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Once we release SRD version 1.0 we expect that to be stable for some time.

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1.0 Introduction

QuestWorlds is a roleplaying rules engine suitable for you to play in any genre.

It is a traditional roleplaying game in that there is a GM and players. The players play characters, each guided by the internal thoughts of their character as to what decisions they make, and the GM plays the world, including non-player characters (NPCs) and abstract threats.

It features an abstract, conflict-based, resolution method and scalable, customizable, character descriptions. Designed to emulate the way characters in fiction face and overcome challenges, it is suitable for a wide variety of genres and play styles.

It is a rules-light system that facilitates beginning play easily, and resolving conflicts in play quickly.

We refer to a rules-light but traditional roleplaying game as a storytelling game, after Greg Stafford's definition in *Prince Valiant*.

1.1 Why QuestWorlds?

QuestWorlds is meant to facilitate your creativity, and then to get out of your way.

It is well suited to a collaborative, friendly group with a high degree of trust in each other's creativity. Characters in *QuestWorlds* are described more in terms of their place in your imagination and the game setting than by game mechanics.

If your group are often at odds and rely on their chosen rules kit as an arbiter between competing visions of how the game ought to develop, or use mechanical options to decide "what action to take," *QuestWorlds* is not a rules set that provides that structure. Make sure to discuss with your group whether you are collectively on board with trying a new play style dynamic, or if you would rather stick to more structured systems.

1.2 Version

The first version of these rules *Hero Wars* was published in 2000 (ISBN 978-1-929052-01-1)

The second version *HeroQuest* was published in 2003 (ISBN 978-1-929052-12-7). We refer to this as *HeroQuest* 1e to disambiguate.

The third version *HeroQuest*: Core Rules was published in 2009 (ISBN 978-0-977785-32-2). We refer to this as *HeroQuest* 2e.

HeroQuest Glorantha was published in 2015 (ISBN 978-1-943223-01-5). It is the version of the rules in *HeroQuest* 2e, presented for playing in Glorantha. We refer to this as *HeroQuest* 2.1e.

QuestWorlds was published as a System Reference Document (SRD) (this document) in 2019. The version of the rules here is slightly updated, mainly to clarify ambiguities, from the version presented in *HeroQuest* 2e and *HeroQuest* 2.1e. This makes this ruleset *HeroQuest* 2.2e, despite the name change. However, to simplify we identify this version as *QuestWorlds* 1e.

An Appendix lists changes in this version. As the SRD is updated we will continue to track version changes there.

1.3 Basic & Advanced Mechanics

As the *QuestWorlds* engine is oriented towards rules-light play, we designate some mechanics as "Basic" and others as "Advanced."

Basic rules represent the minimum mechanical structure you need to play a game with the feel of *QuestWorlds*, while advanced rules add mechanical depth

to areas of play which you might wish to emphasize, though possibly at a cost in speed of play.

In this document, we put advanced mechanics in their own section from the relevant basic mechanic section.

The advanced mechanics can be added to play individually; you do not have to bring them in together. In cases where an optional mechanic depends upon or interrelates with another optional mechanic, we note that in the text.

If this is your first time reading these rules, you may wish to skip over these sections. Return to them once you understand the basic mechanics. Similarly, if this is your first time playing these rules, you may wish to omit the advanced rules at first, getting a feel for the game in its simplest form, and then add them in as you want more depth. Your GM may even decide to employ certain advanced rules on a case by case basis, providing more detail or nuance to particularly interesting conflicts where beneficial, while otherwise taking a lighter approach.

1.3.1 Who Is This Document For

The primary audience for this document is game-designers who wish to utilize the *QuestWorlds* rules framework to implement their own game.

We also recognize that some people will use this document to learn about the *QuestWorlds* system before purchasing it, and some players in games were the GM has a rule book, may use this as a reference to help understand the rules.

For that latter reason, we address the rules here to a player.

However, this remains a technical document with few examples, advice, or other non-rules text to help you play your game, as such are beyond the scope of this System Reference Document.

It is expected that the designers of games you play based on these rules will include such guidance and context as is relevant to their game's particular genre or setting, presented in a format better suited for learning how to play.

1.4 Numbering

Sections within this document are numbered. This is for the benefit of game designers and reviewers.

