

THE DESTINY SYSTEM

A Universal Role-Playing Game System
by Dragonslayer Games

Credits

J. Scott Pittman
Writer, System Game Designer
scott@dragonslayergames.com

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THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER CREATION

CHAPTER ONE: CHARACTER CREATION

Before you can begin play, you will need a character. There are a few simple steps to creating your own character in the Destiny system. Your Director may have guidelines for you to follow during character creation, such as specific Roles to choose from. Check with him before making your character.

CHARACTER CREATION: CHARACTER MAIN SCORES

To have a character that is ready to play in the Destiny System, you need to have the following Main Scores ready. All of these scores together create a rough sketch for any character - a basic idea of what he is.

Name

This is, of course, the character's name. A good name is important to any character, and should fit the mood of the Setting that the Director wishes to use for his adventures.

Summary

The Summary is a two-word description that should not have the characters race or occupation listed. Instead, it should describe the personality and the purpose that the character plays in the Setting he will be part of. "Hard-headed Hero" or "Lovable Helper" would both be great examples. Listed here are some possible examples. Be creative!

Personality: Dark, Jaded, Stubborn, Heroic, Quiet, Funny, Smart-Alec, Bewildered, Aloof, Whimsical

Purpose: Hero, Teammate, Sidekick, Leader, Thinker, Fighter, Information-Gatherer, Healer

Try mixing these up and throwing in a Dramatic Part (see Roles), and you will see a character forming! Examples might include:

Quiet Leader (Mentor)
Smart-Alec Teammate (Comic Relief)
Jaded Thinker (Bouncing Board)



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER CREATION

Motive

Each hero should have a reason he does what he does. In The Destiny System, this reason is defined as the character's Motive. Motives often affect the Actor's choice when choosing a Personality, but not always. When picking from the list, you should think carefully about the Motive of the characters played by the other Actors. Can the individuals work together? If the Director feels that the characters have conflicting Motives, then the Actors must choose again. For example, a person who has no problem with killing criminals might have a hard time traveling with a character who has The Good Fight as his Motive. However, the Director, if he feels up to it, can still allow any Motive. The decision should be based on the Director's vision of the type of game he wants.

Choose one of the following reasons from the chart that drives your character as his Motive.

The Director should feel free to allow other Motives as well, as these are simply the most common seen in heroes of comics, film and books. Villains, "normal" people, animals and the like will also have their own Motives that differ from those listed here.



"Good Guy" Motives

The Good Fight

Characters with this Motive strive to do what is right because they want to, or they feel that it is their responsibility to protect others, not because they have to. A large majority of the most famous heroes in books and movies have this Motive.

Joy Ride

Characters with this Motive do what they do because they get a thrill from it. These heroes do what is right, but make sure to have fun while doing it.

Eye for an Eye

These characters can be dark heroes indeed, wanting revenge for some wrong that is real or perceived against them. They are often seen by other heroes as criminals, or even villains.

Reluctant Hero

These characters are usually only concerned about themselves, but manage to get involved in situations where they must decide to take sides. In the end, they always choose to do what is right. Some of the most interesting characters are Reluctant Heroes.

Programmed

Characters with this Motive are heroes because they have no choice, and sometimes their programming makes it so that they don't want one anyway. The classic example is a robot, programmed to protect humans or enforce the law. A stranger example might be a criminal in a magical world, who has a spell cast upon him that makes him act in the manner of a hero, or he will begin to age and die very quickly (once he decides to help out the innocent people in need, he returns to normal). The hero never seems to change his programming.

Destiny

All player-characters begin with a Destiny of 4. Destiny is a measure of the character's importance to the story - how much "weight" he has over the plot. Characters with a high Destiny tend to live longer than characters who have low ones, although much of this depends on how much combat they enter!

Having a high Destiny score doesn't mean that the character is a good fighter, however (but he might be). Destiny measures the character's ability to survive by skill, wits, luck, help, training, divine help, or any other factor, or a combination of those factors.

Characters have the opportunity to raise their Destiny as they role-play their characters well and participate in the game.

Normally, the Destiny score represents how many dice a character gets to roll during combat, although this can change due to many factors.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER CREATION

Attributes

Attributes are aspects of a character that are natural (to a human), but not learned, such as skills. Typical Attributes include:

- **Mind:** A measure of a character's memory and intelligence
- **Muscle:** A measure of a character's strength
- **Move:** A measure of how fast a character is
- **Mana:** The power level of the raw mystical nature of the character
- **Perception:** A measure of a character's senses - for the most part, how well he sees and hears
- **Willpower:** A measure of the resistance a character has to mind-reading, mental spells, and going insane

The list of possible Attributes is many, and some may be more important to some Settings as others. A character starts with no set Attributes in the Destiny system, and may begin play with none at all. Still, if the Actor likes, he may list a few Attributes and give each of them a score.

While the actual description of the Attribute has no combat value in the Destiny system, it's nice to know the value of such Attributes to describe what is happening. A character with Poor human strength will have little chance to Defeat a character with Good strength and endurance without resorting to weapons, trickery, or just plain luck, for example.

Each Attribute in the Destiny System is given a rating of Poor, Average, or Good. Superhuman Attributes would require the character to have Forces of some kind. Some common Attributes and their ratings are given on the following chart.

Mind:

Poor: Slow Learner
Average: Fast Learner
Good: Lightning Fast Learner

Muscle:

Poor: Weak
Average: can lift 200 lbs.
Good: can lift 300 - 500 lbs.

Move:

Poor: Slow
Average: Can run at normal human speeds
Good: Track runner

Mana:

Poor: Poor defenses to magic
Average: Normal defenses to magic
Good: High resistance to magic

Perception:

Poor: Can't see his hand in front of his face
Average: Normal human perception
Good: Superior senses

Willpower:

Poor: Weak-Minded
Average: Normal human willpower
Good: Strong willpower

Hourglass Points

Each character begins play with an Hourglass on his character sheet. In the top area of the Hourglass a character should give himself 40 points. This represents the "Sand" in his hourglass - the amount of time he has left before his Defeat and possible death. As the character runs out of Sand, he loses points from the top of the Hourglass and adds them to the bottom as "Fallen Sand". Characters can earn more Hourglass Points ("sand" to go into the top of their hourglass) as awarded by the Director for good role-playing.

Specialty

A character's Specialty is something he does better than he does anything else. This can be anything the player wants, with the Director's approval. Very broad Specialties should be avoided - for example, Fighting should be something more specific, like Fist Fighting or Sword Fighting.

When a character uses his Specialty, he rolls twice (when he rolls) and keeps the better result. This applies to Skill Checks as well, as described under Skills.

Race, Age, Occupation, Wealth

These are up to the player with the Director's approval. For more about how the Actors and Director may guide character creation, see the following sections on Roles and Outlines.

That's It!

Character Creation in the Destiny System is quick and easy. Once you have completed these steps, your character is ready to play.



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER ROLES

CHARACTER CREATION PART TWO: CHARACTER ROLES

What is a Role?

The Role of a character is the function the character serves in the Director's story. "Function" would mean the type of *occupation* the character has, his *race*, and the *dramatic part* of the story the character will fill. Each Actor will commonly serve a particular Role in a game, but sometimes more than one character will have the same Role.

The Director can make Roles as detailed (or vague) as he thinks his adventures require. For example, he might require Actors to pick from a few Occupations, but leave the Race and Dramatic Part up to the Actors playing them. On the other hand, the Director could create Roles as detailed as he likes - even creating Roles with Destiny, Motives and Specialties all determined before the game begins. In some cases the Actor makes no decisions at all - the entire character (including the name) is a Role!

Designing the Roles: Occupations

The first thing a Director decides is the Occupation of the Role. These are the basic types of characters that he wants in his game. For example, if a Director is making up a science fiction adventure series, he might decide to let the Actors pick from the following:

Space Pilot

A space pilot knows how to fly most space craft. He can use starship weapons and commonly knows how to do light repairs to his ship.

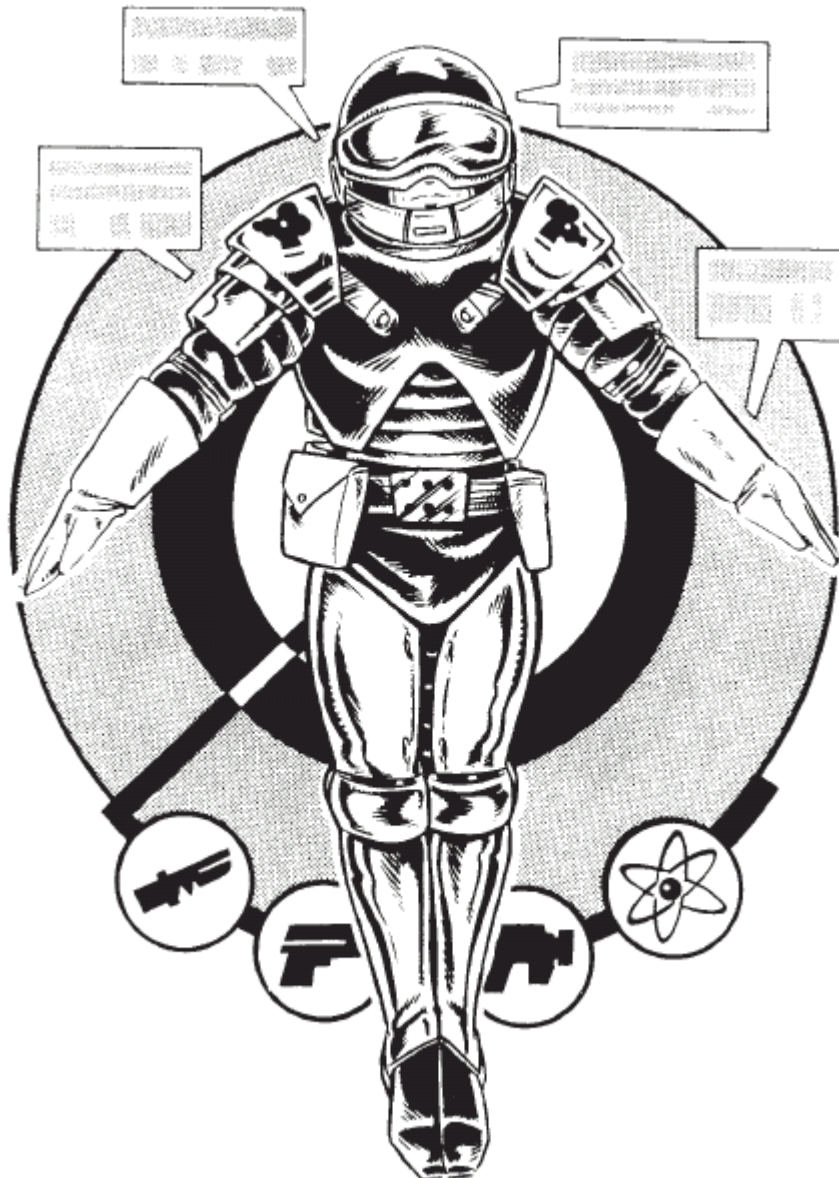
Engineer

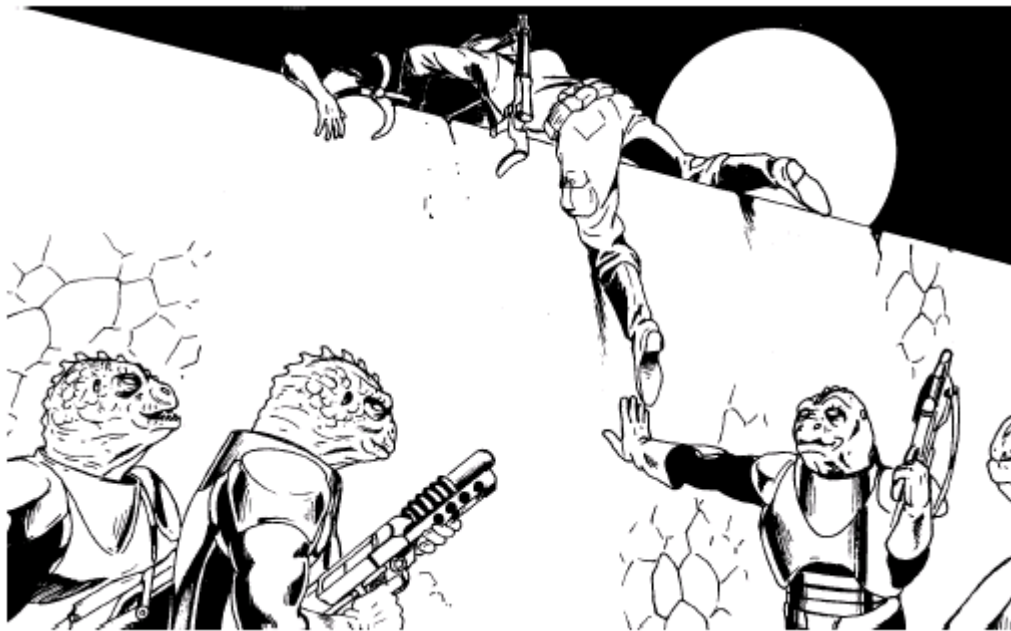
An engineer knows how to fix all kinds of mechanical problems. He is an expert at building and modifying new devices.

Scientist

A scientist is an expert at a particular field of study, such as alien species or space phenomena.

The Roles aren't very defined, but give Actors a basic jumping point to begin to develop their characters. Actors are free to make up the race and dramatic part they will play in the story. This is enough for most Directors who prefer a "loose" game.





Designing the Roles: Race

The Race of a character is part of the Role that he plays. Sometimes the Director may want to make notes about the races he prefers Actors to play in his adventures. He can then let them choose their race along with their occupation.

We will continue our science fiction example with the Director deciding to allow three races in his adventures:

Again, we have a basic outline of each race, which should be enough for most Directors. The Director could make the Race as detailed as he likes, of course, with a rich description of it's history, religion, politics, and the like.

If the Director likes, he can allow the Actors to choose their Race, or use the *Set Roles* system (see *Set Roles*), requiring certain Races with a given Role.

Leaving the race's details vague could allow for the Actors to make up Facets about their characters based on their race, actually making the race more detailed as the game goes on (of course such Facets would have to be approved by the Director). For example, an Actor playing a Yeran could have his character say something like, "What, you didn't know that Yerans have more than one mate? I have four wives myself. Not a lot, but I don't get home very much, you know." The Actor has added Facets to his character, and the race has also developed as a result. If the Actor adds a Facet to a race and the Director approves, the Actor gains a Setting Development award (see New Awards).

Humans

Humans are from Earth. They are the "norm" throughout the universe. Other races tend to think that humans are arrogant.

Yerans

Yerans are an alien race, similar in appearance to wolves, although they have some body features as humans do. Although they look tougher than a human due to their average 7' height, they have no special defenses that would make them superhuman.

Yerans are very much like humans in attitude, and are able to speak the common languages of the galaxy. Most Yerans believe what they can see and feel, and think religion is rather silly.

Caradonians

Caradonians are a white-skinned, slender race, similar to humans but much taller. They have no hair and huge black eyes. Caradonians move slowly and smoothly. They are known for their wisdom and works of art.

Caradonians are a very religious people, worshiping the god they call "The Artist" who sculpted the universe and it's path through time.

Strangely enough, Yerans and Caradonians commonly get along rather well, mostly because the enlightened Caradonians are a very patient race and do not anger easily, even when their religion and other basic beliefs are challenged or even taunted. The Caradonians also make it a point to never force their beliefs on others, not that a Yeran would listen, anyway...

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER ROLES

Designing the Roles: Dramatic Part

Most Directors are satisfied by assigning an Occupation and a Race to each character for their Role in the game, allowing the Personality and Purpose of each character to reflect on how they will play their part. However, the Director sometimes may wish for the Role of the character to include the Dramatic Part they will play.

A Dramatic Part is the nature of the character itself as a function of the character in the story - not his occupation or part in the Setting, but what he does for the story itself. A few examples include:

Moral Conflict

This type of Dramatic Part is applied to a character who will face a moral conflict of some type in the story. Often he will have to make a great decision of some kind. For example, a character may have to choose between fighting against his own brother or not taking sides in a war he feels strongly about. Such characters are usually the focus of the story and have a high Destiny score. Ideal Motives include The Good Fight and Reluctant Hero.

