalties before anyone else jumps out of the woodwork.

ACTIONS & MOVES

As described above, all actions are divided up into the physical and mental. Physical actions are further broken down into **moves**, the most basic element of action in combat. Moves can be strung together to create **sequences**. Regardless of whether you're performing a mental action or a physical action consisting of several moves, all actions are **governed** by appropriate skills. A character can perform one mental action and one physical action (usually a sequence of moves) during her character turn, in whichever order she prefers.

MASS ATTACKS

If an action lists only "Single Foe" beneath its description, it can only affect a single target. Some mental actions, however, like Intimidate or Distract, may be used to affect multiple targets. These are called mass attacks. You make your test, bidding karma if you like; then the opponents make their opposed tests to resist, bidding karma if they like. Rather than combining their successes to oppose yours, each target opposes you individually. If you win the test, they suffer the effects of the action.

MENTAL ACTIONS

Mental actions are often used in preparation for a character's physical action, either increasing her chances of success or decreasing her opponents'. A list of the possible mental actions, the tests required to perform them against single and multiple foes, and the effects they provide, are listed below.



AIM

Description: Lining up the sights of your weapon in preparation for firing. Because the normal preparatory moves cannot be used with most ranged weapons, aiming is the only way to increase firearm damage.

Test (Single Foe): Air (Ranged) opposed by Earth (Quickness).

Effect: +5 damage per net success on your first ranged attack move in an immediate physical attack sequence.

AMBUSH

Description: Sneaking up on a foe before making an attack, which prevents him from defending effectively. This is a specialized action that can only be performed if you know where the foe is but he does not know where you are. It is very hard to ambush someone unless you initiate the combat, and nearly impossible to do so once you're already fighting your opponent.

Test (Mass Attack): Air (Stealth) opposed by Earth (Senses).

Effect: Any targets that fail may only use their base Water score to defend against an immediate physical attack, regardless of how many dice are currently in their Water pools.

DEFAULT

Description: You don't want to bother with a mental action. Actions speak louder than thoughts.

Effect: You take no mental action. Gain +1 re-roll on your physical action.

DEFEND

Description: Another's safety is more important to you than your own, for this turn. You prepare to defend someone else rather than attack.

Effect: You delay, and may use your physical action to perform a defense sequence on behalf of an adjacent ally, using Fire instead of Water.

DEFENSIVE FEINT

Description: Weaving one way when you intend to go another. Must be performed after your physical action, and may only target adjacent opponents.

Test (Single Foe): Air (Quickness) opposed by Earth (Interaction).

Effect: +1 bonus die per net success on your next Water test against target.

DELAY

Description: Holding your action until things are lined up right where you want them.



MENTAL ACTIONS



Aim: Aim a weapon for extra damage.

Ambush: Sneak up on a foe.

Default: Forego your mental action.

Defend: Prepare to intercept an attack against an adjacent ally.

Defensive Feint: Pretend to duck when you're going to weave.

Delay: Delay your physical action.

Distract: Get a foe's attention.

Downplay: Make yourself look like less of a capable fighter than you are.

Feint: Pretend to swing high when you're going to swing low.

Grit: Ignore pain.

Interrupt: Delay your physical action until a specific moment.

Intimidate: Cow your foes.

Karmic Call: Attempt to communicate with anyone with a group mind.

Sense Karma: Determine how much karma a person, place, or thing is infused with.

Size up: Determine a fighter's combat prowess.

Spot: Pay particular attention to your surroundings.

Steady: Negate or temporarily ignore physical disadvantage penalties.

Taunt: Goad an enemy into acting unwisely.

Weave Magic: Summon karma in preparation for a spell.



SIDEBAR 6-6



CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

DUELING DELAYERS

There may be times when multiple combatants want to wait each other out to see what the other does. In such cases, any character may delay their initiatives with the Delay action, even past initiative 0. A character may Delay until the negative integer of his initiative, at which point he must act. This ensures that the character that is the most “on the ball” can wait to see what everyone else does, if that is to his advantage.

SIDEBAR 6-7

Effect: You spend your mental action to time your physical action; rather than performing it immediately, you instead wait until you’re good and ready. You may act at any initiative you wish, up to the negative integer of your original initiative, but cannot interrupt another’s action. Your initiative then changes to the new initiative.

DISTRACT

Description: You draw attention to yourself, hoping to prevent a foe from noticing one of your comrades.

Test (Mass Attack): Air (Trickery) opposed by Earth (Interaction).

Effect: For each net you success you score against a target, he suffers a –1 disadvantage penalty on his next Fire or Water test against anyone but you; however, for every –1 suffered, targets gain +1 bonus die on Air or Earth tests against you until your next turn. For each foe you target with this action beyond the first, all targets gain one automatic success on their tests to resist.

DOWNPLAY

Description: While fighting your foes with all the skill at your disposal, you still manage to hide your strengths and weaknesses.

Effect: This move has no effect unless an opponent uses the Size Up action, at which point you may make an Earth (Trickery) test to oppose the action. See “Size Up,” page 134, for more information.

FEINT

Description: Convince a foe that you’re going to lunge one way with a weapon, making him dodge or block inappropriately, then quickly attack from a different angle. Must be performed before your physical action, and may only target adjacent opponents.

Test (Single Foe): Air (Trickery) opposed by Earth (Interaction).

Effect: +1 bonus die per net success on immediate Fire test against target.

GRIT

Description: You summon inner resolve to hold pain and shock at bay.

Test: Air (Stamina).

Effect: Successes equal the number of wound and weariness penalties you may ignore when performing an immediate physical action.

INTERRUPT

Description: You spend your mental action to delay your physical action, but not just to see how things develop. You intend to interrupt someone else’s action as it occurs. When you declare an Interrupt action, you must specify the action you are preparing to interrupt, and who you think is likely to perform the action, and what your physical action will be. The test for this action is not performed until the instant that you’ve been

waiting to interrupt. For more details on how to use the Interrupt action, see the “Using the Interrupt Action” sidebar.

Test (Single Foe): Air (Quickness) opposed by Earth (Quickness).

Effect: If you win, you may carry out and resolve your physical action before the target completes his, effectively interrupting his action. If you lose, you perform your physical action, but do so immediately after the foe you wanted to interrupt. If the expected action



USING THE INTERRUPT ACTION

The Interrupt action, like the Delay action, allows combatants to postpone their actions until after their initiative. However, rather than acting between other characters' actions, characters using Interrupt may act immediately whenever some condition is met, even if that means interrupting another character's action. An Interrupt is declared as your mental or physical action. It takes the form of an "if-then" statement. For example, "If the troll turns toward the orphan, then I'm going to shoot him with my crossbow." The first part of the statement—the "if" portion—is called the trigger. The second part—the "then" portion—is the interruption. If you declare the Interrupt as your mental action, then the "then" portion must be a physical action. If you declare the Interrupt as your physical action, then the "then" portion must be a mental action.

If the expected trigger never occurs, or if at any point a character wishes to act, he may do so as if he had used the Delay action. If the character's turn begins again without his having acted, the unused action is lost. If the trigger is an event that is not under the control of a character (for instance, a fragile artifact falling off a shelf) the GM sets a TH that the delaying character must beat with his Air (Quickness) test in order to successfully interrupt the trigger. If the interrupting character meets this TH, he acts just before the trigger finishes; in the example above, the scion would be able to act just as the artifact begins to fall, but before it hits the floor. If he

fails to meet the TH, the trigger takes place before the character can interrupt it.

Example: *A stealthy scion comes upon a scene where a sewer troll is searching for an orphan that the scion knows is hiding behind some crates. The scion doesn't want to attract the troll's attention if he can help it, so he declares an Interrupt: "If the troll attacks the orphan, I'm going to shoot him with my crossbow." Later in the round, when the troll's initiative arrives, he does indeed sniff out the orphan and turns to attack her. This triggers the scion's interruption. The scion and troll make opposed Quickness tests. If the scion gets more successes, he makes his shot before the troll can resolve his attack. If the shot kills the troll, his declared attack obviously becomes moot. If the shot doesn't kill the troll, the troll may either carry on with his attack, possibly with wound dice from the crossbow bolt in his neck, or choose a different course of action—to attack the scion, for example.*

If the troll gets more successes, he attacks the orphan. As soon as the attack on the orphan is resolved, the scion fire his crossbow, for whatever good it does to the flattened orphan. If the troll never actually attacks the orphan, the scion may choose another action, like pulling out a grenade and lobbing it toward the troll, or sneaking away into the darkness.

SIDEBAR 6-8

never occurs, you may perform whatever physical action you wish, whenever you wish, just as if you had used the Delay action. In any case, your initiative placement changes to the time of the new action.

INTIMIDATE

Description: You glare at, roar towards, threaten, or otherwise promise a horrific fate to your target, whether with your eyes, your actions, or with words. You must have your targets' attentions and you must be within line of sight of them.

Test (Mass Attack): Air (Will) opposed by Earth (Will).

Effect: For each net you success you score against a target, he suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty on his next Water test against. For each foe you target with this action beyond the first, all targets gain one automatic success on their tests to resist.

Any target that you fail to Intimidate may not be intimidated by you for the rest of the adventure. If a tar-

get is intimidated, and you attack him but fail to inflict a wound die, you may not attempt to Intimidate the same target for the rest of the adventure. If you succeed at the Intimidate action but do not attack the target, you may attempt to Intimidate him again at any point.

KARMIC CALL

Description: You broadcast a message to your broodmates, even if they're outside of Trivial range or somehow blocked from communication.

Test: Air (Ka), unopposed.

Effect: You contact one of your broodmates telepathically. The TH for doing so varies depending on distance and circumstances (see "Ka," page 41).

SENSE KARMA

Description: You peer intently at a foe's aura, determining basic information about his karma. This action may only be used on foes within your karmic range.

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

SENSE KARMA

Successes Information Gained

1-2	Max karma to within 20 points, or determine if percentage of current karma is greater or less than 50%.
3-4	Max karma to within 10 points, or determine if percentage of current karma is close to 25%, 50%, 75%, or 100%.
5-6	Max karma to within 5 points, or determine percentage of current karma to within 10%.
7-8	Exact amount of max karma, or exact amount of current karma.

TABLE 6-2

Test (Single Foe or Multiple Foes): Air (Ka) unopposed.

Effect: You may divide up successes among multiple foes. The precision of the information gained on a given foe depends on how many successes you apply to the foe, as shown on Table 6-2.

SIZE UP

Description: You get the skinny on your opponent, feeling out his relative strength in one area. This test is only opposed if the target has already declared the Downplay move.

Test (Single Foe or Multiple Foes): Air (Interaction) opposed by Earth (Trickery).

Effect: Each success allows you to determine a single base aspect score or skill rank of a foe.

SPOT

Description: You make a conscious effort to remain aware of your surroundings.

Test: Air (Senses), unopposed.

Effect: +1 per success on all Earth (Senses) rolls until your next turn.

STEADY

Description: You focus on your position and balance, possibly recovering from any factors that are inhibiting your movement.

Test: Air (Athletics), unopposed.

Effect: Ignore one disadvantage penalty per success on an immediate physical test. If you are suffering from any fading physical disadvantage penalties, those are removed instead of ignored.

TAUNT

Description: You utter a string of insulting statements regarding the target's heritage, habits, or capabilities, all designed to enrage him. Targets must be able to either hear you or see you, and must have some understanding of what you are trying to convey, whether with words or with creative body language.

Test (Mass Attack): Air (Trickery) opposed by Earth (Will).

Effect: For each net you success you score against a target, he suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty on his next Water or Earth test against anyone but you; however, for every -1 suffered, targets gain +1 bonus die on Air or Fire tests against you until your next turn. For each foe you target with this action beyond the first, all targets gain one automatic success on their tests to resist.

WEAVE MAGIC

Description: You begin to gather the forces of magic about you. How well you manage to weave magic determines whether or not your spell is successful, or whether other, less desirable effects occur.

Effect: See "Casting Spells," page 175.

PHYSICAL MOVES

Unlike mental actions, physical moves can be linked together to create sequences; indeed, very few moves in an action sequence are performed independently. The moves themselves are listed and described below. Physical moves can be divided up into **positioning moves**, which get you around the battlefield, **attack moves**, which you use to beat up your opponents, and **defense moves**, which you use to avoid getting beaten up. More details on the three types of physical moves and how they interact are given below.

POSITIONING MOVES

Positioning moves are used, unsurprisingly, to move yourself about the battlefield. Positioning moves that aren't part of an attack sequence are usually unopposed. You need one success for each positioning move in a sequence. Let's say you have a Stride distance of 20 feet. If you want to cross a 40-ft. long open courtyard in a single turn, you'd need two Stride moves. So you link the two Stride moves into a sequence (Stride + Stride) and go. Normally, you'd just be able to cross the distance without making a test. However, you're in the middle of combat, trying to dodge gunfire and keep your

footing on the slick cobblestones. So just to make sure you get as far as you'd like and don't get caught in the open, you must make a Fire test, factoring in any penalties you might be suffering from. Each success that you gain applies to a single move in your sequence, from left to right. In this case, if you only got one success, you'd only be able to move 20 ft. during your turn.

If conditions or circumstances are particularly challenging, it may become more difficult to cover a certain distance. In these cases, terrain thresholds may require more than one success for each positioning move you attempt. See "Athletics," page 35, for a range of thresholds for Climb, Swim, and Stride tests.

ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF MOVEMENT

Positioning moves usually describe movement over land, but they can also be used to describe other natural forms of movement you may possess, such as flying, swimming, climbing, or earthstriding. Creatures must have appropriate traits or powers to use these alternate forms of movement, of course; a regular Joe can't just declare his intention to fly through the air and expect it to happen.

When Stride, Dash, or other positioning moves are used to describe alternate forms of movement, they're written after the fashion of "Stride [Fly]" or "Dash [Earthstride]." When they're used to describe regular overland movement, however, they're just written without elaboration as "Stride" or "Dash."

Crawl is a special move because, in addition to allowing land creatures to move forward on their hands and knees, it allows some creatures to use forms of movement that they aren't especially well suited to. Aerial and amphibious creatures, for instance, can use the Crawl move to walk on land at one-quarter their normal movement. Aquatic creatures, on the other hand, cannot use any form of movement other than swimming.

ATTACK MOVES

Characters use attack moves to deal damage to their opponents or achieve other effects such as grabbing or throwing enemies. Sequences that use attack moves are usually opposed. Attack moves allow the attacker to choose to attack many times in a turn, save up his energy for one reliable hit that may do a good amount of damage, or risk not hitting at all to finish his enemy in a single blow.

MASS ATTACKS

Just as with mental actions, some physical moves allow you to attack multiple targets at once. These are called mass attacks. You make your test, bidding karma if you like; then the opponents make their opposed tests to resist, bidding karma if they like. Rather than com-

STRIDE DISTANCES

The effects described for positioning moves frequently refer to a character's Stride. A creature's Stride is measured in feet and determined according to the following formula:

Stride = speed x gait multiplier (round up to the nearest 5 ft.)

Speed is based on the character's size, as shown on Table 6-2. Gait multipliers represent the general grace (or lack thereof) with which members of that creature's race move themselves about, and are listed on Table 6-3.

SPEEDS BY SIZE

Size	Example(s)	Speed
-2 to -5	Beagle to Mouse	5 feet
-1	Human child	10 feet
0	Human	20 feet
1	Bear	30 feet
2	Elephant	40 feet
3	Blue whale	50 feet
4	Adult dragon	60 feet
5	Leviathan	70 feet

Table 6-2

GAIT MULTIPLIERS

Descriptor	Example(s)	Multiplier
Sluggish	Blue whale	x .5
Slow	Elephant	x .75
Moderate	Human	x 1
Fast	Adult dragon	x 1.25
Speedy	Mouse	x 1.5

Table 6-3

SIDEBAR 6-1

binning their successes to oppose yours, each target opposes you individually. If you win the test, they suffer the effects of the action.

This is a very powerful effect, because each single point of karma that you spend has the potential to affect multiple targets. In other words, it's a very efficient use of karma. There are even some fighting styles that focus on attacking multiple foes, granting a mass attack effect.

DEFENSE MOVES

Characters who are attacked use defense moves as reactions to those attacks. For each attack move, a defense move must be included in a reacting sequence to counter it. So, for instance, if an attacker includes five attack moves in his action sequence, the defender must include five defense moves in his reaction sequence, or risk being hit.

Each defense move is useful in different circumstances. Block is probably the most effective defense move, but only works against weapons of a certain size and weight compared to your own. All other defense moves either require specific circumstances (like room to use the Dodge move) or inflict a penalty on subsequent tests (like the Spin move).

POSITIONING OR DEFENSE?

Many positioning moves, like Jump or Crouch, can also be used as defense moves. When used in this manner, the character does not end up traveling very far (he's now crouched instead of standing, for instance, or he leapt backward a foot or two), but he does get himself out of the way of the attack.

FULL PHYSICAL ACTIONS

Finally, some physical actions are not moves at all. They are unopposed actions that allow you to focus on the mental instead of the physical. These actions, called **full physical actions**, do just what their name states: they require an entire physical action to perform. Full physical actions are similar to mental actions in that they always require a test using a governing skill, though it may be a test with a specific threshold or it may have variable qualities of success. Full physical actions are usually unopposed.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER: SEQUENCES

While FIREBORN allows for strategic, battle-changing mental actions, the heart of all combats is the wild swings, the dynamic leaps, the desperate dives. Therefore, whereas a character may perform one mental action, he may perform an entire sequence of moves with his physical action. Sequences are described by listing the collection of moves that compose them, separated by plus signs (+). Some example sequences, and the actions they represent, are presented in Table 6-4.

A character's aspect scores determine the maximum number of moves in his sequences. On physical actions, a character may perform a number of moves in a sequence equal to his base Fire score. On physical reactions, a character may perform a number moves in a sequence equal to his base Water score. A character's skill ranks, meanwhile, determine which moves may be included. For each rank he has in a skill, a character's sequences may include one move governed by that skill.

Example: Mikhael the scion has Fire 5 and Water 3. His action sequences can be up to five moves long, and his reaction sequences can be up to three moves long. Let's say he has Athletics 4, Melee 5, and Quickness 2. His action sequences could include up to five moves governed by Melee, up to four moves governed by Athletics, and up to two moves governed by Quickness, and any combination thereof. He would not be able to perform a three-move sequence with a Dodge and two Spins, for instance, because they are governed by Quickness. Likewise, he could not spend all five moves Climbing; his Athletics 4 prevents him from doing so. However, he could use four Climb moves and one Ready to recover, since Ready is not governed by any skill. It is essentially a "free" move.

STANCES AND SKILLS IN SEQUENCES

As you may have noticed, sequences may involve moves that are governed by several different skills. The first sequence given in Table 6-4, for instance, uses Dash (governed by Quickness), Jump (governed by Athletics), and Fist Strike (governed by Melee). Which skill do you use? How do you move your dice? Which aspect pool is used?

First of all, physical action sequences are always tested with Fire. Physical reaction sequences are always tested with Water. Those are the pools you'll be rolling when making tests. Now the question becomes, how do you know which skill ranks (and therefore how many dice you can move) apply to the sequence? Sequences are always tested using the lowest skill ranks of all those involved in the sequence. In other words, when making stance changes in preparation for a sequence, all you need to know are two things:

- Is this a valid sequence for your character?

- Of the skills governing moves in the sequence, in which do you have the lowest rank?

Since you will be checking the moves in the sequence against your skill ranks with step one, to make sure you can perform those moves in the sequence, you'll already know which of the skills involved are your lowest. That skill is the one that determines how many dice you are moving, and therefore which one you are effectively testing with.

Example: Corin is a member of the Order of St. George, a divinely sanctioned extremist cult of dragon-slayers . . . and therefore of scion-slayers. He is chasing one of his quarry down an alleyway, and finally corners her. She clambers over some crates to try to get away, and he immediately moves in to attack, using the following sequence: Dash + Jump + Power + Sword Strike. He really only needed a three-move sequence to get close enough to swing at her, but he has Fire 4, so he figured there's no reason not to add another move, in this case Power.

As mentioned, Corin has Fire 4, and his sequence includes four moves. But what we're really concerned with at this point are his skills. First, can he perform all the moves he is using? He has Athletics 3, Melee 3, and Quickness 2. The sequence includes a single Quickness move (Dash), a single Athletics move (Jump), a single Melee move (Sword Strike), and one ungoverned move (Power). That means he needs to have at least rank 1 in each of those skills. No problem. Now the question becomes, how many dice can he include in his stance change to Fire before he makes the roll? Of the three skills used in the sequence, Quickness is at the lowest, rank 2. Therefore, Corin can move up to two dice to his Fire pool before making the test.

As you become familiar with each move and the skills they are governed by, putting sequences together on the fly will become fairly intuitive.

SAMPLE SEQUENCES	
Sequence	Effect
"Dash + Jump + Fist Strike"	A relatively simple sequence that would allow an attacker to run up to a gap between rooftops, leap over it, and punch an enemy.
"Dash + Dash + Jump + Fist Strike"	Same as above, but allows the attacker to cover a bit more ground before leaping.
"Stride + Jump + Fist Strike"	Same as above, but the attacker moves a bit more slowly, perhaps in order to avoid stumbling on a loose gravel rooftop obstacle.
"Dash + Jump + Knife Strike"	Same as above, but the attack is armed with a knife.

TABLE 6-4

SUCCESSSES WITH SEQUENCES

Attack sequences are almost always opposed. Regardless of whether the sequence is opposed or unopposed, physical sequences have base thresholds equal to their number of moves. If you achieve a number of net successes equal to the number of moves in the sequence, you perform each move in the sequence, in order. If you get fewer successes than you need to complete all moves in the sequence, you start at the beginning of the sequence (the left) and proceed to the right, spending one success for each move and stopping when you run out of successes. Some conditions may require you to spend more than one success on each move.

Example: As the scion that is being chased by Corin sees his sword descending upon her, she has a flashback to the mythic age. She is trapped in the form of a Tethan hunter, and is fleeing from vicious predators. She has a Stride of 20 feet. She is attempting to move to an eight-foot-wide ditch, jump across it, and climb a tree on the other side. It is 30 feet to the ditch, so she can cover that distance with a single Dash move (which allows her to move double her Stride distance, or 40 feet). Since her Jump move to clear the ditch is preceded by a Dash, she can clear 3 feet for each success devoted to the Jump move. And finally, since her Climb speed is 5 ft., or one-quarter her Stride speed, she'll need two Climb moves to get 10 feet up the tree. The hunter/scion can therefore get where she wants to be by creating a fairly intuitive sequence: Dash + Jump + Climb + Climb. She rolls her Fire test and gets only 2 successes, so she completed only the Dash and part of the Jump move: She ran to the ditch and leapt, but landed right in the middle of it.

This means that if you need to leap over a gap, roll under a barrier, and then slash at your foe, it will require three net successes, as opposed to the single net success you'd need if you were standing right next to the unlucky customer. The added difficulty makes sense, of

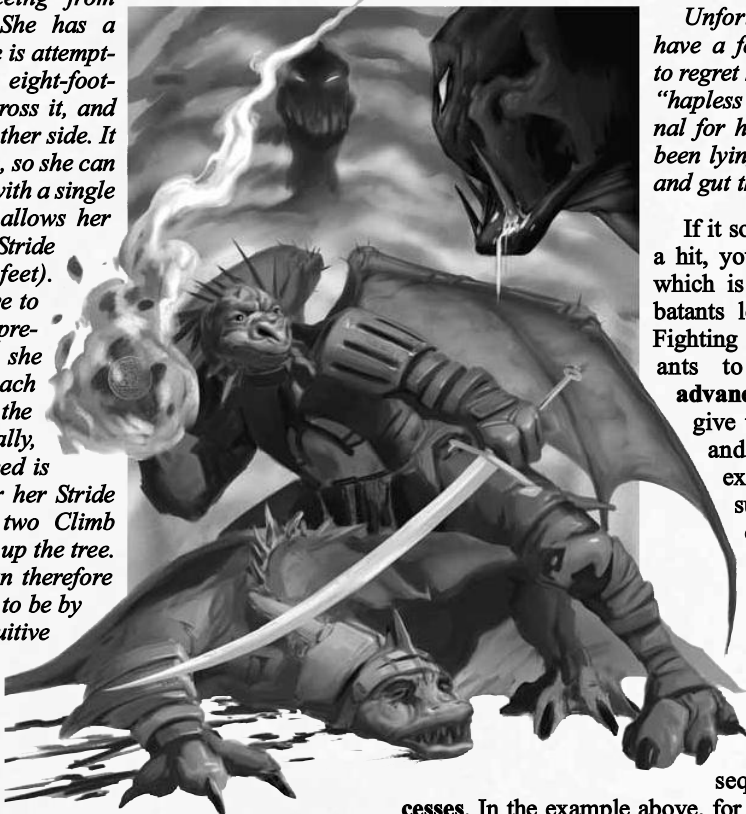
course. A defender who watches you charge toward him has time to prepare himself, and if you leap between rooftops before launching your attack, as the one moving, you're distracted by several other factors that require your attention before you even get to swing your weapon.

Example: Let's return to the modern age. If Corin only rolled three successes when executing the "Dash + Jump + Power + Sword Strike" sequence from the previous example, he would accomplish the Dash, Jump, and Power moves . . . but not the sword strike. Power by itself, without the follow-up attack moves, does nothing for him but create the sound of his sword whistling through air. He would have been better off to use a sequence that looks like this: "Dash + Jump + Sword Strike + Press." That way he would have gotten where he needed to be and scored the hit with his sword. The final move, the Press, wouldn't have been successful . . . but it's only +2 damage, as opposed to the sword's 8 damage.

Unfortunately, Corin will have a few, precious seconds to regret his mistake before the "hapless" scion gives the signal for her friends, who have been lying in wait, to move in and gut the ignorant zealot.

If it sounds difficult to land a hit, you're right. It can be, which is why effective combatants learn **fighting styles**. Fighting styles allow combatants to perform specific, **advanced sequences**, which give them both movement and extra damage in exchange for more net successes, as well as offering all sorts of devastating and debilitating **payoffs**. For more details on fighting styles, see page 158.

A key phrase to remember when discussing opposed sequences is **net successes**. In the example above, for simplicity's sake, the scion wasn't defending at all. It's much more likely that anyone you try to kill will defend against your sequences with sequences of their own. This means that the attacker must not only gain enough successes to succeed at the positioning moves used to get to his opponent or ready his weapon, he must also gain enough successes to overcome the defender's successes from his



defense moves. If he's not careful, the attacker can even get hurt on his own action!

Example: One of the scion's broodmates from the example above leaps from a nearby rooftop, dropping onto a crate behind Corin, and making a wild slash with his claws (a *Jump + Power + Claw Strike* sequence). Corin isn't entirely defenseless himself, however; what he lacks in Fire he makes up for in Water. Corin blocks once with his sword, then hammers mercilessly at his new opponent (*Sword Block + Ready + Sword Strike + Press*). The scion rolls four successes, while Corin rolls a whopping seven! Corin wins the test with three net successes left over to apply to his sequence, giving him the *Block*, *Ready*, and *Strike*. The *Ready* doesn't accomplish anything, and the *Block* was required to counter the single attack. But the *Sword Strike* hits the scion full-force, dealing 8 damage.

POSITIONING AND OPPOSED TESTS

Note that in the example above, Corin scored more successes and won the opposed test, preventing the attacker from landing his attack. However, no defense sequences can affect opponents' moves before they enter the defender's reach. No matter how solid Corin's

block and how furious his return swing, there's no possible way he could have stopped the attacking scion's *Jump* move; after all, it happened on the roof 15 feet above Corin's head. Likewise, even if a defender scores more successes than an opposing attacker, he cannot prevent the charging itself.

Characters using positioning moves outside the reach of an opponent always spend successes to perform those moves before comparing any remaining successes to the opponent and determining the winner and loser of the opposed test.

A character can always take an action or reaction against any character within his reach, even if that character is merely attempting one or more positioning moves. In this case, an opposed test is resolved as normal, and the moving character must win the test in order to perform any positioning moves at all.

Example: Corin's smug smile disappears quickly as a ferocious yell erupts from behind him. A third scion is rampaging toward him with a lead pipe (*Dash + Dash + Club Strike*). Corin attempts to perform the same defense move as before. The scion scores three successes and must immediately spend two of them on the two *Dash* moves—Corin can't do anything to stop these moves. The scion's remaining success is compared to Corin's three, and Corin wins the test with two net successes—he blocks the scion's *Club Strike* but doesn't get enough net successes to complete his sequence.

Now surrounded by angry half-dragons, Corin has a





crisis of faith. He decides that flight is his best option. He wants to try to slam past the “hapless” scion he was originally chasing, climb the fence behind her, then run full-tilt for safety (Dash + Slam + Climb + Dash). However, she doesn’t like that plan, and she’s in his way, so she gets to react to his action with a defense sequence (Kick Block + Ready + Kick Strike). The other scions do not get to respond because Corin is at arm’s length from them, and not attempting move directly through them. Corin rolls three successes, but so does the scion. She doesn’t land her kick strike, but neither does he make any headway toward saving his hide.

In cases like this, in which neither the attacker nor defender achieve anything, the exchange is a draw and combat returns to a status quo, often characterized by defensive positioning and wary circling. In other words, nothing happens and you move along to the next turn. Developments like this don’t do much for the attacker, but are usually quite acceptable from the defender’s point of view. After all, the attacker just used an action and managed to accomplish nothing, while the defender avoided harm.

WEAPON WEIGHTS AND READY REQUIREMENTS

Each weapon has a **ready requirement**. This is the number of Ready moves required to draw it from a sheath or holster if it is not already in hand, as well as to bring the weapon to bear to make a *second* attack with it after already using it once in a sequence. Like all other moves that are part of a sequence, each Ready move requires one success. This means that the higher the ready requirement of the weapon, the more difficult it will be, on average, to swing multiple times in a single turn. While edges can lower a weapon’s ready requirement, a weapon’s base ready requirement is dependent on its weight. Light weapons have a ready requirement of 1, medium weapons have a ready requirement of 2, and heavy weapons have a ready requirement of 3.