This does not imply that game designers need number the rules in their own games.

Numbering however makes it easy to refer to rules in this document when page numbers may vary by presentation format for the purposes of error trapping or

tracking changes. If you need to give us feedback about this document, that will assist us.

1.5 Participants

1.5.1 Players

You and your fellow players each create a Player Character (PC) to be the "avatar" or "persona" whose role you will play in the game. The PCs pursue various goals in an imaginary world, using their **abilities**, motivations, connections, and more to solve problems and overcome **story obstacles** that stand in their way.

When we say 'you' in this document we may mean the player or their PC. Which should be clear from context, or explicitly noted.

1.5.2 Game Master

Your Game Master (GM) is the interface between your imagination and the game-world in which the PCs have their adventures; describing the people, places, creatures, objects, and events therein. Your GM also plays the role of any Non-Player Characters (NPCs) with whom your PC interacts in the course of your adventures.

We generally refer to the GM as 'your GM' in this document's player-facing language. However, if you are the GM for a given game, this naturally refers to you.

2.0 Mechanics

In a *QuestWorlds* game, stories develop dynamically as you and your GM work together to role-play the dramatic conflict between your group's PCs in pursuit of their goals and the challenges, or threats that your GM presents to stand in your way. Stories advance by two methods: conflict, where your PC is prevented from achieving their goals because there is something that must be overcome, a **story obstacle**, to gain a desired person, thing, or even status: the **prize**; or revelation, where something must be overcome, a **story obstacle**, to learn a secret, uncover the past, or reach understanding: the **prize**.

Over the course of play, your GM will present various **story obstacles** as conflicts to the PCs, resulting in either **victory** or **defeat** for your character, which determines whether or not you gain the **prize** you sought. These conflicts can represent any sort of challenge you might face: fighting, a trial or debate, survival in a harsh environment, out-wooing rival suitors, and so on.

Rather than mechanically addressing the individual tasks that make up these conflicts, *QuestWorlds* usually assesses your overall **victory** or **defeat** in a single **contest** where you and your GM make an opposed roll pitting your characters **ability** vs the **resistance** the **story obstacle** presents to you achieving the **prize**.

Whenever the GM presents a **story obstacle** for you to overcome, you should **frame the contest** by describing what you are trying to accomplish, the **prize**, and which of your **abilities** (see below) you want to use to achieve that **prize**, and how.

Based on that **framing** and other factors, your GM will assess what **resistance** the characters face.

You roll a twenty-sided die (D20) against your PC's **ability**, and your GM rolls a D20 against the **resistance**. Your GM will assess your overall **victory** or **defeat** in the contest based on the **success** or **failure** of both rolls, and narrates the results of your attempt to overcome the **story obstacle** and gain the **prize** accordingly. The direction of the story changes, in either a big or small way, depending on whether you gain the **prize** or not.

We encourage your GM to work with your suggestions when narrating the **victory** or **defeat**, but the final decision rests with them.

2.1 Abilities

Characters in *QuestWorlds* are defined by the **abilities** they use to face the challenges that arise in the course of their story. Rather than having a standard list of attributes, skills, powers, etc. for all characters, anything that you can apply to solve a problem or overcome a **story obstacle** could be one of your **abilities**. While your GM may provide some example **abilities** to choose from that connect your PC to a particular story or game world (whether created by your GM or by the designer of a particular game), you get to make up and describe most or all of your **abilities**.

Some **abilities** might be broad descriptions of your background or expertise, like "Dwarf of the Chalk Hills" or "Private Detective" - implying a variety of related capabilities. Others might represent specific capabilities or assets such as "Lore of the Ancients," "Captain of the Fencing Team," or "The Jade Eye Medallion."

Ultimately, **abilities** are just names for the interesting things your character can do.

2.1.1 Ratings and Masteries

QuestWorlds **abilities** are **rated** on a range of 1–20, representing the **target number (TN)** you need to roll or less to succeed on your roll during a **contest** (see §2.3 for more details). **Ratings** are also scalable beyond that range using tiers of capability we refer to as **Mastery**. When you raise a **rating** of 20 by one point, either permanently through character advancement or a temporarily with **modifier** to a contest roll, the **rating** increases not to 21, but to 1M.