The Mentor

The Mentor is the Dramatic Part played by a character who is commonly old, but has a great deal of wisdom and can teach the hero many things. Often this type of character is mysterious and only shows up from time to time. Almost always The Mentor has The Good Fight as his Motive.

Comic Relief

This type of character is the comedian of the group, sometimes just because he is a "funny guy" and other times because his actions are comical. He is not often the focus of the adventure, but serves to take some of the seriousness from the dire situations the characters might face. Although this type of Dramatic part may seem silly, it is often one of the most difficult to play. Joy Ride and Programmed are good Motives for this type of character.

Bouncing Board

This type of character questions what the "main hero" of the story does. He never says what the hero does is wrong, but he does make the other heroes think about their actions. For example, a powerful hero may decide to go rescue the princess being held by the evil dragon, even though the heroes only have a limited amount of time to stop a curse that has befallen the kingdom. A Bouncing Board character might ask "We have the spell to stop the curse of Kalaine but only three days to get it to the capitol. But it will take all of us to defeat the dragon. Does her life weigh as much as the entire kingdom?" These are often Reluctant Heroes.

The possibilities for Dramatic Parts are many. The Director should decide what types of Dramatic parts he needs in his adventures. Dramatic Parts should, at least in part, determine the Motivation of the character, as well as how his is role-played. However, this is not always the case. A Mentor to a thief, for example, might have the Joy Ride Motive.

The Dramatic Part of the character may change from adventure to adventure, especially in a Series - which is why the Director may want to *not* include it as part of a Role. For example, a character who is the Comic Relief in one adventure may be the focus of a Moral Conflict in the next.

Designing the Roles: Set Roles

Many times, the Director will allow the Actors a very "loose" Role, possibly even letting something as simple as "alien space pilot" or "elf archer" to suffice. However, the Director may create adventures that require a specific character. In such cases, the Director can create Roles that include other character attributes - including Motive, Personality, Specialty, Destiny, Hourglass Sand, Powers, and more. He might even have the name of the character and a small background designed! In such cases the Director allows the Actors to pick from the Roles he has designed.

Note that many Actors like to make up their own characters and this method should only be used if the Director's Actors are comfortable with it.

In this example, we have a Role that the Director has designed for an adventure that he has planned using the science fiction example given under Occupations and races.



"Garbuckle" (Real Name: Ha'Par Keel)

Description: This character serves as the best friend of the main character of the story (The Hero). He is a comical character, but is very good at what he does.

Motive: Reluctant Hero

Personality: Up to the Actor (something funny)

Specialty: Starship repair

Destiny: 3

Role: Yeran Engineer

Occupation: Engineer

Race: Yeran

Dramatic Part: Good Friend to the Hero

Professional Skills: Star Ship Engineering

In this case, the Actor can decide what type of comical personality the character has. The character might drink too much, or he might constantly curse the ship he works on (although no one else is allowed to). He could be cowardly, or a bit too aggressive!

As apparent in this example, Roles can still be very flexible even if the Actor is only left with very few choices at character creation. There is still limitless possibilities for this character to expand in detail.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: SKILLS

SKILLS

Skills

Skills in the Destiny System are used to judge what a character can and cannot do. A character who possesses the Computers skill can operate computers, for example, and one who does not possess the skill can not.

Unlike most normal role-playing games, characters do not begin play with any scores in their skills in the Destiny System. Instead, they decide if they have a skill in question when the need for the skill comes up during game play. For example, a player only decides if his character knows the Pilot skill when the Director's adventure has the character comes across the situation where it is necessary for the character to pilot something.

Skills are rated from 1-5, which determines how many dice a character can roll when attempting an action related to a skill. Players roll these dice and try to equal or exceed a Skill Check Target, which is the number the Director decides is needed to succeed at the task at hand. The following chart shows the common difficulties of skill checks:

SKILL CHECK TARGET NUMBERS

Easy	4
Average	8
Hard	12
Very Hard	16
Extreme	20
Impossible	24

If two characters oppose each other in a test of skills, such as in a card game, each player rolls the number of dice and the highest result wins.

A player can always spend Sand to increase his chances of passing a skill check. Each point of Sand adds 4 points to the roll.

Instinct Skills and Trained Skills

Skills are separated into two types: Instinct and Trained. Instinct Skills are those skills that anyone can try, even without training time, such as climbing or swimming. Trained Skills are skills that are taught, such as driving, piloting, computers, etc.

When players decide that their character does not know a Trained Skill, the character cannot attempt to use the skill. If he doesn't know computers, he can't attempt to open the programs he has recovered from the bad guys - he will have to get help.

Instinct skills can be learned by anyone, even without training. If a player has decided that his character does not know an Instinct Skill, he can still roll 1 dice and subtract 2 from the result to make a skill check.

There is no list of skills in the Destiny system - the list of possible skills is endless. The Director decides which skills are Instinct Skills and Trained Skills as the skills are needed by the characters in the game. For reference purposes, the Director should keep a list of the skills that have appeared in game play and assign them as Instinct or Trained.

Combat Skills

Combat skills are given a rating of 1-5, and may or may not be Instinct Skills or Trained Skills. For example, Swords is an Instinct Skill, where Starship Weapons would be a Trained Skill.

The big difference in Combat Skills and "normal" skills is that the players do not use Combat Skills in combat. They are only a device to tell how good the characters are at combat - but the actual ability to survive is based on Destiny Rolls. In fact, any time there is a Danger to the character (see Dangers), the Director should use Destiny rolls and not skill rolls.

Optional Rule - Combat Skills and Destiny Rolls

If the Director decides he likes skills to reflect in combat, he may allow combat rolls to equal Destiny + Combat Skill in dice. For example, a character with a Destiny of 6 and Swords of 4 would roll 10 dice when in combat. This reflects reality much better, but does add up to a lot of dice. It is not the "movie" type of rule that allows heroes to live through nearly impossible odds, so it is not an official Destiny System rule.

Other Skill Rules

Players can choose to give themselves skills as they need them during the game. Each skill should have a rating (1-5, as mentioned above), given to it to describe how good the character is at the skill. Although this rating will have no effect in combat, it helps the Director and the Actors describe what is happening during combat and allows the Director to guide the story when the characters are not in danger.

- 1: Poor: Very Low skill level
- 2: Average: Student
- 3: Good: Graduate
- 4: Superhuman: Master
- 5: Astounding: One in a Million

The Director can choose to allow only certain characters the option to know specific skills (and the other character to not know them - with no Sand gained) depending on the description of the characters. For example, the Director might announce that Tracking is only available to the Woodsman in the party, and the other characters do not know the skill. This option should be used by the Director for highly specialized skills - tracking, computer design, robot engineering, etc., and only in the Settings where such skills would be rare. In a space setting, for example, many characters might know the skill of Warp Chamber Dynamics. In a modern world, only one character in the world may have a full grasp on the skill! The Director must decide what is a common and rare skill and which characters can choose to have them.

Sand Points from Skill Choices

Why would a player not decide to be a master at each skill in the game? Whenever a player decides to know a skill or not (called a Skill Choice), he is awarded with Sand points equal to a roll of 2 dice, minus 1 for each level of the skill. For example, if a character gains a skill at level 2, he receives 2 dice (-2 points) of Sand at the end of the Scene. A character who does not know a skill has the skill at a level of "0", but receives 2 full dice of Sand Points.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: SKILLS

Optional Rule: Profession Rolls

The Director can use Professions, where characters with many similar occupational skills acquire a single skill based on that profession. For example, a character with a broad knowledge of computers may have a skill simply called Computers (Profession): Good (3 dice). This would give the character the ability to operate, program, repair and hack computers without listing all of those skills.

The Director can use this optional rule to make up non-player characters who already have a basic list of skills ready without putting much work into these areas. Actors can use them to make up characters with many skills, without having to make long lists of talents.

The drawback to choosing Professions is that the player receives a one-time award of 10 dice of Sand at character creation, no matter at what level the player decides to have his Professions, and no matter how many he chooses to have. The positive side is that the character receives 2 dice of Sand whenever using the Profession as a Repeat Award (using any skill that relates to the Profession, or choosing not to have a skill that he should have under his Profession).

Professions should be chosen at the time of character creation, but can be added during play, just like skills. If an Actor adds a Profession during play, the Sand award is only 5 dice, instead of the normal 10 dice. Again, this is a one-time award, and the Actor would not receive an additional 5 dice if he chooses another Profession later during play, but can receive a Facet award of 2 dice at the Director's option.

Professions are used if the Director is using the optional rules that allow characters to be "complete" at the time of character creation.

The following is a list of Professional skills and the types of skills they cover, but is by no means complete.



Combat (Exotic Weapons)

Exotic weapons include most weapons that are difficult to learn, such as chains, whips, garrotes, etc.

Combat (Guns)

This is the knowledge of how to use almost any kind of gun, including machine guns, rifles and shotguns as well as pistols.

Combat (Melee Weapons)

This is the knowledge of the use of normal melee weapons, such as swords, staves, clubs and the like.

Computers

The character can operate, program and hack computers.

Diplomat

The character would have knowledge of law, etiquette, and how to work the red tape of government.

Gambler

The character knows how to calculate odds, play most games of chance, and how to cheat and/or spot cheaters.

Historian

The character knows all about archeology, the Greek empire, the hundred years war, etc (or the history of the galaxy and it's worlds, in a sci-fi campaign), for example.

Medicine

The character knows how to treat wounds, cure poisons (if possible), and even perform surgery as appropriate to the game setting.

Rogue

The character knows a number of shady skills, including pick pocketing, stealth, streetwise skills, gambling, etc.

Sciences

The character knows all about genetics, space sciences, physics, etc.

Wizard

The character is knowledgeable in magic, including the workings of potions, dragons, spells, etc.

Woodsman

The character has a broad knowledge of hunting, wilderness survival, and animal skills.

Vehicles

The character can fly or pilot everything from a bicycle to a jet fighter. He would (in fiction) know how to repair his vehicle no matter what kind of damage it had taken.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: CHARACTER OUTLINES

CHARACTER CREATION PART THREE: CHARACTER OUTLINES

Some experienced gamers can create and “wing” characters who have very little detail, as per the character creation rules presented in the Destiny System rule book. However, some players (new and experienced) might have a problem with this. The normal Destiny System character generation system, although perfect for some types of games, might interfere with Directors making up adventures if they give the players a “loose” character creation process. How do you design an adventure that needs an archer if none of your characters have presented themselves as archers yet? How do you create a space campaign where the characters are space pilots if you don’t even know for sure if the characters have the space fighter piloting skill?

The first solution, of course, is to “brief” the Actors on what their characters should be like as they are played. In the example above, the Director could just tell the Actors that their characters are space fighter pilots, all fighting for the Earth in the future against the alien invaders called the Kreen.

Another solution to this problem, if the Director wishes to have both detailed character creation and keep to the Destiny System style of play, is to allow the players to create Character Outlines. These Outlines are rough drafts of the characters, containing some basic notes that you might see in other role-play games, such as occupation, race (if other than human), and important skills (or *Professions* - see *Other Rules*). Of course some basic Powers could be listed also. The player should feel free to include whatever information he wants on the Character Outline. The disadvantage is that Character Outlines take up much more time during character creation. If that’s not a problem with the Actors or Director, you should use them.

However, the Outline should not be included anywhere on the character sheet, as the player has not yet brought any of these aspects into play. The outline can be used as a kind of “checklist” during actual game play, reminding the player what he has brought to the game table and what he hasn’t where his character is concerned. The Outline can be changed or added to at anytime, so long as it doesn’t conflict with established facts already brought into play (if we’ve already seen that the character knows how to perform brain surgery, you shouldn’t add to the Outline that he doesn’t know anything about the medical field, for example). Slowly, as the game is played, you should see the Outline disappear, with all it’s details being transferred to the character sheet as Facets. The Director has the job of bringing about situations in the game that will let the characters have the opportunity to bring out these Facets. To keep easy track, you could write the character outline in pencil on the actual character sheet, then ink in the areas once they come into play and the player has earned Sand awards for them, or even use the character sheet from another game!

Note that Outlines can be combined with very detailed Roles.

An Example of a Character Outline

Wilson is about to run a game involving a science fiction setting. However, he is running a very “loose” game, where most of the details about the characters are up to the players. He decides that he would like a Character Outline of each character.

Clint decides that he would like to make up an ace pilot - a lizard-like alien that’s got a great reputation as a pilot, but is wanted by the authorities for smuggling goods into held territories. He decides to outline his character like this:

Marman Resper

Occupation: Starship Pilot

Race: Rafarian (lizard like)

Skills:

Pilot (starship) - master

Starship repair - good

Laser pistol - expert

Unknown Skills

Gambling (although Marman *thinks* he’s a great gambler)

Diplomacy and Politics

Background:

Marman is a great pilot who is about 30 years old. He has a great reputation as a pilot for the underground, but is wanted by the authorities for smuggling goods. Marman says what he feels, which causes trouble than it solves.

Equipment:

Laser Pistol

Starship

As stated, none of this information is “official”, nor is it listed on the character sheet. Instead, it is used as a guideline for both the Actor and the Director.

During the first game, the Director creates the need for a pilot in the adventure (which helps get Clint’s character into the game). They find Marman. Clint announces:

“You see a lizard-like creature about 5 feet tall, obviously a Rafarian. You don’t recognize him. He looks at you, his vertical eye-slits narrowing. ‘I’m you pilot,’ he says. ‘Marman Resper is the name. Got my own ship and I’m ready to go if you are.’ He wears a protective vest and carries a laser pistol - it looks like he might be expecting trouble.”

Already we have established a lot about the character and can add a few bits of the Outline as Facets (those lines marked in red above). Marman would also have a Claimed Skill of Starship Pilot. At this rate, all the information on the Outline will quickly be transferred to the character sheet, and the character will have earned quite a few Hourglass Points for doing so, since he added the information during the game.

Character Outlines and other Actors

Sharing information about your character’s Outline with other Actors is highly recommended. While many Actors may want to keep their characters details a “surprise”, sharing your basic ideas for the character can allow other Actors to “know” yours, making it easier for them to create Co-Facets and Planned Conversations, and to interact with your character in general. If the Actors get together as a group while designing their Outlines, they can make a group of characters who are skilled as a team, each having strong points and weak ones as well.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Characters commonly carry all kinds of weapons and/or equipment in action stories. In the Destiny System, this equipment has a rating, just as any other Force. A gun might have a Superhuman rating, for example, and a suit of Plate Mail armor would have a Good defensive rating.

Offensive:

Poor: Small animal claws

Average: Baseball bat, Staff

Good: Sword, Battle axe, arrow, spear

Superhuman: Magical sword, pistol

Astounding: Machine gun, shotgun, laser weapon, Grenade

Godlike: Missiles

Defensive:

Poor: Thick skin, leather armor

Average: Chain mail

Good: Plate mail

Superhuman: Magic armor, Kevlar armor

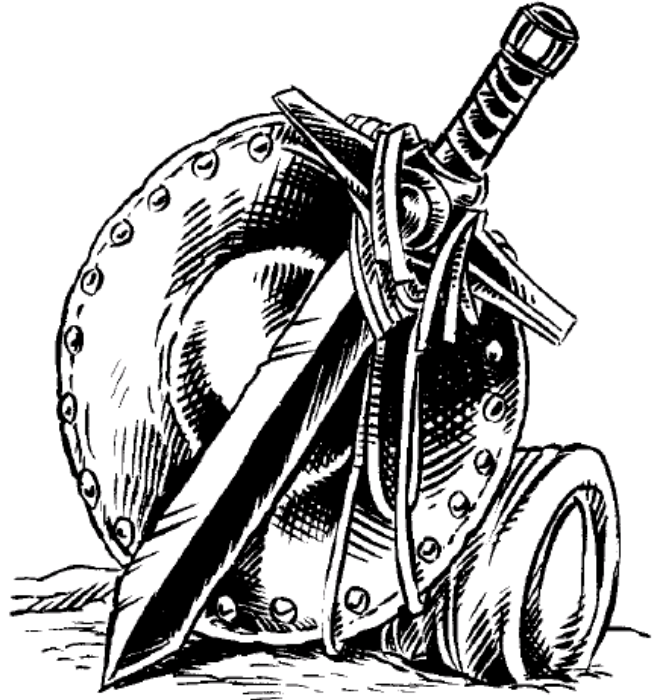
Astounding: Futuristic armor, tank plating

Godlike: super high-tech armor

These scores are used to guide the story and decide what is happening - equipment and armor do not increase or decrease the amount of Sand gained or lost by characters (although they can protect a character from Dangers).