Even natural attacks like kicks and bites can have varying weights, so weapon weight and damage are always listed with a weapon. A weapon and its weight and damage are written as “Weapon Damage/Weight.” So for instance, a dagger is written as “Dagger 6/L,” while a glaive is written as “Glaive 18/H.”

Example: A tainted panther has been released from the London Zoo by a squad of cultists, who were promptly eaten by the thing. A lone scion now faces it down on the rooftops above the city. The panther’s natural attacks are bite 8/M and foreclaws 6/L, and it has Fire 4. The scion is armed with a greatsword 16/H and of course his fists and feet, punch 3/L and kick 4/M, and has Fire 5. The tainted panther growls low, once, then



attacks. A single bound takes it to within reach of the scion, where it slashes with supernatural hatred (*Jump + Bite Strike + L Foreclaw Strike + R Foreclaw Strike*). Because it is not using any weapons more than once, none of the attacks require Ready moves. The scion responds with a purely defensive move to block the three attacks (*Spin + Spin + Spin*). On the scion's turn, he prepares a furious assault of his own (*Greatsword Strike + Fist Strike + Kick Strike + Press*).

The more weapons you have at your disposal, whether natural or manufactured, the more appropriately you can respond to any combat situation. In the example above, each combatant only used each weapon a single time, rather than bringing a weapon to bear for a second strike. If a combatant uses the same weapon a second time in an attack sequence, it must be preceded by its ready requirement.

Example: Both the tainted panther and the scion have taken a few hits. The scion has found that his punches and kicks aren't bothering the creature in the slightest, so he focuses on using just his greatsword. He makes two swings with the monstrous weapon (which has a ready requirement of 3): *Greatsword Strike + Ready + Ready + Ready + Greatsword Strike*. The two hits decapitate the panther.

Meanwhile, the panther is a stubborn beast, and remains animated by the power of the taint coursing through its veins. It takes a moment to notice that its head is gone, then attacks the scion anyway. Since a bite is out of the question, it uses only its foreclaws: *L Foreclaw Strike + R Foreclaw Strike + Ready + L Foreclaw Strike*. The first two Foreclaw Strikes are "free," with no ready requirement; the final move, *L Foreclaw Strike* is a weapon being used for the second time, so its ready requirement of 1 must be met.

READY MOVES AND DEFENSE SEQUENCES

Every defense sequence must begin with a defense move, and must include enough defense moves to counter each of the attackers' attack moves. After blocking or dodging each attack, the defending character is free to finish his reactive sequence as he wishes . . . including using attack moves. With such sequences, the defender can actually turn the tables on an attacker during the attacker's own active phase and harm him.

Normally, in an opposed test, when the initiating character loses the test to the opposing character, nothing happens—the opposing character simply prevents whatever the initiating character was attempting.

In combat, however, when a defending character wins an opposed test, he spends his net successes to perform the moves in his declared sequence; he may have

the opportunity to inflict damage on his foe, even though it isn't his turn.

Any time a defense move is followed by an attack move, a Ready move must be inserted between them to represent the defender moving from defense to offense. This means that, in most cases, a defender must gain at least three net successes to land a hit against an attacker, because the defender must succeed first at a defense move, then a Ready move, and finally with the attack move. That can make it quite difficult to land a hit when on defense; but the fact that you can do it at all is a very powerful game mechanic in favor of the defender.

Example: The scion prepares to deftly avoid the panther's final, headless attack. In response to its many mindless claw attacks, the scion must provide an equal number of blocks, and if he likes he may follow them up with a Ready move and an attack move. He decides on the following sequence: *Dodge + Spin + Crouch + Ready + Fist Strike*. The three defense moves counter the panther's three attacks, the Ready move fulfills the defense-to-offense ready requirement, and the *Fist Strike* drives into the gaping hole where the panther's head used to be, pulverizing the beast's internal organs and stopping its heart.

PHYSICAL MOVES & ACTIONS

A list of possible physical moves and actions follows. Each entry includes the following:

NAME

Type: Positioning, attack, mass attack, defense, or full physical action.

Description: Summary of the move's effects in-game and any limitations or penalties it may impose.

Governing Skill: The skill by which the move is governed.

Full actions use the same layout as mental actions.

BLOCK

Type: Attack.

Description: Interpose a melee weapon (or shield, or fist, or other object) between yourself and a foe's incoming melee weapon, negating the attack. Block must be followed by a Ready move in order to perform an attack move in the same sequence.





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When writing this move, precede the word “Block” with the weapon; so you would write “Fist Block,” “Shield Block,” etc.

Governing Skill: Melee.

BURST

Type: Mass Attack.

Description: Target an entire 10-ft. cube of space with a hail of bullets from a rapid-fire weapon. Everything in the area suffers the weapon’s damage rating. A Burst is a mass attack. Creatures in the targeted area may attempt to dodge the gunfire, reducing the

damage by 5 for each success on their Water tests; as normal for mass attacks, creatures may only dodge the attack if they are within reach of appropriate cover or within reach of the edge of the area of effect. For every additional Burst move targeting the same space in a sequence, the damage dealt increases by 5.

You may target different areas with different Burst moves, but must use the Retarget move between Bursts.

This move may only be performed with weapons that list “Burst” in their weapon catalog descriptions. Each burst uses up 10 rounds of ammunition.

Governing Skill: Ranged.



PHYSICAL MOVES & ACTIONS



Block: Parry an attack with your weapon or fist.

Burst: Fire a rapid-fire weapon.

Cast: Cast a spell.

Climb: Ascend or descend a sloping or vertical surface.

Crawl: Move one-half your stride.

Crouch: Duck or lie flat.

Dash: Move double your stride.

Delay: Delay your mental action.

Dodge: Avoid an attack.

Escape: Escape a grab.

Fire: Pull the trigger on a mechanical weapon.

Focus: Negate or temporarily ignore mental disadvantage dice.

Grab: Get ahold of a foe.

Grit: Ignore wound or weariness dice while performing your mental action.

Interrupt: Delay a mental action until a specific moment.

Jump: Leap horizontally or vertically.

Knockout: Attempt to pound a foe into unconsciousness without doing lasting damage.

Power: Wind up for a mighty attack.

Press: Follow-through on a hit for extra damage.

Ready: Recover from a swing or a disadvantaged position, draw a weapon, etc.

Retarget: When using a ranged weapon, target a different foe or area.

Roll: Dive and move one-half your stride.

Sidestep: Move to the side a distance equal to your reach.

Slam: Smash into an opponent with your body.

Spin: Spin in place to avoid an attack or gather momentum.

Stride: Move your stride distance.

Strike: Attack with a natural or manufactured weapon.

Sweep: Attack several smaller foes at once with a single swing.

Swim: Stay afloat and move through water.

Toss: Throw an opponent.

Throw: Throw a weapon or release a bowstring.



SIDEBAR 6-6





CAST

Type: Full physical action.
Description: Cast a spell (see “Karma and Magic,” Chapter 7, for more details).
Governing Skill: Casting.

CLIMB

Type: Positioning.
Description: Move up to one-quarter your Stride up a surface sloped 45 degrees or more.
 You are considered disadvantaged when you Climb. This means that, if you end your turn while still climbing, you suffer a –1 physical disadvantage on all tests. On your turn, if you stop climbing, you can use a Ready move to recover, thereby ending your disadvantage.
Governing Skill: Athletics.

CRAWL

Type: Positioning.
Description: Move up to one-half your Stride distance while prone.
Governing Skill: Athletics.

CROUCH

Type: Positioning or Defense.
Description: Drop to a crouch or to prone. May be used as a defense move. When you end a turn crouched or prone, you are disadvantaged.
 If you use Crouch as a defense move, you must follow it with a Ready move to perform an attack in the same sequence.
Governing Skill: Quickness.

DASH

Type: Positioning.
Description: Move up to double your Stride distance. If you end a turn while dashing, you are disadvantaged.
Governing Skill: Quickness.

DELAY

Type: Full physical action.
Description: Holding your action until things are lined up right where you want them.
Effect: You spend your physical action to time your mental action; rather than performing it immediately, you instead wait until you’re good and ready. You may act at any initiative you wish, up to the negative integer of your original

initiative, but cannot interrupt another’s action. Your initiative then changes to the new initiative.

DODGE

Type: Defense.
Description: Stepping out of the way of an attack, whether melee or ranged. This is a purely defensive move. You must have a clear space to either side of or behind you in order to dodge, so dodging in tight quarters or when completely surrounded is not possible.
 When you use Dodge as a defense move, you must follow it with a Ready move to perform an attack in the same sequence.
Governing Skill: Quickness.

ESCAPE

Type: Full physical action.
Description: Escape a Grab. See “Grab,” below, for more information.
Governing Skill: Quickness.

FIRE

Type: Attack.
Description: Pull the trigger on a mechanical ranged weapon. For each Fire move that hits, the target suffers

WEAPON WEIGHTS AND BLOCKING

While blocking is the easiest and most efficient of defensive moves, it is somewhat limited by the weight of your opponents’ weapons. Weapons and shields can be used to block weapons within one weight category of their own. So for instance, a medium weapon can block both heavy and light weapons, whereas light weapons can only block light and medium weapons, lacking the mass to effectively block heavy weapons. Heavy weapons, likewise, are too unwieldy to effectively block light weapons.

However, a pixie’s greatsword and an ogre’s dagger are definitely of different sizes than their human counterparts’ weapons. Weapons of differently sized creatures might be considered different weights, as shown in the diagram below.

Size –2	Size –1	Size 0	Size 1	Size 2
Light	—	—	—	—
Medium	Light	—	—	—
Heavy	Medium	Light	—	—
—	Heavy	Medium	Light	—
—	—	Heavy	Medium	Light
—	—	—	Heavy	Medium
—	—	—	—	Heavy

Weapon weights for smaller and larger creatures compare similarly.

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DISADVANTAGED

Some moves cause you to become disadvantaged. If you end your turn without somehow ending the disadvantage, you suffer a -1 physical disadvantage penalty until you recover.

If the move that causes you to be disadvantaged is a type of movement, like Climb or Swim, you can end the disadvantage by using a Ready move and ceasing that form of movement (jump off of a wall, pull yourself out of the water, etc.). If the move that causes you to be disadvantaged is any other move, you can simply use a Ready move to recover, thereby ending your disadvantage.

Disadvantages from fighting style payoffs stack with this disadvantage, but multiple disadvantages caused by performing moves do not stack.

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the weapon's damage rating. Because the weapon is mechanical and does not need to gain velocity, it can be used against foes within reach. The Fire move may be used in conjunction with the Aim move, but not the Power or Press move. Firearms have ready requirements, just like melee weapons, as described by their reload value in Chapter Five (see page 102); rather than being based on weapon weight, however, each firearm's ready requirement is distinct to that weapon model. As with melee weapons, using a firearm a second time in a combat sequence requires that its ready requirement

When writing this move, follow the word "Fire" with the weapon; so you would write "Fire Pistol," "Fire Crossbow," etc.

Governing Skill: Ranged.

FOCUS

Type: Full physical action.

Description: You stop moving for a moment, the better to shake off distractions and focus your mind to the task at hand.

Test: Fire (Will), unopposed.

Effect: Ignore one disadvantage penalty per success on an immediate mental test. If you are suffering from any fading mental disadvantage penalties, they are removed instead of ignored.

GRAB

Type: Attack.

Description: Grab hold of an opponent rather than attempting to inflict damage. Optionally, you may inflict 2 points of damage per successful Press move following the Grab. The total damage for a Grab sequence is considered to be one attack, and is affected by armor value and staged up or down for size, as normal. Whether or

not you choose to inflict damage, the number of Presses following the Grab sets the TH for the victim to break the Grab on his turn. The TH is also affected by differences in size categories, increasing by 1 for every size category you are larger than your opponent, or decreasing by 1 for every size category you are smaller. If the victim attempts to do anything other than break the Grab on his turn, he suffers a -1 disadvantage penalty to either all physical tests or all mental tests (your choice) per successful Press you performed. If a victim remains grabbed from a previous turn, you may make a Fire (Melee) test opposed by his Water (Melee) to gain additional Presses, thereby increasing the TH for the victim to break the Grab and inflicting additional damage if desired.

If you are Grabbed, you may use the Escape or Grab moves as full actions to attempt to break the Grab. Each success you gain lowers the effective number of Presses your opponent has on you, thereby reducing your disadvantage penalty. If you reduce the number of Presses to zero, you are free of the Grab.

Governing Skill: Melee.

GRIT

Type: Full physical action.

Description: You ignore the effects of pain or exhaustion long enough to complete a mental task.

Test: Fire (Stamina), unopposed.

Effect: Successes equal the number of total wound dice and weariness dice you may ignore when performing an immediate mental action.

INTERRUPT

Type: Full physical action.

Description: You delay, but not just to see how things develop. You intend to interrupt someone else's action as it occurs. When you declare an Interrupt move, you must specify the action you are preparing to interrupt, who you think is likely to perform the action, and what your mental action will be. The test for this move is not performed until the instant that you've been waiting to interrupt. For more details on how to use the Interrupt move, see "Interrupt" in the mental action list, page 132.

Test (Single Foe): Fire (Quickness) opposed by Water (Quickness).

Effect: If you win, you may carry out and resolve your mental action before the target completes his, effectively interrupting his action. If you lose, you perform your mental action, but do so immediately after the foe you wanted to interrupt. If the expected action never occurs, you may perform whatever mental action you wish, whenever you wish, just as if you had used the Delay action. Your initiative then changes to the current initiative.



JUMP

Type: Positioning or Defense.

Description: Leap forward two feet for each success. If this move is preceded in sequence by a Dash, you may jump four feet for each success. If you do not follow a Jump move with a Ready move, you are disadvantaged. If you use Jump as a defense move, you must follow it with a Ready move to perform an attack in the same sequence.

Governing Skill: Athletics.

KNOCKOUT

Type: Attack.

Description: Hit a foe so soundly that he loses consciousness, without first having to reduce him to down (see "Taking Damage," page 147). The foe must have suffered at least enough minor wounds to fill in all of his minor wound boxes, or must be suffering from at least 1 wound die. The Knockout move must be preceded by a Strike with a weapon that has a blunt striking surface, and you must be able to target your opponent's head. Your opponent must make a Water (Stamina) test with a TH equal to the number of Power moves preceding the Strike, or lose consciousness as if down. Foes that are knocked out remain unconscious for 10 minutes per Power move preceding the strike, unless stabilized with the Medicine skill.

Governing Skill: Melee.

POWER

Type: Attack.

Description: At the expense of accuracy, put greater power and leverage behind one of your attack moves. For each Power move you perform in a sequence *before* an attack move, the attack move does +5 damage.

Governing Skill: None.

PRESS

Type: Attack.

Description: Driving an attack in deeper or harder once it hits. For each Press move you perform in a sequence *after* an attack move, the attack move does +2 damage. Presses are often used to "fill in" an attack sequence if you have moves left over.

Governing Skill: None.

READY

Type: All.

Description: Ready is one of the most versatile physical moves. It is essentially a recovery move, allowing you to regain your balance or bring a weapon to bear. Its main uses are:

- Draw a weapon, which requires a number of Ready moves equal to the weapon's ready requirement. If the weapon is concealed, the ready requirement to draw it increases by one.
- Use a weapon a second time in an attack sequence, which requires a number of Ready moves equal to the weapon's ready requirement.
- Recover from being disadvantaged (after a Climb, Crouch, Dash, Jump, Spin, or Swim move). In other words, stand up from being crouched or prone, pull yourself off of a climb onto a level surface, pull yourself out of water, etc.
- Perform an attack move after a defense move.
- Perform any miscellaneous action, such as opening a door, pulling a piece of equipment from your backpack, or tying your shoe.

If there is an instance in which you might use the Ready move twice (such as to make an attack after using a Crouch move defensively and to stand up from that Crouch move to recover from being disadvantaged), you must use the Ready move once for each effect.

Governing Skill: None.



CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

RETARGET

Type: Attack.

Description: When using a ranged or melee weapon, direct your subsequent moves to a new target.

Governing Skill: Melee or Ranged.

ROLL

Type: Positioning or defense.

Description: Dive and move forward one-half your Stride distance while prone. Can also be used as a defense move, effectively combining Crouch and Dodge, but has the same space requirements and causes a disadvantage if you end your turn while rolling. If you use Spin as a defense move, you must follow it with a Ready move to perform an attack in the same sequence.

Governing Skill: Quickness.

SIDESTEP

Type: Positioning.

Description: Step a few feet to one side, forward, or back, so as to extend your reach, peer down a hallway, move behind a door, etc. Commonly followed by an

attack and then another Sidestep to return to your original position.

Governing Skill: Quickness.

SLAM

Type: Attack.

Description: Use your body to slam into your opponent, or slam his body into someone or something else. The Slam move must either be preceded by a Grab move (in which case it inflicts damage equal to your size category +2) or a Dash move (in which case it allows you to move through and past your foe). Inflicts a -1 fading physical disadvantage penalty per successful Press after the Slam move.

Governing Skill: Melee.

SPIN

Type: Defense.

Description: Spin in place to avoid an attack.

If you end your turn while spinning, you are disadvantaged. If you use Spin as a defense move, you must follow it with a Ready move to perform an attack in the same sequence.

Governing Skill: Quickness.

3 MULTIPLE TARGETS 3

If you cannot use the Sweep move against your target, and you do not have a power or legacy that gives you a mass attack, you must resort to other methods to attack multiple targets. That is what the Retarget move is for. A sequence in which you use the Retarget move might look like this: Strike I + Retarget + Ready + Strike II.

The Roman numerals after each attack move designate which target they are aimed at. All of the attack moves preceding the Retarget move target the first opponent, while the Retarget move and all of the attack moves following it are aimed at a second opponent.

You perform your test and your opponents perform their reactions as normal. However, this is not a mass attack; your opponents combine their successes against yours. As normal, you resolve your attack sequence from left to right; if you don't get enough net successes to land a hit on the first target, you're definitely not going to be able to follow through and hit the second target, as well. On the other hand, if the first target puts up little to no resistance, you're likely to have quite a few more successes left over to carry over and apply to the moves targeting the second opponent. Obviously, this type of attack sequence is best used in situations in which you have plenty of karma to bid and your opponents have little or none.

STRIDE

Type: Positioning.

Description: Move your Stride distance.

Governing Skill: Athletics.

STRIKE

Type: Attack.

Description: Attack a foe with a melee weapon, whether your fist, an improvised object, or an item made expressly for killing. Causes damage to the foe equal to the damage rating of the weapon.

When writing this move, precede the word "Strike" with the weapon; so you would write "Foreclaw Strike," "Sword Strike," etc.

Governing Skill: Melee.

SWEEP

Type: Mass attack.

Description: Attack multiple foes that are smaller than you, whether with a tail, a greatsword, or a wrecking ball.

As with blocking, weapon weight can make a big difference with the Sweep move. Any time you are attacking opponents that are at least one size category smaller than you, you may be able to sweep. A good rule of thumb for knowing whether or not you can sweep a group of opponents is, if they couldn't block your attack even with a heavy weapon of their own, you can sweep

SIDEBAR 6-8



them. So for instance, a size 0 character can only sweep size -1 characters if he has a heavy weapon. A size 2 character, on the other hand, can sweep size -1 characters even with a light weapon, because as shown on Sidebar 6-8, that weapon is too large for such characters to block, even if they use the heaviest weapon size available to them.

Sweep is a mass attack; rather than combining their successes against you, each opponent responds to your successes separately. So if you achieved 3 successes and your opponents achieved 1, 2, and 4 successes, respectively, you would hit and inflict damage on the first two, but not the third.

When writing this move, precede the word "Sweep" with the weapon; so you would write "Tail Sweep," "Greatsword Sweep," etc.

Governing Skill: Melee.

SWIM

Type: Positioning.

Description: Swim a distance equal to one-half your Stride.

When you use the Swim move, you are disadvantaged.

Governing Skill: Athletics.

THROW (OR RELEASE)

Type: Attack.

Description: Chuck a spear, knife, or other potentially damaging object at a non-adjacent foe. Because they use strength, thrown weapons may be used in conjunction with both the Power move and the Aim action. Because this move requires momentum and space to gain leverage before the throw, you cannot use it on opponents within reach. If you wish to target an opponent within reach with a thrown weapon, you must first use a positioning move to move away.

When writing this move, follow the word "Throw" with the weapon; so you would write "Throw Spear," "Throw Knife," etc., or "Release" when using a bow and arrow, so you would write "Release Arrow."

Governing Skill: Ranged.

TOSS

Type: Attack.

Description: For each successful Press move following your Toss move, you may throw or push a foe a number of feet equal to your reach. Must be preceded by a Grab move.

When calculating distances tossed, use the reach of the thrower to determine the distance each Press causes the victim to travel. If the thrower is larger than the victim, the tosser gains 1 Press per size category the thrower is larger. In other words for every size category the thrower is larger than the victim, the victim travels a

number of extra feet equal to the thrower's reach. If the thrower is smaller than the victim, the thrower loses 1 Press per size category the tosser is smaller. In other words, for every size category the thrower is smaller than the victim, the victim travels that many few feet times the thrower's reach.

Governing Skill: Melee.

FULL-TURN ACTIONS

Some actions require a character's full attention for his entire turn. The most notable is the Treat action, governed by Medicine. Full-turn actions require the use of both the character's mental action and his physical action.

The GM may dictate that any action that requires a skill test and that is not covered by the moves listed in this chapter requires a full-turn action. For instance, hacking into a mainframe on-site while your broodmates hold off the security guards would be a full-turn action. As a rule of thumb, a full-turn action takes as many turns as the TH to accomplish the task.

TREAT

Type: Full-turn.

Description: Make an Air (Medicine) test to treat poison, stabilize, or staunch a bleed effect.

Governing Skill: Medicine.

TAKING DAMAGE

When attackers make successful attacks, they inflict **damage** determined by the damage rating of the weapon used in the attack (knife, fist, or shotgun, for example). Damage can be modified—increased or decreased—by armor, the attack move that was employed to land the hit, and a variety of other factors.

The damage generated by an attack is used to determine the **wound die** it inflicts on the victim. That's where the **health chart** comes into play. The health chart converts damage into wound dice. As a character sustains more and more damage, he sustains more and more wound dice until—eventually—he dies.



CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

3 PUTTING IT TOGETHER: THE ACTION SCENE IN TOTAL 3

The following example uses a variety of different types of moves and sequences, along with karma, to illustrate how an action scene might run.

Example: A scion who's been captured by mooks claiming to be minions of Those Who Dwell Below is thrown into a small circular pit where an abominable, spiny creature lives amid filth and garbage. The scion's captors intend for the creature to eat him, but the scion would prefer an altogether different outcome.

The scion has Fire 3, Water 3, Earth 5, Air 4, Athletics 3, Quickness 2, Melee 4, and 10 points of karma left at his disposal. He has one physical action, one mental action, and two stance changes (as normal for most scions).

The creature has Earth 1, Air 1, Fire 4, Water 5, Athletics 1, Quickness 1, Melee 4, and four points of karma. It has one physical action, one mental action, and one stance change (it's a crippled aberrant, a twisted offspring of a Dweller).

The action sequence begins and initiative dice are rolled. Both roll only one success, but the scion elects to burn a point of karma for one success while the Game Master decides that the creature chooses to conserve its more limited karma. The scion will act on initiative two and the creature on initiative one.

The scion chooses to act when his initiative comes up. With his mental action, he uses the Karmic Call action to reach out to his broodmates, hoping they will hear him and come to his aid. He knows there's a dampening effect that has been preventing him from reaching them, but he can't afford the stance change to move dice to Air, so he just rolls his four dice. He gains two successes, which the GM tells him isn't enough. The player of the scion shrugs; he expected as much.

Now the player begins his physical action. First, he's going to need to stand up from prone, since he was unceremoniously tossed into the pit. Then he'll want to draw the knife from his boot . . . this thing doesn't look like it'll be too phased by fists or harsh language. The knife has a ready value of 1 to draw, so that will take one Ready move. That leaves the scion (who has a Fire of 3) with one move left in a sequence, if he wants to use it, so he throws in a Stride . . . the creature is too far away for him to attack, so he might as well put some space between them. The scion's sequence looks like this: Ready + Ready + Stride. The first ready is to stand up, the second is to draw the knife. The player makes a stance change to Fire; he's using two ungoverned moves and one Athletics move, so he can move a number of dice up to his ranks in Athletics into

Fire. He chooses to move three dice into Fire from Air, leaving dice in Water for when the beast lashes out with its spiny tentacles, and leaving some in Earth in case it attacks him mentally or in case his broodmates somehow did hear his call and are attempting to respond to him. The GM declares that the shifting detritus in the pit has a terrain TH of 2. The scion manages to pull out four successes, so he stands, draws the knife, and backs away 20 feet.

On initiative one, the creature uses its mental action to bellow horribly, attempting what passes for an Intimidate test to its alien mind. The creature makes no stance change to Air (it only has one, and the GM decides it'll save it for the attack), and the scion is saving his stance change for his defensive moves, so he does not either. The two sides roll; the scion gains two successes and the creature gets none at all. The scion is unimpressed by the gurgling mutterings of the creature.

The creature then attempts its physical action. The GM declares that the creature will use two Stride moves to get within reach (thanks to its traits, it ignores the terrain threshold of the pit), then attempt the Tentacle Strike move. He then declares a stance change to move four dice (one from Earth, two from Air, one from Water) into Fire. In response, the scion declares that he'll use the Dodge move, moving two dice (his maximum, as Dodge is governed by Quickness) from Earth to Water. The GM hems and haws about whether the scion, who is backed against the wall of the pit, has room to Dodge, but eventually decides to allow it. The creature will roll eight Fire dice, while the scion will roll five Water dice. The creature gains five successes, while the scion only manages one measly success. The creature needs to spend 2 successes on the two Stride moves, and has 3 remaining—enough to overcome the scion's 1.

Next, both sides must bid karma. The scion would really like to get out of the way of the attack. He secretly decides to spend 2 karma, which would give him a total of 3 successes. The creature also spends 2 karma, increasing its successes to 5.

When the karma points are revealed, the scion gulps—the creature has 5 successes against the scion's 3, for a total of 2 net successes on the attack. The creature's attack lands solidly. Next, damage will be calculated.

THE HEALTH CHART

Characters' health charts are generated in the course of scion creation. To learn how wounds are handled in the game, refer to Diagrams 6-1 through 6-6 below.

Each of the formulas in the left-most column of the chart determine the amount of damage an attack must deal (or exceed) to inflict the listed wound dice. A character may ignore any attack that inflicts less damage than that necessary to inflict a minor wound.

Health charts start out empty (as shown in Diagram 6-1). Each character permanently fills in minor wound checkboxes so that the number of blank boxes is equal to the character's base Earth score (as shown in Diagram 6-2). Each time a character sustains a minor wound, he must place a slash or some other mark through one of the checkboxes. When the checkboxes are all filled, any subsequent minor wounds inflict one wound die.

Each time a character sustains a wound die, he must record it in the "Wounds" intersection in the middle of his aspect boxes. For each wound die a character has, he suffers a -1 wound penalty to all tests. As more wound dice are sustained, the penalties they cause are added to his "Wounds" total. There are three special levels of damage: **down** (6 wound dice), **dying** (7 wound dice), and **dead** (8 wound dice).

A character who is at 6 wound dice is down, and is unconscious. He can't make stance changes, perform actions, declare reactions, or do anything at all that would require him to be aware of and interact with his surroundings. A character who is down must make a Water (Stamina) 1 test (including penalties for wound dice and weariness dice) at the beginning of each combat turn or suffer another wound die.

A character who falls to 7 wound dice (either because he failed his Water (Stamina) test while unconscious from wounds or because he takes wounds that send him directly to that level) will suffer another wound die at the beginning of the *third turn* after he reached 7 wound dice.

A character who reaches 8 wound dice dies.

Medical attention can help characters who are unconscious or bleeding out. A character within reach can make an Air (Medicine) 1 test as a physical action to prevent such a character from degrading further, at least unless he is wounded again (see "Medicine," page 41).

Example: A scion with Water 3 and Earth 4 has the health chart shown in Diagram 6-4.

After that scion sustains two -1 wounds, one -2 wound, and two minor wounds, his character sheet would be marked as shown in Diagram 6-5. The scion in question would suffer four penalty dice to all tests.

If the scion then sustained three more minor wounds, he would end up at -5 wounds, because once a character sustains all of the minor wounds he can take, addi-

3 USING THE HEALTH CHART 3

A blank health chart

Health Chart		
< 1/2 W	no effect	☐
1/2 W	minor wound	☐
W+	-1	☐
2W+	-2	☐
3W+	-3	☐
4W+	-4	☐
5W+	-5	☐
6W+	-6	☐

DIAGRAM 6-1

A filled-in health chart for a character with Water 4, Earth 5, and no minor wounds

Health Chart		
< 4	no effect	☐
4+	minor wound	☐
8+	-1	☐
12+	-2	☐
16+	-3	☐
20+	-4	☐
24+	-5	☐
28+	-6	☐

DIAGRAM 6-2

A filled-in health chart for a character with Water 4, Earth 5, and 3 minor wounds

Health Chart		
< 4	no effect	☒
4+	minor wound	☒
8+	-1	☒
12+	-2	☒
16+	-3	☐
20+	-4	☐
24+	-5	☐
28+	-6	☐

DIAGRAM 6-3

SIDEBAR 6-10

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

tional minor wounds are treated like -1 wounds. So when he suffers the first two minor wounds, he puts cross-marks in his remaining minor wound boxes; when he suffers the third minor wound, he's got no more minor wound boxes to cross off, so he instead takes another -1 wound. His character sheet would now be marked as shown in Diagram 6-6.

Health Chart		
< 3	no effect	
3+	minor wound	
6+	-1	
9+	-2	
12+	-3	
15+	-4	
18+	-5	
21+	-6	

DIAGRAM 6-4

Example: To return to our previous example, the scion has just been nailed by a spiked tentacle. The tentacle does 9 damage. Since the scion has Water 3, looking at his health chart,

we see that 9 damage inflicts a -2 wound. The scion writes " -2 " in the wounds section of his character sheet.

When the scion's turn rolls around, he's going to be suffering a -2 wound penalty to all tests. Considering that he's not much of a fighter to begin with, his situation doesn't look good.