The "M" after the **rating** signifies **mastery**. You have now reached a new order of excellence in that **ability**, such that your die rolls will almost always succeed. Unless opposed by similarly exalted **resistance** (see §2.3.5.2 for more details) the number in front of the M is now the **target number** you seek to roll or less to achieve a **critical**!

As a **rating** climbs, you may even gain multiple **masteries** in it. **Mastery** tiers above one (representing an overall **rating** or 41 or more) are marked with a number to the right of the M symbol. Each successive **rating** increase over 20 becomes a new **mastery** tier. Thus, if you have 10M2, you have two **masteries** (representing a total **rating** of 50, 10+20+20). 10M3 means that you have three **masteries**, and so on.

Specific *QuestWorlds* games or genre packs may use other symbols relevant to their setting or genre to denote **mastery** instead of M. If so, this should be clearly noted by their designers.

In summary, to reflect abilities (or **resistance**s), higher than 20, you divide the **ability** by 20, noting a **mastery** for each multiple of 20 the **ability** exceeds, and treating the remainder as the **target number**. So, for an **ability** of 27, $27 \div 20 = 1$ remainder 7, which translates into a **rating** of seven with one **mastery** written as "7M"; while for an **ability** of 43, $43 \div 20 = 2$ remainder 3, which translates into a **rating** of three with two **masteries**, written as "3M2" on the character sheet.

2.1.1.1 No Relevant ability   You may sometimes be faced with a **story obstacle** for which you have no relevant **ability** whatsoever. In such cases, you may still enter into conflict with the **story obstacle** using a minimum base **target number** of 6 for your **contest** roll. Like **ratings**, it may also be subject to **modifiers**.

2.1.1.2 Making Ratings Quantitative   While *QuestWorlds* generally treats **ratings** as abstract measures of problem solving power rather than quantitive measures of in-fiction traits, some games may also depart from this practice in order to more closely couple key fictional elements to the mechanics. For example, a magic system might classify certain supernatural effects as Apprentice,

Journeyman, or Master level, and require **ratings** of 15, 5M, or 1M2 (respectively) in a relevant **ability** to even attempt them.

Such departures from abstraction should generally only be made where the increased complexity they bring leads to rewarding choices in a key area of interest to the setting or genre at hand. In most cases, you and your GM can simply follow the fiction surrounding your **ability** and its context within the setting for guidance as to what applications of the **ability** are credible.

2.2 Possessions and Equipment

Your character will generally be considered to have whatever equipment is reasonably implied by your abilities. Having an "Athenian Hoplite" **ability** will mean that your character possesses bronze armor, a shield, a spear, and a short-sword; while a "Country Doctor" would be expected to have a well-stocked medical-bag and possibly a horse & buggy in the right setting.

However, if you wish your character to possess something that is particularly special, interesting, or unusual, you may also enumerate it as a rated **ability** in its own right, just like any other **ability** your character might use to solve a problem.

In play, the degree to which you can overcome **story obstacles** with your possessions depends not on any qualities inherent to the objects themselves, but to the **rating** of your relevant **ability**. However the significance of various sorts of gear lies in the types of actions you can credibly propose, and what their impact might reasonably be. An "Invisibility Cloak" **ability** implies very different fictional capabilities than "Souped-up Muscle Car" does.

Conversely, if in the course of play you find your character in a situation without equipment essential to utilize an ability effectively, or where your character's gear is poorly suited to the task at hand, your GM may take into account in assessing credibility-based **modifiers**.

2.2.1 Wealth

In *QuestWorlds*, wealth is treated as just another way to overcome **story obstacles**. Many characters may not even have an explicit wealth **ability**, with their wealth or assets instead implied by **abilities** representing their background, profession, or status. Whether explicit or implied, the relevant **rating** is not an objective measure of the size of your fortune, but instead indicates how well you solve problems with money and resources.

Similarly, treasures and other windfalls that arise during play may be represented in the rules via **plot augments** (see § 2.4.3) in **contests** where using the resource is relevant.

2.3 Contest Procedure

You choose an **ability** relevant to the conflict at hand, describe exactly what you are trying to accomplish, and how. Your GM may modify these suggested actions to better fit the fictional circumstances, and describe the actions of the NPCs or forces on the other side of the conflict.