For example, we know that a character with a staff (Average attack) cannot directly wound a knight wearing plate mail armor (Good defense) - but the character could still attack him, and even Defeat him. Using the staff to sweep his legs out from underneath him, the attacker knocks the knight to the ground. He then quickly knocks the helmet off his foe and holds the staff to his opponent's face, forcing him to surrender (or knocking him unconscious). The battle is over - even with a weapon that was "inferior" to the opponent's defenses. The weapons and equipment involved did not change the dice rolls, but did guide the story, helping to explain what was happening.

In another example, a character wearing a fire-proof suit (defensive rating of Superhuman vs. fire) can walk through a normal fire-related Danger with no chance of Sand loss - but still may lose Sand from fire-based attacks from other characters. Only if the character is Defeated must there be some special explanation of why. The character might just laugh and shrug the flames aside, until he runs out of Sand. That's when one of the flames hit a nearby gas main, causing it to explode and Defeating the flame-proof character (who is knocked unconscious by the force of the explosion).



P.M.

Explosives

Sometimes the Actors (and often the antagonists) will use explosives or other weapons that cover a large area, affecting more than one character. In such a case, the character uses the Attacking Multiple Opponents rule in the combat section. A non-player character with a Destiny of 6 could throw a grenade and attack two characters with a 3-dice attack, or he could attack 1 character with a 6-dice attack. A character with a Destiny of 7 could throw the same grenade and attack 3 characters with a 2-dice attack and one character with a 1-dice attack, or any combination of his 7 Destiny.

Lasting Effects

Some weapons have lasting effects in the real world, such as flame throwers, which leave the victim on fire. However, in the Destiny system, if the attack does not cause the target to run out of Sand Points, the attack does not continue to harm the victim. This is because Sand loss is not necessarily "life point" loss. The victim might have dodged the attack completely if he has Sand Points left.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT



VEHICLES

Vehicles help characters get from place to place and can aid them in battle. Vehicle combat is handled the same way as character combat with weapons - Destiny rolls of the pilots being compared to each other. A character who runs out of Sand is Defeated. Escape rolls apply when in vehicles just as when characters are in normal combat.

Actors can claim that their vehicles are Wounded during combat - the character gains the Sand just as if he had been wounded himself. When this happens roll 1d6 - if the roll is a 4-6 the character also takes a Wound! The Actor can also make up all kinds of *Into the Frying Pan* awards when his vehicle is hit - the shields have gone out, the lasers stopped working, etc. If the roll was a 6, the *Director* makes up an *Into the Frying Pan* award for the character with no bonus Sand earned!

Every vehicle should have an Offensive, Defensive, and Top Speed description. As with other types of combat, these scores are only to help describe what is going on, and do not affect Destiny rolls.

Other details about vehicles can be made up much in the same way as characters are detailed as they are played. The Director must approve these new abilities for the vehicle, but the Actor only receives 1 Sand Point for each new approved ability.

Multiple Characters in a Vehicle

If multiple characters are in a vehicle, the pilot (or captain, if the vehicle is very large) always uses his Destiny when the vehicle is defending. If the vehicle has a co-pilot seat, the characters can use Teamwork on attacks and defenses. This applies to large ships as well, where gunners could all attack a single ship (ships with many weapons should only be allowed to have 1/4 of the gunner characters use Teamwork, or even attack, at a given time, as all of the weapons are not normally on one side of a ship).

If the pilot is Defeated, the Director is allowed to make any outcome he likes - the fighter explodes, most of the battle cruiser's crew dies, or the van wrecks. If there were Actor-played characters who were in the ship, they each take 1/2 of their Sand in loss, and must make a defense roll against a Danger Score of 10. Defeat is as Massive Ship Battle (see right).

Another Actor may roll his Destiny for the pilot - but must use the pilot's Destiny score, or his own, whichever is lower. This may cause another character besides the pilot to lose Sand during Dangers they may face.

If non-pilot (or captain) characters are visible, they may be attacked individually. Gunner turrets, passengers on the back of a motorcycle or visible through windows, or men on a sailing ship are all examples.

When a captain of a very large ship takes a loss of Sand, the Director can create any negative occurrence he likes, such as crewman casualties, engines being useless, the shields going down, etc.

Attacking a Vehicle

If characters purposely attack a vehicle itself for a result (trying to attack the shield generators, blow out a tire, or burn the sails, for example), the Director must decide what the characters need to roll (usually Destiny vs. Destiny) and the outcome if the attack is successful. Examples include: the characters escape after burning the enemy's sails, the opponent's engines are destroyed and he cannot move, the vehicle crashes (see Traffic Chases and Crashes), or the opponent cannot fire his weapons and now must try to get away.

Outgunned Vehicles

If a much smaller ship finds itself in combat (and usually running away from) a much larger ship without help, the smaller ships will not pose a risk to the larger ship, but instead be facing a Danger. The Director may set up a condition in which the opposing gigantic ship may be defeated, usually by actions of the characters played by the Actors. In the meantime, the smaller ship will have to do its best to survive. Note that fighter pilots in a great space battle could find themselves against both in a Massive Ship Battle and Outgunned!

Danger: Outgunned Ship

Description: The Actors are fighting or running from a much larger ship with little hope of victory.

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny

Number of Turns: 1d6, after which the characters must Escape or win the battle (as set by the Director) or the Danger continues each turn.

Defeat: The character's tiny ship is destroyed and the character is killed, or the ship is captured.

Danger: Massive Ship Battle

Description: The characters are aboard a giant ship being attacked by another giant ship, a squadron of fighters, or cannon fire. This could be appropriate for a WWII destroyer battle or a giant spaceship fleet facing their hated foes.

Danger Score: The Danger has a Danger Score equal to the character's Destiny or 3, (whichever is lower), and would last around 20 turns. The Director rolls a d6 each turn for each group of characters in different locations aboard the ship. If he rolls a 5 or 6, the characters must roll against the Danger.

Number of Turns: The Director should decide the exact number of turns that the battle lasts. However, this type of battle is not over quickly - after 10 turns, plus one turn for each ship in the battle, the Director rolls 3 dice each turn. If he rolls an 18, one side has retreated or completed its mission and leaves, or has been defeated, at the Director's whim. As an option, the Director can have the battle last as long as the characters are trying to complete their mission.

Defeat: Roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-4, the character survives, but has been knocked unconscious, taken prisoner, or has otherwise been removed from combat. On a roll of 5-6, the character is killed, usually in a terrible explosion.

Danger: TRAFFIC CHASE and CRASHES

Description: Characters often are forced to drive into heavy traffic and weave in and out of it and incredible speeds in many action movies and television shows. Traffic can include cars but spaceships are also another traffic possibility. Crashes have a Superhuman damage rating.

Danger Score: 3

Number of Turns: Varies

Defeat: the character wrecks and crashes.

If Defeated, the character rolls once against a number of dice equal to his own Destiny. If he passes the roll he is Wounded and unconscious. If he fails the roll he is killed in the crash. If an Actor-played character is not Defeated but his vehicle crashes, he takes 1/2 of his Sand in loss and must make a defense roll against a Danger score of 10. Defeat would indicate a result as for Massive Ship Battle (above).

Character:	Dotson Starhawk
Player:	Michael Jones

Destiny 4

Attributes:

Reflexes: *Good*
Willpower: *Good*

Personality: _____ Sharp-Witted
Purpose: _____ Pilot
Dramatic Part: _____ Bouncing Board
Motive: _____ Joy Ride

Specialty: _____ Piloting (Starships)

Race: _____ Human
Age: _____ 32

Occupation: _____ Pilot-for-hire, secretly part of the Resistance

Wealth: _____ Not rich, but Seems to have enough to get by

Skills and Professions:

Starship Piloting, Repair and Weapons: Master (4 dice)

Weapons and Equipment:

The Runner (spaceship): Offensive/Defensive: *Good*; Speed: *Super*

Laser Gun (T523 Blaster)

Personal Communicator

Small Toolkit

Powers:

None

Ratings

Poor

Small Animal Claws
Leather Armor

Average

Baseball Bat, Staff
Chain Mail Armor
Lift 200 lbs.

Good

Sword, Arrow
Plate Mail Armor
Lift 300-500 lbs.

Superhuman

Pistol, Magic Sword
Magic Armor, Kevlar
Bend Bars, Pick Up Car

Astounding

Machine Gun, Grenade
Futuristic Armor
Lift Tank or Semi

Godlike

Missiles
Tank Armor
Push Over Buildings

The Cool Factor

Remember that thinking of a cool way to do something, and not just stating that your character does it, can gain you another dice to your roll



Weaknesses:

Fear of black holes

Facets (Background and Other Notes):

Saw father killed in black hole accident when he was a child

Joined the secret Resistance against the government 7 years ago

The Hourglass

Sand Options

- Push Destiny (+1 per dice used, D×2 loss max)
- Escape (Spend equal to the Destiny of opponent; roll vs. that opponent; pushing Destiny during the roll is possible)

Types of Sand Awards

Wounds

Building Description

Facets (Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment)

Co-Facets (A)

Background Facets

Setting Development

Role-Playing

Heroism

Weaknesses

Stating the Obvious (B)

Good thinking

Out of the Frying Pan

Director-Caused

Forced Awards

All Rules Stop

Misc.

Into the Fire

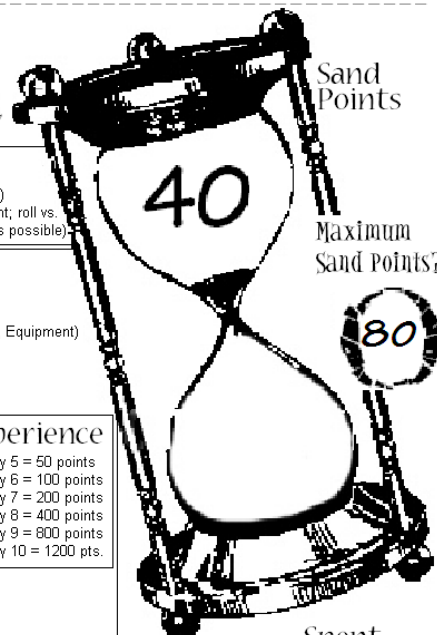
Repeat Awards (B)

(A) Can cause other Actors to gain Sand Points

(B) Award one point each

Experience

Destiny 5 = 50 points
Destiny 6 = 100 points
Destiny 7 = 200 points
Destiny 8 = 400 points
Destiny 9 = 800 points
Destiny 10 = 1200 pts.



Player:



Attributes:

Motive:

Specialty:

Wealth:

Skills and Professions:

Weapons and Equipment:

Powers:

Remember that thinking of a cool way to do something, and not just stating that your character does it, can gain you another dice to your roll!

Weaknesses:

Facets (Background and Other Notes):

The Hourglass

Sand Options

- Push Destiny (+1 per dice used, Dx2 loss max)
- Escape (Spend equal to the Destiny of opponent; roll vs. that opponent; pushing Destiny during the roll is possible)

Types of Sand Awards

Wounds

Building Description

Facets (Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment)

Co-Facets (A)

Background F

Setting Defelopmen

Role-Playing

Heroism

Weakne

Stating the Obvious (B)

Good thinking
Out of the Box

Out of the Frying Pan Director Caught

Director-Caused Forced Awards

Forced Awards All Rules Stop

Misc:

Misc.
Intro

Repeat Awa

..... (—)

(A) Can cause other Actors to gain Sand Points

(B) Award one point each

Experience

Destiny 5 = 50 points
Destiny 6 = 100 points
Destiny 7 = 200 points
Destiny 8 = 400 points
Destiny 9 = 800 points
Destiny 10 = 1200 pts.

Sand Points

Maximum Sand Points?

Spent
Sand Points

HOURLASS WORKSHEET

SAND OPTIONS

Pushing Destiny / Escape

TYPES OF AWARDS

O Wounds

O Building Description

Facets

Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment

Co-Facets (*)

Background Facets

Setting Development

O Role-Playing

Heroism

Weaknesses

Stating the Obvious (1)

O Good Thinking

Out of the Frying Pan

O Director-Caused

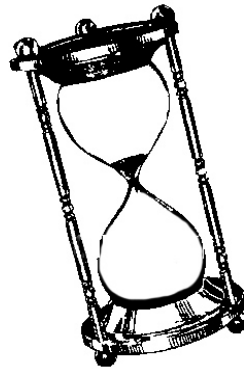
Forced Awards

All Rules Stop

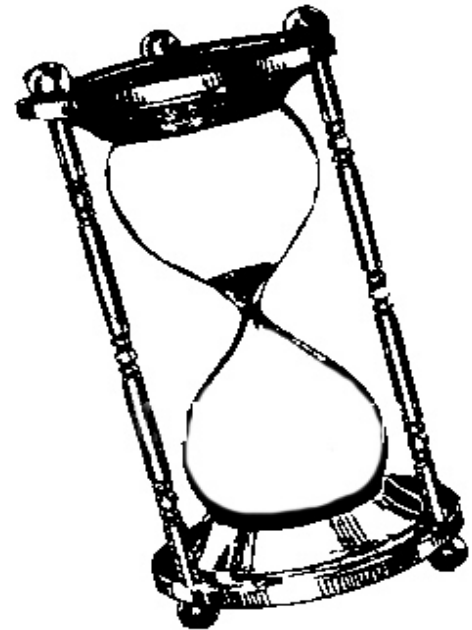
O Misc.

Into the Fire

Repeat Awards (1)



Sand points when entering combat



HOURLASS WORKSHEET

SAND OPTIONS

Pushing Destiny / Escape

TYPES OF AWARDS

O Wounds

O Building Description

Facets

Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment

Co-Facets (*)

Background Facets

Setting Development

O Role-Playing

Heroism

Weaknesses

Stating the Obvious (1)

O Good Thinking

Out of the Frying Pan

O Director-Caused

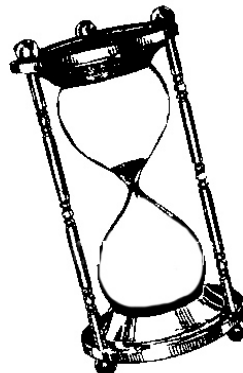
Forced Awards

All Rules Stop

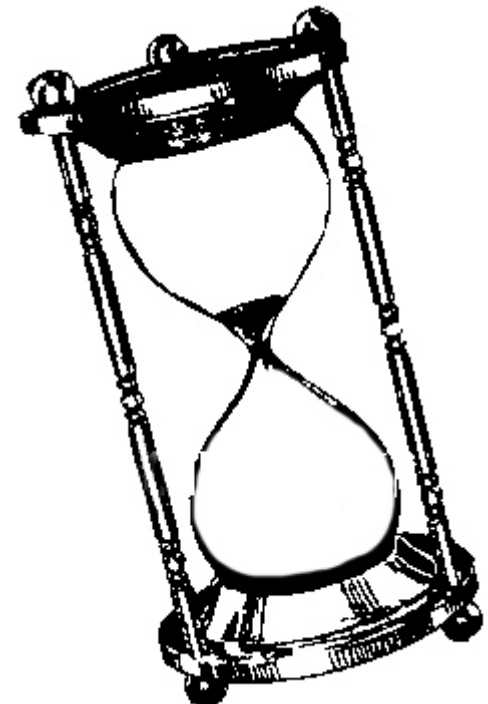
O Misc.

Into the Fire

Repeat Awards (1)



Sand points when entering combat



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

INCREASING DESTINY

As Sand slips through the character's Hourglass, he becomes more experienced and gains Destiny as well. When a certain amount of points pass through the Hourglass, the character gains 1 point of Destiny. this starts at 50 points and doubles for each new level.

Destiny 5	= 50 points
Destiny 6	= 100 Points (*) 2
Destiny 7	= 200 Points
Destiny 8	= 400 Points (*) 3
Destiny 9	= 800 Points
Destiny 10	= 1200 Points (*) 4
Destiny 11	= 2400 Points
etc.	etc.

(*) When a character gains this much Destiny, he gains a new Specialty. The number shows how many Specialties the character should have with the level of Destiny.

HOURLASS POINT AWARDS

Better Characters

What is a "better" character? Is it a hero that is more powerful or has more skills? For some inexperienced gamers this is true, but serious Actors want roles that are well-developed, with interesting backgrounds and all kinds of "loose" facts about their creations that seem to bring them to life. They realize characters can be "improved" by limiting what they can do and giving them weaknesses! Actors should be able to design people with any skills and Inhuman Forces they like, limited by the Director. The real reward for portraying characters, role-playing, is to create great stories about unique beings.