ARMOR

Armor, quite simply, absorbs damage. Any time you would suffer damage, first subtract your armor value. The number remaining is the damage that actually "gets through" and has the potential to inflict minor wounds or wound dice.

HEALING

Characters who get beat up have the opportunity—eventually—to get better. The following sections describe how characters recover from wounds.

WOUNDS

Minor wounds heal fairly quickly, while recovering from wound dice is a long and arduous process. Minor wounds heal at a rate of one per day, with or without medical assistance. Wound dice, on the other hand, are a bit trickier; they must be removed one by one. It takes a number of days equal to twice a character's current wound dice to improve the penalty by one die; this is called a **healing period**. Doing so without medical attention requires a Water (Stamina) test 1 at the end of each healing period. This test, like all of the character's other

DIAGRAM 6-5

DIAGRAM 6-6

tests during the healing process, suffers from his current wound dice. Failure means that the wound does not improve; getting fewer than half the required successes (rounding up) means that the wound actually worsens by one die.

A wounded character receiving the benefit of medical attention is much better off. At the beginning of each healing period, the physician caring for the wounded character makes an Air (Medicine) test. For each success he rolls, the wounded character gains +1 bonus die to his Water (Stamina) test to heal at the end of the healing period. Additionally, if the physician meets a TH equal to or greater than the wounded character's current wound dice, he cuts that healing period's duration in half.

A physician without proper equipment suffers materials penalties to the tests, as described in "Medicine," page 35. A wounded character with at least 1 rank in Medicine can attempt to provide medical care for himself, but suffers his normal wound dice penalties to his own Air (Medicine) tests.

Luckily, a character's minor wounds heal simultaneously to and independent of his wound dice, regardless of the results of his Water (Stamina) tests.



Example: The scion manages to use one of his powers to escape from the pit and the creature within, but not without being beaten nearly to death: he has suffered his maximum number of minor wounds and is suffering from 5 wound dice. He is now holed up in an abandoned barn without access to medical care. He has no healing magic or hoard items, and he knows no Medicine himself, so he has no recourse but to wait his wounds out. On the first day, one of his minor wounds disappears, so his player erases the slash mark through a minor wound box. Over the next two days, the other two minor wounds fade as well. Now the scion can at least get in a fistfight without reopening his old wounds, even if he's incredibly unlikely to land any hits. After 10 days of scrounging for food in dumpsters, the scion makes his first Water (Stamina) test at a -5 penalty. With a base Water score of 3 and a Stamina of 2, he has 5 dice to roll. Subtracting the -5 from his wound penalties, that leaves him no dice to roll. He decides to spend a point of karma to give himself one success; he manages to knit his body back together a bit. He is now at 4 wound dice. 10 days down, 8 more till the next healing period, then 6, then 4, and finally 2, for a total of 30 days of healing.

WEARINESS

When a character suffers from wound penalties it represents that he is, unsurprisingly, wounded. Some effects, on the other hand, do not wound a character, but

still cause long-term disadvantage penalties. Such penalties represent that the character is weary. A character can reduce his weariness dice by one for every hour of sleep or three hours of waking rest that he gets. Waking rest consists of doing nothing more strenuous than preparing a light meal, reading and writing, or standing watch.

Example: A character who rests for six hours and then sleeps for three would recover five weariness dice.

SIZE DOES MATTER!

Each creature has a size category, ranging from -5 (an insect) to 0 (a human) to +5 (a leviathan, the largest and oldest of dragons). Obviously, a titan throwing a pixie is going to have a different effect than a pixie trying to throw a titan.

First of all, each size category has an accompanying unit of measurement, called its reach, that determines a few different things: how close the creature needs to be to attack you in melee, the distance it can jump with a single success on a Jump move, and the distance it can fall without harm, among others. Creatures smaller than size 0 always have reaches of at least 1 foot.

Size and reach affect the following moves and actions:

Damage: Damage scaling is probably the most dramatic effect of size differences. After damage is deter-



REACH

All creatures have a reach dependent upon their size categories. Reach is a variable that is often referred to calculate distance, such as the distance a creature can jump with a single success on a Jump test, or what is considered adjacent to him. A creature within reach can be attacked with a melee weapon; a creature outside of reach must be approached before he can be attacked.

Size	Example(s)	Reach
-2 to -5	Beagle to Mouse	0 feet
-1	Human child	1 foot
0	Human	2 feet
1	Bear	5 feet
2	Elephant	10 feet
3	Blue whale	15 feet
4	Adult dragon	20 feet
5	Leviathan	25 feet

SIDEBAR 6-9

mined from an attack, including adding damage from Power or Press moves and subtracting it due to armor values, it is scaled up by one wound per size category the attacker is larger than the target, or down by one wound per size category the attacker is smaller than the target. This means that the claws of an adult dragon, even if they are a light weapon that deal the same damage as a dagger, can easily skewer a man.

Firearms are almost always scaled for size 0 creatures, but they do such large quantities of damage that they still present dangers to large creatures.

Block: Some weapon weights and sizes may be too large (or too small!) for you to block effectively. Table 6-8 on page 143 shows which weapon weights may be used to block one another, and how weapon weights for creatures of different sizes compare.

Grab: The TH for the defender to break free increases by 1 for every size category the attacker is larger than him, and decreases by 1 for every size category the attacker is smaller than him.

Jump: The distance crossed with each success on a Jump move is either equal to a creature's reach, or double the creature's reach if preceded by a Dash.

Toss: When calculating Tosses, use the reach of the thrower to determine the distance each Press causes the victim to travel. If the thrower is larger than the victim, add one Press per size category the thrower is larger. If the thrower is smaller than the victim, subtract one Press per size category the thrower is smaller.

Melee Attacks: A creature can attack targets with melee weapons that are within reach. A creature's defense sequences can begin to oppose a foe's moves as soon as he comes within reach. Some weapons,

like glaives, increase a character's effective reach for these purposes only.

Fire Weapon: A creature can attack targets with a mechanical ranged weapon (anything with a trigger or release mechanism), even if they are within reach. Doing so allows the target to respond with a defense sequence that can include melee attacks.

Throw Weapon: A creature cannot attack targets with thrown weapons if the target is within reach. Whether or not the attacker is within the target's reach affects whether or not the target can respond with a defense sequence that includes melee attacks, but does not matter for the purposes of the attacker being able to use the weapon. A creature cannot use thrown weapons against targets within its own reach because of the leverage, momentum, and room required to effectively propel the weapon.

Falling: Falling inflicts 1 damage per reach fallen, minus one per success on a Water (Athletics) test. A creature traveling more rapidly into the ground (perhaps because it dove right into the dirt, was thrown that direction from directly above, or has reached terminal velocity) suffers 2 damage per reach fallen, and may not make a Water (Athletics) test to lessen the damage.

FLIGHT

Airborne movement and combat sequences work much the same way as ground movement. Every creature that can fly has a **flight gait**, which works exactly the same as normal gait except that it is used to calculate the creature's speed in the air (See "Stride Distances," page 135). In addition, every creature capable of flight has a **flight maneuverability**, which ranges from 1 to 6. Just as with ground movement and sequences, a flying creature's Fire score determines how

many moves it can perform in a sequence involving flying, and its Athletics and Quickness skills are also likely to have a great influence on its airborne presence.

Flying creatures use positioning moves just like other creatures. However, they can only use them in a specific order: Jump (takeoff or landing), then Crawl, then Stride, then Dash, then Spin. This represents the buildup of momentum necessary to remain in flight while performing the moves. So for example, a dragon on the ground would need to execute the Jump move in order to get airborne, then could use the Crawl move to slowly lift himself higher, then achieve greater forward momentum with the Stride move. If he wanted to Spin, he would have to first achieve greater speed by using the Dash move. Likewise, if the dragon wishes to land without harming himself, he must first decelerate to the Jump move, moving from right to left along the chain above instead of from left to right.

These moves assume flight in a straight line. If the dragon wishes to stall or change direction (whether horizontally or vertically), he can use the Crawl move to stall in place, effectively "turning 0 degrees," the Stride move to turn up to 90 degrees, the Dash move to turn up to 180 degrees, and the Spin move to turn up to 360 degrees. As with moving, these moves can only be used to turn by advancing along the specific order of flight moves as described above (in this case, it is in order to achieve the velocity necessary for the rapid direction change). Flying creatures can insert attacks at any point in the sequence, just like ground creatures.

Example: A grounded dragon with Fire 3 and Athletics 3 can perform the following sequence as a physical action: Jump [Takeoff] + Crawl [Fly] + Stride [Fly]. With another physical action, the dragon can perform the sequence Dash [Turn 180] + Stride [Fly] + Foreclaw Strike. In this latter case, he also needs Melee

FLIGHT MANEUVERABILITY

Maneuverability	Immediately Accelerate to or Decelerate from . . .	Positioning Move's Effect
1	Jump	Takeoff or land.
2	Crawl	Stall or move forward up to one-half your Stride [Fly] distance.
3	Stride	Move forward between one-half your Stride [Fly] distance and your full Stride [Fly] distance, or turn up to 90 degrees.
4	Dash	Move forward between your Stride [Fly] distance and twice your Stride [Fly] distance, or turn up to 180 degrees.
5	Spin	Turn 360 degrees.
6	Any Move	Hover.

TABLE 6-5

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT



1 and Quickness 1, since the sequence includes an attack and a Dash.

A flying creature cannot make two turning moves in a row; he must move some distance in between them. Thus, a dragon could not use the sequence Stride [Turn 90] + Stride [Turn 90] + Stride [Fly]. Nor can he simply stay in one place, with Crawl [Stall] + Crawl [Stall] + Crawl [Stall]. He could, if it wished, use the sequence Stride [Turn 90] + Crawl [Fly] + Stride [Turn 90].

When ascending, a dragon covers half the normal distance with positioning moves; when descending, a dragon covers double the normal distance with positioning moves.

Getting anywhere via flight would seem to require a lot of room to build up speed, slow down, and change direction. However, as mentioned above, flying creatures also have maneuverability ratings. A flying creature's maneuverability rating allows him to skip some positioning moves in a sequence, "accelerating" or "decelerating" directly to the desired move. The number of moves the creature may skip is shown on Table 6-5. For example, a dragon with maneuverability 3 can take off and go immediately into a Stride move. The table indicates the fastest positioning move a dragon with a given maneuverability can attain immediately upon take off or prior to landing. It also summarizes each move's effects.

As the table shows, having a maneuverability of 1 doesn't really do anything at all for you. It's the bare minimum, so any creature with a flight gait has at least flight maneuverability 1. At the other end of the spectrum, maneuverability 6 flyers can hover instead of using the Spin move, staying in one place indefinitely.

Example: *A dragon with Fire 6, Athletics 5, Melee 1, and Maneuverability 1 can go from standing on the ground to an aerial spin: Jump [Fly] + Crawl [Fly] + Stride [Fly] + Dash [Fly] + Spin [Fly]. He can also go from standing on the ground to landing in front of a foe across a chasm, and attacking: Jump [Fly] + Crawl [Fly] + Stride [Fly] + Crawl [Fly] + Jump [Fly] + Bite.*

Example: *A dragon with Fire 5, Quickness 5, and Maneuverability 4 is much more dexterous in the air than her kin above, able to go from perching at the top of a cliff to swooping down and attacking a foe on the cave floor and then flying back up to her perch, all in a single action: Dash [Fly] + Foreclaw Strike + Dash [turn 180] + Hindclaw Strike + Dash [Fly]. The dragon can accelerate directly to Dash with the first move due to her high maneuverability, and she can decelerate from a Dash to a landing. Note that the dragon needs Melee 2 to perform the preceding sequence, since it includes two attack moves.*

WIND

Powerful winds can inhibit fliers, limiting their maneuverability. A wind at the right angle can also help, if it speeds you on your journey. A creature flying directly into the wind may face terrain thresholds, as he would when swimming in choppy seas or climbing a slick surface. The terrain threshold for flight moves is equal to 1 for every 10 mph of the wind's speed.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Vehicle combat works similarly to normal combat. Instead of positioning moves made to get your body around the battlefield, you use positioning moves to get a vehicle around the battlefield. On the other hand, if you do not succeed at positioning moves while driving, you do not simply stop; you keep going, just not in the direction or fashion you had hoped. Add gunfire and innocent bystanders, and you have a recipe for high-octane disaster.

Action scenes involving vehicle combat follow all of the same steps as normal action scenes, except that one phase, called the vehicle maneuvering phase, is added to the end of each cycle of character turns. All characters act as normal during their initiatives, with pilots needing to devote at least some of their attention to controlling their vehicles, as described below. Once all characters have acted, all vehicles travel their current speeds, and pilots' maneuvers are performed.

Pilots can perform sequences on their initiatives, but all physical sequences must include at least one Pilot move, a special positioning move used only when piloting a vehicle. The Pilot move is governed by Travel. Each Pilot move allows the pilot to accelerate, decelerate,

PILOT MANEUVERS

Threshold	Conditions
1	Make a soft turn (<45 degrees)
1	Accelerate by 1 speed rank (+1 to the TH for each speed rank beyond the first)
1	Decelerate by 2 speed ranks (+1 to the TH for every 2 speed ranks beyond the first 2).
3	Avoid a small hazard or obstacle, such as a person
3	Make a sharp turn (>45 degrees)
5	Avoid a large hazard or obstacle, such as a bus
5	Make a hairpin turn (>90 degrees)
+1	Per current speed rank of vehicle above 1
+1	Light traffic or rough roads
+3	Medium traffic or wet roads
+5	Heavy traffic or icy roads

TABLE 6-6

ate, or perform a maneuver. Further, each Pilot move has a terrain threshold, depending on the complexity of the maneuver and the conditions of the driving environment, as shown on Table 6-6. Pilots declare their intentions with each Pilot move when they construct their sequences, but the vehicles do not actually move (and therefore the Pilot moves are not resolved) until the maneuvering phase. During the maneuvering phase, all Pilot moves are resolved simultaneously.

SPEED

Speed ranks in vehicle combat, like Wealth and Cost, are estimated rankings of ranges of real-world numbers. These numbers are not meant to be used for detailed schematics of chase scenes, but rather to give the GM and players an idea of how fast the rest of the world is passing by, and how difficult it is to steer when going that quickly. As such, there's not a lot of granularity to the value. A vehicle with a speed rank of 0 is a vehicle moving at walking speed, while one moving at rank 15 is at the extreme end of the ground vehicle spectrum. Table 6-7 gives approximate real-world equivalents for each speed rank. In addition to determining the THs of maneuvers, speed can be used to determine rough estimates of distance between vehicles throughout a chase

SPEED RANKS

Speed Rank	Ft./Turn	mph
0	50	5
1	100	15
2	200	30
3	300	45
4	400	60
5	500	75
6	600	90
7	700	105
8	800	120
9	900	135
10	1000	150
11	1100	165
12	1200	180
13	1300	195
14	1400	210
15	1500	225

TABLE 6-7

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scene or road combat.

When accelerating on a straightaway without obstacles, bonus dice from handling become automatic successes, instead. That means, for example, someone in a Ferrari Testarossa is invariably going to blow the doors off someone in a Ford Taurus Wagon.

ATTACKING VEHICLES

When firing on enemy vehicles, you have two options: aim for the vehicle, or aim for the passengers. Hitting the former is much easier than hitting the latter. When you aim for a passenger, he may perform a defense reaction as normal, using the vehicle's cover value as automatic successes on his defense roll. Simultaneously, the vehicle's pilot performs a defense maneuver on his vehicles' behalf, using the Pilot move as a defense move and applying the vehicle's handling bonus or penalty to the test. The two results are compared to the attacker's test separately. If both the passenger and the vehicle are hit, both take damage from the attack. If only the passenger is hit, he takes damage from the attack and the vehicle suffers none. If only the vehicle is hit, it takes damage from the attack and the passenger suffers none.

BLOOD ON THE HIGHWAY

If an acceleration or deceleration Pilot move is failed, you simply do not manage to increase or decrease speed (though the latter can cause significant problems if there are large objects directly in your path). If a maneuvering Pilot move is failed, you must immediately make a Water (Pilot) test at the same TH as the move you failed. If you succeed, you retain control of the vehicle. If you fail, you lose control of the vehicle. It decelerates by 60 mph each turn; if it comes to a stop without hitting something first, the passengers remain unharmed. If the vehicle hits an unyielding obstacle first, such as another car, a tree, or a building, the vehicle suffers 2 damage for every 5 mph of the vehicle's speed at time impact, minus its armor value. Passengers

suffer the same damage, minus the vehicle's cover and any personal armor they are wearing.

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

Lobbing an explosive into just the right area can be challenging. First, make an unopposed attack test, targeting a spot that you choose. The TH to do so within the first range increment is 3, usually quite do-able, but more difficult as range penalties are applied. If you don't meet the TH, the explosive lands off target somewhere within the range increment into which you aimed it. The direction is determined randomly by the GM, and the distance is determined by the number of successes you were short of the required 3. For each success you were short, the explosive lands 20% of its range increment away from its target. That is to say, if you miss while throwing a grenade (which has a range of 30 feet) at a spot 90 feet away, it will land somewhere within 30 feet of that spot. If you miss by one, it will land six feet from the target, because 20% of 30 is six; if you miss by two, it will land 12 feet from the target, and so on.

EXPLOSIVE WEAPON DAMAGE

Explosive weapons have blast radius increments that are very similar to range increments. Characters within the first increment of the blast radius suffer full damage (potentially; see below), while the damage decreases by 5 with each blast radius increment until it ceases doing damage.

DODGING EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

If you're caught in the blast radius of an explosive weapon, you're about to enter a world of hurt. Magic, bomb suits, and luck can save you, but not much else. When subjected to an explosive blast, you may attempt to avoid some of the damage with the Dodge or Roll move. For each success you gain on the test, you may reduce the damage by 5. You must either be within reach of effective cover or the edge of the blast, at the GM's discretion, to attempt this move.



AIMING DIRECTLY AT TARGETS

Aiming a grenade launcher, RPG, or some other weapon of minor destruction at a mobile target like a car or a creature is much more difficult than aiming for a general area. The payoff is fairly satisfying, though: if you hit, none of the damage can be dodged.

In order to hit a target square-on with an explosive, you may use the Aim move, but suffer a -5 disadvantage penalty on the test to do so. The down side is that, if you miss, your explosive likely travels out of range of your target, because you were aiming for a body instead of a good impact spot.

FIGHTING STYLES

Fighting styles let you use sequences that look a lot like other sequences; each one is a collection of moves separated by plus signs. They are different from normal sequences, however, in that they cannot be created on the fly in the course of play, as other sequences can. Rather, each fighting style sequence represents a learned and inflexible succession of moves that, when launched in the proscribed order, give some benefit over and above the sum of the moves that make it up.

A fighting style sequence is described by the following factors:

Fighting Style: The fighting style of which the sequence is a part. If you know a fighting style, you can perform any of its sequences for which you have the minimum aspect and skill scores. Learning a fighting style requires the expenditure of a certain number of APs (the same number is used during character creation to determine how many fighting style picks a particular fighting style is worth).

Name: A sequence's name may be simple or colorful, direct or lengthy. It usually describes—though sometimes obliquely—the effects of the sequence, and always serves to make the

sequence distinct from all the other sequences in FIREBORN.

Moves: This is a listing of the moves that make up the sequence, presented in the order they occur. The moves in a sequence are separated from each other by plus signs. Obviously, the number of net successes a character must generate in order to successfully complete the sequence is equal to the number of moves in the sequence.

Rank: Rank describes the sequence's overall potential to deal damage. The higher the rank, the more effective it can be if executed successfully.

Payoff: One of the benefits of performing a fighting style sequence is that, if it's successful, the final effect is a little bit more than the sum of the sequence's moves. Payoff gives a description of what that "little bit more" consists of. A wide variety of payoffs are described under "Payoffs," below. Generally speaking, the higher a sequence's rank, the more effective and deadly its payoff will be.

RESOLVING FIGHTING STYLE SEQUENCES

To determine the results of a fighting style sequence, the attacker and defender roll dice, bid karma, and determine the winner's net successes as normal for an opposed test.

Then, if the winner scored at least one net success for each move in the sequence, the entire sequence is successful and the attacker does the base damage of each attack move in the sequence in addition to inflicting the sequence's payoff. However, if the winner achieves some net successes but does not meet the sequence's threshold, each net success confirms one of the sequence's moves, counting from left to right, but the rest are not successfully completed and the payoff does not materialize. To say it another way, each positioning or attack move for which you have a success

is completed, and your character either changes position accordingly or does appropriate damage for each attack



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move that hits, but the rest of the moves, for which there are no corresponding success, are not successful and do not occur. Of course, if the attacker doesn't achieve any net successes, he doesn't perform any of the moves in his sequence.

Example: A boxer having a cigarette in a back alley (Fire 4, Water 4, Melee 5, four points of karma) is accosted by a gangster who wants him to throw his next fight (Fire 4, Water 3, Melee 3, Quickness 3, one point of karma). Rather than even respond to the insult, the boxer declares that he will unceremoniously launch the Flurry of Blows sequence, which consists of the moves "L Fist Strike + R Fist Strike + Ready + L Fist Strike." He makes a stance change to move three dice from Air to Fire.

The gangster declares that he will use Fist Block + Fist Block + Dodge to resist the attack. He uses a stance change to move three dice—his maximum, since he only has Melee 3—from Fire to Water.

They proceed to roll dice. The boxer rolls six dice and generates four successes. The gangster rolls six dice and only generates two.

Next, each bids karma. The boxer realizes that he'll only have two net successes, so the only part of his sequence that he'll be able to finish as things stand are the first two Fist Strikes. He'd like to also land the Ready and final First Strike and gain the sequence's payoff, so he bids two points of karma. The gangster, who only has one point of karma, decides to save it, thinking that he'll probably need the automatic success down the line when he renews his line of persuasion.

When the bids are revealed, the boxer has six total successes and the gangster still only has his two. After comparing their totals, the boxer comes out with four net successes, enough to execute the whole Flurry of Blows sequence. The gangster suffers the effects of all three Fist Strikes as well as the sequence's payoff, an extra 5 damage done by the final Fist Strike.

FIGHTING STYLE SEQUENCES IN DEFENSE

Fighting style sequences, like other sequences, can be turned into defense sequences. All that is necessary is that it begin with enough defense moves to block all the attacks in the attacking character's sequence. Once all the attacks have been accounted for with defense moves, a fighting style sequence can be "tacked on" to the defense moves. Obviously, the more attack moves in the attacking character's sequence, the less likely a defend-

ing character is going to be able to try to swing back. Conversely, if you put all your effort into a single attack move, and miss, your foe is much more likely to be able to get in a riposte.

Example: The example of the boxer and gangster from above continues to the next turn. The gangster launches a Double Strike, moving three dice from Air to Fire. The boxer sees no reason to let the gangster off easily, so he declares that he'll respond with the Butterfly and Bee defensive sequence, which consists of the moves Dodge + Ready + Fist Strike. Because the gangster is using two attack moves, the boxer must add another Dodge in front of the sequence. Both sides roll six dice from their Fire and Water pools, respectively. The gangster's results are miserable—only one success—but the boxer celebrates five whopping successes. Neither side chooses to bid karma; the boxer figures there's no point and the gangster still wants to conserve his meager karma stash.

Because the boxer used a defensive sequence and generated the most successes, some of his moves can be completed, even though it's the gangster's active phase. The boxer has four net successes, enough for him to complete his extra Dodge as well as all three moves of the Butterfly and Bee sequence. He deals damage to the gangster, which will include payoff gravy, since the entire sequence was completed.

The gangster starts to wonder if his job pays enough.

LEARNING FIGHTING STYLES

In order to use a fighting style in play, a character must learn it as part of character creation or advancement. The character must simply pay the cost in fighting style picks with his advancement points or character creation picks. The fighting styles available to FIREBORN characters, and their component sequences, are listed later in this chapter (see "The Catalog of Pain," below), and more will be presented in future FIREBORN supplements.

As normal, the character must have the minimum aspect score and skill ranks necessary to perform any given sequence.

MULTIPLE TARGETS

Some fighting style sequences are specially designed to attack multiple targets. When this is the case, each attack move in the sequence is labeled with a Roman numeral to indicate which defender is the target of each move. (Combat sequences where the attack moves are not labeled with Roman numerals—which accounts for the majority of combat sequences—are only useful against single targets.)

Example: *The Whirling Dervish combat sequence consists of the moves “L Fist Strike (I) + R Fist Strike (II) + Press + L Kick Strike (I).” It consists of a punch with one fist to the primary target, followed by a punch with the other fist to a secondary target, finished up with a kick to the primary target.*

When a fighting style sequence with multiple targets is announced, the attacker’s primary, secondary, and tertiary targets (or however many targets there are) must be identified. All of the targets must be within reach of the attacker unless the sequence includes a positioning move that allows the character to travel between different targets (in which case the allowable distance is based on how far the attacker can move with the specified positioning move), or the sequence includes one or more ranged attacks (in which case the maximum distance is defined by the range of the weapon in question). Characters may not use multiple-target sequences against single targets; such sequences are powerful, but they are also inflexible. This means that a two-target sequence cannot be begun if there is only one enemy within reach. However, using the Whirling Dervish sequence above as an example, if target I crumples to the ground after the first Fist Strike, the attacker may continue the sequence along the chain up until he reaches an attack that targets the now-inconsequential foe. At that point, the sequence is aborted.

To resolve a fighting style sequence against multiple targets, the normal steps for a mass attack are followed. All defenders have the opportunity to declare defensive moves or sequences, make stance changes, and roll for successes. If order of declaration is important, defenders act in the order of their initiative placement, with the fastest characters going first. All characters involved, however, should roll dice and bid karma simultaneously.

To determine the success or failure of the attack, the attacker’s successes are compared to those scored by each target independently. So if the attacker gained five successes on his attack test, each target would need five successes on his defense test to completely oppose the attack. When defending against a mass attack sequence, you ignore attack moves targeting other characters; they effectively become the opponent’s Ready moves, as far as you’re concerned. Using the example above, target I would be reacting to the sequence “L Fist Strike (I) + Ready + Ready + L Kick Strike (I).” Meanwhile, target II would be reacting to the sequence “Ready + R Fist

Strike (II) + Ready + Ready.”

The payoffs for mass attack sequences are also applied independently. If target I counters all of the attacker’s successes but target II counters none of them, then target I avoids taking damage while target II suffers damage and the sequence’s payoff.

Example: *A scion chasing a devious and highly placed minion of the Gray Men is interrupted by a pair of brick rotters, hideous wall-crawling creatures. Hoping to dispatch them quickly and continue his pursuit before his quarry escapes, he announces the Whirling Dervish sequence (which is detailed in the example above). One of the rotters looks a little tougher than the other one, so the scion announces that the tougher rotter will be the primary target of the sequence and the other will be the secondary target. The scion (who has Fire 4, Melee 4, and five points of available karma) announces a stance change to move four dice from Earth to Fire.*

The GM announces that the first rotter (Water 3, Quickness 2, no available karma), whose initiative is higher than his companion’s, will use a sequence of Dodge moves to defend himself. He makes a stance change to move two dice from Fire to Water. The second rotter (Water 2, Melee 2, three points of available karma) announces a sequence of Block moves, and likewise moves two dice from Fire to Water.

Both sides roll their dice. The scion, rolling eight dice, achieves three successes. The tougher rotter, rolling five dice, achieves one success, and the other rotter, rolling only four dice, also gets one success.

Next, both sides have the opportunity to bid karma to add to their success totals. The scion realizes that, as things stand, his sequence won’t do much against his foes. He throws three karma points into the mix to at least give himself the possibility of landing all four Whirling Dervish moves.

The tougher rotter has no karma to spend, so he has no decision to make. The second rotter, however, wants to make absolutely sure that the final (and powerful) Kick Strike doesn’t work out. He bids two points of karma, hoping those two additional successes will reduce the quality of the scion’s attack enough to prevent the finishing kick from finding its target.

Both sides having decided, the karma bids are revealed. The scion comes out with six total successes, the first rotter remains at one success, and the second rotter kicks up his successes to three. Against the first rotter, therefore, the scion has five net successes: enough to complete the sequence and knock him pretty hard against the wall he crawled off of. The second rotter had a bit more luck, giving the scion only three net successes: enough to land the second move of the sequence, a Fist Strike, but not enough success to be able to apply the payoff.

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PAYOFFS

All of the payoffs that can be inflicted by the combat sequences in this chapter are described below. In the descriptions, the person launching the attack is always referred to as the “attacker,” while the target of the attack is the “victim.” In all cases other than the Additional Damage payoff, the damage caused by the final strike must be sufficient to inflict a wound die, or must **connect**, in order to have any effect. For instance, if a knife-fighting move that normally includes a Blind payoff only inflicts a minor wound on a dragon, thanks to his much larger size and his tough scaly hide, the payoff does not occur. This prevents outrageous events like a giant being beheaded by a butter knife thanks solely to the wielder’s finesse, but allows for David and Goliath or Bard vs. Smaug epic strikes by the particularly skilled, blessed, or well-informed against the conspicuously vulnerable.

Additional Damage +X: The final move in the

sequence (or the latest attack move in the sequence, for sequences that don’t end with attack moves) inflicts +X damage.

Bleed: The victim begins to bleed heavily and suffers a new minor wound at the beginning of each of his character turns when he resets. A character who suffers this result more than once bleeds at the rate of multiple minor wounds each round. Once a character’s minor wound boxes have been filled, he suffers 1 wound die, as normal, for each minor wound he would normally suffer, including wound dice sustained from bleed effects. Bleed effects may be staunched with the Treat full-turn action, requiring an Air (Medicine) test; the successes gained equal the number of bleed effects that are staunched.

Blind: The victim is permanently blinded. See Sidebar 6–10, “Gross Trauma,” for a description of the full effects of blindness.

Daze: The victim loses his next mental action. If Daze is followed by a number (“Daze X”), that number

GROSS TRAUMA

Combat sequence payoffs can produce some pretty nasty results, but these are the dangers of the world of FIREBORN. This box describes the long and short-term game results of the various bodily traumas that can spring from combat as well as the dangers described in other chapters of this book.