2.3.1 Resolution Methods

The Basic resolution methods are as follows:

2.3.1.1 Automatic Victory   Sometimes, your GM may not call for a **contest** at all, in which case you are simply victorious in overcoming the **story obstacle** at hand. This may be because **defeat** in the conflict to overcome the **story obstacle** would lead to uninteresting results or a narrative dead-end, such as when finding an important clue is essential to the progress of an adventure.

Your GM might also do this in cases where, within the fictional context, the particular **ability** you have brought to bear on the **story obstacle** is such that overcoming the **story obstacle** should be a trivial matter under normal circumstances (e.g. - a professional hunter bringing in the evening meal in a forest filled with game animals). In such cases, **defeat** would simply not be credible unless your GM wanted to introduce some further complications to the story. Generally, your GM will only use **automatic victory** when you have a relevant **ability** to justify its application.

For cases where overall **victory** may be a given, but the degree, timeliness, or cost of that **victory** may be interesting concerns, consider the Advanced rules in §2.19.

2.3.1.2 Simple Contest   The **simple contest** *QuestWorlds*' primary resolution mechanic for overcoming **story obstacles**, and is used the most often. It also provides the foundation for other types of **contest**, including several Advanced ones. As such, it receives both an overview of key concepts here as well as a more detailed treatment in §4.

At is most basic, a **simple contest** can be summarized as follows:

1. You and your GM agree upon the terms of the **contest**.
2. You roll a D20 vs your relevant **ability**, while your GM rolls a D20 vs the **resistance**.
3. Your GM compares the **success** or **failure** of the two rolls, and assesses your overall **victory** or **defeat**.
4. Your GM then narrates the **outcome** of the conflict as appropriate.

If you enter into conflict with another player rather than a **story obstacle** presented by your GM, you both roll your relevant abilities for the **contest** instead of against a GM-set **resistance**, and your GM interprets the **results**, as described above.

2.3.2 Framing the Contest

2.3.2.1 Contest Framing Overview   When a conflict arises during the game, you and your GM start by clearly agreeing on:

- What goal you are trying to achieve. We call this the **prize**.
- What the **story obstacle** is you are trying to overcome.
- What **tactic** you are using to and overcome it.

This process is called **framing the contest**.

2.3.2.2 Conflict: Goals vs Obstacles   **Contests** in *QuestWorlds* don't simply tell you how well you performed at a particular task: they tell you whether or not you overcame a **story obstacle**, which moves the story in a new direction. Unlike some other roleplaying games, a **contest** in *QuestWorlds* does not resolve a task, it resolves the whole **story obstacle**.

If you need secret records which are stored in a vault within a government compound, your goal is to get the information - while the fact that it is secured against your access is a **story obstacle** you must overcome to attain that goal. Overcoming that **story obstacle** may involve many possible tasks, evading guards, lock-picking, forging credentials, etc. - but the **contest** doesn't address those individually. The **contest** is framed around the entire conflict against the **story obstacle** as a whole.

In a fight, your **story obstacle** may be the opponents themselves, who you are fighting to capture or kill. Just as often you are seeking another goal and you might just as easily attain it by incapacitating or evading your foes. In this case, beating the enemy is a task, not the **story obstacle**. For example, if an **ally** has been accused of treason by the King, your goal could be to prove the **ally's** innocence. The power of the King threatening your **ally** is a **story obstacle** to be overcome, and a trial by combat could be a **contest** to resolve the conflict with an **ability** like "Knight Errant."

In a court trial, your goal is likely a particular verdict, while the **story obstacle** might be the opposing lawyer, an unjust law, or even the justice system itself. In this case, jury selection, a closing argument, revelatory evidence, or legal procedural challenges are tasks, not the entire **story obstacle**. The overall conflict encompasses all those things.

A conflict to overcome a **story obstacle** moves the story forward when it is resolved. If it is merely a step toward resolving a **story obstacle** it is a task

and not a conflict. While those component tasks may be interesting parts of narrating **tactics** and **results**, your GM should be sure to look for the **story obstacle** in conflict when framing a **contest**.

If there is no **story obstacle** to your actions, your GM should not call for a **contest** but simply let you narrate what you do, provided that seems credible.