Actors in the Destiny System are rewarded with Hourglass Points as they play, which measure just how much their characters deserve to survive by measuring how much the Actor is contributing to the game.

Earning Hourglass Points

At the end of each Scene (see Time in the Destiny System), each Actor is awarded 1-10 dice of Hourglass Points to add to the top of his Hourglass (although it is possible to earn even more). The Director determines how many points to award the Actor based on the following types of Awards.

In many role-playing games, "experience points" are given after a game session as a reward, and used to improve characters by granting them more skills and powers. In the Destiny System, however, characters can add elements to individuals as the Director and Actors agree is fitting for that person.

Instead of "experience points", heroes in the Destiny System receive Hourglass Points, which the Actor can use to avoid the death of his character. As Sand runs through the character's Hourglass, his Destiny increases. Unlike other games, individuals are improved and limited throughout the course of a Destiny System story. Hourglass Points are not used to improve a character (except in the case of Destiny). Instead, they are used to help heroes who are well developed and well role-played survive.

Hourglass Points are gained in five ways: Building



Description, Role-playing, Good Thinking, Director-Caused, and Miscellaneous. These rewards are given out during the adventure. For each type the Actor succeeds in, he gains 1-2 dice of Hourglass Points. Therefore, a character could receive several Hourglass point awards throughout a story. For each type the Actor succeeds in, he gains 1-2 dice of Hourglass Points at the end of the Scene.

Note that Hourglass Points gained from being Wounded is not listed here, as the points gained from Wounds are given to the character immediately.

Types of Awards

Building Description

Facets
Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment
Co-Facets (A)
Background Facets
Setting Development

Role-Playing

Heroism
Weaknesses
Stating the Obvious (B)

Good Thinking

Out of the Frying Pan

Director-Caused

Forced Awards
All Rules Stop

Misc.

Into the Fire
Repeat Awards (B)

(A) Can cause other Actors to gain Hourglass Points
(B) Award one point each

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Facets

Adding **Facets** to a character involves adding (or deciding not to add to) a character's Skills, deciding that a skill has improved (and showing this somehow during the game), or detailing the character's Forces, Attributes, appearance or equipment. For example, if a hero is trapped in a flying plane, with the pilot killed, the Actor has to decide whether or not his character can control the craft. If the individual knows how, the Actor should refer to the area for "skills" on his character sheet and write down "pilot-plane". He just added a Facet to his hero, and will receive Hourglass Points for increasing what we know about the character, adding more definition to him or her.

However, a character receives more Survival by choosing to not know Skills or limiting himself or his Forces in some way. If the person was trapped in the same plane, and he does not know how to fly the vehicle, the Actor just added description to his character, made the individual more realistic by limiting his knowledge, and also created a great situation for the hero to be trapped in during a story.

Also see *Appearance and Awards* and *Character Attribute Score Descriptions* sections at the end of this chapter, as well as the *Skills* and *Weapons and Equipment* chapters.

Background Facets

Background Facets can also be added to a character. These Facets are rewarded when they are mentioned during a story, in role-played conversation, and deal with an individual's background or personality. Such statements must have some type of meaning for the hero or the adventure, but do not have to relate directly to the plot (those that do not are usually the best kind!). If John Smith says "I like cake", he might get a very small reward, if any. If John Smith says "yeah, I got two boys and an ex-wife back in the states, if I had seen em' in the last five years I might tell you about em'", then we are really finding out something important about this character, and the Actor just developed lots of personality and interest to the individual he is portraying. The Actor would write down this important piece of Background under his Facets and would probably receive a big Combat Point reward.

Good examples of Background Facets include how much money the character has, where he lives, and his past jobs.

One good way to earn a Background Facet award is to allow the Actor to create a small "flashback" (memory) that the character might have. If the Actor can find (or make up) a link between the story and his flashback, he could earn a major Combat Point award!

Co-Facets

Co-Facets are Facets that are made up for an individual by another Actor that does not control that character, during speech made during the game. When we hear someone talking about someone else, we can find out all kinds of neat things about the subject of the conversation.

Experienced Directors may even allow this award when one character is thinking about another one! Remember, to earn this reward, there needs to be a solid background detail involved, or the character doing



the talking will simply receive a Good Role-Playing award.

For example, two characters, Rex and Amy, are talking to each other. Rex mentions that Amy used to pilot her x-90 spacecraft around the Mijara Nebula back when it was crawling with space pirates.

Co-Facets are a double-reward. First, they are treated as a Forced Facet (see below) for the individual who the details are about (although he can refuse the Facet, see below). Second, the character who made the statement gains 1 dice of Hourglass Points for making up the aspect for another Actor.

The recipient of the Co-Facet can refuse to take it and the reward. If so, he and the Actor who made up the new Co-facet do not receive the Hourglass Points. For example, if Jim mentions how Larry (the priest) used to be a drunk, the Actor playing Larry may refuse to accept the Co-Facet. The Director can also refuse to allow the Co-Facet if he thinks it is unsuitable for the character.

Actors who make up interesting Co-facets for Supporting Cast Characters may also receive the 1 dice award, as the Director sees fit, depending on how interesting the Co-Facet seems to him.

Setting Development

Setting Development awards are given to Actors to add to their characters when the character says something that gives more depth to the Setting, including (but not limited to) it's places, races, and history.

For example, a group of characters (in a fantasy Setting) are traveling through the Red Woods after they camp for the night. A character might say, "Tomorrow we travel through the Red Woods. Forty years ago, a great battle between man and the beast men took place there. They say the ghosts of the fallen still lurk in dark places in the forest." No Facets were added to the character, but the Setting was detailed, giving the Red Woods much more realism and interest. If the Director likes the idea, he would add a few notes about the Red Woods to his Setting and award the Actor with a Setting Development award (as well as the usual Good Role Playing award). Setting Development awards are worth 1 Survival Point, or 2 if the Director feels that the detail was very interesting.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

ROLE PLAYING

Good Role-Playing

Good Role Playing involves making the game fun, by acting out the part and keeping to the idea of the character. It involves admitting when a hero is afraid, intimidated, or concerned. It also usually means playing an individual who does care, at least slightly, about someone or something other than himself. Books could be written about the subject of good role-playing, but the most of it is just common sense and good acting, and remembering that nobody is perfect.

One way to earn Good Role-Playing rewards is to strike up conversations filled with dramatic remarks or humor. Most good stories have lots of this type of chat mixed in with the action. However, boring statements like "go over there and wait", and "OK, I'll go over there and wait" should not be rewarded! Good conversation can be either the life or death of a good story, do not underestimate it! The Director should be more than willing to be very generous to those Actors who come up with the best character interactions. Actors should be encouraged to make up conversations before the game and act them out during "slow" times, challenging themselves to make up great dialogue and see how many Hourglass Points they can earn. See the Role-Playing Tips section at the end of this chapter for more detail.

Remember that good role-playing includes what the character is thinking, and descriptions of his body language and actions.

Role-playing realistic characters can be difficult for new Actors - many players in a role-playing game want to make sure that they survive and often don't even know the names of the other player's characters. There are many things a Director can do to help the Actors be interested in the other characters. Here are a few ideas:

1. Have the characters possess different skills or powers, to encourage teamwork
2. Always award lots of Sand (3 dice, or even more) for the Actors who really give a good try to act in character and create interesting dialogue. This doesn't mean that they succeeded, but that they simply made the effort.
3. At the end of a game, award 2 extra dice of Sand to each Actor that knows the name of the other Actor's characters they are playing.

Heroic Action

Heroic Action awards are special awards given to Actor's characters when they act in a heroic fashion. Volunteering to save the lost children of a village without payment, not killing a foe when the opportunity arises, and deciding to risk everything to save a friend are all examples of Heroic Actions. Heroic Actions always earn 3 dice of Hourglass Points.

Stating the Obvious

Stating the Obvious is a reward related to Good Role-Playing. In many television shows and movies, characters seem to state the obvious to their friends and fellow adventurers. Great examples include "Here they come!" and "They've destroyed our headquarters!". Once per game, an Actor can earn this award by having his character state the very obvious. However, this nets Actors only 1 Hourglass Point per Scene (see Time and



Turns).

Weaknesses

Weaknesses limit characters, but also make them much more human and believable. Whenever an Actor plays a character that shows any kind of weakness, he receives 2 dice of Hourglass Points.

Some weakness are fairly major, like ones that strip a character of his powers, or kill him outright. These types of weaknesses should be rare. The Director may ask for them if characters are ultra-powerful in their descriptions. This allows the Director and Actors to explain how such a character could be Defeated if he runs out of Sand when facing a less powerful foe. Here are some examples:

- A character that loses all his superhuman powers at night
- A character that has magic that cannot affect creatures from a certain dimension
- Attacks of a certain type (fire, cold, electricity) pass through the character's defenses

Weaknesses do not have to be ones that cripple the character. Minor weaknesses are just as interesting. Here are some examples:

- A character will not attack if it puts innocent people in harm's way
 - The character has taken a vow of poverty
 - The character reveals that he is very afraid
- The character is in love, and the villain can easily use that to his advantage by holding the loved character hostage.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

GOOD THINKING

Out of the Frying Pan

Out of the Frying Pan awards can be gained by an Actor by thinking his way out of tough situations. Coming up with a way to beat a foe without having to fight him, turning a bad situation around to favor a character, or simply getting an individual and his friends out of a dangerous spot in a unique way are all examples of how to earn this award.

This award is also given to characters that figure out riddles or puzzles that are part of the Director's adventures.



DIRECTOR-CAUSED AWARDS

Forced Awards

Forced Awards are Hourglass Points awarded for a Facet or Out of the Frying Pan/Into the Fire occurrence in the game, as usual, but come about when the Director causes these things to happen. For example, if the Director has an important SCC announce that he is the father of an individual played by an Actor, the character receives a Forced Background Facet award.

All Rules Stop

The Director has the special ability to call for a **All Rules Stop** during a Scene. When he does so, he ignores all the rules for the Destiny System (except these!) and makes something happen in the game that is necessary for the development of the story he wishes to create.

During an All Rules Stop, no characters (including Director-controlled characters) lose Hourglass Points, but Actors can still gain Hourglass Points through the normal means. If the Director had to call for the All Rules Stop during a Danger or a battle with an Antagonist, the Actor receives all of his points back that he had lost since the Time to Survive had been called. Furthermore, whenever a Director calls for an All Rules Stop, each Actor-played character receives 2 dice of Hourglass Points.

MISCELLANEOUS AWARDS

Into the Fire

Into the Fire awards can be earned whenever a character fails at an action or loses a roll vs. a Danger or Antagonist. Whenever the character is unsuccessful, the Actor can create a situation that increases the risk or difficulty, and therefore earn Hourglass Points for making the story more interesting. For example, if a hero fails a roll vs. another character when firing his gun, he can say that his gun has jammed and is useless. Because this creates a problem for the character (he can no longer use his gun), he receives Hourglass Points. Being Wounded in combat and running out of ammunition are two of the most common Into the Fire awards.

Repeat Awards

In some cases, an Actor might gain Hourglass Points in what is called a **Repeat Award**. Actors can be rewarded Hourglass Points again and again for repeated use of interesting Facets or performing the same type of Good Role-Playing during adventures. However, this only gains the Actor one Hourglass Point per Scene, per use of an award that has already been the subject of a Hourglass Point gain. This applies to Skills as well.

For example, a barbarian may cry out "For the glory of Thanok!" each time he goes into battle, netting him 1 Hourglass Point per Scene he uses the phrase. Another character's eyes may glow before he transforms into a monster. The Director has full control over the passing out of Repeat Awards, and should only give these points when the Actor is using his character's details to form a complete person with a strong sense of personality traits and a solid background - or if it's just really neat!

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

ROLE-PLAYING TIPS: THE THREE PART CONVERSATION METHOD

The three part, PLANNED CONVERSATION method

A great way to make a Planned Conversation is to use the Three Part Method. This method, as the name implies, uses three steps to make a conversation believable and interesting.

In the first step, the characters begin the conversation with a light conversation on a topic not related to anything important, but that real people might talk about. Conversations could start out being about a character's new car, a new tattoo, or what they characters are having for lunch, for example. The characters don't finish the conversation about this topic until the third step, usually leaving the topic off with an unanswered question.

In the second step, the characters discuss something important, usually something of consequence to the character's future or an important decision that needs to be made. Actors can leave this second step blank and use the current choices they need to make about the adventure at hand as the topic here.

In the third step, the characters finish the conversation they started in the first step, and can end the conversation. If the Actors can quickly combine the subjects of the first and second step together in this last step (which may take some quick thinking on the Actor's part), the Director should award an additional 2 dice of Countdown Points.

An Example of a Planned Conversation

In this Example, we have two characters, Artaylium and Dinian, in a medieval setting.

The actors have planned out step 1 and 3 on the conversation they plan to use during the adventure. They decide to leave the second step open for adventure-related conversation.

In step one, the Actors plan out a conversation about a light topic (a scar that Dinian has on his left shoulder).

Artaylium: Where did you get that scar on your shoulder, my friend?

Dinian: Ah, yes. (looks down at his shoulder). I was fighting at the Battle of A Thousand Dead when I received this wound. I was cut deeply with a battle axe. I killed my foe, but I had to burn the wound so that I would not bleed to death.

Artaylium: You burned your own wound?

Step one ends here, leaving the conversation open with a question. They plan the third step:

Artaylium: You never answered my question. Did you burn the wound yourself?

Dinian: It burned less than the defeat we faced that day.

With their rough sketch of the dialogue, the Actors bring the Planned Conversation to the next game. During the adventure, the characters have a choice to

take a quick path through a dangerous goblin-infested valley, or to take time to go around the mountains. The

long path is much safer, but they are pressed for time as they are sending a message about an army moving in to attack Calan, a city over the mountain. They insert a small bit of adventure-related dialogue as the second step. They quickly change the third step to make the conversation related to both step one and two, and use their Planned Conversation:

Step One

Artaylium: Where did you get that scar on your shoulder, my friend?

Dinian: Ah, yes. (looks down at his shoulder). I was fighting at the Battle of A Thousand Dead when I received this wound. I was cut deeply with a battle axe. I killed my foe, but I had to burn the wound so that I would not bleed to death.

Artaylium: You burned your own wound?

Step Two

Dinian: (pauses) The path through the mountains is very dangerous. There are many goblins in the area. They travel in large groups, and we would have to be very careful to avoid them.

Artaylium: Have you been through the mountains before?

Dinian: No, but I have heard that the goblins come out less during the day. However, we would certainly have to travel through the night to reach Calan in time to warn them of the attack. If we pass around the mountains, we would almost certainly be too late to give them the message.

Step Three

Artaylium: You never answered my question. Did you burn the wound yourself?

Dinian: Aye, I did. I nearly passed out from the pain. The burn took many weeks to heal.

Artaylium: (looking at the mountains) A horrible thing to have to do my friend, but sometimes we have to do what we must to call ourselves warriors...

Obviously, Artaylium was speaking of both the wound Dinian burned and the decision the characters face to travel through the mountains, combining the subjects of the conversations of Step one and two. The Director awards 2 dice for the Planned Conversation and 2 dice for combining the topics. In addition, the Director gives Dinian Facet Awards (he fought in the Battle of A Thousand Dead and has a horrible scar from when he burned his own wound).



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

DIRECTOR TIPS:

AWARDING HOURLGLASS POINTS

Look Ma! I can't die! Role-Playing and Hourglass Points

One thing that might happen in the Destiny System is that inexperienced Actors might play their character as if he or she is invincible because the character has saved up many Hourglass Points. Being able to survive at least the first few attacks, the character runs headfirst into battles a sane man would dare not enter. How should a Director handle this?

First of all, the Director has the power to control the story, although he does not have the right to outright kill a character *without warning*. In other words, if a Supporting Cast Character gains surprise over another, the Director could tell the Actor that the villain has pulled out a gun and placed it to the character's head, and if the Actor tries to make an Action to escape and fails a roll of Destiny vs. Destiny, he will automatically be killed, regardless of how many Hourglass Points he has. Such action by the Director can easily set Actors straight who are playing "suicidal" characters.