Blindness: A blind character—whether blinded temporarily or permanently—suffers a –4 disadvantage penalty on all physical tests, and automatically fails mental tests that involve sight, such as aiming a weapon. The GM may rule that some physical actions are completely beyond the capability of a blind character, such as taking photographs or solving jigsaw puzzles. Certain familiar actions, on the other hand, might suffer a reduced penalty, or no penalty at all.

Deafness: A deaf character—for whatever duration—cannot hear. In addition to automatically failing all Senses tests that rely solely on hearing, the character suffers a –1 disadvantage penalty on all rolls that require careful attention to balance, like Athletics and Quickness, because of the role the ears play in equilibrium. The character also suffers a –2 disadvantage penalty to Casting tests, because he cannot hear his own voice well enough to ensure proper phrasing.

Dismemberment: A character who loses a single finger or toe suffers no long-term impairment unless the GM wishes to impose a specific penalty on some action that obviously involves the missing digit—a right-handed character missing his right index finger but attempting to pitch a curveball, for example.

A character missing one hand or arm can’t do any-

thing that would require the use of that hand or arm, and suffers a –1 disadvantage penalty on tests for which most people use both hands or arms. A character missing both hands or arms generally cannot manipulate physical objects in a useful manner . . . although he might still be a wiz at those video games with the dance control pads.

A bipedal character missing one foot or leg suffers a –2 disadvantage penalty to all physical tests that require movement or maintaining balance while standing, and he must use the Crawl move to walk forward without aid. Even with the aid of a crutch or staff, such a character’s gait becomes Sluggish, regardless of what it was before. A quadruped missing one foot or leg suffers a –1 disadvantage penalty to all physical tests that require movement or maintaining balance while standing, and his gait is lessened to the next lowest rating.

Characters of either type that are missing two or more feet or legs can’t attempt any positioning moves other than Crawl and Roll, and are always considered disadvantaged. (If they have access to unusual forms of movement like flight and earthstride, those can still be attempted normally.)

There are obviously a large number of assistive devices like wheelchairs and prosthetics that can lower or eliminate these penalties. GMs should address them on a case-by-case basis.

Paralysis: A character who is paralyzed cannot attempt physical actions or mental actions that require physical movement, such as programming a computer.

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indicates the number of mental actions the victim loses.

Deaf: The victim is permanently deafened. See Sidebar 6–10, “Gross Trauma,” for a description of the full effects of deafness.

Death: The victim of the sequence is killed or destroyed outright.

Disadvantage (Physical) X or Disadvantage (Mental) X: The victim suffers X fading disadvantage penalties to either all physical tests or all mental tests. Each time the victim resets, his fading disadvantage penalties in all aspects decrease by one.

Example: *An attacker deals Disadvantage (Physical) 3 to an opponent. The victim immediately sustains a –3 fading disadvantage penalty to all Fire and Water tests. Upon his reset, the victim’s disadvantage penalties decrease to –2.*

Disarm: The victim drops one weapon (or other item held in the hand) to the ground. If the victim is holding more than one item in hand, the attacker chooses which one is dropped.

Dismember (Type): One of the victim’s body parts is completely severed from his body. “Digit” dismemberment results in the removal of a finger, toe, or ear; “Extremity” dismemberment results in the severance of a hand or foot; and “Limb” dismemberment removes an arm or leg. See Sidebar 6–10, “Gross Trauma,” for a

description of the full effects of dismemberment.

In addition to the effects described there, Digit Dismemberment results in one Bleed effect, Extremity Dismemberment results in three Bleed effects, and Limb Dismemberment results in five Bleed effects.

Paralyze: The victim is permanently paralyzed from the neck down. See Sidebar 6–10, “Gross Trauma,” for a description of the full effects of paralysis.

Pin X: The victim is pinned in a Grab, where “X” equals the number of Presses (and therefore the increase in TH) that the payoff adds on the attacker’s behalf. Follows the normal rules for Presses after Grabs, including the option to inflict damage and modification for differing size categories.

Push X: The victim is knocked backwards as if thrown, where “X” equals the number of the attacker’s reaches the victim is pushed back. Follows the normal modification for differing size categories.

Note that the effects of Push are cumulative with the effects of other moves in the sequence—like Slam and Toss—that move the victim around.

Stun: The victim loses his next physical action. If Stun is followed by a number (“Stun X”), that number indicates the number of physical actions the victim loses.

Trip: The victim is forced to the ground in the prone position. He is immediately disadvantaged, and must use the Ready move on his turn if he wishes to stand.

THE CATALOG OF PAIN

The sections that follow present the basic fighting styles and corresponding sequences available to FIREBORN characters. The fighting style descriptions use the following terms:

TH: The number of net successes needed to perform the sequence and achieve the payoff. There’s nothing tricky about this number, it’s simply here as a “quick view” of the number needed.

Name: The name the sequence goes by. Sequences that are italicized are defense sequences.

Moves: The moves (in order) required to perform the sequence.

PR: Stands for **payoff rating**. An approximation, on a scale of 2–10, of the relative power of the payoff. A weapon strike’s normal damage would be considered to have a payoff rating of 1.

Payoff: Description of the sequence’s payoff.



FLYING FISTS (I)



The Flying Fists style teaches a fighter to use his fists, and use them quickly, to do nothing more complex than inflict as much pain as possible.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Double Punch	L Fist Strike + R Fist Strike	1	Additional damage +5
3	One-Two	L Fist Strike + Press + R Fist Strike	1	Additional damage +5
4	Flurry of Blows	L Fist Strike + R Fist Strike + Ready + L Fist Strike	1	Additional damage +5
5	Furious Rain	L Fist Strike + Spin + R Fist Strike + Ready + L Fist Strike	1	Additional damage +5
6	Rain of Blows	L Fist Strike + R Fist Strike + Ready + L Fist Strike + Ready + R Fist Strike	1	Additional damage +5



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BARROOM BRAWLING (1)

Barroom Brawling makes use of brute force and handy objects to beat opponents down. Humiliated foes and destroyed surroundings are the most common effects of this fighting style; any harm inflicted up them is purely incidental. Whole bottles are 4/L weapons, broken bottles are 5/L weapons, and barstools and pool cues are 6/M weapons.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Bulldozer	Dash + Slam	3	Knockback 3
2	Eat Glass	Spin + Bottle (whole) Strike	3	Knockout
3	Go for the Jugular	Power + Power + Bottle (broken) Strike	5	Additional damage +5, bleed
3	Stick It	Ready (grab pool cue) + Crouch + Pool Cue Strike	4	Disadvantage (physical) 4
4	Bludgeon & Bleed	Bottle (whole) Strike (I) + Ready + Spin + Bottle (broken) Strike (II)	2	Disadvantage (physical) 2
4	Butterfly & Rhino	Dodge + Ready + Power + Fist Strike	2	Additional Damage +10
5	Who, me?	Ready (grab barstool) + Sidestep + Barstool Strike + Sidestep + Ready (replace barstool)	4	Additional damage +10, trip

ENTRAPPING DEFENSE (1)

Entrapping Defense is a purely defensive fighting style, focusing on grabs, that uses a foe's weight and momentum against him.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Momentum	Dodge + Ready + Grab	2	Push 2
3	Missstep	Crouch + Ready + Grab	2	Trip
4	Possession	Dodge + Ready + Sidestep + Grab	3	Disarm
4	Punishment	Crouch + Ready + Power + Fist Strike	3	Knockout
5	Restriction	Dodge + Ready + Power + Sidestep + Grab	4	Disadvantage (physical) 4
5	Retribution	Crouch + Ready + Sidestep + Power + Grab	4	Dismember digit

LURING BLADE (2)

The Luring Blade style is favored by canny swordsmen, who like to fight combat on terms of their own choosing. By making their opponents come to them, they conserve their strength. Assumes the use of two light weapons, two medium weapons, or a mix of the two (for these purposes, Fist could be one of the weapons).

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
4	1st Reply	Weapon Block + Ready + L Weapon Strike + R Weapon Strike	1	Additional damage +5
5	2nd Reply	Weapon Block + Ready + Jump + Spin + Kick Strike	3	Knockout
5	3rd Reply	Roll + Ready + Ready + L Weapon Strike + R Weapon Strike	4	Additional damage +20
5	4th Reply	Spin + Ready + Ready + Power + Weapon Strike	6	Additional damage +30
6	5th Reply	Weapon Block + Ready + Power + L Weapon Strike + Power + R Weapon Strike	5	Additional damage +25
6	6th Reply	Dodge + Ready + Power + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	9	Additional damage +45

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RANK AND FILE (2)

The Rank and File style is the basic and highly regimented style many sword fighters in both the modern and mythic ages are taught. All of the sequences in this style require the combatant to have a sword or other medium bladed weapon in hand.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	The First Station	Weapon Strike + Press	1	Push 1
3	The Second Station	Stride + Weapon Strike + Press	3	Additional damage +5, trip
4	The Third Station	Weapon Strike + Ready + Ready + Weapon Strike	1	Disadvantage (physical) 1
4	The Fourth Station	Power + Power + Weapon Strike + Press	5	Additional damage +10, disarm
3	The Fifth Station	Dash + Power + Weapon Strike	5	Daze
2	The Sixth Station	Power + Weapon Strike + Press	3	Additional damage +15

LONG ARM (2)

The Long Arm style encompasses moves used by peasant levies with spears and halberds in the mythic age as well modern warriors bearing re-purposed stop signs. All of the sequences below require the combatant to use a heavy weapon that increases the wielder's reach by 1 rank.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Fell	Power + Weapon Strike	3	Push 1, trip
3	Neuter	Power + Power + Weapon Strike	5	Push 2, disarm
4	Impale	Power + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	7	Push 3, bleed
4	Carve	Stride + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	7	Additional damage +15, push 4
5	Gore	Stride + Power + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	9	Additional damage +20, push 5
5	Reverse	Weapon Strike (I) + Ready + Ready + Ready + Weapon Strike (II)	1	Additional damage +5

STREET FIGHTING (2)

Street fights often end up as face-to-face trading of blows. Street Fighting is a very efficient, if not very savvy, style that focuses on knocking the other guy down before he can do the same to you.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Gut Shot	Power + Fist Strike	3	Disadvantage (physical) 3
2	Groin Shot	Power + Kick Strike	3	Disadvantage (mental) 3
2	Head Butt	Power + Slam	3	Knockout
3	Assault	L Fist Strike + Slam + R Fist Strike	1	Push 1
3	Backhand	Spin + Ready + Fist Strike	3	Additional damage +5, disadvantage (mental) 2
4	Rabbit Punches	L Fist Strike + R Fist Strike + Ready + L Fist Strike	1	Disadvantage (physical) 1
4	Uppercut	Crouch + Ready + Power + Fist Strike	6	Stun

CHAPTER SIX: ACTION AND COMBAT

UNDERHANDED (2)

Beloved of low-down gang bangers and pit fighters everywhere (if anything is beloved of such scum of the earth), the Underhanded style includes every dirty trick in the book.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Groin Kick	Power + Kick Strike	3	Disadvantage (mental) 3
2	Sucker Punch	Spin + Fist Strike	3	Additional damage +10, push 1
3	Sand in the Eye	Crouch + Ready + Fist Strike	4	Additional damage +5, disadvantage (mental) 3
3	Box the Ears	Power + Power + Fist Strike	5	Daze
4	Bum Rush	Dash + Slam + Press + Press	3	Push 3
4	Family Jewel Thief	Power + Grab + Press + Spin	4	Bleed
5	Eye Gouge	Power + Power + Power + Power + Fist Strike	9	Trip, blind
5	And Stay Down!	Power + Power + Power + Power + Kick Strike	9	Paralyze

ARCHANGEL (3)

The Archangel style allows dragons to deal death from above, making their ability fly a major asset.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Comet	Dash [Fly] + Slam	3	Knockout
3	Hunter Above	Dash [Fly] + Foreclaw Strike + Dash [Fly]	3	Additional damage +15
4	Aerial Lash	Dash [Fly] + Spin + Power + Foreclaw Strike	6	Dismember extremity
5	David's Sling	Jump + Crawl [Fly] + Grab + Roll + Throw	5	Push 5
6	Earth's Embrace	Bite + Grab + Press + Jump [Fly] + Crawl [Fly] + Stride [Fly]	1	Additional damage +5 (and is grabbed in air)

CRUSHING MASS (3)

The Crushing Mass style makes use of the dragon's huge size to overwhelm lesser foes.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Lay Low the Giant	Power + Tail Strike	3	Trip
4	Crushing Strike	Stride + Power + Grab + Slam	5	Daze
5	Constrict	Power + Power + Grab + Press + Choke	5	Pin
5	Avalanche	Climb + Jump + Power + Grab + Roll	7	Additional damage +5, stun
5	Spine Crush	Dash + Jump + Power + Power + Tail Strike	9	Paralyze
6	Encroaching Tide	Stride + Crouch + Spin + Power + Power + Tail Strike	10	Death

SUBMERGED (3)

The Submerged style is favored by aquatic and earthstriding dragons, taking advantage of the fact that their foes are often out of their natural elements to do as much damage as possible. All positioning moves used below can be used either while swimming or earthstriding.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Death Fountain	Dash + Power + Bite	5	Additional damage +25
3	Into to the Deeps	Grab + Press + Dash	2	Trip, target pulled under
4	Leaping Swordfish	Dash + Jump + Power + Bite	7	Additional damage +35
4	Evasive	Dash + Bite + Spin [turn 180] + Dash	3	Additional damage +15
5	Blood in the Water	Power + Power + Power + Power + Bite	9	Additional damage +45
5	Buried Alive	Stride + Grab + Press + Spin [turn 180] + Stride	3	Disadvantage (physical) 3, target pulled under

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DRUNKEN MONKEY (3)

The practitioner of the drunken monkey style stumbles from stance to stance looking for all the world like he's smashed out of his mind—which he may well be. Moves in Drunken Monkey sequences do not cause their practitioners to be disadvantaged.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	<i>Avoid the Idiotic</i>	<i>Escape + Ready + Slam</i>	3	<i>Disadvantage (physical) 3</i>
3	Warn the Unwary	Sidestep + Kick Strike + Sidestep	3	Disarm
4	<i>Confuse the Witless</i>	<i>Crouch + Ready + Jump + Fist Strike</i>	5	<i>Daze</i>
4	Dismember the Unbroken	Spin + Grab + Power + Fist Strike	4	Dismember Digit
5	Pummel the Impudent	L Fist Strike + Press + R Fist Strike + Press + Slam	1	Push 1
5	Blind the Unseeing	Dash + Ready + Stride + Spin + Kick Strike	7	Blind
6	Punish the Merciless	Roll + Power + Kick Strike + Jump + Power + Fist Strike	7	Additional damage +35

EASTERN SMALL STYLE (3)

The eastern styles are catch-alls for the wide variety of well-rounded Asian martial arts that focus on attacks with the hands, feet, and light weapons. All focus on combining battlefield movement with maximum damage, ignoring opportunities for unusual or flashy payoff effects.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Rat	Crouch + Weapon Strike	3	Additional damage +15
2	Hare	Jump + Weapon Strike	3	Additional damage +15
3	Mouse	Dash + L Weapon Strike + R Weapon Strike	2	Additional damage +10
3	Kangaroo	L Kick Strike + Dash + R Kick Strike	2	Additional damage +10
3	<i>Rabbit</i>	<i>Dodge + Ready + Kick Strike</i>	2	<i>Additional damage +10</i>
3	Scorpion	Stride + Kick Strike (I) + Weapon Strike (II)	2	Additional damage +10
4	Grasshopper	Dash + Jump + Power + Kick Strike	7	Additional damage +35

PUGILIST (3)

The pugilist style is as close to highbrow as you can get while bloodying your knuckles and pulping another guy's nose. Pugilism focuses on knocking your opponent off-balance and wearing him down.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Step Up	Stride + Fist Strike + Press	2	Disadvantage (physical 1), knockback 1
3	Even the Odds	Power + Fist Strike + Press	3	Additional damage +5, disadvantage (physical 2)
3	<i>Butterfly and Bee</i>	<i>Dodge + Ready + Fist Strike</i>	2	<i>Knockback 2</i>
4	Uppercut	Crouch + Power + Ready + Fist Strike	6	Additional damage +5, daze
4	Knock the Wind	Stride + Sidestep + Power + Fist Strike	6	Additional damage +5, stun
5	Nose Job	L Fist Strike + Sidestep + Power + Power + R Fist Strike	4	Additional damage +10, disadvantage (mental 1), disadvantage (physical 1)
5	Goodnight	Power + Power + Power + Fist Strike + Knockout	7	Knockback 5, trip

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EASTERN MEDIUM STYLE (4)

The eastern styles are catch-alls for the wide variety of well-rounded Asian martial arts that focus on attacks with the hands, feet, and medium weapons. All focus on combining battlefield movement with maximum damage, ignoring opportunities for unusual or flashy payoff effects.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Fox	Roll + Ready + Kick Strike	4	Additional damage +20
3	Snake	Escape + Ready + Kick Strike	2	Additional damage +10
4	Wolf	Stride + Weapon Strike (I) + Spin + Kick Strike (II)	3	Additional damage +15
4	Boar	Dash + Weapon Strike + Press + Press	3	Additional damage +15
4	Ape	Jump + Grab + Press + Press	3	Additional damage +15
4	Crocodile	Crouch + Weapon Strike + Roll + R Kick Strike	1	Additional damage +5
5	Leopard	Dash + Jump + Power + Weapon Strike + Kick Strike	7	Additional damage +35

GUN FU (4)

The Gun Fu style consists of sequences useful in close quarters when holding one pistol in each hand, each with a reload of 1 or less. Note that moves like “Pistol Strike” in the sequences below refer to the act of striking someone with a gun body—pistol-whipping them—rather than firing the gun. Pistol strikes are 4/L weapons with a thrown range of 5 feet.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Go Down!	Power + Pistol Strike	3	Knockout
2	Near and Far	L Fire Pistol (I) + R Fire Strike (II)	1	Additional damage +5
3	Taste Recoil	R Fire Pistol + Ready + Power + R Pistol Strike (II)	2	Disadvantage (mental) 2
3	Built to Last	Pistol Block + Ready + Pistol Strike	2	Additional damage +10
3	The Finger	Roll + Ready + Fire Pistol	2	Additional damage +10
4	Double Tap and a Half	L Fire Pistol (I) + R Fire Pistol (I) + Ready + R Pistol Strike (II)	1	Push 1
4	Wheel of Fire	L Fire Pistol (I) + R Fire Pistol (II) + Ready + L Fire Pistol (III)	1	Additional Damage +5
4	The Last Two Bullets	L Fire Pistol + R Fire Pistol + Ready + Release Pistol	1	Disadvantage (physical) 1
5	Up Close and Personal	Dash + Power + Power + L Pistol Strike + R Fire Pistol	7	Additional damage +30
5	Timeless Leap	Dash + Jump + L Fire Pistol + Ready + L Pistol Strike	5	Additional damage +25
6	Buckwheat	Jump + Roll + Ready + Power + Power + Fire Pistol	10	Death

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KNIFE FIGHTER (4)

The knife style is a collection of techniques used by scrappy knife fighters in dark alleys all over the world. All of the sequences in this style require the combatant to have a knife or other light blade in both hands. If two blades are not available, Kick Strikes may be used to replace the off-hand Weapon Strikes.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Double Gut	L Weapon Strike + R Weapon Strike	1	Additional damage +5
2	Blood in the Eyes	Spin + Weapon Strike	3	Disadvantage (mental) 3
3	Fountain	Power + Power + Weapon Strike	5	Additional damage +5, bleed
3	Flying Fork	Jump + L Weapon Strike (I) + R Weapon Strike (II)	2	Additional damage +10
4	Overhand Stabs	Power + L Weapon Strike + Power + R Weapon Strike	4	Additional damage +20
4	Raincoat	Spin + Ready + Ready + Weapon Strike	4	Disadvantage (mental) 2, disadvantage (physical) 2
5	Centrifuge	Spin + L Weapon Strike (I) + R Weapon Strike (II) + Ready + L Weapon Strike (III)	1	Push 1
5	Handcuff	Grab + Press + Press + Power + Knife Strike	1	Additional damage +5
6	Turnstile	Roll + Ready + Ready + L Weapon Strike + Power + R Weapon Strike	6	Dismember extremity
6	Scythe	Dash + Sidestep + Power + Power + Weapon Strike + Stride	9	Additional damage +45

OVERKILL (4)

Equally as effective with a huge club as with a finely-honed claymore, the Overkill style makes maximum use of a large weapon's weight and leverage. All of the sequences in this style require the combatant to use a heavy weapon. Certain of the payoffs have varying effects depending on whether or not the weapon is bladed. The bladed effects always precede the word "or" in the payoff descriptions, while payoffs for unbladed weapons follow the "or."

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
4	Draw	Ready + Ready + Ready + Weapon Strike	4	Disadvantage (physical) 4
3	Hew	Power + Weapon Strike + Press	3	Additional damage +15
3	Pursue	Dash + Jump + Weapon Strike	5	Additional damage +5, bleed or Daze
3	Lay Low	Stride + Power + Weapon Strike	5	Trip, disarm
4	Skull Crush	Power + Weapon Strike + Power + Kick Strike	4	Additional damage +20
4	Disable	Spin + Ready + Power + Weapon Strike	6	Dismember extremity or Stun
4	Divest	Power + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	7	Blind or Disadvantage (mental) 7
5	Dismember	Climb + Jump + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	8	Dismember limb or Disadvantage (physical) 8
5	Debilitate	Power + Power + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	9	Additional damage +45 or Paralyze
6	Destroy	Dash + Sidestep + Jump + Power + Power + Weapon Strike	10	Death

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RAVAGER (4)

The Ravager style makes use of the dragon's beast-like form to dish out horrible wounds.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	Backslash	L Hindclaw Strike + Power + R Hindclaw Strike	2	Additional damage +10
3	Sickle Strike	Power + Power + Bite Strike	5	Additional damage +25
4	Adder's Fangs	Power + L Foreclaw Strike + Power + R Foreclaw Strike	4	Additional damage +10, disadvantage (physical) 2
4	Ravage	Power + Foreclaw Strike + Ready + Bite Strike	3	Additional damage +5, trip
5	Rend	Power + Power + L Foreclaw Strike + Power + Power + R Foreclaw Strike	7	Additional damage +5, dismember extremity
5	Gnash	Power + Power + Power + Power + Bite	9	Paralyze

SWIFT (4)

The Swift style focuses on movement, moves governed by Quickness, and multiple attacks, making its practitioner seem like a blur of motion on the battlefield.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
2	Gut	Crouch + Foreclaw Strike	3	Additional damage +15
3	Erosion	Foreclaw Strike + Power + Hindclaw Strike	2	Disadvantage (physical) 2
3	Furious Wind	Foreclaw Strike + Spin + Hindclaw Strike	2	Disadvantage (mental) 2
4	Arcing Maw	Spin + Power + Power + Bite Strike	7	Additional damage +15, bleed
4	Sprouting Claws	Dash + Jump + Power + Foreclaw	7	Additional damage +35
5	Thunderhead	Jump + Power + Bite + Spin + L Foreclaw Strike	6	Stun
5	Overwhelm	Bite Strike + Power + Foreclaw Strike + Power + Hindclaw	1	Push 1
6	Vortex	Crouch + Jump + Foreclaw Strike + Power + Spin + Hindclaw Strike	6	Dismember extremity

EASTERN LARGE STYLE (5)

The eastern styles are catch-alls for the wide variety of well-rounded Asian martial arts that focus on attacks with the hands, feet, or weapons. All focus on combining battlefield movement with maximum damage, ignoring opportunities for unusual or flashy payoff effects.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
4	Giraffe	Dodge + Ready + Jump + Weapon Strike	3	Additional damage +15
4	Hippo	Crouch + Weapon Block + Ready + Weapon Strike	2	Additional damage +10
5	Bear	Roll + Power + Weapon Strike + Ready + Kick Strike	5	Additional damage +25
5	Tiger	Jump + Power + L Kick Strike (I) + Power + R Kick Strike (II)	7	Additional damage +35
5	Water Buffalo	Dash + Slam (I) + Press + Press + Stride	3	Additional damage +15
5	Elephant	Stride + Grab + Press + Press + Slam	3	Additional damage +15
6	Dragon	Dash + Jump + Roll + Ready + Power + Weapon Strike	9	Additional damage +45

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KINGSGUARD (5)

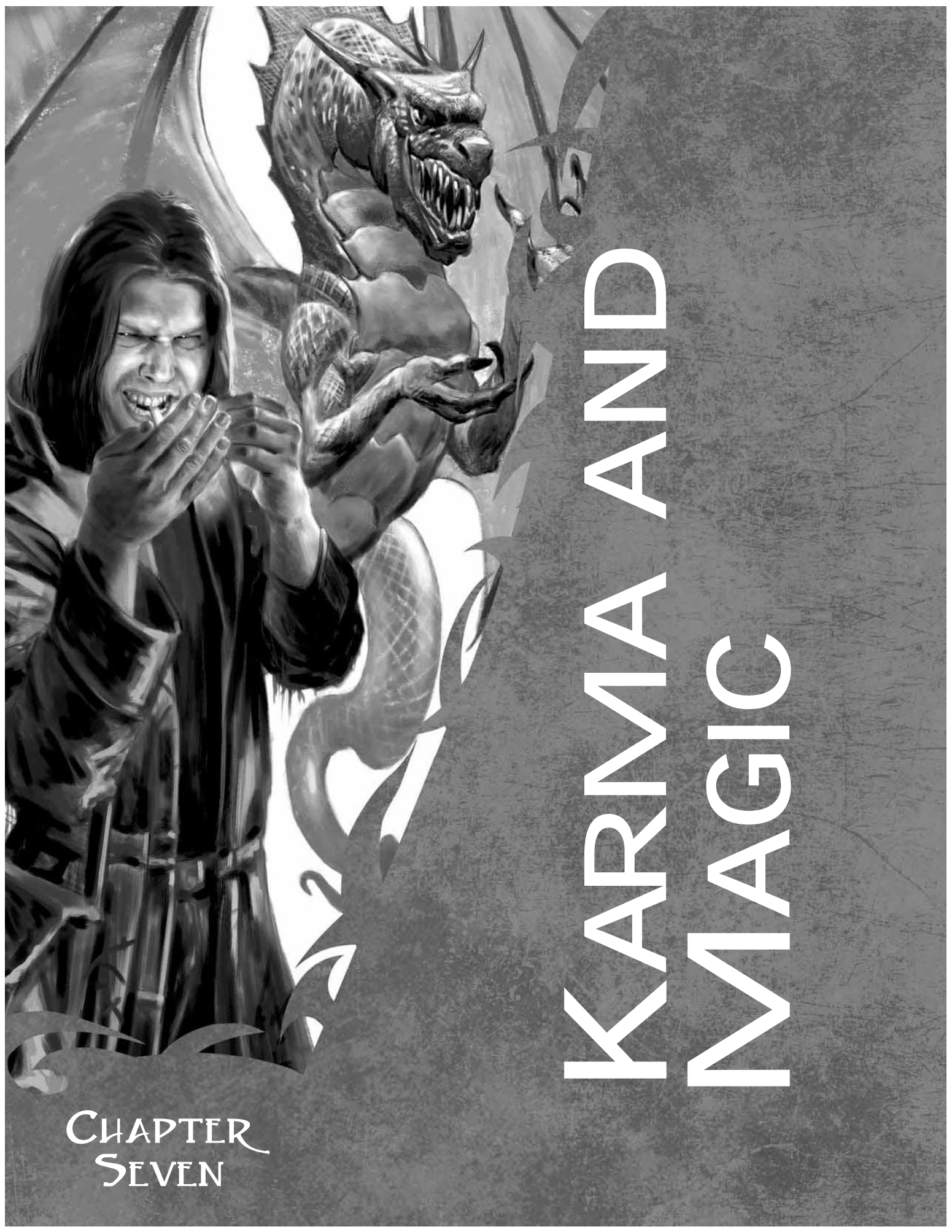
Used when outnumbered, outmaneuvered, or facing better-armed or armored foes, the Kingsguard style is meant to allow for effective, if eventually suicidal, holding actions. Assumes use of a light or medium weapon.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	<i>The First Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Weapon Strike</i>	2	<i>Trip</i>
4	<i>The Second Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Weapon Strike + Stride</i>	2	<i>Push 2</i>
4	<i>The Third Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Sidestep + Weapon Strike</i>	4	<i>Additional damage +5, disarm</i>
4	<i>The Fourth Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Power + Weapon Strike</i>	4	<i>Additional damage +20</i>
5	<i>The Fifth Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Power + Power + Weapon Strike</i>	6	<i>Dismember extremity</i>
5	<i>The Sixth Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Spin + Weapon Strike + Sidestep</i>	5	<i>Additional damage +25</i>
5	<i>The Seventh Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Power + Weapon Strike + Dash</i>	5	<i>Additional damage +5, bleed</i>
6	<i>The Eighth Defense</i>	<i>Weapon Block + Ready + Weapon Strike + Ready + Ready + Weapon Strike</i>	2	<i>Additional damage +10</i>

LIGHTNING STYLE (5)

The lightning style combines attack with movement; practitioners of its sequences launch strafing, fly-by assaults that begin and end with their victims at considerably more than arm's length.

TH	Name	Moves	PR	Payoff
3	<i>Thunder Clap</i>	<i>Dash + Weapon Strike + Dash</i>	3	<i>Disarm</i>
3	<i>Lightning Strike</i>	<i>Jump + Weapon Strike + Dash</i>	4	<i>Additional damage +10, disadvantage (physical) 2</i>
4	<i>Furious Rainstorm</i>	<i>Dash + Weapon Strike + Kick Strike + Dash</i>	2	<i>Additional damage +10</i>
4	<i>Tornado's Grip</i>	<i>Dash + Grab + Press + Throw</i>	3	<i>Push 3</i>
5	<i>Hurricane's Fury</i>	<i>Dash + Weapon Strike + Spin + Kick Strike + Stride</i>	3	<i>Disadvantage (mental) 3</i>
5	<i>Piercing Wind</i>	<i>Sidestep + Stride + Weapon Strike + Stride + Sidestep</i>	4	<i>Bleed</i>
6	<i>Blinding Snow</i>	<i>Climb + Jump + Spin + L Kick Strike + R Kick Strike + Weapon Strike</i>	5	<i>Additional damage +25</i>
6	<i>Howling Gods</i>	<i>Roll + Ready + Jump + Power + Power + Weapon Strike</i>	10	<i>Death</i>



KARMA AND MAGIC

CHAPTER
SEVEN

THE EPHEMERAL

This chapter deals with the **ephemeral** things of the world of FIREBORN. Ephemeral effects are things that are unseen by the human eye, but that nonetheless affect the world—the most dramatic examples of these are karma and the twisting of it into magic. Broodsense is also an ephemeral effect, and so is karma's opposite, taint.