Another thing to remember is that unless the character really is suicidal, using a character in this manner is poor role-playing, and the Actor will not be receiving as much (if any) Good Role-Playing awards as the other Actors who are role-playing well. Make sure to remind the Actors from time to time that although they know how many Hourglass Points they have, their characters *do not*. If the Director feels that the characters are rushing into battle only because the Actors think that they are invincible, he may use an All Rules Stop to Defeat (but not kill) them.

Finally, it may not be a very bad thing for the characters to rush off into combat all the time. Not only does it make for exciting times, but it will also keep them from keeping so many Hourglass Points that the game becomes a "no threat" situation.

Hourglass Resets: An Optional Rule

Actors will commonly use much of their Sand score when fighting the villain at the end of adventures. During the dramatic climax of the story, the players will be tempted to gain the upper hand and spend lots of points to Push Destiny. They might need to as well, if faced with difficult opponents.

While this is fine, it usually means that at the beginning of the next adventure, many of the heroes could be seriously low on Sand Points. To give them a chance to survive a new adventure (in addition to chances to earn new points during the game), each character begins a new *adventure* (not each new gaming session) with Sand Points equal to his Destiny x5 or his current amount of Sand Points, whichever is higher.

Appearance and Awards

Characters can be awarded many Hourglass Points for all kinds of details being added to their character, but the Director must be cautious about awarding too many points for descriptions of an individual's look. It's far too easy for an Actor to announce that his hero wears an ear ring or some other small detail, and receive Hourglass Points.

The Destiny System tries to simulate the way a person who enjoys a story finds out about a person as he reads a book or watches a movie. Normally in such stories, a character's appearance is revealed early and is fairly complete. In the Destiny System, Actors can announce what their character looks like once for a Hourglass Point award. Such an award will be 1-2 dice, depending on how much thought and detail the Actor has put into the appearance.

This does not mean that a resourceful Actor cannot make up interesting details about a character's look at a later time. For example, he might announce that while the other characters see his warrior remove his shirt, they notice his back is covered with tattoos of oriental dragons. Another hero might slip off his glove to reveal that his hand is scarred from horrible burns. Such added details can merit additional Hourglass Points awards.

Awards Limitations: An Optional Rule

In some Settings, entire games may go by without combat of any kind. If this is the type of game you like to play and you have players that are fairly good role-players, you may soon have characters who have hundreds of Sand Points, making them all but undefeatable without resorting to an All Rules Stop each game.

In such Settings, the Director can limit the number of Sand Points that a character may have in the top of his hourglass at one time. This is equal to his Destiny x 20. A character with a Destiny of 6, for example, could have 120 points (at maximum) in the top of his Hourglass.

While the top of his Hourglass is full, any Sand that the character earns goes directly to the bottom of his Hourglass, bringing the character closer to increasing his Destiny.

Note that in very realistic games where characters have no super powers (such as a historical war or modern-day police Setting) the Director could limit this even further. Realistic Settings might have a maximum of Destiny x10, where Gritty Settings might have a maximum of Destiny x5!

Destiny Limitations: An Optional Rule

To keep the challenge up for Actors who play a lot and earn Sand in large amounts, the Director can use the following rule: any Destiny score above 10 counts as 1 point per dice. This includes Pushed Destiny as well. For example, if a character has a Destiny of 15, he rolls 10 dice and adds 5 to the result.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: DEVELOPING CHARACTERS AND AWARDS

SPECIAL NOTES: CHARACTER ATTRIBUTE SCORE DESCRIPTIONS

As they come up in play, an Actor may need to determine how strong, fast, smart, etc. that his character is. A rating such as this that is not a skill or special superhuman ability is called an Attribute, and is considered a Facet for the purpose of Hourglass Point awards.

While the actual description of the Attribute has no combat value in the Destiny system, it's nice to know the value of such Attributes to describe what is happening. A character with Poor human strength will have little chance to Defeat a character with Good strength and endurance without resorting to weapons, trickery, or just plain luck, for example.



Attributes are only described as needed during game play, and almost any kind of Attribute can be created. For example, Manipulation may come into play as an Attribute in a Setting of political intrigue, but may not in a game of military starfighter pilots.

Each Attribute in the Destiny System is given a rating of Poor, Average, or Good. Superhuman Attributes would require the character to have Powers of some kind. Some common Attributes and their ratings are given on the following chart.

Mind:

Description: An Attribute in Mind reflects how fast the character learns and figures out problems. Mind is sometimes called Intelligence or Intellect.

Poor: Slow Learner

Average: Fast Learner

Good: Lightning Fast Learner

Muscle:

Description: Muscle reflects the general strength of a character, including how much he can lift. Muscle is sometimes called Strength, Brawn, or Might.

Poor: Weak

Average: can lift 200 lbs.

Good: can lift 300 - 500 lbs.

Move:

Description: Move reflects how fast the character is. Move is often called Dexterity or Speed.

Poor: Slow

Average: Can run at normal human speeds

Good: Track runner

Mana:

Description: Mana reflects the natural affinity for magic that the character possesses, and his resistance to magical effects. Characters with high Mana often have Powers such as spells and magic resistance.

Poor: Poor defenses to magic

Average: Normal defenses to magic

Good: High resistance to magic

Perception:

Description: This Attribute reflects the character's senses, such as hearing, sight and smell. Sometimes a character can have separate Attributes for each sense. A character might have Good sight but Poor hearing, for example.

Poor: Can't see his hand in front of his face

Average: Normal human perception

Good: Superior senses

Willpower:

Description: This Attribute reflects the character's resistance to mental powers and stress.

Poor: Weak-Minded

Average: Normal human willpower

Good: Strong Willpower

Other Attributes

Again, Attributes allow the Actors and Directors to develop description of what is happening during combat and Destiny rolls, and offer no real game statistic that affects the outcome of battle. The Director can use these Attributes to decide if the characters succeed or fail at certain tasks as well, such as in the case of skills. The Attributes listed here are only examples. Almost any type of Attribute is possible.

At the end of any Scene where an Actor has decided that his character has a Poor Attribute of some kind, he should receive 2 dice of Hourglass Points. Any Average or Good (or superhuman) Attribute should be awarded with 1 dice. The Director may allow a few Attribute scores and awards at the time of character creation, if he likes.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: TIME AND TURNS

TIME IN THE DESTINY SYSTEM

In the Destiny System, time does not pass as it does in the real world. While it might take only a few seconds for you to decide that your character will repair his car, it might take the character two days to do it! On the same train of thought, you might take several minutes to decide that your character will attack his friend who has had his mind controlled, but your character only needs seconds to take the action.

The amount of time it takes the Actor to decide something, roll dice, etc. is called **Real Time**. The amount of time required by a character to take actions is called **Game Time**.

Turns

A **Turn** in the Destiny System allows a character to take an action of some kind. He might attack a foe, drink a potion, sneak up on an enemy, or whatever. The Director decides just what a character can do in one turn. Turns are not measured in any time frame; they might be a second to a minute or longer if the Director decides. The Director has full control over this; he might decide in one battle that you have time to take your weapon out and attack with it in a single turn; in another battle he might decide that the character's foes are so close that drawing the sword will take a full turn and the character's enemies have First Shot (see Special Rules).

Characters can always talk to their friends or foes during a turn while taking other actions, without any kind of penalty. While this is not realistic, it is fun!

Scenes

A **Scene** is made up of a number of turns. It tells part of the story. A Scene might begin when the characters break into a secured building, and ends when they either set off an alarm or reach the main computer. The next Scene would either be a battle with the guard, an attempted escape, or downloading the files from the computer.

At the end of each Scene, the Director awards Sand (in rolled dice) awards to Actors. Then the Director moves on to the next Scene. Many Scenes make a Script.

Scripts, Episodes and Movies

A **Script** is a number of Scenes that make an entire story. If the story is part of an ongoing Series, it is called an **Episode Script**. If it is a one to three shot adventure, it is called a **Movie Script**.



Series

A **Series** is made up of many adventures, each its own Episode. A Series can be any number of adventures. Each 10 Episodes are called **Seasons**.

Movies

A **Movie Script** is usually only one to three adventures. These stories are usually grand in scale, or tell a very exciting story with a quick end compared to a Series. Characters gain Destiny much faster in a Movie than in a Series, and the adventures can be much more dangerous.

Characters start with an Destiny of 6 in a Movie and improve Destiny in a Movie at the rate of 1 point for each 50 Combat Points spent. These points must be earned during the game, however (they cannot be Combat Points the character began play with).

Often, the Director has much more action involved in a Movie script than in a normal Series. Dangers and Antagonists are around every corner.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMBAT

COMBAT

When players enter Combat they enter the following pattern of events:

1. The Director announces Time to Survive. Actors should record their Sand totals in case the Director calls for an All Rules Stop.
2. The Director decides if there is First Strike for any character or group.
3. The Director and the Actors decide which characters are being attacked and what the characters are going to do.
4. Each defending character rolls his Destiny score in dice; the Cool Factor / Strategy Factor is applied to any rolls if they apply. If he is defending against multiple attacks, he rolls Destiny once against each attack. If he rolls a critical fumble (half or more of the dice roll "1"), the defender takes *at least* the highest rolled attack dice of the opponent in damage.
5. Each Actor makes an Attack Roll for attacking characters he controls. The Cool Factor / Strategy Factor is applied to any rolls if they apply.
6. Defending characters who had lower Destiny rolls than the rolls to attack them (or those that fumbled) subtract the difference in rolls from their Hourglass.
7. Any characters who run out of Sand are Defeated.

Time To Survive

When Dangers appear (including Antagonists), the Director calls for Time to Survive. While the Dangers are present, Actors can still earn Sand Points, but they are not given to the character until the Danger is over. If the character dies during that time, he loses all earned Sand Points during time to Survive.

When a Time to Survive is called, all Actors write down the Sand scores of their characters, in case the Director calls for an All Rules Stop (see *All Rules Stop*).

Characters can still earn Sand Points by being Wounded during combat, or by other *Into the Frying Pan* awards.

First Strike

Sometimes an attacker gets the "jump" on his opponent. He might ambush him, or have his weapon drawn before his foe, for example. In the Destiny System, this is called First Strike (although it is also called Surprise or Initiative). The Director decides when a character has First Strike over others.

If a character has First Strike over another, his opponents cannot make attack rolls, but can roll to defend themselves.



Initiative (Who Goes First)

While not terribly realistic, it's easier to run combat in a series of turns. To determine who goes first in any turn, each Actor rolls 1d6+Destiny for his character. Highest rolls go first, then second highest, third, etc. Initiative does not have to be used, but can simplify combat.

Combat Rolls

In many chases characters will want to attack other characters. In this case, the defending character makes a roll equal to his Destiny. The attacking character then rolls, trying to beat the total rolled by the defending character.

If he succeeds, the opposing character takes as many points from his Sand in the top of his Hourglass and adds it to the points in the bottom of his Hourglass. When a character runs out of points, he is Defeated.

The Cool Factor

If the Director thinks that an action is very cool, he can allow the player to add one dice to any roll (defense or attack).

While the Cool Factor can be gained on any turn, the award should not be used lightly. It should be given to Actors who think out what their character is going to do and make it interesting. As an optional rule, the Director should only give out the Cool Factor to the Actor he thinks was most creative with his action that turn.

The Strategy Factor

The Strategy Factor is used in the same way as the Cool Factor, but is rewarded if the Actors come up with a great plan to defeat their opponents. The plan should be well thought out and the Actors must stick to the plan to get the bonus.

If the Director thinks that the award is appropriate, the group of Actors can choose one player each turn to receive a +1 dice bonus to either his attack or defense rolls.

Pushing Destiny

A character can Push Destiny by spending Sand. When Sand is spent, the character may roll 1 extra dice on an attack than he normally was able to do so. However, when a character Pushes Destiny, he cannot cause any more loss in Sand than his Destiny score x2 with that attack.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMBAT

Defeated Characters

A character who runs out of Sand Points is **Defeated** by the Danger he faced. Each Danger has a specific result that will happen to a character who is Defeated. Some Dangers will knock the character unconscious or have him captured by his foes - others will simply kill him. Some characters who are Defeated aren't wounded or even captured, but their goals have been thwarted (not catching a fleeing criminal, for example). The result of a Defeat is up to the Director, but should fit the Danger and further the story.

A Defeated character, if not killed, begins earning Sand Points as soon as he is in the next scene of the story. For example, a character might be Defeated by the villain and left for dead. In the next scene of the story, he is found by a wandering priest and healed of his wounds over the next few days. As soon as the priest finds him and the Antagonist disappears, the character begins earning Sand Points once again.

Wounds

When a character is involved in a situation that could cause him harm, the Actor can announce that his character has been Wounded. Wounded characters roll Destiny normally against other characters, but if they win a roll, they subtract 1d6 from the Sand loss they cause an opponent. Wounded characters can still Push Destiny, however. A character who becomes Wounded instantly receives 1d6 Sand Points - which can bring him back to above 0 points if he lost enough to bring him into a negative score. If the earned Sand Points are still not enough to save him, he is treated as having 0 Sand Points and is Defeated.

A character can be Wounded multiple times, but only once per any turn he loses Sand Points. Each time past the first, the character receives an additional +1d6-1 Sand Points (yes, he can roll 0 points!) and adds an additional +1 to the Sand Points he fails to cause an opponent. For example, a character who has been Wounded 2 times subtracts 1d6+1 from the Sand loss to another character.

The Director can decide that a character controlled by an Actor has been wounded if he thinks it will make the story more exciting - but these wounds do not affect game play, award Sand Points or subtract from dice rolls. Don't count them with the other wounds that affect dice rolls.

Sand Points and Combat

The core of the Destiny role-playing system is Sand Points, gained during play. These points can be lost during situations that would threaten the life of the character. If an Actor runs out of points his character is Defeated.

If you have played other role-playing games before, it is important not to confuse Sand Points with "health" or "life points" from other game systems. Those point totals describe how much damage the character can take before being killed, and are usually based on the endurance of the character's body. When they lose "life points", characters in other games are almost always being wounded or damaged in some way. This is not the case with Sand Points.

Sand Points are simply a tool to find out who *wins* a battle or survives a danger of some kind, but not who is being hurt during the danger. Being wounded in combat (or during other dangers) is part of the story and wounds are actually chosen for characters by the Director and Actors to make a story better and to earn more Sand Points.

When a character loses Sand Points, the Actor is still able to make any kind of action he wants the character to make that would be good for the story (with the Director's approval). The Director has the last word, however, and might describe what happens himself at the end of a turn. Even though Mighty Hero and Evil Villain fight with swords for a turn and Evil Villain loses Sand Points, the Director may describe the action as the Evil Villain having the upper hand, forcing the character back and even pinning him for a moment against a wall. Only when Evil Villain loses all of his Sand Points does Mighty Hero come back at the last second and win the day. Actors can win Sand Points during these situations by acting as the "underdog" even if they are winning in Sand totals, earning Good Role-Playing Awards.

This abstract system of "counting down" Sand Points allows the Director and the Actors to make more dramatic stories, which is most of the fun of role-playing. Having the hero pound his foes one turn after the other might be fun, but will get boring pretty quick. Having the option to make up scenes where the characters barely escape danger or are even overpowered during the fight only to win in the end is much more dramatic - and much more fun!



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMBAT

Attacking Multiple Opponents

Characters can attack as many opposing characters as their Destiny can be divided into the Attacker's. For example, a character with a destiny of 6 can attack two characters with a Destiny of 3.

Remember, "attacks" aren't necessarily physical attacks - the character is simply trying to exert his influence over the story using his Destiny score. For example, if a character Defeated three opponents that were trying to catch him, the Director could say that the character isn't caught. The opponents are "defeated" by not catching the character since that was their purpose.



Teamwork

If more than one character is attacking a single foe, the players can announce that they are using Teamwork to try to increase their chances of winning a Destiny roll (if the opponent has a much higher Destiny, for example).

All characters must be attacking the same target. Then take the highest Destiny of the group. Add 1 die to the roll for each character attacking, to a maximum of 10 or the target's Destiny, *whichever is higher*. If the character's Specialties are being used for half or more of the attacking characters, add an additional 1 die to the roll. However, when using Teamwork, the attack roll cannot cause more Sand loss than the attacker's highest Destiny x3. The characters roll this total once, not for each character. The dice total only applies to attacks, not to rolls when defending from an attack.

For example, three characters (Destiny 5, 5 and 6) are fighting a foe with a destiny of 10. They agree to use Teamwork, and two of them are using their Specialties (the fighter uses his sword, and the mage uses lightning bolts). Their total roll would be 6 (the highest Destiny) + 2 (one for each additional character attacking) + 1 (for more than half of the characters using their Specialties). The heroes now get to roll 9 dice for their combined attack, not 5 or 6.

In another example, a troop of 10 soldiers (Destiny 1, Specialty: laser blaster combat) fighting a Destiny 8 character could Teamwork for a total of 10 dice.

When making a Teamwork roll, divide out the dice and let each player roll (but add the results together). Add the results together. In the example above, each character would roll 3 dice.

Note that The Cool Factor can add another die to the roll if the players come up with a cool teamwork idea. If the characters Push Destiny, they are not subject to the normal limitation - instead, they cannot cause Sand loss

of more than the highest Destiny score x3 (the Teamwork limit). The players must decide who spends the points to Push Destiny, or may divide the points spent to Push Destiny between them.

Teamwork cannot be used by any character that is attacking multiple opponents.

For example, a hundred robots with lasers (Destiny 1 each, no specialties) attack the Grun, a mighty alien beast (Destiny 9). Using Teamwork, they divide into 10 groups of ten. Each group now has a destiny of 10! They attack, and 7 groups win the Destiny roll. However, they can only cause 3 Sand in damage (the highest Destiny x3). The Grun takes a 21-point Sand loss. The Grun makes 9 Destiny rolls (see multiple attacks) and leaps on top of nine of the robots, destroying them. The next turn the robots could have a maximum of 9 groups with Destiny 10 with Teamwork, and one robot on his own (who is in trouble!). It's going to be a long, hard battle.

Escape

Often in action-adventure stories, characters escape at the last minute of a battle to fight again another day. Characters can Escape their opponent provided they meet certain requirements.

First, the character must have Sand Points left before gaining any from Wounds or other sources (the Director or Actor can state that it appears that the character is Defeated just before the escape, but he must have points to spend). The character must spend an amount of Sand Points equal to the Destiny of the character facing him. If he is facing more than one opponent, he must spend an amount equal to the highest Destiny opposing him.

Second, the escape must be explainable. In most cases, the Director or Actor can come up with something that could be used as an escape fairly easily. If fighting on a sci-fi spaceship, the character could slip into an escape pod, be "transported" away, or even blast himself out of an airlock to be rescued in mere seconds by a cloaked ship. In another example, a hero protecting a secret code imprinted in his mind could be badly wounded, fighting a villain on top of a skyscraper. Just when it appears that he will be captured, he leaps off the building. The villain leaves, thinking the hero dead, but the hero still clings to the ledge only a story down, just out of sight as the villain looks over to see the jagged rocks in the water below. One of the easiest ways to explain an escape is to have the opposing character "sidetracked" with the villains goons or having to rescue an innocent bystander while the villain gets away.

Finally, the character must make a roll vs. his opponent, with both characters using Destiny. The character attempting to make the escape can Push his Destiny on this roll if he has the Sand Points to spare. The character that he is attempting to escape from *cannot* Push Destiny on this roll. If the character attempting to make an Escape does not win the roll, he has not escaped, but must still spend all of the points he used trying to do so. He also may not make another Escape roll for the duration of the Time to Survive.

Once you have established an escape for the character and the character has paid the Sand total required, he makes his escape. The battle is over at this point - the character has escaped. If the opposing forces (Director-controlled characters or Actor-played characters) look for the character, they will not find him. He is gone. The Director can cause new threats to face

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMBAT

the character, but he had escaped the threat he faced a moment ago for the time being. This explains some of the amazing luck that many heroes have in action stories, and how many villains escape to return to fight another day.

When a character escapes, he may bring with him a number of characters equal to his Destiny.

Note that after an escape, it is common for the Director to give Actor-played characters a chance to earn more Sand Points if they were very low, using role-playing opportunities.

If a character sacrifices himself (see Self-Sacrifice), he can give his Sand Points to other Actor-played characters to pay their "fee" for Escaping. In addition, the characters he means to save through his sacrifice do not have to make the roll to Escape. However, if the Actors are playing correctly, this should be the last resort of any hero!

All Rules Stop

The Director has the special ability to call for a All Rules Stop during a Scene. When he does so, he ignores all the rules for the Destiny System (except these!) and makes something happen in the game that is necessary for the development of the story he wishes to create.

During an All Rules Stop, no characters (including Director-controlled characters) lose Sand Points, but Actors can still gain them through the normal means. If the Director had to call for the All Rules Stop during a Danger or a battle with an Antagonist, the Actor receives all of his Sand Points back that he had lost since the Time to Survive began. Furthermore, whenever a Director calls for an All Rules Stop, each Actor-played character receives 2 dice of Sand Points.

If the Director decides to use an All Rules Stop in the Actor's favor (allowing them to escape or defeat an opponent even though he has Sand points left, for example), the Actors do not receive their Sand Points back or receive the 2-dice Sand Point award.

The Director should only use this ability to further the story, and rarely. If a villain must win a battle and no other foe could take his place, the Director can call for an All Rules Stop if the character is defeated, for example, allowing the villain to win instead.

The Director is never allowed to kill an Actor-played character during an All Rules Stop, but can have the characters captured or knocked out to further the story (again, this will not cause the Actor's characters to lose Sand Points).

The Director cannot use an All Rules Stop to keep an Actor-played character from being Defeated (he can do this for characters he controls, as mentioned).

If the Director uses an All Rules Stop to have character captured, he must provide them some way of escaping at a later time (this does not mean that they will be successful if they do not survive the Dangers involved - just that the opportunity is there).

Again, it should be stressed that an All Rules Stop should be used very rarely. Beginning Actors can become frustrated if they are winning and are forced to be defeated or captured outside the rules, even if given extra Sand Points.

The Director can use an All Rules Stop on a single character if he likes - having one character Defeated while the others battle on. He may do this if the story requires it, or if the Actor has to leave the game suddenly.

Knockout, Stun and Capture

Many times an Actor will try to Defeat another character quickly by using an attack, spell or other Power that is designed to end the battle in one strike, such as attacks that knock the opponent unconscious, stun his opponent, or captures him in some way (with a bola or net, for example).

Such attacks simply do not work unless the opponent is Defeated by the loss of his Hourglass Points.

Actor-Character Unconsciousness

Sometimes a situation arises in the game when a character wants to knock out a bad guy - or the other way around.

A Director-controlled character can simply be knocked out when he is Defeated (see the Rules section).

In the case of Actor-characters, two things can happen: the Actor can choose to be knocked out, or the Director can force the character to become unconscious.

If the Actor chooses to be knocked unconscious while he still has Sand, he receives an Into the Fire Combat Point award of 3 dice, and is knocked out for a number of Combat Turns equal to the roll of 1 dice, or until the Director chooses for the character to awaken. If the Actor decides that his character is knocked unconscious, the Director should not kill the character, but have him captured, fall into the river below, or use some other dramatic excuse to allow the Actor to survive. If the Actors seem to be abusing this ability, the Director can suspend it for a limited (or even permanent) amount of time.

If the Director chooses for the Actor-character to be knocked out, and the Actor-character still has Sand remaining, the Director uses an All Rules Stop, and the character awakens only when the Director sees fit.

Attacks Meant to Wound

The Actors can think of all kinds of neat things to do if they like to limit the effectiveness of their opponent - disarming an opponent, blinding him, or wounding an arm or leg.

If the action was meant to defeat the opponent, normal Defeat rolls apply. If the opponent has Sand Points left, he dodges the bola, resists the mind control, etc.

If the roll has any other effect (one that does not instantly win a battle), the Director must decide how the effect works and if the target can be affected. If so, normal rolls are made. If the attacker rolled higher, the effect has it's result, usually Wounding the target, if the Director likes the idea. This special type of attack does not cause loss of Sand. Victims of such attacks do not gain Sand from Wounds or other effects. Attacks meant to Wound cannot be used by Director-played characters - only the Actors can use these special rules. Actor-played characters are only Defeated by loss of Sand or an All Rules Stop.

The Powers section has guidelines for some other effects, but the Director might have to make a call on many of them!

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMBAT

Other Types of Attack

Sometimes an Actor-character's attack is meant not to wound or limit the opponent's ability to attack, or cause a Danger, but has some other purpose. For example, a character may want to hit a sea troll and knock him overboard. The sea troll is not in danger if he lands in the water (he can breathe underwater), and knocking him over won't hurt him. The effect is to remove the sea troll from combat, *forcing* him to retreat or escape in some way.

In such cases, the Director can allow the Actor to roll his Destiny vs. the opponent's Destiny. If the Actor wins, then the effect takes place. An Actor can Push Destiny as with any other attack. Strategy Attacks are a popular type of Specialty with rouge-type characters, but are more challenging to come up with than regular attacks.

The Director can allow his characters to use these types of attacks also, but should use them sparingly.

Sneaking Around

The assassin in the shadows or the thief picking the hero's pockets are just a couple of examples of when characters might want not to be seen. Sneaking around in itself is not dangerous - it's after you get caught that things can get deadly!

Characters do not use destiny rolls or Sand points to sneak and hide. Instead, they make Skill Checks or roll their Attribute scores and compare them to the results of the people that might notice them.

For example, Gero the rouge might want to sneak past the guards after he has stolen a large amount of gold. In a previous game, the Actor had already announced that Gero has a superhuman Stealth skill, so he would roll 4 dice. The guard has no particular skill that would allow him to see Gero, but does have a Average *Perception* (an Attribute). The Director allows the guard to roll 2 dice to detect Gero. Gero rolls a total of 14, and the guard rolls 10. Although it is close, Gero slips past the guard and off to count his treasure.

Chases

Sometimes chases in stories are very dangerous, such as modern car chases or pursuits through asteroid fields in tense sci-fi stories. For those types of chases, see the rules for Dangers.

However, sometimes chases are just that - the characters are trying to get away from someone, or someone is trying to get away from the characters. As long as the chase is not deadly in some way, the Actors can compare rolls, with the Director deciding what skills and attributes are appropriate (horseback riding, running, climbing, jumping, or broom flying, for example). For fun, the Director can state an odd number of tests and declare that the characters that roll the most wins are successful in the chase (either getting away or catching the runaways).

If there are many characters in the chase, there may be a lot of rolling, which can get boring. Instead, the Director can use the Teamwork rules (substituting the appropriate skill or attribute for the Destiny score) and make one roll for each side.

Helping Each Other

Characters in action stories often help each other by pushing someone out of the way, leaping across a street to grab a would-be victim out of the way of a speeding vehicle, grabbing the princess and swinging across the giant chasm, etc.

In the Destiny system, this is simulated by a character giving up some of his Destiny score so that another character can roll that many dice. For example, a hero with a Destiny of 9 who is with a female reporter with a Destiny of 3 is in a hall when a giant boulder rolls toward them. He grabs her by the arm and yells "run!", helping her get out of the hall. He gives up three of his score and adds them to the reporter's, giving both of them a Destiny of 6 for a single turn.

Other Compared Rolls

Just as with Sneaking Around and Chases, the Director can result to Skill Checks and Attributes when characters are trying to compete against each other in non-deadly situations. The Director can use skills to judge the results without dice, but Actors like to roll dice, so let them!

One thing to stress again here is that as soon as the situation becomes deadly, the Director should call for Time to Survive. Combat skills are just a way to detail the story and are not actually used to roll for the results of combat, unless the Director is using the optional rules for combat skills added to Destiny.



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: ANTAGONISTS AND DANGERS

DANGERS AND ANTAGONISTS

At any moment in a good action adventure, something could happen to threaten the heroes. In the Destiny System, it's no different. Things happen to the characters that threaten their lives.

There are two main types of threats that the Actor-played characters must be wary of: Antagonists and Dangers.

Antagonists

The most common type of threat in any game is called an Antagonist. An Antagonist is a Danger that can fight back against the characters. These creatures are intelligent (even if driven by advanced programs, spells or instinct), or at least act intelligent. Antagonists can be evil villains, robot guards, or animals that are hunting the characters (or attacking them because they have been trained to do so). Although Antagonists are dangerous to the characters, these rules consider Dangers and Antagonists separate kinds of threats. Antagonists do not have a Danger Score or Number of Turns. Instead, they have an Destiny and Sand score, just like characters controlled by the Actors. Each turn, the Actor-controlled character and the Antagonist roll against each other as outlined in the Combat rules.

It's important to stress here that when characters lose Sand Points, they are surviving the danger they face. They are not being hurt or losing "life points" (to learn about characters being Wounded, see Wounds). When their points run out, they are Defeated.

Antagonists can have any level of Destiny, just like Actor-played characters. They begin play with their Destiny x10 in Hourglass Points.

If it is important to the story plot, an antagonist can escape the scene by use of the Escape rules, or (as a desperate means) an All Rules Stop by the Director.

Note that most animals (dogs, snakes, etc.) will have a Destiny Score of 1. Groups of animals should be considered a Danger (see next page).

Example: Dark Jack and the Bank Robbery

Antagonist: Dark Jack

Destiny: 6

Sand Points: 60

Description: Dark Jack appears and fights against the hero of the story. He will have a goon with him (see below) for each other "good guy" character present. The battle lasts three turns and then Jack escapes. He leaves his goons to fight while he runs away. They will, of course, cover his getaway.

Defeat: If Dark Jack defeats the characters, he will laugh and rob the bank, leaving them humiliated.

Antagonists: Goons

Destiny: 2

Sand Points: 20

Defeat: See Dark Jack. If they Defeat the characters, they will have shot them in the arm or leg, hurting them badly but not killing them. The bad guys get away for now. It will be possible for the characters to Defeat Jack's goons, but not Jack himself, in this Scene.

Hollywood Antagonists

There are a couple of rules that apply to villains in a movie or television type adventure. These rules are optional, but can make your games a little more fun.

First, the Director can make the first encounter with the villain non-lethal, but call for an All-Rules Stop and make sure that he or she wins. This gives the antagonist the chance to meet the hero face-to-face and gloat. He might also make off with a hostage, such as the hero's friend, romantic interest or family member.

As another optional rule, the Director can give the antagonist double his normal Destiny on the first encounter, if he is unique but not the main villain. This kind of "beginner's luck" is fairly common, especially in comics.



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: ANTAGONISTS AND DANGERS

Dangers

Characters must survive **Dangers** when they appear in the game plot. Dangers can be natural disasters, traps, or other deadly obstacles.

Characters can face multiple Dangers at one time, such as when they must leap over a pit while escaping from a lava flow (both the lava flow and the pit would be Dangers).

Each Danger has a Danger Score and a Number of Turns. It should also have a short description and a result if the Actor's characters are Defeated.

The Danger Score of a Danger depends on the type of Danger the characters face. If the Danger could be survived by anyone, it commonly has a Danger Score described as "Equal to Destiny", meaning that the Danger Score is different for each character who faces it. The Danger Score rolls as many dice as the character's Destiny who is trying to survive it.

Other Dangers are those of the type that would be only survivable by true heroes, such as flying a spaceship through an asteroid field or dodging the shots of several automated laser cannons. These types of Dangers commonly have a set Danger Score of 2-5, but the Director has the final say.

When a Danger appears, the Director decides how long (in turns) the Danger will last. Each turn, the Director rolls a number of dice equal to the Danger Score. Each Actor who had a character involved in the Danger must roll his Destiny in dice and compare it to the amount rolled for the Danger. If he rolls higher (or equal) he does not lose Sand points. If not, he is required to spend a number of Sand points equal to the difference of the roll.

For example, flying through an asteroid field has a Danger Score of 8. The Director rolls 8 dice for a total of 32. Ace has an Destiny of 6. He rolls his Destiny for a total of 24. He must pay 8 Sand Points to survive the first turn through the asteroid field.

If a character doesn't have enough Sand Points he is Defeated (see Defeated) by the Danger.

Once a Danger has run its course (the amount of turns the Danger was to last has passed), the plot continues and the characters no longer have to pay Sand Points.

Dangers, Antagonists, and Sand Loss

Antagonists always cause Sand loss on a successful roll (when the character rolls higher than his opponent) - even if their attacks can't cause damage directly to the opposing character. The "winning shot" (a roll that causes the opposing character to lose the battle by running out of Sand Points) must be explained in some way if he has defenses that are more powerful than the attack.

Dangers that are not real threats to characters cannot cause Sand loss (if their defenses are stronger than the attack). For example, if a character is attacked by a spear trap with a Good damage rating and he has Superhuman skin armor, the trap causes him no threat. However, an Antagonist with a spear can cause him Sand loss, even if his attack can cause no damage. However, the Actor and Director must come up with a way for the attacker to win the battle if he causes his opponent to drop to 0 Sand Points or below.