KARMA & TAINT

Karma is the greatest force in the world of FIREBORN. It is a power like the press of the ocean's tides, like the passage of time—and also like the impact of a .45 caliber bullet. It is at once ephemeral and concrete, timeless and instant, and of undeniable strength.

Karma arises in the world from the actions of natural creatures. The interactions of human beings produce karma, for one—their striving, their longing, their love, their hate—their very being produces karma in the same way green plants give off oxygen. Other natural living things also produce karma, though in smaller amounts than humans do, from the lowliest bacteria to the greatest whale, from the smallest sprout to the mightiest redwood. In its pure, natural state, the whole world is flooded with karma.

Supernatural creatures, dragons the greatest among them, do not produce karma. Rather, they are of it. As trees are made of wood and clocks are made of gears, supernatural creatures are quite literally composed of the stuff of karma. It is an absolute truth, therefore, that the supernatural cannot exist in the world without the natural.

Taint is karma corrupted, karma's opposite. It is not only the absence of karma, but is a sickened, tarry force that is utterly contrary to it. If karma can be compared to air, then taint is like smog, like poison gas. And since supernatural creatures and dragons are of that air, when the air becomes tainted, so do they.

It is not known how long taint has been in the world. Some say it's always been here. Others accuse the cryptically titled beings called Those Who Dwell Below for bringing it to the surface from their subterranean hells.

Your scion may know something about taint, but no one is sure exactly how it works or what its effects are. More details on taint can be found in the *Game Master's Handbook*.

USING KARMA

In addition to infusing places, karma manifests in options and abilities that characters can use in the course of play. One way is through **magic**, which is the ability to shape reality blatantly, consciously, and directly (as opposed to the more instinctive use of bidding karma or even using legacies). Magic is a complex topic, and is covered in detail later in this chapter.

The most common manifestation of karma in the world—and in any FIREBORN game—is in creatures' karma pools. As described in previous chapters, all living creatures have karma pools at their disposal, which they can use in a variety of ways to enhance their natural abilities. Table 7-1, below, summarizes these uses of karma for scions specifically, and adds a few more that will be described more fully in the pages to come.

The most important note about using karma is its use during action scenes vs. during narrative scenes. *When humans or scions use karma during an action scene, it immediately replenishes at the end of that scene.* This is because the very acts of living and feeling generate karma in and of themselves; when in tense situations, humans produce so much karma through their actions that any karma spent is immediately returned to them. Use of karma during a narrative scene, however, is not so dramatic or powerful, and so does not replenish at the end of that scene; karma spent during narrative scenes may only be regained as explained under "Regaining Karma," below.

USES OF KARMA

Use	Effect	Karma Cost	Notes
Karma Bid	Gain one automatic success on a test.	1	For this purpose, a character may not spend more points of karma on a test than his base score in the aspect that governs the test.
Manifest Dragon	Manifest a draconic form trait without using an action	1 point per rank of form	For this purpose, a character may only spend 1 point of karma per heritage rank in a single turn.
Nurture Karma	Increase an area's karma rating.	1 point per area's current karma rating	For this purpose, a character may only spend 1 point of karma per humanity rank in one day.
Activate Legacy	Use a legacy according to its description.	Varies	For this purpose, a character may only spend a number of points of karma per turn equal to his rank in the legacy's governing power, plus his awakened rank.

TABLE 7-1



For supernatural creatures other than scions, all karma spent is the same, regardless of whether it's spent during an action scene or a narrative scene.

REGAINING KARMA

Creatures regain karma in varying amounts by living out their daily lives and experiencing success in their actions, enlightenment in their thoughts, or strong emotions in their hearts. The various methods of regaining karma, and the amount of karma regained, are shown on Table 7–3.

INFUSED AREAS

While karma is an ephemeral concept in the world of FIREBORN, it is also a concrete force in it. Karma permeates some places and objects, giving them karma ratings of one to five. They are said to be **infused**. These are the exception, however; most places have no karma rating, and are said to be **balanced**.

Because karma arises from the actions, thoughts, and emotions of natural creatures, areas infused with karma are always defined by borders with meaning to such creatures, whether they be natural, magical, or man-made borders like riverbanks, ley lines, or the walls of rooms. They are never defined abstractly using mathematical measurements that are divorced from such natural divisions. A glade, magical nexus, or attic might have a karma rank, because those are ways that characters and creatures naturally conceive of space. A 10-foot cube or 20-foot sphere otherwise visibly undefined, however, would never describe an area of karma. People simply don't think of spaces in that way, and so karma doesn't behave that way, either.

REGAINING KARMA IN INFUSED AREAS

In a balanced area, karma is regained normally. In areas infused with karma, on the other hand, whenever characters regain karma, they regain a number of additional karma points equal to the area's karma rating.

BOUNDARIES OF KARMA

The extent of an infused area is always described by boundaries. There are a variety of ranks of boundaries, from Trivial boundaries like the walls between rooms in a house to Profound boundaries like the coast of an ocean. The nature of a boundary—natural, magical, or man-made—does not affect its rank. The different magnitudes of boundaries and examples of each are listed in Table 7–2; in the case of spells or Group Mind, the barriers listed are those that interrupt a spell's range or a Group Mind's reach.

BOUNDARIES OF KARMA

Rank	Boundaries
1 (Trivial)	Brooks, hedges, small clearings, game trails, footpaths, doorways, and interior walls. Trivial effects generally should not exceed a 50-ft. radius or line.
2 (Minor)	Streams, ridgelines, minor ley lines, residential streets, railroad tracks, tree lines, load-bearing walls, and the exterior walls of small structures like houses, stores, and the like. Minor effects generally should not exceed a 500-ft. radius or line.
3 (Moderate)	Rivers, tall bluffs and cliffs, moderate ley lines, major surface streets, underground public transit tunnels, major sewer lines, and the exterior walls of moderate structures like schools, shopping malls, and the like. Moderate effects generally should not exceed a one-mile radius or line.
4 (Major)	Major rivers, lakeshores, major ley lines, the acknowledged boundaries of cities and towns, highways and freeways, and the exterior walls of massive structures like sports stadiums, international airports, and skyscrapers. Major effects generally should not exceed a 10-mile radius or line.
5 (Profound)	Ocean coastlines, the spines of mountain ranges, and the acknowledged borders of counties, states, or small nations. Profound effects generally should not exceed a 100-mile radius or line.
6 (Hemispherical)	Essentially, half the world. Everything from one horizon to another . . . the only thing that limits hemispherical effects is the curvature of the earth.

TABLE 7-2

REGAINING KARMA

Action	Karma Regained
A good night's rest in an infused area	1 point per karma rating of the area
Gaining full successes on a test	1 point per success (only applies when dice are actually rolled, not when full successes are granted by spell effects or legacies)
Gaining APs	1 point per AP gained
Surviving a flashback	1 point per point of base Air score
Delivering the killing blow to a foe (or blow that brings an enemy down)	1 point, +1 per 10 APs or APVs of the foe
Absorbing the karma from a hoard item	1 point per point of karma absorbed

TABLE 7-3

Note that each type of boundary also “stands in for” boundaries of lesser magnitude. An area bounded by Trivial boundaries could have an ocean border for one of its boundaries, for example, because an ocean coastline can block a Trivial effect just as easily as it can block a Profound effect.

Note also that the magnitude of a given boundary is always open to the GM’s interpretation. While the wall of a bank vault might not—architecturally speaking—be a load-bearing wall, the GM would certainly be within his rights to declare it a Minor boundary rather than a Trivial one.

CHAPTER SEVEN: KARMA AND MAGIC

NURTURING KARMA

Change in Karma Rank	Passage of Time
Taint 5 to taint 4	One century
Taint 4 to taint 3	One decade
Taint 3 to taint 2	One year
Taint 2 to taint 1	One month
Taint 1 to balanced	One week
Balanced to karma 1	One week
Karma 1 to karma 2	One month
Karma 2 to karma 3	One year
Karma 3 to karma 4	One decade
Karma 4 to karma 5	One century

TABLE 7-4

KARMIC RANGE

All creatures have a karmic range, as determined by their base Air scores. Karmic range is a measure of how far your mind can reach through the ephemeral world to affect things around you. When using the Scrye spell, for instance, you can peer through the walls of reality to look at someone far distant, so long as they are within your karmic range. When using Group Mind, you can communicate with fellow broodmates so long as they are within your karmic range.

NURTURING KARMA

The only way to increase an area's karma rating (or to remove taint from it) is to **nurture** karma. Karma is nurtured when natural beings consciously tend to their own actions and interactions, with the intention of increasing the natural character of their surroundings. "Conscious" is the operative word as far as nurturing karma is concerned. A monk who tends a small herb garden over months and years in an attempt to increase his connection with divinity is nurturing karma. A strip mall full of people who interact in a myriad of ways, day by day, are not consciously doing anything to make the world right. While they generate a lot of karma in their interactions, they are not nurturing karma—the strip mall will never become a place that is infused with karma.

Karma is not nurtured by the natural living of unintelligent natural creatures, because they are not conscious about increasing the natural character of any-

thing. A virgin forest may be a beautiful—and natural—place, but the activities of the plants and animals that live and die there do not nurture karma in the place. Nurturing karma requires the conscious activity of intelligent natural creatures (which limits it, for the most part, to humans and scions).

In game terms this means that, each day, an intelligent natural creature must spend one hour nurturing the area's karma per its current karma (or taint) rating. During that hour, the character must also expend one karma per its current karma (or taint) rating for that express purpose. Each span of time and karma so spent affects one area of Trivial boundary: a monk's garden, the walls of a scion's place of meditation, or a basement, as in the following example.

Karma is infused into an area progressively; a place must first move from balanced to karma 1, then to karma 2, and so on. The speed with which karma is nurtured in a place is listed on Table 7-4. It is assumed that, during this period, karma is not being used for any other purpose; for every day that karma is drawn on within the area for other purposes, another day is added to the nurturing time. The periods of time described in the table are interrupted by the spawning of taint anywhere within the borders of the area. The instant taint is spawned—for any reason—in an area where karma is in the process of being nurtured, the area's karma rating is reduced as usual, and the nurturing clock is reset for that area. For more details on how and when taint is spawned, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.

Example: A brood of scions uncovers a temple to dark gods in the basement of a derelict house in South Kensington. They quickly realize that it is tainted, and decide that it has to be cleansed before it's allowed to spread. Through research and painful experimentation, they determine that it has a taint rating of 2. Referencing Table 7-4, we see that it will take them a month and a week to return the place to balanced. For the first month, one of them must spend two hours each day nurturing karma there, however he chooses. After one month, one of them must spend one hour each day nurturing karma there. Any day that is missed is tacked onto the nurturing time, and if taint is spawned there during that period, they end right back where they started.

MAGIC

Just about everyone in the world of FIREBORN can manifest karma in one way or another. Some have supernatural powers, a few have access to legacies. Even the most mundane folks—the janitors and cell phone salesmen of the world—have one or two karma points to use when the going gets tough. But only a very skilled (or foolish) few can use magic, the ability to manifest the supernatural by manipulating karma direct-

ly, the ability to reach into the ephemeral, draw out raw power, and make it do tricks.

To use magic, characters cast **spells**. A spell amounts to a recipe for magic, a cheat code for the programming of the world. You carry out a prescribed series of actions—gesticulate with your arms, manipulate your fingers, intone syllables of power, channel karma—and some specific, corresponding, magical event happens. Maybe you create a softly glowing light, maybe you disintegrate a 747 passenger aircraft. It just depends on which spell you cast. The devious and power-mad mages of the past have invented hundreds or thousands—maybe even millions—of spells. While a lot of them are identical or similar in function to other spells, others are completely unlike anything else out there.

But here's the thing: Magic is dangerous. Very dangerous, both to the caster and the caster's environment. Because not only can a poorly cast spell turn a mage's brain into pudding, it can open up a firehose of taint and fill up the pristine world of the ephemeral with corruption and perversity faster than anything else in the world.

All spells are defined by rank—from one to five—and a number of other details like range, duration, effect, and so on. Rank 1 spells are the least difficult and least potent, while a rank 5 spell is a momentous thing to pull off and can do some pretty extreme damage, both to the caster and his enemies. See "The Grimoire of Lore," which begins on page 180, for a collection of spells.

CASTING SPELLS

Assuming that you know a given spell (see "Learning Spells" on page 179), casting it is a straightforward process. To cast a spell, you must first open your body to the flow of karma with the Weave Magic mental action. Weaving magic requires an Air (Casting) test with a TH of twice the rank of the spell you want to perform.

Then comes the hard part: making sure you weave the karma that you've pulled on correctly, shaping it as controlled magic. There are two ways to do so: the dangerous way and the slow way.

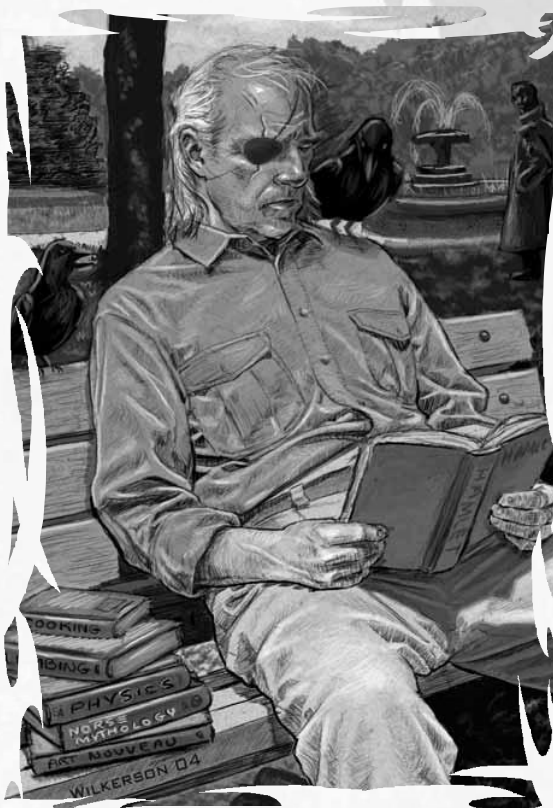
To cast the spell, you must immediately use the Cast physical action, performing a Fire (Casting) test and gaining exactly a number of successes equal to the rank of the spell. If you gain the exact number of successes, the spell is performed. If you gain fewer than the required number of successes, you may accumulate one success toward casting the spell, and may continue casting the next turn. If you gain more than the required number of successes, the spell is performed, but for each success you achieve over the rank of the spell, you generate an **overkill success**. For each overkill success, you

suffer 10 points of damage, which cannot be avoided by any normal means.

The dangerous way, of course, is to move as many dice to Fire as possible and attempt to cast the spell in a single turn. If you get lucky and manage to achieve just the right number of successes, it gets the job done and unleashes the spell. But odds are that you'll get too many successes, in which case the extra power boils over out of control, bringing the stink of your boiling brain matter along for the ride. The slow but safer way is to accumulate your successes slowly.

That's all a supernatural creature needs to know to cast a spell. Natural creatures, which include upstart cultist human wizards, for instance, have

another complication to worry about. Or you might more accurately say that it's something the scions need to worry about. You see, every time a human fails to generate enough successes to cast a spell, his power over karma rips a little at the fabric around him. In other words, he generates taint. The more powerful the spell that is attempted, and the more he fails by, the worse the taint generated. Scions and modern magicians alike are not entirely sure what cause and cost this "slow casting" has on the world; for more details, see the *Game Master's Handbook*.



CHAPTER SEVEN: KARMA AND MAGIC

OVERVIEW: CASTING SPELLS

WEAVE MAGIC (MENTAL ACTION)

1. A mage—that is, anyone who knows a spell—declares his intention to use a mental action to Weave Magic. He declares the spell by name, announces its target or targets, and may, if he wishes, make a stance change to Air using the Casting skill.
2. The mage rolls the dice in his Air pool.
3. The mage may spend karma to increase his number of successes.
4. The results are determined. If the mage meets or exceeds the TH of the spell (twice the spell's rank), he may move on to the next step. If he fails, he suffers no ill effects, and may try again next turn.

CAST (PHYSICAL ACTION)

5. The mage may, if he wishes, make a stance change to Fire using the Casting skill.
6. The mage rolls the dice in his Fire pool (note that he **MUST** roll all of the dice in his Fire pool . . . using magic correctly requires a light touch!).
7. The mage may spend karma to increase his number of successes.
8. The results of the casting are determined, as shown below.

Correct number of successes: The spell is performed, with effects as described under the spell's entry.

Too few successes: The caster accumulates a number of successes toward casting the spell equal to the successes gained, and his turn ends. If the caster is a natural creature, this process causes the spawning of taint, the effects of which will be determined by the GM.

Too Many Successes: When a caster generates too many successes with the Weave Magic move, there are two possible effects:

- The mage suffers 10 damage per success by which he exceeded the spell's TH. Armor and most edges and powers that normally help prevent damage are useless in avoiding this injury.
- Each spell has one or more **casting options**. While increasing the spell pick cost to learn the spell, these can lessen the danger of wizardry immensely. If the mage knows casting options for the spell, he may channel overkill successes into any of those options. Each overkill success thus channeled improves the effects of the spell as described under the casting option. Any unchanneled overkill successes then

inflict damage on the caster as normal.

Example: Bellock, a young scion-mage, falls into a dark cavern while hunting through Celtic ruins. He hears footsteps, slithering, and a soft, feminine, mocking laughter that crawls up his spine and tickles fear from his mind the like of which he hasn't known since he was a child. Terrified, he responds almost instinctively, declaring that he will use the Radiance spell to light up the cave. At the least, he reasons, he'll be able to see the doom that shambles toward him. He doesn't even bother to make a stance change with Casting, since Radiance is a rank 1 (and therefore TH 2) spell. He rolls the four dice in his Air pool, and gains three successes. He has successfully used the Weave Magic move.

Bellock then proceeds to Cast, which is his physical action. He makes a stance change to bolster his base Fire score of 2, moving two dice from Air to Fire for a total of four dice in that aspect.

Having made all of his declarations and carried out his stance change, the scion rolls his dice. Against the odds, four successes come up—two more than he needed. And Bellock, being the impatient type, didn't bother to learn any casting options for the spell.

First, the spell is performed successfully, lighting up the cave with a cool 40 watts. Additionally, the two additional successes inflict 10 damage each to Bellock, for a total of 20. This inflicts 4 wound dice to the normally resilient scion. On the bright side, Bellock now gets to watch as the cave dweller eviscerates him . . .

EXPANDED MAGIC RULES

There are a number of additional elements that can affect spellcasting, each of which is discussed in turn below.

CASTING OPTIONS

Some spells have **casting options** (also called **safety options**, or, simply, **options**) built into them. Typical casting options allow a mage to increase the range of a spell, increase the size of its area of effect, or increase the number of targets a spell can affect, all by using successes over and above those normally required to cast the spell in question.

Casting options are beneficial in two ways. First, and obviously, they allow mages greater flexibility in spellcasting. A single spell becomes useful in a wider variety of circumstances. Most spells have casting options, and the specific effects of each spell's options are individual to the spell.

Second (and the reason they're often known as safety options) is that they double as built-in pressure valves. They provide a way to safely disperse extra power in the event that a caster rolls too many successes with a Weave Magic test. As long as all of the extra

successes—which would normally cause damage to the caster—can be dissipated according to the option descriptions (many spells have a limit as to just how many extra successes can be safely “burned off”), the caster does not suffer ill effects. If the caster still has overkill successes over and above those that can be dealt with through the spell’s safety options, only those extra successes are counted when determining the damage dealt to the caster.

REACTION SPELLS

Although most spells must be cast on the caster’s turn, some spells can be cast as **reaction spells**—that is, they can be cast on someone else’s turn. Some allow the caster to react to attacks, others to attempts to find or Scrye on him, and so forth. When cast as reactions, such spells require only the Gather Magic step, using a mental reaction and following the normal rules (one die is subtracted for each use of the Earth pool after the first, etc.). Because of

the spell’s simplicity and split-second use, a physical reaction and Weave Magic test is not needed.

Spells that can be cast as reactions specify the types of actions they can be used to react to, and they may not be cast as reactions to other types of actions. For example, a reaction spell that can only be used to respond to melee attacks cannot be cast in the face of a firearms attack. Spells that can be cast either as actions or reactions are only limited in this way when they are cast as reactions.

When a spell is cast as a reaction, the caster casts the spell as his reaction rather than making the (probably physical) reaction test he would normally make. If the Gather Magic test is unsuccessful, the mage does not get a chance to make a physical reaction, meaning that an attacker probably completes his attack sequence. If the Gather Magic test is successful, however, the spell’s description is followed with regards to how the reacting mage opposes the active character’s action. Typically, the results of a reactive Gather Magic test act in place of

the mage’s normal reactive test, but some reactive spells have altogether different effects.

A character cannot cast a reaction spell during his turn (which means, among other things, that a mage cannot cast a Counter Weave in response to a Counter Weave; see page 184).



RITUALS

Many spells have **ritual versions**, ways to cast the spell that take hours or days (or even longer), but which have more potent effects by far than normal castings of the same spell. Many spell effects can be made permanent through ritual applications. Unless otherwise described, assume that all rituals can be countered with a counter-ritual, which may be performed by anyone that knows the original ritual used. The target of the counter-ritual must be within Trivial range for the counter-ritual to succeed.

All spells’ ritual versions are different, but they have a few things in common. First, they take a very long time—much longer than any action scene will last. Second, the TH for a ritual is three times the rank of the spell it’s based on, rather than the normal TH of twice the rank of the spell it’s based on. Third, rituals always require some amount of karma expenditure, beyond simply the incidental karma used to gain successes on tests. Fourth, rituals may be performed, and often

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LEARNING SPELLS

SKILL RANKS IN CASTING

	1	2	3	4	5	6
RANK OF SPELL	1	6 months	1 month	1 week	1 day	1 hour
	2	—	6 months	1 month	1 week	1 day
	3	—	—	6 months	1 month	1 week
	4	—	—	—	6 months	1 month
	5	—	—	—	—	6 months
	6	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE 7-5

require, additional participants. Finally, casting a spell's ritual version usually requires one or more difficult to make or obtain **ritual components**. Sometimes a ritual's components are used up or destroyed in the course of casting the ritual, but in other cases, they can be used over and over in subsequent ritual castings.

The procedure for casting a ritual is similar to the procedure for casting a spell in that the Weave Magic action is performed once, and the Cast action may be performed over several attempts, accumulating successes as you go. The main difference is that, instead of taking turns to perform a Cast action, rituals require hours, days, weeks, or months to perform a test. The course of steps is shown below.

OVERVIEW: CASTING RITUALS

PREPARATION

1. Participants are determined. From among the participants, one of them will act as the ritual's principal caster.
2. The setting for the ritual is prepared. This requires the principal caster to spend one hour per rank of the ritual to be performed. The GM makes a secret Air (Casting) test for the principal caster with a TH equal to twice the rank of the ritual; if the test is successful, the ritual will work. If it is not successful, the ritual will fail, but this will not be known until the last Cast success is accumulated.
3. The principal caster and any bystanders may double-check the setting preparation to see if it is faulty. Anyone may make a single Air

(Senses) and Air (Casting) test; the TH for both tests is the TH of the test to prepare the setting, +1 for each success by which the principal caster failed the secret test. If both tests are successful and the setting was prepared incorrectly, the checker can repair the setting. Double-checking a setting preparation requires 10 minutes per rank of the ritual, and repairing such a setting requires 30 minutes per success by which the original preparer failed the TH.

***Note:** The next two phases, the gathering of magic and the weaving of magic, actually require an entire narrative scene, or possibly several narrative scenes. Performing the two steps takes a length of time equal to the interval of the ritual, during which participants may not cease performing the ritual more than a few minutes each day, long enough to eat, drink, and take care of the basics of personal hygiene. Weariness tests may be required, depending on the length of the interval, and weariness dice are applied to all Casting tests made during the interval.*

GATHER MAGIC

4. Once the setting and participants are in place (within an area of Trivial boundaries), the principal caster declares his intention to use a mental action to Gather Magic. He declares the ritual by name, announces its target or targets, and may, if he wishes, make a stance change to Air using the Casting skill. The other participants may, if they wish, make stance changes to Air using the Casting skill.
5. All participants other than the principal caster roll the dice in their Air pool.
6. All participants other than the principal caster may spend karma to increase their number of

successes.

7. For each participant that meets or exceeds the TH of the ritual (three times the rank of the ritual), one success is added to the principal caster's successes.
8. The principal caster rolls the dice in his Air pool.
9. The principal caster may spend karma to increase his number of successes.
10. The results are determined. If the principal caster gains enough successes to meet or exceed the TH of the ritual (three times the rank of the ritual), the participants may move on to the next step. If he fails, the participants suffer no ill effects, and may try again. A Gather Magic step, whether successful or failing, uses up an amount of time equal to half of the ritual's interval.

CAST

11. The principal caster may, if he wishes, make a stance change to Fire using the Casting skill. The other participants may, if they wish, make stance changes to Fire using the Casting skill.
12. All participants other than the principal caster roll the dice in their Fire pool.
13. All participants other than the principal caster may spend karma to increase their number of successes.
14. For each participant that meets or exceeds the TH of the ritual (three times the rank of the ritual), one success is added to the principal caster's successes.
15. The principal caster rolls the dice in his Fire pool.
16. The principal caster may spend karma to increase his number of successes.
17. The results are determined, as shown below. A Cast step, whether successful or failing, uses up an amount of time equal to half the ritual's interval.

Correct number of successes: If the principal caster gains exactly the number of successes needed to meet the TH of the ritual (three times the rank of the ritual), he may then draw on the karma of all participants, including himself, if desired, and expend it to complete the ritual. If there is not enough karma among the participants, the ritual fails.

Too few successes: The principal caster accumulates a number of successes toward casting the ritual equal to the successes gained, and the interval ends. The process may be immediately repeated with another pair of Weave Magic and Cast attempts, each requiring an amount of time equal to half of an interval. If the process is not immediately begun again, any accumulated successes are lost.

Getting too few successes on a ritual, similarly to getting too few successes on a spell, spawns taint; the exact effects of this process are known only by the GM.

Too Many Successes: When the principal caster generates too many successes with the Cast action, there are two possible effects:

- All participants suffers 10 damage per success by which the principal caster exceeded the spell's TH. Armor and most edges and powers that normally help prevent damage are useless in avoiding this injury.
- Overkill successes may be channeled into any casting options for the base spell that the principal caster knows. The one exception to note is duration; for rituals with permanent durations, any casting options that extend a spell's duration may not be used. As normal, any unchanneled overkill successes inflict damage on the participants.

LEARNING SPELLS

Learning spells is a straightforward process requiring three things: a general knowledge of the ways of magic, a source of the spell in question, and a period of time in which to study it.

General knowledge of magic can come from many sources—teachers, ancient books, or a keen eye for the ways of nature and the supernatural alike. A character wishing to learn a spell of any rank must have at least one rank in the Casting skill and Casting edge, and must further spend one AP (or spell pick, if chosen during dragon creation) per rank of the spell.

Spell sources come in many forms. They may be books, scrolls, computer disks, sound recordings, or the tutoring of a mage who already knows the spell, to name a few. Spell sources are very valuable, and mages who have knowledge of spells are almost always reluctant to share them with others, especially those who are not their known and trusted allies.

Assuming a complete source is available, the amount of time the mage must spend to learn a spell depends on his Casting rank, as shown on Table 7-5.

Once a mage spends the required interval studying and practicing the spell, the mage spends one AP per rank of the spell (+1 for each casting option learned). Spells may be purchased with both humanity points and heritage points . . . magic is neither mythic nor modern, but eternal, and bridges the gaps of time.

Once a spell has been learned according to this procedure, it remains available to the mage who learned it forever after.

LEARNING VARIANTS

Many spells have variants, having only slightly different effects than the spell upon which they are based. A mage attempting to learn a variant of a spell he

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already knows must only spend half the time in study and half the APs normally required (rounding up). Two variants of known rank 1 spells may be learned for a single AP and period of study.

When recording a spell on the character sheet, players should make sure to record which variants are known. There is a space for this on the spell sheet in the “Variants” column. If a variant is known but the primary spell is not known, the primary spell should be written with a line crossed through it.

When variant spells are discussed in the rules, they are recorded after the fashion of “Variant Name (Spell),” which allows you to find the appropriate spell description easily without having to scan the list of variants for all the spells listed in the grimoire. For example, “Shining Gold (Radiance)” refers to the spell Shining Gold, which is a variant of the spell Radiance (see Diagram 7-1).

Powers, Legacies, Spell Picks		
Rank	Name	Effect
1	SHINING GOLD (RADIANCE)	
2	FLOAT A/C	
4	AVATAR R ONLY	

DIAGRAM 7-2

LEARNING CASTING OPTIONS AND RITUALS

When a mage learns a new spell, he does not automatically also learn the casting options and rituals associated with the spell. Each casting option or ritual version included with the spell adds +1 to the AP or spell pick cost to learn it. Casting options and rituals can also be learned later, after the initial spell is learned; each such option costs 1 AP or spell pick.

Alternatively, some casters may wish to learn a ritual without learning the spell. If this is the case, the spell may be learned later, for the same costs as described above.

Note that not all spell sources include all of the casting options or rituals versions related to that spell. In fact, some ancient texts are purported to have heretofore unknown—and dangerously powerful—casting options. Mere suspicion of the existence of such texts led to many feuds and even outright wars of possession by wizards throughout the mythic age.

When recording a spell on the character sheet, players should make sure to record which options are known, as well as if a ritual version is known. All casting options are given a letter to facilitate this, while “R” is reserved for rituals. To specify which options are known, spells should be recorded after the fashion of “Spell Name A/B/C/R,” where A, B, and C are the letters associated with the options that are known, and R is included at the end if the ritual is known. For example, a wizard who has “Float A/C” recorded on his character sheet knows the Radiance spell, and has learned to use casting options A and C (per their descriptions under the explanation of that spell) when casting it. Casters that know only the ritual version of the spell should put a line through the name of the spell and write “R only” in the appropriate spot, instead of just “R.”