In short, equipment and Powers can be used to protect the character from losing Sand Points against Dangers - but equipment will not protect from attacks caused by other characters.

Character-Created Dangers

Sometimes characters can take actions that cause Dangers to their foes. This can take some quick decision-making from the Director.

Quick attacks from characters that last one turn are simply attacks and use the normal rules for fighting Antagonists. For example, while a normal tree falling naturally is a Danger, a tree pushed over by an Antagonist uses a normal roll by the Antagonist, just as if he had attacked with a weapon of any other kind.

Attacks that continue to threaten the opposing forces become Dangers. The Director will have to make up the Danger's statistics (Danger Score, Number of Turns, and Defeat Results) as each danger is created, but can use the those listed under *Common Dangers*.

For example, a character might create a wall of fire to block off an area of a cave so that his enemies won't follow him. The Actor and Director work together to decide that the magical fire will last for an entire Scene. The fire will have a Danger Rating equal to Destiny for any character that is pushed into it. Characters pushed into the fire do not pass through the wall, but are burned and bounce off of it as if it were solid. The result of Defeat would be deadly. The Director also decides that if anyone willingly decides to go through the fire will be killed without another spell of protection or that is not immune to fire in some way. Of course, adding this spell to the character's known Powers would result in a Hourglass Point Award.

Obstacles

Another type of struggle that might come up against the characters, although not nearly as threatening as Antagonists or Dangers, are Obstacles. These are challenges that delay the heroes, but do not necessarily threaten them with death. Being locked in a jail cell, trying to climb a wall or hill, or a locked door are just a few examples of Obstacles.

The characters do not use their Destiny to get past such delays, but instead use their Skills and Attributes. The Director can use the character's skills to judge if the characters can get past these obstacles, or he can use the optional Skill Checks rules.

If the character has no skill, he can use his Attributes that he has given to his character. The character would roll 1 dice for Poor, 2 dice for Average, and 3 dice for Good, if the Attribute applies.

For example, a character could try to bash a door down with his Good *Strength* (an Attribute, not a skill). This is a Hard thing to do, according to the Director, so he gives it a Skill Check Target Number of 12. The attribute has 3 dice, and the Actor needs to roll over a 12 to knock the door down.

If a skill and a Attribute are both appropriate to try to get past an obstacle, use the higher rating of the two.

Puzzles

Nothing can stop the progress of an adventure for the heroes like a puzzle. Puzzles can be riddles, mysteries, hard-to-read maps, or other items that the characters have to figure out to be successful in their adventure.

The best way to handle such puzzles is to have the Actors figure them out themselves with a few clues, and not to let the puzzle be solved by simply making a dice roll. If the Actors figure out the answer faster than the Director expected, he may award the Actors 1 dice of Sand each, or 2 dice to any single player that figured out the puzzle at hand.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMMON DANGERS

COMMON DANGERS

Some Dangers come up often during exciting adventures. The following list details Dangers that can be thrown into almost any adventure.

ASTEROID BELT

Description: Rocks, some as big as buildings or small moons, float in a huge field in space. Most sane people stay away from flying through such places, but sometimes heroes have to fly through these kinds of fields to shake those chasing them or to hide from evil empires. Crashing into an asteroid at high speed has a Godlike damage rating.

Danger Score: Asteroids sometimes clear out and then fall back into tight areas. Each turn, the Director rolls 2d6. The result is the Danger Score of the Asteroid field!

Number of Turns: Varies

Defeat: The character crashes into an asteroid and dies.

BIG BOULDER

Description: This is a classic Danger, such as a trap releasing a giant boulder or one caused by a landslide. Giant rocks have an Astounding damage rating.

Danger Score: 5

Number of Turns:

Defeat: The character is crushed by the giant rock and dies.

EXPLOSIONS

Description: Explosions are common in nearly all adventures stories. Bombs, vehicles, and buildings all have a nasty habit of blowing up in action films.

Explosions can have a damage rating at any level.

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny

Number of Turns: One, to everyone caught in the explosion.

Defeat: The character dies if caught in the middle of an explosion - if he is on the edge of the explosion, he can be knocked unconscious.

FALLING

Description: Falling from great heights can seriously wound or kill characters. This is not a Danger to characters who can fly! Falling has a kinetic damage rating of Poor for a 10 foot drop, Average for a 20 foot drop, Good for a 40 foot drop, and Superhuman for an 80 foot drop or more.

Danger Score: 2 for a 10 foot drop. Add 1 for each additional 10 feet. A character will never have to pay over 50 Sand from a single fall to survive the Danger. Example: A fall of 80 feet has a Danger Score of 9, with a 50 Combat Point maximum for the fall.

Number of Turns: One roll - usually a few seconds

Defeat: The character dies. Note that if the character is not Defeated, he may choose to be Wounded or Unconscious, or both.



FIRE

Description: Fire is a common problem in adventure stories. Buildings can catch on fire, as well as vehicles and forests. A character trapped by the fire will need to find a way out or die from burns or breathing smoke. Normal fire has a Good damage rating.

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny

Number of Turns: Varies. Large fires can last for hours.

Defeat: The character dies of multiple burns or breathing smoke.

MINEFIELD

Description: The characters have to cross an area filled with hidden mines, or have to travel at high speeds through an area with visible ones. Mines can have any damage rating, depending on the type of mine.

Danger Score: 1d6+2 per turn. Each turn the Director rolls.

Number of Turns: Varies

Defeat: The characters hit a mine and are killed.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: COMMON DANGERS

PIT TRAP

Description: Dungeons can be filled with horrible pits filled with spikes at the bottom to impale the heroes of the story. Spears have a Good damage rating.

Danger Score: 5

Number of Turns: One

Defeat: The character is impaled and dies.

POISON TRAP

Description: Poison darts are triggered by a trap to paralyze, knock unconscious, or even kill those who trigger the trap.

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny; see Poison in the Super Forces section.

Number of Turns: One Poison attack

Defeat: Depends on the poison's effects.

SPEAR TRAP

Description: Deadly spears fly from the wall of a dungeon or trapped lair. Spears have a Good damage rating.

Danger Score: 5

Number of Turns: One

Defeat: the character is impaled and dies.

SUFFOCATION

Description: Characters who are without oxygen may die from suffocation. The Director calls for Time to Survive (see the Combat section) as soon as a character is without oxygen. This is not a Danger to a character that does not need to breathe!

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny

Number of Turns: Varies

Defeat: A character will die if he runs out of Sand. While facing the Danger, the Actor cannot choose to become Wounded.

SWARM

Description: The characters face a group of rats, snakes, insects or other deadly creatures attacking as a large, hard-to affect group.

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny

Number of Turns: Varies

Defeat: Trying to fight these creatures is nearly impossible. The character must make an Escape roll (see Escape in the Combat Section) or try to find a way to affect the group of opposing creatures (by drowning them, burning them up, causing a massive explosion, or the like). If the character can find a way to affect the creatures in such a way, he may make a Destiny roll vs. the Danger Score. If successful, he has Defeated the Swarm and has either killed it or chased it away.

VACUUM

Description: The vacuum of space is cold, airless and exposed to dangerous levels of radiation. The lack of pressure will kill most creatures within seconds. Exposed characters without protection will not survive long.

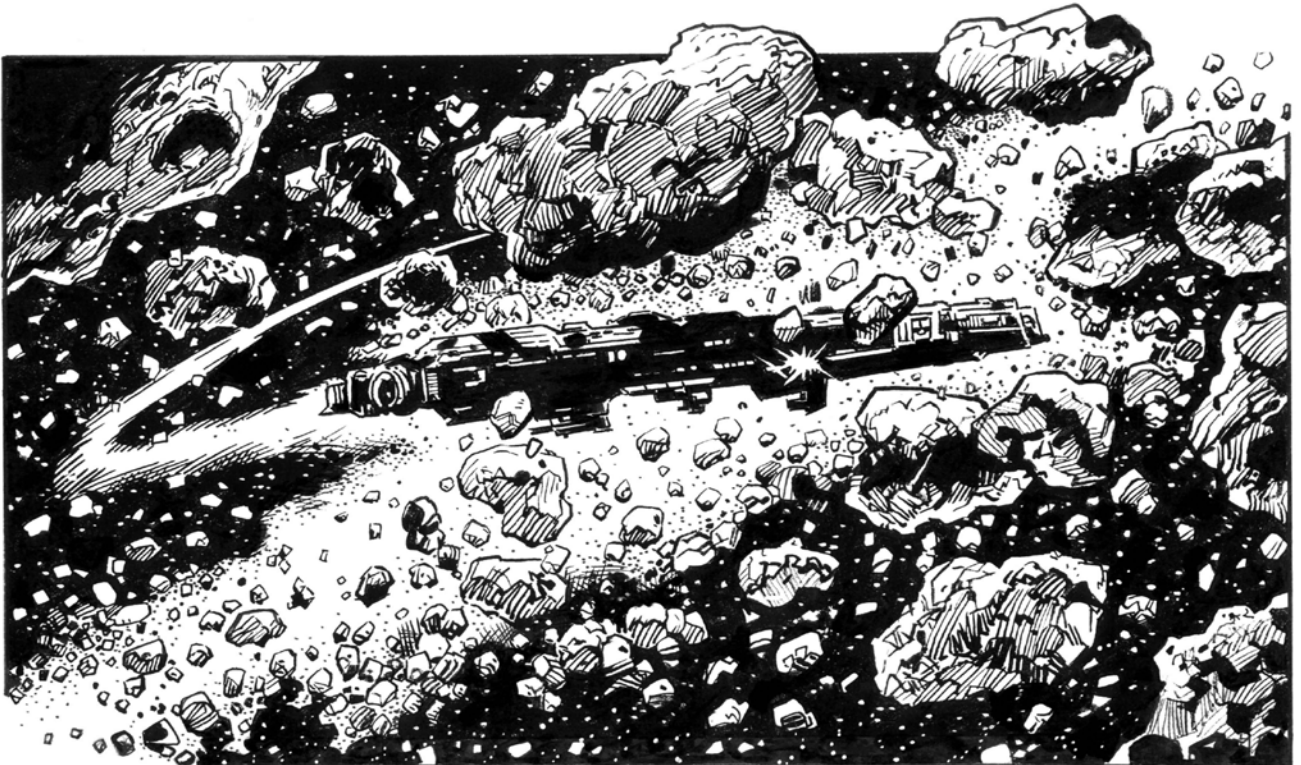
Characters with proper protection are not affected. Space causes Good radiation damage, Superhuman cold damage, and Astounding decompression damage. In addition, characters are attacked with suffocation effects (see Special Rules).

Danger Score: Equal to Destiny. The Danger score gains 1 dice per turn the character is exposed. For example, a character with an Destiny of 6 will be attacked with a Danger Score of 6 the first turn, 7 the second, 8 the third, etc.

Number of Turns: as long as the character is exposed.

Defeat: The character dies of decompression.

Also see the Vehicles section of this book for more specific vehicle-related Dangers.



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: OTHER RULES

OTHER RULES

No set of rules can cover every situation. Often the Director will have to make judgment calls on all kinds of actions that the Actors will come up with. The following rules should help the Director in some of those situations, and gives various game options.

Darkness

Darkness makes combat more difficult. In the Destiny System, Darkness only makes a difference if one character can see but his foes cannot. If a character can see and his opponent cannot, any combat-related action he takes is considered a Specialty.



Reach

What happens if the Director thinks that one character could not reach an opponent who has a ranged attack, such as a swordsman doing battle with a flying opponent?

In such as case, the attacking character is considered to have the First Shot (see above) each turn, until the defending character can find some way to attack his enemy or uses Escape to get away.

Distance

Distance rules were left out of the Destiny System on purpose. How far a rifle can fire, if a character is close enough to use a grenade against his foes, and other similar questions are simply left up to the Director to answer.

The Destiny System is a game of quick fun and acting, not of math and charts. Including detailed distance rules would bog down the game, and make vehicles, Forces, and weapons complex and time consuming to place into play.

If he feels that he must, the Director can draw out a map of the area to answer the Actor's questions about how far they are from different things and each other. However, it's still up to the Director to decide how far someone can move and the distance required to perform any action.

Optional Rule:

Limited or Expanded Rolling

Quite simply, there are no dice rolls made outside of dangerous situations. Instead, the Director decides what happens based on the character's actions, and their Attributes and Skills. He often uses these as a guideline as he moves the story along. Use this option if your Actors prefer role-playing over dice rolls.

As another option, the Director can allow skill rolls of all kinds, as described in the Skills section of this book. Use this option if your Actors like to make dice rolls. This option also makes the Destiny system more like traditional role-playing games and might make the transition to the Destiny system easier for new players to the game mechanics.

Optional Rule: Different Die Types

Don't like 6-sided dice? Use another kind. As an option, the Director can replace any d6 roll with another kind of dice, such as 4-sided, 10-sided, or even 20-sided.

Note that rolling a different kind of dice leads to different results. Rolling a smaller kind of die (4-sided) can lead to characters who are almost impossible to defeat if they have very high Destiny scores, although failures become more common as it is much more likely that a result of "1" can show on a die roll. On the other hand, rolling a larger kind of die makes outcomes more random, and makes failures much less likely.

If the Director uses this option, he would have to adjust Skill Check Target Numbers levels for Skill Rolls if he is using that option, but rewards would remain the same, as they are dice-based and not point-based, for the most part. These rule and chart changes are not covered in this book, as the default for dice in the normal Destiny system is 6-sided.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: POWERS

POWERS (FORCES)

Some characters will have special powers. These powers allow characters to do things not possible in the real world, like fly or shoot lasers from their eyes. Some characters might have fantastic mental powers, and others might have the ability to wield powerful magic. In the Destiny System, these powers are called Forces.

Super Forces are part of the character, and are detailed as the game is played much in the same way as backgrounds and skills. Adding details to a Force is subject to a 1-3 dice Sand award, depending on how creative the Director feels the detail is. The maximum range, amount of time available for use and area of effect are all aspects that can be subject of awards for a Force. Remember that Weaknesses of a power are also details, and are subject to up to 2 dice of Sand depending on how severe the weakness is. Force weaknesses can easily be used to gain *Repeat Awards*.

Each offensive or defensive Force in the Destiny System is given a rating of Poor, Average, Good, Superhuman, Astounding or Godlike.

Offensive:

Poor: Small animal claws

Average: Baseball bat, Staff

Good: Sword, Battle axe, arrow

Superhuman: Magical sword, pistol

Astounding: machine gun, shotgun, laser weapon, grenade

Godlike: Missiles

Defensive:

Poor: Thick skin, leather armor

Average: Chain mail

Good: Plate mail

Superhuman: Magic armor, Kevlar armor

Astounding: Futuristic armor, tank plating

Godlike: super high-tech armor

Each Force is handled differently, and does not have to be described in game terms or mechanics the same way twice if the Director wishes otherwise. Below are some example Forces and how they are handled in the Destiny System, but the description in any given Setting might be different (and sometimes even in the same Setting). For example, the Director may allow characters to have the Control power, but in his setting mental powers are very weak. Opposing characters would be allowed to roll two extra dice to resist the effects. In another Setting where mental powers are strong, characters might have to add +2d6 to the amount of Sand required to resist the effects of Control!



ALTER

Description: The character can turn anything into anything else.

Game Mechanic: The Actor makes a roll using his Destiny vs. the Destiny of the change, as chosen by the Director. For example, changing sea water into drinking water might have an Destiny of 1, while changing air into a helicopter might have an Destiny of 20!

If this Force is used on living creatures, the opposing Destiny is equal to the Destiny of the victim. If the victim does not have enough Sand to negate the Result Points from the Action, he is killed from shock to his system!

Often, many characters will have this Force with limited ability - such as only being able to turn the air around them into ice or with a weakness that they cannot create complex items with moving parts - or that while they are immune to damage from the power, they can only change their own body!

ATTACK FORCE

Description: The character has some type of hand-to-hand or ranged attack ability other than his normal punch and kick, such as claws, horns, the ability to throw fireballs or to emit lasers from his eyes.