CREATING SPELL SOURCES

A mage who knows a given spell can create a spell source for it (and any known variants and casting options) by recording what he knows in whatever format he wishes. Recording a spell accurately takes one hour per rank of the spell (plus an additional 30 minutes for every casting option, ritual, and variant you wish to include).

THE GRIMOIRE OF LORE

The following section catalogs and describes the spells available to FIREBORN characters and villains. They are grouped below by rank, beginning with the most basic spells and progressing through more advanced—and dangerous—ones. New spells will also be presented in future supplements to FIREBORN.

READING THE SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

Each spell is described by a number of elements, each of which is defined below.

Common Name: Each spell is introduced by its common name. This is either the name by which the spell is most widely known, or the name that most cogently describes the actual effects of the spell.

Alternate Names: A listing of other names by which the spell is also known. These may be alternate names of identical spells, or the names of spells that are technically different—different gestures, different words of power—but whose end results are just the same. The list

of alternate names provided is by no means exhaustive, as there are myriad obscure magical traditions that put their distinctive imprint on a variety of spells by renaming them.

Area of Effect: Area of effect is a description of exactly what can be affected by the spell. For most spells, this is a precise number of creatures or objects of a specific size. Such descriptions should be read closely and literally—magic is a precise business. A spell that affects “seven living creatures” always affects exactly seven creatures. If the spell affected up to seven living creatures, the area of effect description would say that, instead. Some area spells may fill an area equal to a specified karmic range, meaning that the spell’s effects are blocked by barriers as described under “Boundaries of Karma,” page 172.

Spells that target creatures assume that those creatures are **detected**. This means that the caster can clearly see the targets. Detecting creatures may require spells like Second Sight or Ka tests to view the ephemeral, if they are invisible. Alternatively, far-viewing means like Scrye spells may be used to detect creatures.

Other spells may target creatures that are **known**. For a creature to be known, the caster must have seen or interacted with the creature while within Trivial range of it, or the caster must know the name by which the target thinks of himself. For this purpose, a given name is legitimate, as is an accepted nickname, but a name imposed by others is not (e.g., a target may be called “Limpert” by the kids in the neighborhood because of his distinct gait, but if the target has never heard the nickname, it cannot be considered one of his names).

If a mage casts a spell and declares an area of effect target that turns out to be illegal (for example, he casts a spell that affects seven living creatures and, unbeknownst

to him, one of them has died) he must make an Earth (Casting) test with a TH equal to the spell’s TH. If he fails, the spell dissipates without effect. If he succeeds, he may declare a different—and presumably legal—target or targets. This process of testing Earth and declaring an alternate target continues until the mage fails a test or gets the target right. Note, however, that the GM is under no obligation to tell the caster why the target he originally chose was illegal. He should just tell the caster to make an Earth test and re-declare his target(s).

Range: Range describes the possible distance between the caster of the spell and the farthest extent of the area of effect at the moment of casting. (The “moment of casting” is the physical action in which a

spell is cast.) As with area of effect, spell ranges are written literally. Thus, a spell with a maximum range of 100 feet will be written as “up to 100 feet,” while a spell with a precise range of 50 feet will be written as “50 feet.”

Some spells’ ranges, meanwhile, like areas of effect, are defined by a specified karmic range. This means that the caster must have a line of effect to the target unblocked by any of the barriers that block its karmic range or lower. In many cases, this may put the target beyond the limits of human vision; if the target needs to be visible to the caster, he can often use Scrye spells, video cameras, or other means as specified in the spell description to view the target during casting.

Some spells have an area of effect that is centered on some point in space. For example, Radiance’s area of effect is “a five-foot-radius sphere, emanating from a point in space designated by the caster.” When this is the case, the center point of the area effect is the thing that is subject to the spell’s range. While Radiance’s range is Trivial, it could actually light up something over 50 feet away, because the point in space could be located 50 feet away from the caster, with the five-foot radius extending five feet beyond that maximum range.

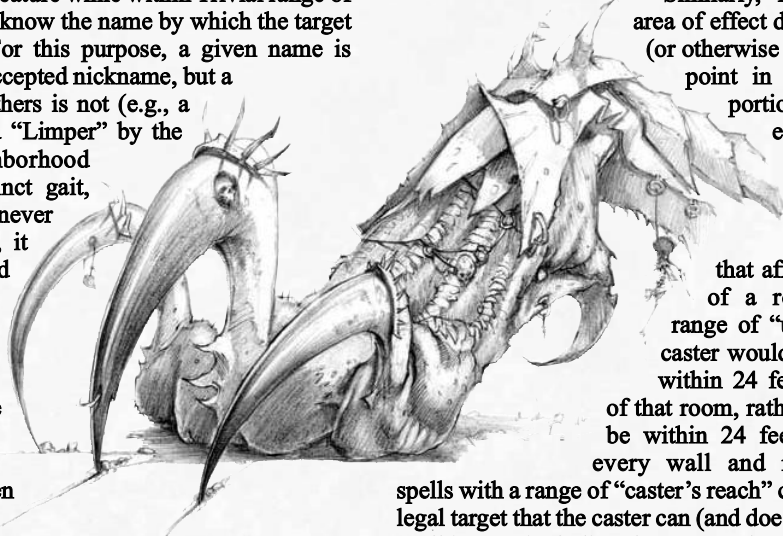
Similarly, for spells whose area of effect does not center on (or otherwise relate to) a single point in space, only one portion of the area of effect must fall within the spell’s range. For example, in the case of a spell

that affects the contents of a room and has a range of “up to 24 feet,” a caster would only have to be within 24 feet of one corner of that room, rather than having to be within 24 feet of the room’s every wall and nook. Likewise,

spells with a range of “caster’s reach” can be cast on any legal target that the caster can (and does) touch while the spell is cast, including the caster. The caster need not be able to reach the entire extent of the thing he is touching.

If, for any reason, there is no legal area of effect within the spell’s range at the moment of casting, the spell automatically dissipates. For example, if a spell with a range of Trivial and an area of effect described as “seven living creatures” were cast in a place where there simply were not seven beings within Trivial range of the caster—making the naming of alternate targets a moot point—the spell would automatically dissipate.

Duration: Duration is the period of time over which the spell continues to affect its target or targets. Like area of effect, a spell’s duration should be read closely and literally. A spell with a duration of one hour lasts for





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exactly one hour from the moment it was cast, even if the caster decides, nine minutes after casting, that he'd rather the effects ended right then.

When the phrase "chosen by caster" (for example "up to one hour as chosen by caster") is part of a duration description, that means that the duration must be chosen, within the constraints given, at the time the spell is cast. The caster may not decide to choose or alter the duration at some point after casting the spell. Spells whose duration includes the phrase "terminable at will" can be ended at any point during the spell's duration. All the caster must do to end the spell is expend a mental action.

Reaction: Reaction tells whether a spell can be cast as a reaction (see "Reaction Spells," page 177). If "Only," the spell can only be cast as a reaction; if "Optional," the spell can be cast as either an action or reaction according to the spell's effect description; and if "No," the spell cannot be cast as a reaction.

Effect: Effect is the meat of the spell; it describes what happens when the spell is cast. A spell's effect can be almost anything, without practical limit. Like area of effect, range, and duration, a spell's effect should be read closely and interpreted fairly literally by the GM. "Fairly literally" means that the GM should exercise judgment, but should adjudicate clear descriptions clearly. For example, a spell that sets every wooden object within 10 feet of the caster on fire does exactly that, and the GM should feel no remorse about announcing that the wooden handle on the caster's handgun is burning. On the other hand, the GM should realize that a spell which "inflames the emotions of all those nearby" does not actually cause anything to burn.

Casting Options: This section of the spell's description lays out any options by which a caster can burn off extra Casting successes by increasing a spell's intensity of effect, number of targets, area of effect, or some other variable.

Casting options are presented in a lettered list and described after the fashion of "X (Y): Effect." In this formulation, "X" is the number of successes that are used up by the casting option, "Y" is the maximum number of successes that can be used up by this casting option each time the spell is cast, and "Effect" is what happens each time X successes are burned off.

Example: "1(3): Affect one additional target" indicates a spell where one superfluous success can be used up to affect one additional target, and that up to three successes can be burned off in this way each time the spell is cast, to affect up to three additional targets.

Casting option effects that increase or increment a spell's effect are applied one at a time, and stack with each other. For example, a casting option that doubles the number of targets affected by a spell doubles with one extra success, doubles that result with a second extra success, and so forth. It does not double with one extra success, triple with a second extra success, and so on.

Example: If three successes are burned off on the

casting option "1(3): Double the radius of the area affected by the spell" and the spell has a basic area of effect "a 10-foot radius," the spell would affect an 80-ft. radius. (10 doubles once to 20, again to 40, and a third time to 80.)

Some spells have several different casting options. When this is the case, they can be chosen singly or in combination. The effects of the different casting options can be stacked in any order the caster chooses.

Example: A spell that affects exactly two supernatural creatures has multiple casting options, including both "1 (1): Affect one additional target" and "1 (Unlimited): Double the number of targets." A caster burning off two additional successes could affect six targets (by adding one and then doubling), five targets (by doubling and then adding one), or eight targets (by doubling twice).

Ritual Version: This describes the requirements and effects of any ritual version of the spell (see "Rituals," page 177). At the end of the description, the ritual's traits in parentheses describe the length of one ritual interval, the number of karma points that must be spent to complete the spell's casting, and any ritual components required. The ritual components will either be described as "endures" or "consumed" depending on whether the component will remain intact after the ritual or be destroyed as part of it. These elements are presented after the fashion of "(ritual interval / X karma / ritual components)." For example, a ritual's specifics might be described as "(1 hour / 5 karma / 1 live goat, consumed)."

Variants: Variants are additional versions of the basic spell that are not identical, but that are very similar and can be described succinctly. Each variant is described with the variant spell's name and an explanation of how the variant spell is different from the usual version. Variant spells are usually less widely known than the basic version, less effective than the basic version, or more narrowly useful than the basic version. Sometimes, however, variant spells are more powerful. Sometimes they even have different ranks than the base version of the spell.

RANK 1 SPELLS

ASSUMPTION

Alternate Names: Mage-memory, The Keen Eye of Power's Manifestation Observed, Sticky Fingers.

Area of Effect: One witnessed power.

Range: Trivial.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: Only.

Effect: This spell allows its caster to "memorize" a power that he sees in use. Assumption can only be cast as a reaction to the use of a power within range; it suffices if either the individual using the power or the manifestation of the power are within range. While memorization has no immediate or explicit effect, it enables



the mage to subsequently duplicate that power using any of the Mimic spells (see page 190).

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the spell's range by one rank.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version allows the caster to memorize a power possessed by a willing or restrained target, without the target having to actually manifest it. (1 day / 6 karma / a single drop of the target's blood, consumed)

BEGUILE

Alternate Names: Cloak of Sophistication, Golden Tongue, Weave the Tapestry of Lies.

Area of Effect: One known creature.

Range: Caster's karmic range.

Duration: A number of hours equal to the caster's base Air score, terminable at will.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The caster gains 1 re-roll on all social tests against the target.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): The caster may specify an additional known creature to be affected.
- b. 2 (Unlimited): The caster gains an additional 1 re-roll on the affected tests.
- c. 2 (Unlimited): The caster may designate one willing creature in addition to himself to gain the re-rolls on the affected tests against the target.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell makes the effects permanent. (1 hour / karma points equal to the known creature's base Earth score / 1 meaningful personal item belonging to the target, consumed)

Variant (Pimp's Patter): The area of effect changes to "Any creature the caster is touching," and range changes to "Caster's touch." No target need be identified when this spell is cast, but the caster must touch a creature to gain the re-roll.

BUZZKILL

Alternate Names: Brainscrew, Clouds of Confusion, Mind Muddle, Enfeebling Finger.

Area of Effect: One creature.

Range: Exactly 13 feet.

Duration: 13 combat turns, terminable at will.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of this spell must make an Earth (Will) 2 test or suffer a -2 disadvantage penalty to all mental tests.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): The TH to resist the spell increases by one.

Ritual Version: The ritual version has the same effects with the much longer duration of 13 days. It can be cast on one known creature within Karmic Awareness range. (1 day / 5 karma / several strands of hair from the head of the intended victim, consumed)

Variant (Despair's Deep Hole): This version has a casting option (a) of "2 (Unlimited): The penalty to all mental tests increases by one." Knowledge of this variant is a closely guarded secret of the tainted magical lineage that developed it.

CAT'S EYES

Alternate Names: Silver Senses.

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: Either the caster or any living creature in the caster's field of vision who meets his gaze.

Duration: Five minutes per point of the caster's base Air score.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of the spell gains 1 re-roll on all Senses tests.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (1): Both the caster and a single character or creature in his field of vision who meets his gaze are affected.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): A single target of this spell gains an additional re-roll on the affected tests.
- d. 3 (Unlimited): A single target of the spell gains 1 automatic success on all affected Senses tests.

Variant (Circle of Cat's Eyes): This variant's area of effect is "A number of targets exactly equal to the caster's base Air score; all targets must be joining hands in a circle with the caster at the time of casting."

CLARION CALL

Alternate Names: Knitting of Flesh and Bone, Laying of Hands, Messiah's Touch, Adopt the Wound.

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: Within hearing distance of the caster.

Duration: Permanent.

Reaction: No.

Effect: In order for this spell to take effect, the target must hear the caster as he shouts the target's name. Clearly, this depends on ambient noise, the presence of physical obstacles, the ability of the caster to shout loud-



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ly, and so forth; these must all be adjudicated by the GM according to the situation. Neither technological nor magical effects and devices can change or extend the basic range of the caster's voice for the purposes of this spell, so telephones, telepathy, bullhorns, and the like do not help. Furthermore, note that deaf or deafened characters cannot be affected by this spell and mute wizards may not cast it.

The target heals one wound die or recovers from one weariness die, which is transferred to either the caster or another willing creature that the caster is touching. The wound or weariness retains its basic appearance and effects when transferred, so that (for example) a healed gunshot wound to the arm looks and behaves like a gunshot wound after being transferred to the caster's or volunteer's arm.

At the time the spell is cast, the recipient of the wound or weariness must make an Earth (Will) test with a TH equal to the number of penalty dice transferred, or subconsciously reject the pain and shock of being wounded, in which case the spell dissipates without effect.

The recipient of the wound dice or weariness dice can be killed or knocked unconscious by this spell.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the number of wound or weariness dice transferred from the target by one.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Transfer one wound die or weariness die from one additional target. Note that the wounds or weariness of all targets must be transferred to the same recipient.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell heals the wounds or weariness as described, but does not require a recipient—either caster or volunteer—to accept the wound. (1 hour / 3 karma / no ritual components)

Variant (Masochist's Delight): This variant only allows wounds to be transferred to the caster.

COUNTER WEAVE OF THE FIRST ORDER

Alternate Names: Gordion Knot, Mephitic Rebuttal, Two-Drops, Warrior's Ward.

Area of Effect: One rank 1 spell or ritual in progress.

Range: Caster's karmic range.

Duration: Instant.

Reaction: Only.

Effect: This spell counters magic as it is being woven. Counter Weave and its variants are staples of any wizard's training who expects to be opposed by other casters. It may have inspired the popular image of two wizards dueling by slinging undefined energy back and forth, each countering the others' power.

Any time a mage that knows Counter Weave detects the casting of a rank 1 spell or performing of a rank 1 ritual within his karmic range, he can use this spell as a reaction. Unlike other spells, the goal of the Weave Magic move in Counter Weave is not simply to meet the TH of the spell (i.e., twice the spell's rank), but to gain as many successes beyond the TH as possible. For every extra success the caster gains, the target

spell's Weave Magic TH increases by one.

Because Counter Weave actually lessens the possibility of a wizard gaining overkill successes, it was used among many wizards as a way to duel in the mythic age, stacking one wizard's casting ability against another's. It was also commonly seen on battlefields, where war casters would keep each other occupied with constant spells and Counter Weaves while the regular troops battled it out. While an effective way to counter an enemy wizard, this tactic obviously leads to a likelier generation of taint than simply killing your foe. This is one reason that dragons and human wizards, with their penchant for magical dueling for the sake of pride, are often at odds.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell counters other rituals. It requires the same karma expenditure as the ritual being countered, and also requires appro-





prate counters (spiritual or physical opposites, as determined by the GM) to the ritual's components. Rather than being a reaction spell, the counter-ritual is a full ritual, including both the Weave Magic and Cast (mental and physical) steps. The interval of the counter-ritual is one step lower than the ritual being countered; for instance, a ritual with a day interval would have a counter-ritual with an hour interval.

Variants: There is a Counter Weave variant for each spell rank; each variant Counter Weave can only be used against a spell of its own rank. These variants may be learned for half their normal AP cost, as normal. Counter Weaves are written after a fashion of "Counter Weave of the X Order," where "X" is the rank of the spell that the variant counters (First, Second, etc.).

GRASP

Alternate Names: Grip, Wizard's Clutch, Invisible Grasp.

Area of Effect: One physical object weighing five pounds or less.

Range: Up to 50 feet.

Duration: Up to seven minutes, terminable at will.

Reaction: No.

Effect: Grasp is used to manipulate objects at a distance. Within the weight limit, any physical object the caster can see—even remotely, such as by security camera—can be manipulated and moved through space, as long as it remains within the range of the spell. Control mechanisms like levers, buttons, and computer keyboards can be manipulated to do things like launch catapults, unlock doors, and type computer commands.

Objects that are secured (tied down, bolted to the floor, and so on) cannot generally be moved, though the Game Master must be the judge of whether lightly secured items can be manipulated.

Items being manipulated with Grasp do not move with a great deal of speed or force, so Grasp can't be used to block or parry attacks, catch speeding bullets, or the like.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the maximum weight of the items that can be manipulated by one pound.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.

Ritual Version: The ritual version permanently enchants an item of appropriate weight so that the ritual's caster can forever after manipulate the item per the spell's normal effects. (1 day / 3 karma points / the item in question, endures)

RADIANCE

Alternate Names: Globe of Illumination, Light of Ra, Night's End.

Area of Effect: A five-foot-radius sphere, emanating from a point in space designated by the caster.

Range: Up to 144 feet.

Duration: 12 minutes.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell produces a soft glow of light, approximately equivalent to the light given off by a forty-watt incandescent bulb. The light is not uniform through the spell's sphere of effect, but fades toward the edges. The light emanates from the center of the sphere of effect, so that anything that blocks light will either cast a shadow (an arm or tree branch, for example) or obstruct the light entirely (a wall or floor).

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the sphere of the light's radius by five feet.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.

Ritual Version: The ritual version makes the effects permanent. (1 hour / 1 karma / no ritual components)

Variant (Fireflies): Although the overall brightness of the light is unchanged, the effect seems to come from a multitude of fireflies that flit through the area of effect.

Variant (Token of Light): Rather than being cast on a point in space, this spell is cast on a physical object of any size, which the caster must be touching at the time of casting. The light then moves with the object wherever it is taken.

Variant (Shining Gold): Rather than being cast on a point in space, this spell is cast on a coin or other piece of physical currency within range. The more relative value the currency has to the caster, the brighter the light. A quarter, for instance, would glow with the same brightness as a candle, while a gold doubloon would shine like a spotlight. The light moves with the currency wherever it is taken.

Variant (Will-o-wisp): The light cast by the spell is not interrupted by physical objects. That is, it is impossible for any object to cast shadows within the light.

SHADOW

Alternate Names: Enshroud, Halo of Subterfuge, Dwellers' Touch.

Area of Effect: A five-foot-radius sphere, emanating from a point designated by the caster.

Range: 144 feet.

Duration: 12 minutes.

Reaction: No.





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Effect: This spell creates a strange sphere of shadow that—upon examination—appears not to be cast by anything at all. At night or in dim places, this spell is hard to detect, but is very bizarre in broad daylight or bright indoor areas. In most circumstances, those that attempt to sneak or remain hidden in areas affected by the spell receive one re-roll.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the sphere of the darkness's radius by five feet.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.

Ritual Version: The ritual version makes the effects permanent. (1 hour / 1 karma point / no ritual components)

Variant (Envelope of Black): Rather than creating an area of shadow, Envelope of Black creates a sphere of complete and impenetrable blackness. It is impossible to see into or within the sphere. This variant always appears unnatural and unnerving, except in pitch-blackness.

SIDESTEP

Alternate Names: Grace of Vishnu, March Hare.

Area of Effect: One creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Up to one hour as decided by caster.

Reaction: Optional (duration of one reaction).

Effect: The target of Sidestep receives one re-roll on all Dodge tests.

As a reaction, Sidestep may be cast in response to any physical attack. When so cast, the caster receives one re-roll on a Dodge test made in reaction to that attack only.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (2): The target receives one additional re-roll on Dodge tests.
- 1 (1): One additional target may be affected.

STATIC

Alternate Names: Mind Static, Shield of Psyche's Protection, Ironmind.

Area of Effect: One character or creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Up to one hour, chosen by caster.

Reaction: Optional (duration of one reaction).

Effect: The target receives one re-roll on all Earth (Will) tests.

As a reaction, Static may be cast in response to any spell that affects the mind or any offensive mental action. When so cast, the caster receives one re-roll on the Earth (Will) test made in reaction to that action only.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (3): The target receives an additional re-roll on the affected tests.

RANK 2 SPELLS

AEGIS

Alternate Names: Aura of Protection, Armoring Rune.

Area of Effect: One willing creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: 12 combat turns, terminable at will.

Reaction: Optional (duration of one reaction).

Effect: Aegis wraps its target with an invisible force that provides armor value 4 with no skill cap or weariness rating. Aegis also protects the target's head and hands as a helmet and gauntlets, respectively.

The armor value provided by the spell is cumulative with any other armor physically worn by the target of the spell, as well as any other magical or supernatural effects that also provide armor value.

As a reaction, Aegis may be cast in response to any physical attack against the caster. When so cast, the caster gains the benefits of the spell against that attack only.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the duration by six turns (though the spell remains terminable at will).
- 2 (6): Increase the armor rating provided by one.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version permanently enchants a suit of armor of any kind, increasing its armor value by two. (1 month / 5 karma / 12 suits of armor identical to the suit to be enchanted, consumed)

Variant (Scales of Might and Justice): Functionally equivalent to the basic Aegis spell, this version coats the target in a visible, seamless skin of dragon scales. In addition to its normal effects, the target stages down burn wounds by one.

Variant (Shield of the Righteous): Instead of a suit of invisible armor, this variant creates an invisible, nearly weightless shield that blocks attacks as a heavy shield but has the traits of a small shield. The shield can be passed around and used by anyone, not just the caster.

Variant (Aegis Detritus): This version of the spell draws upon loose nearby objects to create a spinning,





swarming cloud of debris around the caster, granting him armor value 4 but being reduced by one each time he is attacked during the turn; at the beginning of each turn, the armor value of the cloud of debris resets to 4. This version of the spell can be cast as a reaction against an attack on any creature adjacent to the caster, granting that creature the benefits of the spell against that attack only.

COUNTER WEAVE OF THE SECOND ORDER

This spell is identical to Counter Weave of the First Order (see page 184), save that rank 2 spells can be countered.

ETHER-WALL

Alternate Names: Architecture of Magic, Impervious Barrier, Immobile Shield of the Ancients' Power.

Area of Effect: Up to 144 square feet.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Up to a number of minutes equal to the caster's base Earth score.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell creates an invisible, passive, two-dimensional magical force, much like a wall, that repels all rapidly moving objects. Its edges may be formed in any shape so long as it does not curve or bend in any way.

The wall catches and slows any physical object moving through it a speed of approximately 10 mph for one turn. Anything moving at 10 mph or less when it hits the wall (essentially, anything slower than a jogging human) is unaffected. Once the object passes through, it regains its previous velocity. Vehicles that hit the wall immediately decrease to 10 mph (with potentially disastrous effects to their passengers); ranged weapon ammunition that hits the wall is delayed for a turn, giving potential targets plenty of opportunity to leave the area; and creatures cannot use any move faster than a Stride when passing through the wall.

The magical force need not sit on the ground or be anchored to any physical object whatsoever. It remains in space at whatever point the caster designates until its duration expires. An Ether-wall cannot be created in a space where there is already a physical object.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the range by 12

feet.

- b. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the area of effect by 144 square feet.
- c. 1 (1): Add "terminable at will" to the spell's duration.
- c. 2 (Unlimited): Designate one creature within range who is not affected by the wall; objects he throws, however, or projectiles from a gun that he fires, are affected normally.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version makes the force's duration permanent. It may be both permanent and terminable at will if casting option (c) is known. (1 day / 5 karma / a chip of diamond with a Cost of 4, consumed)

Variant (One-Way Whisper):

The slowing force exerted by this version spell only applies in one direction; imagine a "one-way wall"—you are slowed when coming through in one direction, but not in the other.

Variant (One-Way Brick): This variant's force is visible, appearing as a completely realistic brick wall. Casual viewers must make an Earth (Senses) test 4 to realize that something is amiss. It blocks vision just like a brick wall, but, just like One-Way Whisper, it only exerts force on one side, unless a double layer is created.

FLASH

Alternate Names: Sun Fist, Light of the Soldier of God's Fury.

Area of Effect: A 12-ft. radius sphere, emanating from a point in space designated by the caster.

Range: Up to 144 feet.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: No.

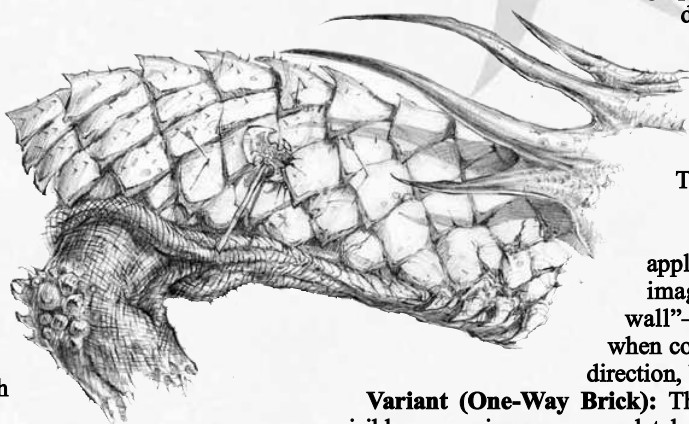
Effect: This spell creates a blinding flash of light and sound that disrupts, distracts, and flummoxes anyone within the radius of its effect. (Although the light and flash can be seen by those outside the radius, it does not adversely affect them.)

Creatures in the area of effect must make an Earth (Will) 4 test or suffer 1 fading disadvantage penalty to all tests for every success they were short of the TH.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Double the radius of the





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area of effect.

- b. 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- c. 2 (Unlimited): Create an additional sphere of effect, which may appear anywhere within the spell's range, and whose radius of effect can be doubled as per casting option (a).

Variant (Silent Flash): A variant that creates light but no noise. It affects only seeing creatures, but otherwise the effects are the same.

FLOAT

Alternate Names: The Hand of Air, Levitate, Gravity Sucks.

Area of Effect: One size 0 creature.

Range: Up to 50 feet.

Duration: A number of turns equal to the caster's base Air score, terminable at will.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The caster can cause the target to move up, down, or sideways through the air a distance equal to the caster's (not the target's) Crawl distance. Each turn, the caster may cause the creature to move a like distance with a mental move. Unwilling creatures may resist with an Earth (Will) test 4.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): One additional target is affected. Causing multiple targets to move through the air after the first turn requires one mental action per target to be moved, however.
- b. 2 (10): The target may be one size category larger.

Variant (Plummet): This variant simply grabs the target and yanks him up into the air, then drops him. The target travels upward (and, subsequently, downward) 20 feet for every success by which he is short of the Earth (Will) test to resist the spell.

GREAT LEAP

Alternate Names: Toadstride, The Grasshopper Manifest.

Area of Effect: One size 0 or smaller creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Until the target touches the ground.

Reaction: No.

Effect: If the caster or his target spends his next entire physical action leaping, he travels 10 times farther than he would with a number of successes equal to his base Fire score on a Jump test.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (5): The target may carry a number of additional size 0 creatures equal to the number of overkill successes, or any combination of additional size categories' worth of creatures up to the number of overkill successes, without suffering penalties due to carrying capacity.
- b. 1 (5): The spell may target a creature of one size category larger.

THE LABORER ABIDES

Alternate Names: Blessing of Industry, Able-body.

Area of Effect: One character or creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Until sunset, or until the target stops doing the activity specified.

Reaction: No.

Effect: When casting the Laborer Abides, the caster specifies some activity such as running, fighting, building a house, or casting a ritual. As long as the target of the spell continues to do that activity and nothing else, he does not become tired or require sustenance of any kind. Because the target does not become tired, it is impossible for him to sustain weariness penalties of any kind while the spell persists. When the activity ends, whether by choice or interruption, the target can once more become tired as usual, though his prior efforts do not "catch up with him."

For an unknown reason, this spell can only be cast during the day; the sun need not be visible, but it must be up in the part of the world in which the spell is cast.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Affect one additional target (who must pursue the same activity).

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version imbues some tool with the effects of the spell. The first time the tool is used in an appropriate task after sunrise each day, the effect activates, and its user remains tireless until he chooses to stop or until the sun sets. Shoes would be appropriate for running, hammers for building, swords for fighting, and so on. The ritual's effect has a duration of 1 week per base Air score of the caster. (1 day / 3 karma / the tool to be enchanted, endures)

Variant (Labor of Luna): A variant that can only be cast when the moon is up, and lasts until the moon sets.

MAGEFIST

Alternate Names: Fist of Force, Invisible Might, Smash.





Area of Effect: One discrete object, character, or creature.

Range: 12 feet.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: Optional.

Effect: This spell allows the mage to exert a great deal of force on a single point for a split second. This effect can (for example) knock down doors, crush objects, deal damage to living creatures, and even block melee attacks.

Magefist creates a split-second force construct that acts as a mattock (7/M). The caster may use the magefist to perform an immediate single physical attack sequence, using his base Air score as its Fire pool. The magefist has Melee 1 for the purposes of number of moves in its attack sequence, but does not have any stance changes. Unless the defender is able to view the ephemeral, such as with Ka or the Second Sight spell, he cannot make a stance change to Water in reaction to the attack.

Magefist can be cast as a mental reaction to block any melee attack launched against the caster, using his base Air score as its Water pool. Alternatively, the magefist can be cast to block an attack against another character within range, but only if the caster used the Defend mental action; casting the spell then uses the caster's physical action.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the Fire score of the magical force by one.
- c. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the Water score of the magical force by one.

Variant (Hand of the Ancestors): This variant creates a large, disembodied human fist (about the size of a basketball) that strikes the target. Because it is visible, characters and creatures attacked by this spell can make stance changes to Water normally. The duration of this variant is one turn per point of the caster's base Air score, and it may be directed to attack with a mental action.

Variant (Ray of Power): This variant manifests as a beam of white light that flashes from the mage's hand and strikes its intended target. Like Hand of the Ancestors, this manifestation is visible, and targets can therefore make stance changes to Water normally. The range of this variant is 100 ft.

MIMIC THE FIRST ORDER

Alternate Names: Assumption's Handmaiden.

Area of Effect: Caster.

Range: Caster.

Duration: 1 scene.



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Reaction: Varies (see Effect).

Effect: This spell allows the caster to use any rank 1 power that he has “memorized” by using the spell Assumption (see page 182). Any options and variations that are a part of the basic power are available to the caster, whether or not they were employed at the time the caster cast Assumption. This spell may be cast as a reaction when the power being mimicked can be used as a reaction.

EXPANDED LORE

Variant (First Empowerment): This variant has a range of “Caster’s touch” and an area of effect of “1 living creature.” It allows the caster to grant any memorized rank 1 power to a target that he touches. Unwilling creatures may resist with an Earth (Will) 4 test.

SECOND SIGHT

Alternate Names: Down the Rabbit Hole, Trip.

Area of Effect: All things the caster can see with his unaided eyesight. “Unaided” means that the caster’s sight cannot be enhanced by technology (cameras, low-light gear, binoculars—even eyeglasses), though this prohibition does not include magical means or aids. This spell also does not work on recorded or phantasmal images; the caster cannot use it on video recordings, photographs, illusions created by magic, and the like.

Range: As far as the caster can see.

Duration: Until the caster blinks. The caster must make an Earth (Will) 1 test at the beginning of each of his turns to avoid blinking. The threshold increases by +1 each turn.

Reaction: No.

Effect: Tapping into the power of karmic awareness, Second Sight allows the caster to see the ephemeral, including spirits, karmic auras, and the trace effects of spells.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Each additional success burned off increases the intensity of the auras the caster sees; for each extra success channeled into this casting option, the Earth test threshold to avoid blinking increases by one.

Ritual Version: The ritual version creates a magical device that allows anyone who looks through it to gain the effects of the spell. Of course, those who use the device but do not understand the symbolism by which the information is imparted may not understand what, exactly, they’re seeing. The form of the device is chosen and provided by the caster, but must always be an item that aids or affects perception, such as a magnifying glass or 3-D glasses. The device’s magical properties persist for a number of days equal to the ritual caster’s base Air score. (1 day / 3 karma / the item chosen, endures)

Variant (Flash of Insight): Flash of Insight is identical to Second Sight in all respects except that it can be cast as a reaction to any action at all. Its duration is only one second. (This does not typically affect the caster’s reaction rolls directly, but it may give the caster valuable information that allows him to better choose how to react.)

Variant (Blinders): Developed by corrupt and tainted wizards, this is a version of Second Sight that does not detect creatures who are tainted. It is generally passed off as an unaltered version of Second Sight, though, so that those to whom it is taught continue to mistakenly believe—for example—that their tainted masters are pure and blameless. This spell is only called Blinders by those who know its secret; those who have been fooled only know it by one of the legitimate names of Second Sight.

SCRYE

Alternate Names: Roving Eye, Farsight, Clairvoyance, The Mind’s Eye.

Area of Effect: A five-foot radius centered on a known point in space designated by the caster. The point may be designated either by direction and distance (“a point five feet from my outstretched finger,” “a point five feet directly behind me”) or in relation to some landmark known to the caster (“the alarm clock on my nightstand,” “the top of the tree at the entrance to the sacred grove”).

Range: Caster’s karmic range.

Duration: As long as the caster keeps his eyes closed.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The caster can see, in his mind’s eye, the visible contents of the area of effect he has chosen, even if physical barriers (closed doors, walls, earth, or anything at all) intervene. This spell does not create light in the place if it is dark, nor allow the caster to perceive things he normally could not see. Abilities that allow the caster to see the ephemeral, however, work through the scrye.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the spell’s range by one karmic awareness rank.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the radius of the area of effect by five feet.
- c. 2 (2): Create a visible light (identical to the effect of the Radiance spell; see page 185) in the area being viewed. This visible light is also apparent to anyone else who can see the area of effect.
- d. 4 (4): Render the caster capable of per-

ceiving within a darkened area of effect. (This is functionally equivalent to (c), above, save that there is no light created that would allow those in or near the area of effect to realize they are being scryed upon.)

- e. 2 (4): Render the caster capable of either hearing or smelling—or both, if four extra successes are spent—within the area of effect.
- f. 3 (3): Make mobile the point upon which the area of effect is centered. When mobile, the caster can move the point 50 feet in any direction with a mental action. It can travel unimpeded by physical objects.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version permanently enchants an item with the basic effects of the spell. The area of effect is seen in or through the item: Reflected in a mirror, manifest within a crystal ball, or even in the glass of an old TV. In order to function, the object must remain within range of the target area. Note that unless casting option (f) is infused into the item, it can only be used to observe the area of effect chosen at the time of enchantment. If two items are included in the ritual, the items scrye on each others' locations, allowing for two-way communication. Remember, this effect is usually only visual, not aural, so actual dialogue is impossible unless option (e) is achieved. But then again, with cell phones, who needs two-way magic mirrors? Including two items in the ritual takes the same amount of time, but costs twice the karma and uses up one additional eye. (1 month / 12 karma / one dragon or scion eye, consumed)

Variant (Vision): This variant gives the caster a vision of a random area of effect within his range, which may or may not be meaningful or important. Among certain faithful, this version of Scrye is used for divination and augury; among the cynical, this variant is seen as being completely worthless.

Variant (Voices): This variant allows the caster to

hear sounds as if he stood in the chosen area, rather than see the five feet around it. For as long as the spell lasts, the caster cannot hear anything going on around him, and is effectively deaf. Casting option (e) allows vision and smell instead of hearing and smell.



SLOW THE LIVING

Alternate Names: Moving Violation, Molasses, Ralphie's Curse, Snail-touch.

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: 13 feet.

Duration: 13 combat turns, chosen by caster, terminable at will.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of this spell acts as though the air had tangible thickness and a haze of uncertainty clouded his brain. This has three effects:

- The target's initiative is reduced by ten.
- The target suffers -2 disadvantage penalty to all of his reaction tests.
- A target with the capacity to act in

quicken initiative may not do so while he is under this spell's effect.

Unwilling targets may resist with an Earth (Will) 4 test.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.
- d. 1 (Unlimited): The target's disadvantage penalty increases by 1.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version creates either a permanent Zone of Impairment or a permanent Sluggish Token (see "Variants," below). (1 week / 5 karma / 13 different species of snails, consumed)

Variant (Zone of Moving Impairment): Rather than having area of effect "one living creature," this variant affects a spherical area with a radius of 13 feet.



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All characters who enter the radius suffer the effects of the spell if they fail their Earth tests, while those who leave shake them off. This variant adds casting option (e) “1 (Unlimited): Increase the area of effect’s radius by three feet.”

Variant (Sluggish Token): This spell infuses a discrete item of size –2 with magical power such that whomever touches, wears, or is otherwise in contact with the item is affected per the spell’s basic effects for as long as he remains in contact with it. This variant adds casting option (e) “2 (Unlimited): Increase the size of the item that may be affected.”

RANK 3 SPELLS

ANIMATE

Alternate Names: The Object Awakened, Mage’s Helper, Intelligent Coffeepot.

Area of Effect: One discrete object.

Range: Caster’s touch.

Duration: 13 minutes.

Reaction: No.

Effect: An unintelligent object gains the ability to operate on its own and move through space. The animated item may only operate on its own according to its nature. For example, a firearm could shoot itself, a sword could swing itself, a car could drive itself, a drawbridge could swing up and down, and a coffeepot could turn itself on and make coffee. Items may not exceed this capacity, however—a firearm could not reload itself, a sword could not sharpen itself, a car could not fix its broken transmission, a drawbridge could not negotiate an end to a siege, and a coffeepot could not fill itself up with grounds. When objects must make tests to accomplish things that are in their nature, their base aspects are equal to half the enchanting mage’s aspects, and they may perform sequences and make stance changes as if they had skill ranks equal to half the mage’s skill ranks (rounded up). An animated object is always assumed to have used an optimal stance change to accomplish its task. In other words, a sword animated by a mage with Fire 4 and Melee 2 would effectively have Fire 2 and Melee 1; when performing a melee test, it would move 1 die to Fire and roll three dice total. It could perform an attack sequence two moves long and with one attack move.

In addition to carrying out its basic functions, an animated object can move through space at the enchanting mage’s Crawl rate. The item can move through any non-solid medium; it may inch along tabletops, fly through the air, “swim” through water, and so forth. (The obvious exceptions are items permanently attached to other things. A drawbridge could not float away from the gate of which it is a part, for example.)

An animated item generally carries out the will of the mage that animated it without the spellcaster having to expend actions to direct it. A gun shoots the mage’s ene-

mies, a sword attacks his foes, a car brings him to the place he wants to go, a drawbridge admits his friends and blocks out his enemies, and a coffeepot brews him coffee whenever the urge strikes. In play, the mage’s player simply controls the animated item as if it were an extension of the character’s will.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the range by 50 feet.
- b. 2 (Unlimited): Double the spell’s duration.
- c. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the base score of one of the object’s aspects by one.
- d. 2 (Unlimited): Increase the base score of one of the object’s skills by one.

Ritual Version: The spell’s ritual version makes the duration permanent. (1 week / 9 karma points / a fresh human brain and an ounce of mercury, consumed)

Variant (The Obedient Object): Rather than operating as an extension of the caster’s will, the object animated by this variant acts at the command of anyone who speaks a word or phrase specified by the caster when the spell is cast. In order to wrest control of the object from its current controller, the new controller must use a mental action to make an Air (Will) test opposed by the current controller’s Earth (Will) test.

BLIND

Alternate Names: Eyesight Deprived, Un-vision, Deprivation

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: Caster’s unaided vision, up to 50 feet.

Duration: 13 turns.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of the spell is blinded (see “Blindness” in the Gross Trauma Sidebar, page 160).

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 3 (Unlimited): Affect one additional character or creature.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the range by 50 feet (but do not eliminate the requirement that the caster be able to see the target).
- c. 2 (2): Eliminate the requirement that the caster’s vision be unaided. (The caster must still be able to see the victim, but he may use magical or technological means such as Scrye or low-light gear to do so.) The range-in-feet requirement remains unchanged.



- d. 1 (Unlimited): Double the duration.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version makes one known target within range of the caster's karmic awareness permanently blind. This effect can be negated with a counter-ritual by anyone who knows this ritual version of the spell. (1 day / 12 karma / 1 ounce of the target's flesh, cut from the target)

Variant (Deafen): This spell renders the target deaf rather than blind (see "Deafness" in the Gross Trauma Sidebar, page 160).

CATCHER'S CREATION

Alternate Names: Entrapped Disguise, Stump

Area of Effect: One size 0 object or creature.

Range: Trivial.

Duration: 1 hour per base Air score.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This is the best known spell of disguise that has survived from the mythic age; the more effective version of such spells, like those that produce invisibility, have been notoriously difficult to rediscover. (Perhaps because their owners, with such spells in their repertoires, are similarly well hidden.)

When cast, the spell creates a glamour of whatever object the caster envisions, which then surrounds the target. The glamour must be of about the same size and mass as the target, so a human might be disguised as the remains of a dead tree, a city mailbox, or a tall cairn, for instance. Any creatures who perceive the target without viewing the ephemeral will see the glamour instead. Perceptive viewers may notice that something is not quite right about the object with a TH 6 Senses test. Of course, if the target happens to be walking across a street in the guise of a tree, or is an incongruous object, such as a mailbox on top of a mountain, that is likely to tip the viewer off that something is amiss.

If the target is an object, or is a creature that is remaining motionless, any viewers are likely to think nothing of it. Targets may engage in minor movements, such as casting, writing, looking around, standing up or sitting down, etc., without disrupting the appearance of the glamour. Any movements more dramatic than this, however, in addition to the obvious effects of an otherwise stationary object appearing to move of its own volition, cause the glamour to be mildly disrupted as it tries to "catch up" to its target. For each physical move the target performs, the TH for a viewer to notice that something is odd about the object is lowered by one.

When cast as a reaction, this spell may allow the caster to disguise herself instantly when she is unexpectedly spotted. In so doing, however, she must freeze, remaining absolutely still. The disguise lasts for as long as the viewer continues to look towards the caster, or until the caster moves against her own volition. The caster may remain motionless for one minute by making a Water (Stamina) test 1, with the TH increasing by 1 each additional minute.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 2 (Unlimited): Increase the size category of the creature or object disguised.
- b. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the TH to notice something amiss about the object.
- c. 4 (4): Cause the glamour to fool even those viewing the ephemeral; they still have a chance to perceive something amiss, just as a normal viewer would.
- d. 2 (Unlimited): When cast as a reaction, target one additional object or creature within Trivial range to receive the benefit of the glamour (all targets must be disguised as the same type of object).

Ritual Version: If cast on an object, the ritual version of this spell has a duration of permanent. If cast on a creature, it has a duration of one month and the glamour is not seen by animals or other non-intelligent creatures. Each time the target is seen by an intelligent creature, however, the spell kicks in as normal. Every time it does so, there is a 1-in-36 chance (i.e., it occurs if you roll two 1's on 2d6) that the target is subjected to a Warp the Unwilling effect, turning him into the object shown by the glamour (see page 199). Unwilling targets may resist the ritual with an Earth (Will) 6 test, while characters subject to the Warp the Unwilling effect need to succeed at a Water (Stamina) 10 test to retain their true forms. (1 week / 9 karma / the skin of an octopus, consumed)

CORUSCATING BOLT

Alternate Names: Ray of Power, Zot of Death, Slice.

Area of Effect: A relatively straight line between the caster and an interrupting object.

Range: Caster's sight/unlimited. (The caster can only aim the bolt at targets that he can see, but the extent of his eyesight does not limit the actual distance the bolt can travel. Rather, it continues on until it hits something solid and disperses. In areas devoid of such barriers—the surface of the ocean, for example—the ray's range is effectively limited only by the curvature of the earth.)

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell creates a 5-foot-wide bolt of light, fire, and electricity that extends from the caster's finger and causes 30 points of damage to anything it strikes. A target must have resistance to both burn and electrical damage to reduce or negate it. The bolt ends when it strikes the first seriously solid object in its path, such as a substantial building wall, a car, or a creature of size 2 or larger. Minor impediments—humans, furniture, and foliage, for example—suffer the bolt's damage but do

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CORUSCATING BOLT

Roll	Effect
1	Missed entirely; no damage
2	–2 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
3	–1 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
4	+1 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
5	+2 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
6	Hit square on, no chance to avoid damage

TABLE 7-6

not impede it. (The ultimate target also suffers the damage, in addition to stopping the ray.) The GM is the final arbiter of what manner of obstacle is capable of ending the bolt's advance, though generally speaking anything that is both large and solid as well as capable of absorbing the bolt's damage without being completely destroyed qualifies.

Characters can attempt to dodge the bolt with a Water (Quickness) test, reducing the damage by 5 for each success. The bolt travels in a relatively straight line, which means that it is jagged like lightning and writhes like fire. While it cannot bend around corners or describe an arc, a coruscating bolt can sometimes fail to affect even objects in its direct path through the whim of fate and luck. Each object or creature in the bolt's path must roll one six-sided die, with results as shown on Table 7-6.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): The damage caused by the bolt is increased by 5.
- 2 (Unlimited): One object or creature in the bolt's path, of the caster's choice, must re-roll on Table 7-6.

Ritual Version: None.

Variants: A number of variants of this spell create visual effects of varying appearance—different colors, intensities of light, and so forth. They are otherwise identical to the basic version.

COUNTER WEAVE OF THE THIRD ORDER

This spell is identical to Counter Weave of the First Order (see page 184), save that rank 3 spells can be countered.

FALSEHOOD

Alternate Names: Dark Veil, Mystic Filmstrip, Vision of What Is Not.

Area of Effect: A five-foot radius centered on a point in space, restricted such that the caster can only affect portions of the area of effect that he can see at the time of casting.

Range: 50 feet.

Duration: One week. (This refers to the length of time the target is "protected" by the alternate information specified. There is no limit to the amount of past time that can be affected when Falsehood is used to foil History, page 198, or similar spells that allow a mage to perceive the area of effect in the past.)

Reaction: Optional.

Effect: Falsehood is used to foil casters who use spells like Second Sight, Scrye, or History to gain visual and auditory information. When Falsehood is cast, its caster specifies an alternate version of what will be detected when other casters use spells to gain information about Falsehood's area of effect. For example, a mage casting Falsehood on his meditation chamber might specify that anyone using magic to spy on the room will see him lying asleep in his bed.

The mage who casts Falsehood may be as specific about his intended perceptions as he likes, which the GM should be rigorously literal in applying. For example, the mage who made himself appear to be asleep in his meditation chamber would appear to be asleep in all of past time to a mage who cast History to check out the chamber; this might be a clue to a scrying mage that Falsehood was being employed.

Falsehood can be cast as a reaction when a spell that Falsehood could thwart is being cast. The spell must be being cast on an area of effect within Falsehood's range.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the radius of the area of effect by five feet.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's range.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version increases the spell's duration to permanent. (1 week / 6 karma / no ritual component)

Variant (False Token): This spell is cast on an item rather than a point in space; the false information travels with the item and its surroundings rather than being related to an immobile area. For example, a False Token might make its bearer appear to be a scion to those who cast Second Sight, or make it appear that the token's surroundings (up to Falsehood's area of effect) are pitch black to someone using Scrye to view the area where the token is located.

FLIGHT

Alternate Names: Bird's Flight, Without Wires.

Area of Effect: One living character or creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: 13 minutes.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of the spell gains a flight gait of sluggish and flight maneuverability 1.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): Increase the target's gait by one category or maneuverability by one rank.

MIMIC THE SECOND ORDER

This spell is identical to Mimic the First Order (see page 190), save that rank 2 powers can be mimicked.

WARD

Alternate Names: Glyph, Wizard's Protection, Sign of Shelter.

Area of Effect: The area described by one Trivial boundary.

Range: The caster must be within the boundaries of the area of effect when he inscribes the symbol, but not when the symbol is affected by a spell. He must be within range of his karmic awareness when the symbol is affected by a spell.

Duration: The spell persists as long as the symbol inscribed remains obvious and unblemished. Trivial blemishes—dust falling into the grooves of a carving, for example—do not end the spell, but the meaningful disruption or concealment of even a single line of the symbol is sufficient to end the spell's effects. Note that concealed Wards can return to power if they are subsequently uncovered.

Reaction: No.

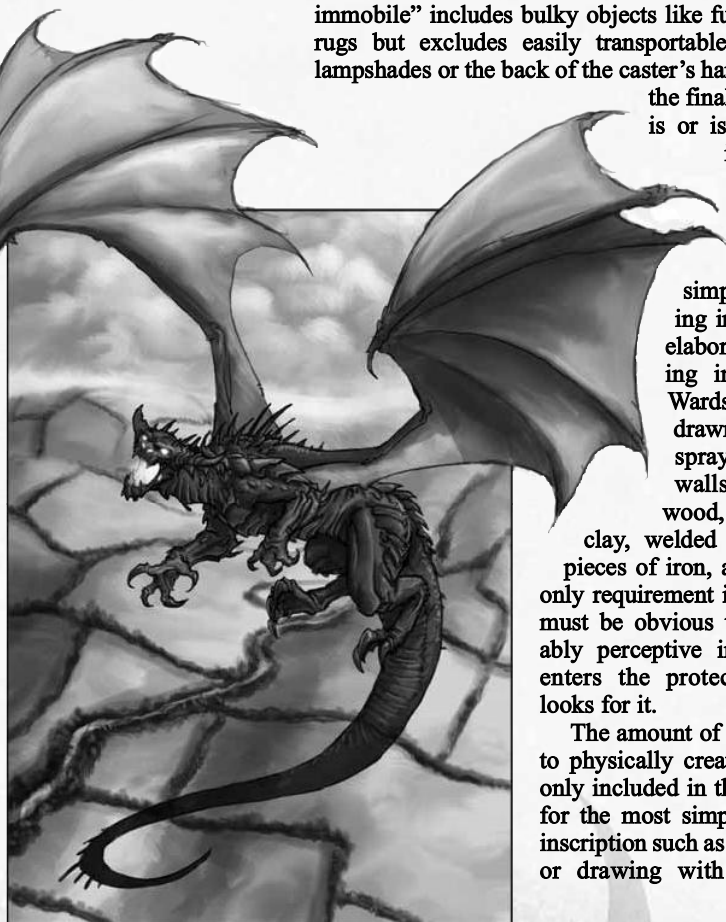
Effect: When casting Ward, the caster inscribes a

symbol of magical power that protects everything within the area from the effects of spells and powers. This protective effect is linked to the inscribing wizard's Earth score, and ebbs and flows as his Earth pool does. Whenever any creature or object within the area of effect is the target of a successfully cast spell or power, so long as the Ward's caster is within karmic awareness range, he makes an Earth (Will) test with a TH equal to the rank of the spell or power plus the attacker's base Air score. If the Ward's caster meets the threshold, the new spell has no effect, even though it was successfully cast; its magic power is sucked into the Ward and dispersed harmlessly. If the Ward's caster does not meet the threshold, the spell takes effect normally. The Ward does not absorb spells that create an area of effect, only those that target creatures or objects. For instance, it would work against Blind, but not against Coruscating Bolt. In either case, the Ward's caster becomes aware that some magic is active within the warded area, whether he is present or not. Note that if a Ward's caster dies or is out of karmic awareness range, the Ward ceases to be useful unless the caster employed casting options to allow it to make tests independently.

A mage casting Ward must have some means at hand of inscribing the symbol of power on a relatively immobile surface within the area of effect. ("Relatively immobile" includes bulky objects like furniture or area rugs but excludes easily transportable surfaces like lampshades or the back of the caster's hand. The GM is the final judge of what is or is not relatively immobile.)

Inscribing the symbol may be as quick and simple as scratching in the dirt or as elaborate as chiseling in living rock. Wards can also be drawn on surfaces, spray-painted onto walls, burned into wood, sculpted from clay, welded together from pieces of iron, and so on. The only requirement is that the rune must be obvious to any reasonably perceptive individual who enters the protected area and looks for it.

The amount of time necessary to physically create the Ward is only included in the casting time for the most simple methods of inscription such as dirt-scratching or drawing with a permanent



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marker. For more elaborate symbols, the GM must determine how much time the caster must spend before the rune is complete and the spell takes effect. When a lengthy inscription process is required, the Weave Magic test is made at the beginning of the procedure, and the Casting test is made at the end.

For the casting options and ritual version below, the larger the area protected, the larger and more permanent and immovable the Ward must be. A Ward protecting a Minor area, for instance, might be inscribed on the side of a building or painted on a parking lot; a Ward protecting a Moderate area might be painted on a water tower, created with crop circles, or built with cairns in a clearing; and a ritual version would require massive landscape alteration on the level of Stonehenge or the Cerne giant in Dorset, England.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (1): Affect an area described by Minor boundaries.
- b. 4 (4): Affect an area described by Moderate boundaries.
- c. 3 (Unlimited): +1 bonus die to the caster's Earth (Will) test to protect against spells.
- d. 10 (10): The Ward may make tests independently of the caster, using his base Earth score plus his ranks in Will. The caster can never make tests on behalf of the Ward.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of the spell can be used to Ward an area with Major boundaries. (1 month / 25 karma / permanent landscape alteration, endures)

WHOLENESS

Alternate Names: Fitness Restored, Touch of Restoration, Healing

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: Caster's touch.

Duration: Permanent.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target recovers from the effects of one permanent gross trauma such as blindness, deafness, the loss of a limb, and so on. The effect is not instantaneous; severed limbs slowly grow back, damaged hearing slowly regenerates, and so on. The target creature can begin making Water (Stamina) tests to heal the trauma as if he had 5 wound dice; when these "wound dice" are reduced to 0, the trauma is completely healed. This spell cannot be used to restore sight to those who could never see, grant new limbs to those born without them, and the like.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options: None.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell can grant eyesight or hearing, or restore missing limbs, to those who never had them to begin with. It cannot create a faculty in a type of creature that would not typically possess it; it cannot give men third arms, for example. Alternatively, it allows for immediate recovery from gross trauma effects, without needing to make Water (Stamina) tests. (1 day / 12 karma / the eyes, ears, or limb of one willing to sacrifice it, consumed)

RANK 4 SPELLS

AVATAR

Alternate Names: Karmic Bodyguard, Messenger of the Ancients.

Area of Effect: One karmic construct.

Range: Minor.

Duration: Up to 14 turns, as decided by caster.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell summons a shining paragon of righteousness (or a dark forbidding manifestation of doom, depending on your personal tastes) to do your bidding. The creature is quite obviously otherworldly, and is too dramatic to do anything subtly or quietly. When it first appears, rising like a shadow from the ground or descending like a bolt from the heavens, it demands in a booming voice, "What is thy bidding?" The caster may then give the creature instructions in 14 words or less, which the construct attempts to do to the best of its ability. If the task is still unfinished when the duration ends, or the construct finishes the task on the spell's last turn, it makes a dramatic departure in a manner similar to its arrival. If the construct completes the task before the duration of the spell has ended, it returns to the ephemeral stuff of which it is made and channels back to its source through the caster, inflicting 5 damage to him for each turn remaining in the spell's duration. This damage is identical to that caused by overkill successes, and therefore cannot be avoided by most normal protective means.

The construct is a size 1 creature with two stance changes. It bears an 18/H weapon, which, like the creature's overall form, is decided upon by the caster. It has a land, flight, and swim gait of speedy, flight maneuverability rank 3, and armor value 6. It suffers any of the effects that the caster suffers from, including spell effects and penalty dice, but is itself otherwise immune to all spells, fighting style payoffs, and penalty dice. The construct can be affected by physical damage as normal, destabilizing and disappearing when reduced to 6 wound dice, but it does not suffer the corresponding wound penalties. All of the construct's base aspect scores are equal to the caster's base Water score, plus it has a number of superhuman aspect points equal to the



caster's base Fire score, which may be divided up among the aspects as the caster desires. It has ranks in all skills equal to the caster's base Air score and karma equal to the caster's base Earth score.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 5 (Unlimited): Increase the size category of the construct.
- b. 3 (Unlimited): Increase one of the creature's base aspect scores, skill ranks, flight maneuverability, AV, or weapon damage by 1.
- c. 1 (5): Grant the construct one rank in an edge of your choice.
- d. 2 (10): Grant the construct one rank in a power of your choice.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell creates a permanent construct, powered by the life force of the ritual's caster or its beneficiary. The construct can either be bound to a place of Moderate size or an individual (called its master). If it is bound to a place, it depletes the caster's karma pool by 1 each month. If it is bound to an individual, it depletes its master's karma pool by 1 each day. (1 month / 12 karma / a symbol of the religious orientation most closely associated with the area or individual to which the construct is bound, endures)

CORUSCATING RING

Alternate Names: Circle of Fiery Death, Chicago Style.

Area of Effect: A 12-foot-radius circle around the caster that is blocked by solid objects (see Effect).

Range: Centered on caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell is identical to Coruscating Bolt, except that it inflicts 40 damage, and only extends in a circle around the caster, parallel to the ground at any point of the caster's height that he desires. Creatures that would block a Coruscating Bolt create "shadows;" anyone within such a shadow (that is, objects and characters who are on the other side of the obstacle from the casting mage) are spared from the attack. Use Table 7-7 to determine the random effects.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): The damage is increased by 5.
- b. 2 (Unlimited): One object or creature in the ring's path, of the caster's choice,



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CORUSCATING RING

Roll	Effect
1	-2 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
2	-1 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
3-4	+/-0 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
5	+1 to TH of Water (Quickness) test
6	+2 to TH of Water (Quickness) test

TABLE 7-7

must re-roll on Table 7-7.

- c. 1 (Unlimited): Double the radius of the ring's area of effect.

Variant (Circle of Ravens): This highly feared spell creates a ring of life-draining energy that ignores and passes through all unliving things, including animated objects or undead creatures, and affects all living things in its path without being interrupted. In other words, no living creature within its radius can take cover from the effect.

COUNTER WEAVE OF THE FOURTH ORDER

This spell is identical to Counter Weave of the First Order (see page 184), save that rank 4 spells can be countered.

EPHEMERAL ARMOR

Alternate Names: Soul Shield, The Nine Guardian Signs.

Area of Effect: Trivial emanation from the caster.

Range: Trivial.

Duration: Permanent until used.

Reaction: No.

Effect: Ephemeral armor protects you from harm in a somewhat convoluted and unexpected manner: by linking your life force to those who are attacking you. An effect of Trivial range emanates outward from you, tying your essence to those around you. Any time damage is willfully dealt to you, the spell traces the source of the damage back to the one who initiated it. If the source of the damage is within range, he suffers the damage instead of you. A creature may prevent the damage from being inflicted to itself, and cause it to be inflicted to you instead as normal, by making an Earth (Will) 8 test.

Ephemeral Armor protects you from physical and mental damage equally. Payoffs that would normally be inflicted are suffered by the aggressor, as are spell effects. Ephemeral Armor can absorb and redirect 8

wound dice worth of attacks and 8 ranks worth of harmful spells. For this purpose, fighting style sequences that would connect are considered wound dice equal to their PR.