Game Mechanic: The Actor rolls normally using his Destiny. In some cases, this Power gives the character the ability to attack at a range. A character with claws (an Attack Force) with a Specialty of "claw attacks" could be very dangerous! If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: POWERS



CAPTURE, STUN, OR KNOCKOUT FORCES

Description: Many characters, and some weapons and equipment, allow a character to attempt to stop a foe instantly by wrapping him up, stunning him, or knocking him unconscious. A bola is a weapon designed to wrap around a victim, holding him in place, for example. A super-hero character might have the power to place his hand on the forehead of a victim, knocking him out. Regardless of the attack form, if the assault succeeds the victim is considered Defeated (see the Rules section for more on Defeating an opponent).

Game Mechanic: If the attacker succeeds in a roll vs. the opponent's Destiny, the victim has the opportunity to spend Sand to avoid the effect. For example, Smoke, a super-villain, has the Force to emit a knockout gas from his hands that he is immune to. If he causes Mr. Smith 13 Sand from the smoke, Mr. Smith can pay the 13 Sand to ignore the effect (he coughs and his eyes water, but he doesn't pass out, or maybe he had a hidden gas mask. Try to explain the Force's failure without being silly). Of course, Smoke can attack again with his knockout gas next turn. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

CONTROL

Description: The ability to control another human, or possibly animals, making them obey the character.

Game Mechanic: The character makes a roll using his Destiny vs. the Destiny of the opposing character. If the character attempting the control wins, he has gained dominance over the victim. The target is allowed to pay a number of Sand equal to the Destiny of the controlling character multiplied by three to break the effect. The Director might only allow the controlled character to pay the Sand to break the effect when he is in a situation that endangers his life or the life of those he is unwilling to kill, depending on the description of the Force. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

EMOTION CONTROL

Description: This Force allows the character to try to change the emotion of a victim to that of fear, loyalty, love, or some other mental state.

Game Mechanic: The character attempting to change the emotion of the victim rolls, comparing Destiny as usual. The victim must spend Sand equal to the Destiny of the attacker multiplied by three or suffer the effects of this Inhuman Force. The Director might only allow the controlled character to pay the Sand to break the effect when he is in a situation that endangers his life or the life of those he is unwilling to kill, or when conflicting emotions arise (the controlled character's true love tries to talk him out of leaving with the controller). If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: POWERS

GROWTH

Description: The character can change shape, becoming larger and stronger.

Game Mechanic: The character's Specialty becomes Hand to Hand fighting while the growth power is in effect. He rolls twice for each physical action (offensive or defensive), and keeps the better score, having much more effect when causing or defending from damage. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

HEALING

Description: The character can heal the wounds of others.

Game Mechanic: Sand in the Destiny System is not a measure of the character's life-force. Instead, it measures how much the character deserves to live. Therefore, a character cannot "bring back" Sand to a character. However, a character with this Force can heal effects an Actor might have brought upon his character by saying he was Wounded from an attack (see Wounds). It will also bring a character who has fallen to or below 0 Sand from physical attacks, mental attacks, disease or poison back to consciousness with 0 Sand and no Wound level. If the Action that brought the character to be healed below 0 Sand was one that could have killed the character, the Healing Force must be applied within one turn or the subject will die. If the character can heal himself automatically (without taking an action), this Inhuman Force might be called Regeneration.

ILLUSION

Description: The character can create realistic illusions in the mind of his victim.

Game Mechanic: The character rolls his Destiny vs. the Destiny of the victim. If he succeeds, the subject believes the illusion created in his mind is real unless he can pay Sand equal to the Destiny of the character (multiplied by three) that used this Inhuman Force to fool him. The Director decides when the Illusion ends. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

IMMORTALITY

Description: The character cannot die.

Game Mechanic: If the character with this Force falls to below 0 Sand, he suffers the normal effects of doing so (Defeat), but he will not die. The character regains consciousness with 0 Sand when the Director sees fit (usually a number of Combat Turns equal to the roll of one dice). If the character is a Supporting Cast Character, he may reappear again at a later date with all his Sand regained!

IMMUNITY

Description: The character is immune to certain types of attack. He might have a body of air and is unaffected by physical strikes, or the character might be impervious to fire or cold.

Game Mechanic: The character suffers no effects from the attack type he is immune to. However, he still loses Sand as usual from Antagonists (or from Actor-played characters, if he is the Antagonist). If he is Defeated while being attacked by powers that he is immune to, the Director and Actors must explain how, knowing that the character is immune to the attacks of the other characters. The character would lose no Sand from Dangers that affect characters with the threat the character is immune to.

INVISIBILITY

Description: The character can become invisible.

Game Mechanic: Characters with this power still make normal Destiny rolls in combat. If they are defeated, the Director and Actors must decide how the character was Defeated even though he was invisible.

Outside of dangerous situations, an invisible character can do amazing things, such as slipping past guards and such. A character with this power gains +1 dice when making Escape rolls.

MENTAL BLAST

Description: The character can "blast" the mind of another character, making him fall unconscious (or, if the Director agrees, even kill the victim).

Game Mechanic: The Action is made per the normal rules. If the victim runs out of Sand, he falls unconscious. The Director decides when the victim awakes. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.



THE DESTINY SYSTEM: POWERS

MIND PROBE

Description: The character can attempt to read minds.

Game Mechanic: The attacker compares Destiny rolls. If he succeeds, he has read the mind of his victim. The victim can pay Sand equal to the attacker's Destiny (multiplied by three) to resist the effect - if he knows his mind is being read. A character can sense if his mind is being read if his Destiny is at least 2 above the attacker's. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

NEGATE FORCE

Description: The character can attempt to negate Powers of other characters.

Game Mechanic: When the character attempts to negate a Power of another character, he rolls comparing Destiny. If the character succeeds, the victim's Power is lost for a set amount of time determined by the Director (with help from the Actor if this Special Power belongs to an Actor-character) when this Power is designed for the character. The default amount of time is a number of turns equal to the roll of two dice. The Director may decide that this Power requires the attacker to be within touching range. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

POISON

Description: The character can poison his victim by touching him.

Game Mechanic: If the character successfully touches a victim (causing Sand loss as a normal Action), the target is affected by a special Danger (with a rating equal to the attacker's Destiny) and continues to battle the Danger until he can find a cure for the poison or rolls higher than the Danger. If the victim reaches 0 Sand from the poison, he is considered Wounded, as per the normal Wound rules (see the Rules section). If he falls to a negative Sand score, he is killed. Some poisons that are not deadly may stop the Sand loss when the character reaches 0 Sand.

If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

A use of the Healing Force negates the loss of Sand in future turns from the poison.

RESISTANCE

Description: The character can resist the effects of a certain attack type, but is not immune to it, such as fire or electricity.

Game Mechanic: The character cannot be attacked directly by an appropriate Force that has a rating beneath his Resistance. He still makes combat rolls normally. Although he would still lose Sand from attacks of the type he is immune to, he might be protected from losing Sand from certain Dangers.



STRETCHING

Description: The character has the ability to stretch his body as if it were made of rubber.

Game Mechanic: This power is not a Force in itself, but gives the character other abilities. Usually, the character will have a Resistance to physical damage, a Capture power (as he can stretch around other characters), and the ability to travel very quickly as he can stretch from area to area with ease. The exact powers and details of the Force are up to the Actor, with the Director's approval.

SUMMONING

Description: The character can summon monsters or demons (a classic example being the mage that summons skeletons to fight his foes). This might also be the power to animate objects such as statues.

Game Mechanic: The character can summon an equal number of Destiny 1 creatures (monsters, zombies, or whatever) equal to his Destiny. Normally, the character can do this once per day, or the Director might place a cost of 1 dice of Sand each time he summons the creatures if he can summon more than once per day.

SUPER LUCK

Description: The character is super-lucky. Attacks seem to miss him, and he seems to be able to win at games of chance and skill more easily than others. This is not normal "good luck" - the universe itself seems to work in the favor of the character.

Game Mechanic: This Force doesn't help the character to fight better, but does keep him from losing Sand as fast. The character pays only half the normal amount of Sand to survive. *Note to the Director:* This is a very powerful Force, and should be the characters only "main" power, if Actor-played characters are allowed to have it at all. Characters with this power should have an Destiny of 7 maximum. Outside of combat, the Director should remember this Force when deciding the outcomes of normal stuff that happens to the characters.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: POWERS

SUPER SPEED

Description: The character is superhumanly fast.

Game Mechanic: In combat, the character can take more than one action per turn against multiple characters without loss of dice (see *Fighting Multiple Antagonists*). He can also attack as many characters as his Destiny score, regardless of his opponents Destiny total! Outside of combat, a character might be able to do lots of neat things: run across water, change clothes into his costume in the blink of an eye, or put a model together in a few seconds! Note that this power doesn't make the character any stronger - a character with average strength still can't directly hurt a character with Good armor.

Characters with Super Speed can often run at great speeds.

SUPER STAMINA

Description: The character has superhuman endurance.

Game Mechanic: This is a Resistance (see resistance) to kinetic energy - all physical forces. It includes such attacks as lasers, fire, being hit by a car or bullets, and lightning. It would not be effective against gas attacks, drowning, or mental attacks.

SUPER STRENGTH

Description: The character has increased strength.

Game Mechanic: The character's rating for damage he causes from physical attacks is better than Average. All characters are assumed to have Average strength at creation, but normal humans can be defined as having Good strength. Above this, characters have Super Strength of Superhuman, Astounding, or Godlike.

Average: normal man

Good: weightlifter

Superhuman: can bend bars, pick up cars

Astounding: Can lift tanks and semi-trucks

Godlike: Can tear through steel like paper and push over buildings

TURN UNDEAD

Description: The character has the power to turn undead, demons and other evil creatures (of the Director's choice) away from him, or even destroy them.

Game Mechanic: The character rolls normally (comparing Destiny) against any undead creatures that are in range. If the creature loses Sand, but is not reduced to a score below 0, it runs from the character. If the creature loses all of its Sand it is destroyed. If an appropriate defensive Force has a higher rating than the rating of this Force, this Force cannot affect the defending character directly.

WIZARD (Magic)

Description: Characters with this power know magic, and can weave spells, giving themselves many different powers. Wizards are rarely known to have the power to heal or to bring people back from death, however.

Game Mechanic: The Director can use this power in many ways, but the following two ways are the most common.

First, the Director can allow a character with magic to do whatever he can imagine, using the character's Destiny as a base. Use the powers described here as a reference to determine how to handle the many powers that the Actor will come up with. Very creative uses of the power can net Actors with award dice. of Sand



Points.

Another way to handle this power, for a more realistic and balanced game, is to allow the character the ability to learn spells, but the character must find those spells during the adventures he is involved in, buying them at markets, learning them at wizard schools or (for the most fun) finding them in hidden locations and ruined dungeons. As the character finds his spells, the Director decides how long it would take the character to learn the spell and what exactly the spell can do.

Spells and their success are based on the character's Destiny during combat, or Skill Checks if the character is outside of combat, using the characters appropriate Profession (wizard, mystic, etc) or individual skills (sorcery, spellcasting, summoning, etc.). See the section on Character-Created Dangers in the Combat section for more information.

THE DESTINY SYSTEM: ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIBING THE ACTION

When playing the Destiny System, one of the things the Director and Actors will constantly do is make excuses for the dice rolls and Sand Point losses of characters. In other words, they tell the story.

The Destiny System is abstract; there are no rolls that are "hits" and "misses". The Director and Actors decide when their characters are Wounded. A character can lose Sand Points and still be just fine - even winning the battle!

Think of Sand Points as a "countdown" toward the end of the battle. Slowly the points disappear until the battle ends early or one character runs out of points. During that time, anything can be happening. The hero of the story may not be able to get past the armor of his foe - yet, even though he's causing Sand Point loss. When the villain's Sand Point total runs out, make an excuse to explain the Defeat! Perhaps the hero sees that the villain is near an electrical fence and pushes him into it. The hero doesn't get past the armor - but he managed to defeat his foe anyway. Maybe the hero doesn't defeat the foe at all - the evil villain might have fired his laser earlier and caused the building structure to grow weak - and just as it appears that he will crush the hero the roof comes crashing down upon him. Another Director-controlled hero might show up to save the Actor-played character (although Actors get tired of being saved - they want to be the hero. Use this one sparingly, if at all). Rare occurrences have been known to happen in fiction that include natural things (lightning, earthquakes) and even godly intervention has saved more than one hero's life (again though, use this sparingly - it tends to get old quick).

Of course if both opponents can affect each other with their weapons, the excuses become a little easier. A character might win by wits, skill, or just plain luck.

Trying to figure out just what is happening during all of the Sand Point loss is challenging, as it is not the simple "roll and take away life points" you see in other systems. It takes a little thought and some getting used to the fact that the guy losing points may not even be wounded. But once you and your players get used to the idea it becomes much more fun than traditional role-playing games. *You* get to make up the story - not the dice.

DESCRIBING THE ENVIRONMENT

To help the Director and the Actors make the excuses necessary to describe the story according to the dice rolls, the Actors are free to "make things up" about their environment as they see fit, with the Director's approval. The Director can alter the environment as well. Characters might find a laser gun in the battle field where they are crawling to escape from a foe, a vial of acid in a laboratory, or they might see a loose cropping of rocks that, if hit just right, might crumble and fall onto their enemy. All kinds of things are possible. These changes don't make it any more likely that the hero or villain will win the battle - they are simply ways to explain Sand Point loss and Defeat, and sometimes



they just make a neat place to have a story placed in. Let your Actors help you design the environment. Their imagination combined with yours will make your stories much more entertaining.

Don't let the highly structured forms of other role-playing games fool you - this kind of environment change happens in any pen-and-pencil role-playing game. Directors in other games change the environment on a whim and make additions to it as needed and often as the Actors make suggestions or remarks that give the Director creative ideas. In the Destiny system, all the participants are given the opportunity to help create what is around the characters without trying to "hide" that they are doing it.

One thing to remember as the Director is to make sure that your environment changes and additions make sense. It's highly unlikely that you will find a gun when fighting on the top of a skyscraper (to win this battle if it's going against the hero could be more realistically explained by having the victor push his foe over the side!). You probably won't find a stalactite to drop on your foe when in a spaceship (although there might be supplies in storage areas overhead). The more sense an addition to the environment makes, the more believable the story will be.

AWARDS

Building Description

- Facets
 - Skills, Attributes, Forces, Appearance, Equipment
- Co-Facets (A)
- Background Facets
- Setting Development

Role-Playing

- Heroism
- Weaknesses
- Stating the Obvious (B)

Good Thinking

- Out of the Frying Pan

Director-Caused

- Forced Awards
- All Rules Stop

Misc.

- Into the Fire
- Repeat Awards (B)

(A) Can cause other Actors to gain Hourglass Points

(B) Award one point each

RATINGS

- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Superhuman
- Astounding
- Godlike

Offensive:

- Poor: Small animal claws
- Average: Baseball bat, Staff
- Good: Sword, Battle axe, arrow, spear
- Superhuman: Magical sword, pistol
- Astounding: Machine gun, shotgun, laser weapon, Grenade
- Godlike: Missiles

Defensive:

- Poor: Thick skin, leather armor
- Average: Chain mail
- Good: Plate mail
- Superhuman: Magic armor, Kevlar armor
- Astounding: Futuristic armor, tank plating
- Godlike: super high-tech armor

DESTINY RATINGS

- 1: Lackey
- 2: Thug
- 3: Minion
- 4: Beginning Hero
- 5:
- 6: Experienced Hero
- 7:
- 8: Powerful Hero or powerful adversary
- 9:
- 10: Legendary Hero or extremely powerful foe

COMBAT

When players enter Combat they enter the following pattern of events:

1. The Director announces Time to Survive. Actors should record their Sand totals in case the Director calls for an All Rules Stop.
2. The Director decides if there is First Strike for any character or group.
3. The Director and the Actors decide which characters are being attacked and what the characters are going to do; the Cool Factor is applied to any rolls.
4. Each defending character rolls his Destiny score in dice; the Cool Factor is applied to any rolls. If he is defending against multiple attacks, he rolls Destiny once against each attack. If he rolls a critical fumble (half or more of the dice roll "1"), the defender takes *at least* the highest rolled attack dice of the opponent in damage.
5. Each Actor makes an Attack Roll for attacking characters he controls.
6. Defending characters who had lower Destiny rolls than the rolls to attack them (or those that fumbled) subtract Sand from their Hourglass.
7. Any characters who run out of Sand are Defeated.



SKILL CHECK TARGET NUMBERS

Easy	4
Average	8
Hard	12
Very Hard	16
Extreme	20
Impossible	24