This spell cannot be fooled by mechanical devices like guns, traps, or timed explosives. It tracks the karmic trail left by the one most responsible for the damage, regardless of his methods or whereabouts, so long as he is within range of the emanation.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 3 (Unlimited): Increase the range of the emanation by one rank.
- 3 (Unlimited): Increase the number of wound dice the Ephemeral Armor can absorb and redirect by 1.

Ritual Version: The ritual version of this spell works like the normal version of the spell, except that its duration is 1 year and it only absorbs and redirects damage caused by a single known target. (1 week / 12 karma / the blood of three creatures the target has killed, consumed).

HISTORY

Alternate Names: Pastsight, Rewind, Visions of What Has Come Before

Area of Effect: As Scrye (see page 190).

Range: As Scrye.

Duration: As Scrye.

Reaction: No.

Effect: Just like Scrye, this spell allows the caster to observe the goings-on around a certain point in space, but with one important addition: The caster can see what happened at the chosen place up to one hour in the past. The caster can shift his vision to any point in history within that hour, moving backward and forward through time at will, until he opens his eyes.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- As the casting options for Scrye, see page 190.
- 1 (Unlimited): Multiply the period of history that can be viewed by 10 (i.e., from one hour in the past to 10 hours in the past to 100 hours in the past, and so on).

Ritual Version: As Scrye (see page 190), save that the ritual's requirements are (6 months / 24 karma / 12 dragon or scion eyes consumed).

MIMIC THE THIRD ORDER

This spell is identical to Mimic the First Order (see

page 189), save that rank 3 powers can be mimicked.

PARALYZE

Alternate Names: Space Bar, Chill the Blood of Time.

Area of Effect: One size 0 object or creature, or an area equivalent to a size 0 creature.

Range: Trivial.

Duration: Up to one minute, chosen by caster, terminable at will.

Reaction: Optional.

Effect: This spell stops time for the target object or creature, or for everything within an area roughly equivalent to a size 0 creature's mass. For example, a scion freezes in mid-leap, bullets pause in the air, a motorcycle stops in place, and so forth. When the spell's effects conclude, the target continues with whatever momentum it had when the effects began. For example, a scion falling from a bridge who was paused in mid-air would continue falling and a speeding car stopped inches from a brick wall would crash into it. Unwilling targets can resist with an Earth (Will) 8 test.

In order to cast Paralyze as a reaction, the caster must use and succeed at a physical Interrupt move. A successful Paralyze freezes creatures or objects just long enough for any reacting characters to gain full successes on their reaction tests; for instance, reacting characters would gain full successes against an enemy's attack or to leap out of a car before it crashes.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 2 (Unlimited): Increase the size category of the target object, creature, or equivalent area by +1.
- 4 (Unlimited): Affect an additional object or creature within range.
- 4 (Unlimited): Increase the range by one rank.
- 4 (Unlimited): Double the duration.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version extends the duration to permanent and holds the creature or object in a state of suspended time that persists even long after the target would otherwise die, break down, or otherwise expire. If the caster wishes, he may specify some condition at the time of casting that will end the spell's effects, at which point the object returns to the flow of real time as if no time had passed. (1 day / 6 karma points / no ritual components)

Variants: None.

WARP THE UNWILLING

Alternate Names: Toadform.

Area of Effect: One size 0 object or creature.

Range: Trivial.

Duration: Permanent until countered (see description).

Reaction: No.

Effect: The plot device of countless fairy tales, this hideous spell reshapes objects or creatures into still-whole but alternate forms. Humans may be reshaped into toads, swords into paperweights, buildings into cardboard boxes. The new form can be any natural creature (if the target was a creature) or unimbued object (if the target was an object) of a size category exactly 4 less than the target's original size. The target becomes that creature entirely, in mind and body, if applicable. Unwilling targets may resist with an Earth (Will) or Water (Stamina) test 8, whichever is better for the target.

When a creature or object's form is reshaped in this way, however, the weave of reality requires that the target's new identity be linked to the old with a key of sorts. This key is a condition set by the caster during the casting of the spell, which must be worked into a rhyme and uttered as the spell is completed. The condition must be possible, if unlikely, and must not require any monetary expenditure or the destruction of valuable materials. Examples include an object being submerged in water, a creature hearing the sound of church bells on the night of a full moon, or, of course, a beautiful maiden kissing a hideous animal.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 2 (Unlimited): Increase the size category of the creature or object transformed.
- 2 (Unlimited): Increase the maximum size of the creature's new form by one +1.

Variant (Torturous Phylum): This classic variant of Warp the Unwilling works exactly like the base spell but allows the target to retain its mind (i.e., mental aspects and skills, but not edges or powers) even though its form

3 TORTUROUS PHYLUM 3

Base Earth score	Interval
1	1/day
2	1/week
3	1/month
4	1/year
5	1/decade
6	1/century

3 TABLE 7-8 3



has changed. It must make an Earth (Will) test 1 to retain its mind when first transformed; thereafter, it must make a new test with a +1 TH at regular intervals depending on its base Earth score, or become the creature completely.

RANK 5 SPELLS

CORUSCATING SPHERE

Alternate Names: Explosion of Light, Sunburst, Summon the Avatar of Destruction.

Area of Effect: A 12-foot-radius sphere around the caster that is blocked by solid objects (see Effect).

Range: Centered on caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: No.

Effect: This spell is nearly identical to Coruscating Ring (see page 197), save that the spell does 50 damage, and the swath of destruction describes a sphere around the caster and affects all objects in three dimensions that are within the radius, rather than those in a plane parallel to the ground. The spherical nature of the destruction removes the random element of lesser versions of this spell. Additionally, as with explosions, damage can only be avoided if a victim is close enough to the edge of the radius effect, or to valid cover (i.e., something that casts a "shadow") to dive out of the way with a single move.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- a. 1 (Unlimited): The damage is increased by five points.
- b. 2 (Unlimited): One target in the sphere's path does not suffer damage.
- c. 1 (Unlimited): Double the radius of the sphere's area of effect.

COUNTER WEAWE OF THE FIFTH ORDER

This spell is identical to Counter Weave of the First Order (see page 184), save that rank 5 spells can be countered.

DISINTEGRATE

Alternate Names: Destruction, Ruin, Slag.

Area of Effect: One detected object or creature of size 0 or smaller.

Range: 50 feet.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Reaction: No.

Effect: Disintegrate destroys its target utterly, leav-



ing behind a pile of dust and melted slag or organic material approximately one-quarter the mass and size of the target before it was disintegrated. Unwilling targets may resist with a Water (Stamina) 10 test; creatures may attempt such tests for objects in their possession. Unattended enchanted items or hoard items may test by rolling a number of dice equal to their current karma pool, gaining 1 automatic success per karma rank.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the range by 50 feet.
- 1 (Unlimited): Halve the target's disintegrated mass and size.
- 3 (Unlimited): Disintegrate an additional target of size 0.
- 3 (Unlimited): Increase the allowable size of a single target by +1.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version can destroy a target larger than size 5. As all creatures are size 5 or smaller, this means buildings—examples might include a castle's keep, a battleship, or a skyscraper. Any structure is a legal target as long as it is a single edifice as adjudicated by the GM. When the ritual is finished, the roiling, crumbling destruction takes place over the course of several minutes depending on the structure's overall size. This gives the occupants the opportunity to escape, though fleeing from a disintegrating building is far from safe or assured. Only the edifice itself is destroyed by this ritual, so the rubble can be sifted for the durable contents of the building—furniture and the like—though much will have been crushed or damaged as the structure came apart. (1 day / 12 karma points / a highly detailed map or diagram of the target consumed)

Variant (Pillar of Salt): This version of Disintegrate turns both organic and inorganic targets into a quantity of salt approximately equal to one-quarter their previous mass.

Variant (Fireburst): This version of Disintegrate causes the target to burn white-hot. In addition to destroying the target and reducing its mass and size, nearby flammables catch fire. Targets gain 1 automatic success on their Water (Stamina) tests to resist per die that they normally stage down burn wounds, if they are resistant to fire. Creatures that are immune to burn wounds cannot be harmed by this spell.

DOMINATE

Alternate Names: Puppetmaster, Mage's Inviolable Will, Servitude Assured.

Area of Effect: One living creature.

Range: 50 feet.

Duration: 1 minute.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The target of this spell falls completely under the caster's sway and must obey his will completely, up to and including the most repugnant and self-destructive activities the dominated individual can imagine. The spell's target is aware of his actions, but completely unable to prevent himself from carrying them out. Unwilling targets may resist with an Earth (Will) test 10.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the spell's range by 50 feet.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.
- 3 (Unlimited): Affect one additional target.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version makes its duration permanent. (1 week / 18 karma points / one ounce of the target's brain matter, consumed)

Variant (Dragonlord): This particularly terrifying version of the spell has led to the destruction of entire broods of dragons. If a scion fails to resist the spell, all of his broodmates within karmic range are immediately targeted as well, in order from those with the lowest base Earth scores to the highest. For each broodmate that has already failed to resist the spell, the TH to resist increases by 1.

ECLIPSE

Alternate Names: The Sun Darkened, Ill-omen.

Area of Effect: A one-mile radius.

Range: Radius must be centered on caster.

Duration: Six minutes.

Reaction: No.

Effect: For those within the area of effect, a celestial object appears to pass in front of the sun, obscuring it and bringing darkness to the Earth. For the first two minutes of the duration, the body progressively eclipses the sun, and for the final two minutes, it seems to pass away once more, so that the sun is only completely eclipsed for two minutes. (If the duration is extended, the additional duration is added to the period of complete eclipse; the waxing and waning periods remain only two minutes long each).

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 1 (Unlimited): Increase the radius of the area of effect by one mile.
- 1 (Unlimited): Double the spell's duration.

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version extinguishes the sun until the caster either dies or wills sun-



CHAPTER SEVEN: KARMA AND MAGIC

light to return to the affected area. (1 day / 18 karma / one living human, consumed)

Variant (Darkest Night): This variant brings about an eclipse of the moon rather than the sun.

MIMIC THE FOURTH ORDER

This spell is identical to Mimic the First Order (see page 190), save that rank 4 powers can be mimicked.

REINCARNATE

Alternate Names: Soul's Migration, Resurrection of the Flesh, New Lease on Life.

Area of Effect: One formerly living creature.

Range: Within karmic awareness/caster's touch. (The soul being reincarnated must have died within the caster's karmic awareness range, and the body it will be placed into must be touched by the caster during the casting.)

Duration: Until the next sunrise.

Reaction: No.

Effect: The caster retrieves the soul of a known deceased creature and places it into an unconscious living creature at hand. The body may be of any type whatsoever; a man may be reincarnated into an earthworm, an earthworm may be reincarnated into a man. When resurrected, a soul must succeed in an unopposed Earth (Will) test (using its modified Earth as determined below) or go eternally insane. The TH of the test depends on how long the soul has been deceased, as shown on Table 7-9

Souls that meet the threshold retain their prior mental state; they may act rationally (if they wish) as long as the spell persists.

Souls that go insane act completely unpredictably, without regard to their previous moral values, interpersonal connections, or any concept of self-preservation (or concern for the safety of the creature whose body they are inhabiting). After the spell's duration ends, such unfortunates typically remain behind as shades to either haunt the place of their reincarnation or haunt those who performed the deed. The precise nature of a resurrected creature's insanity is left up to the GM, but should relate both to the soul's demeanor in life and the characteristics of the body into which it was reincarnated.

While the spell persists, reincarnated characters' base mental aspect scores are equal to their original base mental aspect scores, while their physical aspects are equal to those of their reincarnated body minus one. Reincarnated characters' skill ranks are the same as their original skill ranks, with the following limitation: men-

REINCARNATE

TH	Time since creature's death
1	Up to 33 seconds
2	Up to 33 minutes
3	Up to 33 hours
4	Up to 33 days
5	Up to 33 months
6	Up to 33 years
7	Up to 33 decades
8	Up to 33 centuries
9	Up to 33 millennia
10	Up to 330,000 years

TABLE 7-9

tal skills may not have more ranks than the new body's base Air score, and physical skills may not have more ranks than the new body's base Fire score. Likewise, edges remain with the character but may not be of higher rank than the new body's base Water score, and powers remain with the character but may not be of higher rank than the new body's base Earth score. Finally, if the character was a scion, it retains its previous awakened rank.

EXPANDED LORE

Casting Options:

- 5 (Unlimited): Extend the duration by one dawn (effectively, one day).

Ritual Version: The spell's ritual version makes the reincarnation permanent. (1 month / 24 karma points / the receptacle body and some physical remnant of the soul's original body, both endure)

Variant (Place-binding): This variant retrieves a target's soul from the afterlife and binds it to a place rather than to a body. The soul becomes a shade and haunts the location touched by the caster.

Variant (Objectify): This variant binds the target's soul into a physical object other than an unconscious body. The soul becomes a shade that haunts the object touched by the caster.

GLOSSARY

Action scene: One of two types of scenes in Fireborn. Occurs whenever combat is imminent or split-second timing is necessary.

advanced dragon creation: The default system for creating a dragon character.

advancement point value (APV): The relative strength of a creature, based on its aspects, traits, edges, and powers.

advancement points (APs): Points used during character advancement to purchase fighting styles, spell, edges, and powers.

Air: The aspect that controls aggressive mental actions.

ammo: The number of rounds in one clip of a firearm or ranged weapon.

armor value (AV): The amount of damage that a suit of armor, skin, or other trait allows you to subtract from any physical damage you would otherwise suffer.

aspect: A score that defines a character's potential ability in aggressive, passive, physical, and mental activities.

attack move: A discrete unit of action, performed in an action scene, intended to harm another character.

automatic success: Usually purchased with karma, a free success toward a test.

available street credit: A game unit that estimates a character's current leverage and influence on the street, used for gaining access to illegal items.

available wealth: A game unit that estimates a character's current spending power.

awakened rank: The most important level of distinction to determine a scion's power.

awakening: The moment at which a scion gains a new awakened rank.

background: A scion's career and history.

balanced: The normal state of any area or object, having neither a karma rating nor a taint rating.

base aspect score: A character's aspect score without stance changes.

begotten: A follower of a sire.

blast: The damage-dealing explosion caused by explosive weapons.

bonus points: Extra points that may be spent on skills during character creation.

breed: A dragon type, which determines traits and powers.

broodmate: A character that is linked, body and soul, to a dragon; all player characters in a campaign are broodmates.

burn wounds: Wounds caused by fire.

chassis: For the purposes of the health chart, the vehicle version of a Water and Earth score.

check: A roll of the dice to accomplish a task, but on which karma cannot be bid to gain successes.

cinematic bonus dice: Bonus dice given at the GM's discretion for creative and exciting description of a character's actions by his player.

class (basic, elite, exotic): The level of familiarity required to appropriately use a weapon or vehicle.

cold wounds: Wounds caused by cold.

connect: To successfully attack a foe and inflict damage beyond a minor wound.

Cost: The amount of available wealth that must be spent on an item in order to purchase it; also, a game unit that defines what is a significant purchase.

cover: The number of automatic successes a vehicle grants to its passenger's defense sequences.

damage: Points, caused by attacks or other game effects, that are

compared to the entries of your health chart to determine if wounds are suffered.

daze: Cause an opponent to lose his next mental action.

dead: No longer living (8 wound dice).

defense move: A move that can be used to oppose an attack move and prevent it from connecting.

dependent traits: Traits that are determined using a character's base aspect score.

detected: A creature, spell, or other effect whose location is sensed by the detecting character, whether through vision or other means.

disadvantage penalty: A penalty on a test caused by one of several game effects; disadvantage penalties from different sources stack.

down: Unable to act (6 wound dice).

draconic form: A scion's manifestation of his draconic self's traits.

draconic form traits: Traits that a scion may gain when manifesting his draconic form.

drop: To bring a character to the down, dying, or dead states (usually 6, 7, and 8 wound dice, respectively).

dying: Unable to act and worsening (7 wound dice).

Earth: The aspect that controls passive or reactive mental actions.

edges: Special talents that allow characters to pull off amazing stunts and tricks.

electrical wounds: Wounds caused by electricity.

elite skills: Skills that can be made elite with edges.

ephemeral: A descriptor for the unseen world of karma and magic.

fading penalty: A penalty that lowers by one each turn, or that can be negated by a Steady or Focus action.

fighting style sequences: Sequences specially designed to provide payoffs, grouped under distinct fighting styles.

fighting styles: Pre-designed sequences grouped by theme or weapon type.

Fire: The aspect that controls aggressive physical actions.

first aid: A use of the Medicine skill to heal recently-suffered wounds.

flashback: A switch in campaign style to the mythic age, in which players take on the roles of their draconic selves.

flight gait: The multiplier that a creature applies to his speed when flying.

flight maneuverability: The ease with which a creature can move about while flying; determines which Fly moves can be accelerated to or decelerated from.

full physical action: A discrete unit of activity that requires a character's entire physical action, rather than just a single move.

full successes: An effect, usually granted by legacies, by which every die a character would roll for a test is automatically considered a success.

full-turn action: An activity that requires a character to use both his physical and mental actions to accomplish.

gait: The multiplier that a creature applies to his speed on land.

governed: The skill that controls a move or action.

handling: The bonus dice or penalties a vehicle gives its pilot when he makes a Pilot test.

health: A character's current level of wound dice, weariness dice, or minor wounds.

health chart: The chart used to determine the effect, if any, of damage suffered by the character.

heavy: A weapon that has a ready requirement of 3.

heritage points: Advancement points granted by the GM for



GLOSSARY

action and roleplaying in or regarding the mythic age. May be spent on powers, fighting styles, and spells.

hoard: A dragon's verison of wealth.

hoard rank: Part of the requirement of a scion's advancement rank; determined by the highest ranking infused item the scion possesses that was part of his draconic self's original hoard.

humanity points: Advancement points granted by the GM for action and roleplaying in the modern age. May be spent on edges, fighting styles, and spells.

infused: An item or area that has a higher-than-normal level of karma.

initiative: The order in which a creature acts during an action scene.

initiative phase: The first step in an action scene, in which initiative is determined.

karma: The unseen, supernatural force without which magic and dragons could not exist.

karma pool: The amount of karma a creature has at his disposal.

karmic range: The maximum range at which a creature can use Group Mind and certain spells.

lair: A dragon's home.

legacy: An ability possessed by each dragon that is powered by karma.

light: A weapon with a ready requirement of 1.

living on the cheap: Spending an entire adventure without making a significant purchase.

mass attack: An attack that affects multiple opponents, which the opponents oppose individually.

materials penalty: A penalty to a test caused by inappropriate or shoddy tools.

medium: A weapon with a ready requirement of 2.

melee weapon: A weapon used primarily in hand-to-hand combat.

minor wound: A wound that does not inflict wound penalties.

mirrored creation: A simple method for creating your dragon that results in a character that is very similar to your scion.

moves: A discrete unit of activity performed during your physical action; may be strung together to create sequences.

net successes: The number of successes a character achieves on a test after comparing his successes with those of opposing characters.

nurture: To raise an area or object's karma rank (or lower its taint rank).

opposed test: A test in which two characters work toward opposite goals and compare successes to determine the winner.

outlook: The draconic version of a background.

overkill success: An undesired success over the TH for a spell when performing the Cast action. Causes damage to caster.

payoff: The bonus effect for completing an entire fighting style sequence.

pool: The number of dice currently allocated to one of your aspects.

positioning move: A physical move used to move a character around.

quality: A character's level of success over a TH.

quickened initiative: An opportunity to act before all other characters, which prevents them from making stance changes in their opposing tests.

quickened initiative dice: The number of dice a character may roll on a quickened initiative check.

range: The distance beyond which a ranged weapon's user begins to suffer penalties.

ranged weapon: A weapon used primarily at a distance.

reach: The distance at which a creature can affect another crea-

ture with melee attack moves, as well as the distance covered by a single success on a Jump test.

ready requirement: The number of Ready moves required to draw a weapon or use it a second time in a sequence.

reload: The number of Ready moves required to use a ranged weapon a second time in a sequence or to replace a clip of ammo.

re-roll: Allows a character to re-roll an unsuccessful die (one that came up one, two, or three).

reset: Returning all of your dice to the base aspects from which you drew them, and regaining your stance change allotment.

scion: A dragon reborn from the mythic age, reborn in the modern age in human form.

sequences: A series of physical moves strung together as a character's physical action.

significant purchase: A purchase that depletes a character's available wealth.

sire: The mythic figurehead a scion follows, whether consciously or unconsciously.

skill cap: The maximum effective skill ranks a character has while wearing armor.

skills: Ability in a certain type of task; also, the number of dice a character may move to an aspect for a related test when making a stance change.

spell: A specific recipe for the manipulation of karma to create a desired effect.

stance: The current location of a character's aspect dice.

stance change: The movement of dice, using skill ranks and in support of a test, from one aspect pool to another.

stance pool: The number of stance changes a character has per turn.

street cost: A game unit that estimates the amount of street cred needed to gain access to an item for purchase.

street cred: Similar to wealth, a game unit that estimates a character's connections on the black market to purchase illegal items.

stun: To cause a character to lose his next physical action.

success: A roll of a four, five, or six in a six-sided die.

superhuman rank: Provides an automatic success any time you make a test in the aspect in which you have the superhuman rank.

taint: A mysterious force that acts as the opposite of karma.

test: Rolling your dice in an appropriate aspect, using stance changes if possible or desired, to accomplish a task.

threshold (TH): The number of successes necessary to succeed at a task.

thrown weapon: A weapon primarily thrown by hand.

top speed: A vehicle's maximum speed.

traits: Physical characteristics based on a creature's race.

turn: A discrete unit of time during which a character may normally perform one physical action and one mental action.

unopposed test: A test whose goal is to meet a certain threshold and is not opposed by another character.

upkeep: The available wealth that must be spent each adventure in order to maintain a character's wealth, appearance, and lifestyle.

Water: The aspect that controls passive or reactive physical actions.

Wealth: A game unit that estimates a character's lifestyle and long-term purchasing ability.

weapon type: Define's a weapon as melee, thrown, or ranged.

weapon weight: Determines a weapon's ready requirement and the number of hands needed to wield it.

weariness dice: The number of weariness penalties a character is currently suffering from.

wound dice: The number of wound penalties a character is currently suffering from.

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Fire

disadvantage
physical

Air

disadvantage
mental

Water

weariness

Earth

FIREBORN™

SCION CHARACTER SHEET

Name _____
Background _____
Sire _____
Wealth (available) _____

Karma

Earth x 5 = Max

Pool Size

Current Karma Points

Health Chart			
< 1/2 W	no effect	☐	☐
1/2 W	minor wound	☐	☐
W+	-1	☐	☐
2W+	-2	☐	☐
3W+	-3	☐	☐
4W+	-4	☐	☐
5W+	-5	☐	☐
6W+	-6	☐	☐

Armor

Skills

Rank	RR	
_____	()	Athletics
_____	()	Melee
_____	()	Stamina
_____	()	Quickness
_____	()	Ranged
_____	()	Travel
_____	()	Casting
_____	()	Craft _____
_____	()	Craft _____
_____	()	Interaction
_____	()	Ka
_____	()	Knowledge _____
_____	()	Knowledge _____
_____	()	Knowledge _____
_____	()	Medicine
_____	()	Research
_____	()	Senses
_____	()	Stealth
_____	()	Tech
_____	()	Trickery
_____	()	Will
_____	()	_____
_____	()	_____
_____	()	_____

Edges, Powers, Legacies

Rank	Name	Effect
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

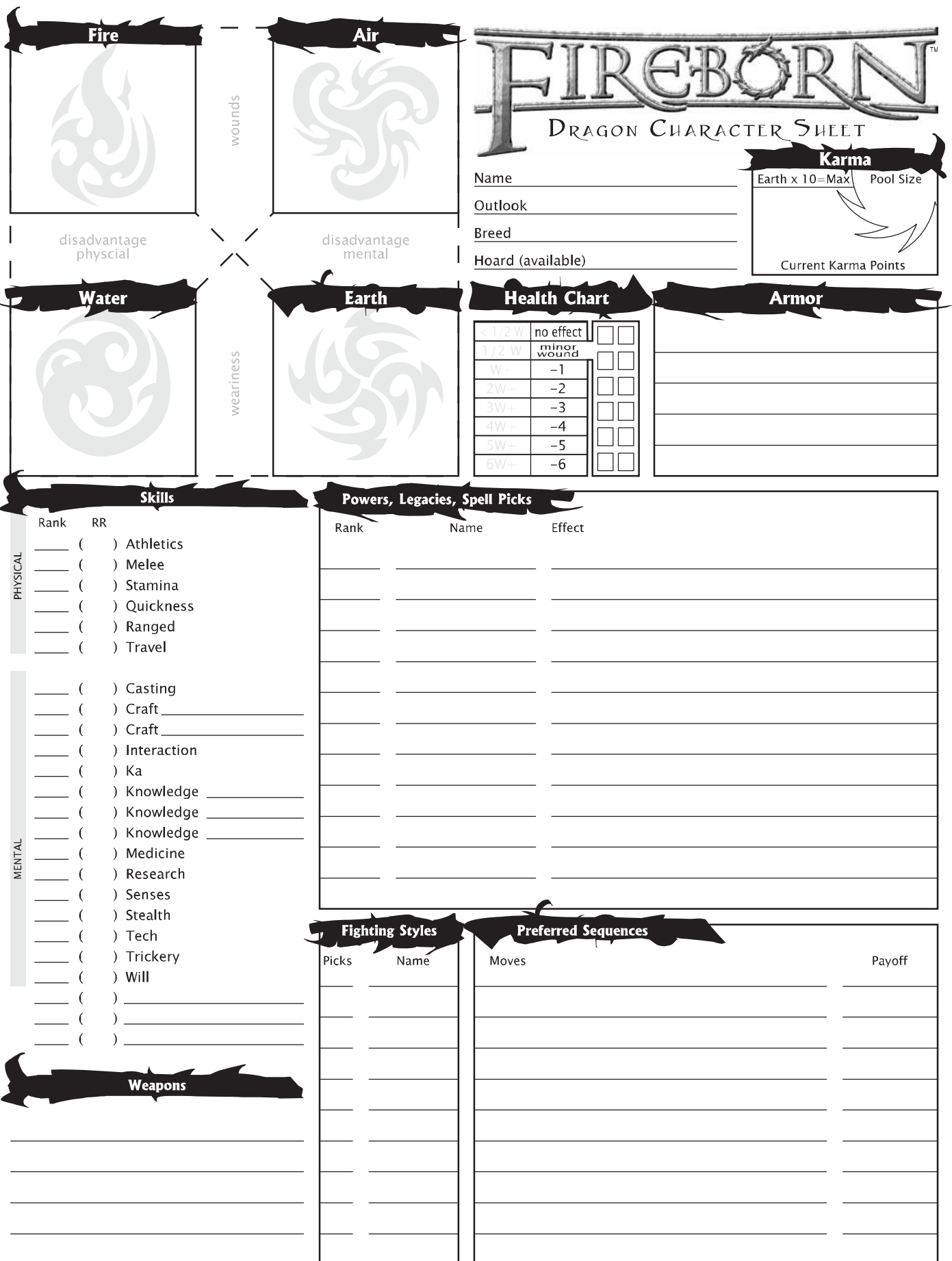
Weapons

Fighting Styles

Picks	Name
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Preferred Sequences

Moves	Payoff
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



SAMPLE FIREBORN CHARACTERS AND CREATURES

COP (MODERN AGE)

Race Human (Cop); **AP** 10. **Aspects** Fire 3, Water 3, Air 4, Earth 3. **Health** <3 / 3+ / 6+ / 9+ / 12+ / 15+ / 18+ / 21+. **Karma** 3.

Fighting Styles: Entrapping Defense. **Weapons:** Police baton (club), Heckler & Koch P2000 US pistol. **Armor:** None.

Edges: Network: Criminal 1, Network: Police 2, Paranoid. **Skills:** Athletics 3, Interaction 4, Knowledge: Street 2, Knowledge: Law 3, Melee 3, Quickness 1, Ranged 3, Senses 4, Travel 3, Trickery 2.

GARMIN REAVER (MODERN AGE)

Race Scion (Ex-Military)/Dire Drake; **AP** 50. **Aspects** Fire 5(2), Water 4, Air 3, Earth 4(1). **Health** <4 / 4+ / 8+ / 12+ / 16+ / 20+ / 24+ / 30+. **Karma** 15.

Fighting Styles: Barroom Brawling, Eastern Medium Style, Street Fighting. **Weapons:** Browning UT-129 shotgun, hunting knife (dagger). **Armor:** None.

Edges: Daunting 3, Resilience 4, Survivor 3.

Powers: Ferocity 4, Instinct 5. **Legacy:** Undying Wurm. **Sire:** Caronach. **Skills:** Athletics 5, Knowledge: Survival 3, Medicine 3, Melee 6, Quickness 6, Ranged 4, Senses 3, Stealth 4, Tech 1.

POSSESSED CRUSTIE (MODERN AGE)

Race Human (Drifter); **AP** 10. **Aspects** Fire 5, Water 3, Air 1, Earth 3. **Health** <3 / 3+ / 6+ / 9+ / 12+ / 15+ / 18+ / 21+. **Karma** 3.

Fighting Styles: Flying Fists. **Possessions:** None. **Armor:** None.

Edges: Brawler, Strong, Survivor. **Skills:** Athletics 3, Melee 4, Quickness 3, Stamina 2. Knowledge: Street 4, Senses 2, Stealth 4, Trickery 3, Will 2.

SLAUGH (MODERN OR MYTHIC)

Race Fey (Corrupted); **APV** 30. **Aspects** Fire 4, Water 4(1), Air 5(2), Earth 3. **Health** <3 / 3+ / 6+ / 9+ / 12+ / 15+ / 18+ / 21+. **Karma** 15.

Fighting Styles: Submerged, Underhanded. **Weapons:** Claws (5/L), Bite (6/M). **Armor:** 3.

Edges: Dexterous, Skill Specialty: Quickness (dodging punches), Skill Specialty: Quickness (dodging melee weapons), Skill Specialty: Stealth (hiding while still), Stealthy. **Powers:** Shadow Spinner 2. **Skills:** Athletics 4, Melee 5, Quickness 5, Senses 5, Stealth 5, Trickery 4.

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