For example, you are traveling from one star system to another. In the next star system you hope to confront the aged rebel who holds long-forgotten secrets that could bring freedom to the galaxy. Your GM feels there is no useful **story obstacle** for you to **contest** against, and so lets you describe heading down to the spaceport to secure a ship, meeting the captain and crew of your vessel, and traveling to the next world. Your GM encourages you to summarize what happens quickly so you can get to the meeting with the old rebel. Your GM knows that will be the real **story obstacle**, convincing the old rebel to part with their secrets.

2.3.2.3 Tactics   You either choose an **ability** that represents any 'key moment' in overcoming that **story obstacle**, or a broad **ability** that lets you overcome the whole **story obstacle**. We call this choosing a **tactic**.

Your **tactic** might describe your using an **ability** that helps you overcome a task within the **story obstacle**: sneaking past the guards, picking the locks, choosing the right jury or skewering your opponent with your foil. Or, your **tactics** might describe using a broad ability like "Ninja", "Lawyer", or "Fencer" to overcome all those challenges that might form part of the **story obstacle**. Either way, if you succeed at that roll, you overcome the whole **story obstacle**. Or by failing at that roll, you fail to overcome the **story obstacle**, not just fail at one task.

When deciding on your **tactic**, focus on how your unique abilities would help you overcome the **story obstacle**. This as the "key moment" where we focus on your PC. Use this moment to reveal your PC's strengths to the group.

Your GM will determine if your **tactic** passes a **credibility test**. If you try to jump a 100 meters gap or run faster than a speeding car, your action is not credible and your GM will ask you to choose a different **tactic**.

Credibility depends on the genre, as what is not credible in a gritty police procedural might be in pulp where you might be able to leap from a bridge onto a speeding train. If in dispute, your GM should discuss with the group whether they consider your **tactic** credible for the genre.

Extraordinary abilities in some genres give you the capability to do the incredible. For example in a superhero genre you might fly or be invulnerable to bullets, in a fantasy genre hurl magical lightning bolts. A genre pack for the game should help define what incredible **tactics** are allowed for that game as part of an *Extraordinary Powers Framework*.

The GM can narrate the remaining tasks that make sense of the story depending on your **success** with that roll, or have them occur 'off-stage' for speed. Think of the way TV or Cinema often cuts to the key moment of drama in a break-in, over showing us the whole heist from beginning to end.

2.3.2.4 No Repeat Attempts A **contest** represents all of your attempts to overcome a **story obstacle**. If you lose it means that no matter how many times you tried to solve the problem, you finally had to give up. You can try again only if you use a new **tactic** to overcome the **story obstacle**.

2.3.3 Resistance

Your GM chooses a **resistance** to represent the difficulty of the **story obstacle**.

When setting **resistance**s it is important to understand that whilst traditional roleplaying games simulate an imaginary reality, *QuestWorlds* emulates the techniques of fictional storytelling.

Understanding this distinction will help you to play the game in a natural, seamless manner.

For example, let's say that your GM is playing a game inspired by fast-paced, non-fantastic, martial arts movies in a contemporary setting. You are running along a bridge, pacing a hovercraft, piloted by the main bad guy. You want your character, Joey Chun, to jump onto the hovercraft and punch the villain's lights out.

In a traditional, simulative game, your GM would determine how hard this is based on the physical constraints you've already described. In doing so, they would come up with imaginary numbers and measurements. Your GM would have to work out the distance between bridge and hovercraft. Depending on the rules set, they might take into account your relative speed to the vehicle. Then they would use whatever resolution mechanic the rules provide them with to see if Joey succeeds or fails. If you blow it, your GM will probably consult the falling rules to see how badly you injure yourself (if you land poorly), or the drowning rules, if you end up in the river.

In *QuestWorlds*, your GM starts not with the physical details, but with the proposed action's position in the storyline. They consider a range of narrative factors, from how entertaining it would be for you to **succeed**, how much **failure** would slow the pacing of the current sequence, and how long it has been since you last scored a thrilling **victory**. If, after this, they need further reference points, your GM can draw inspiration more from martial arts movies than the physics of real-life jumps from bridges onto moving hovercraft. Having decided how difficult the task ought to be dramatically,your GM will then supply the physical details as color, to justify their choice and create suspension of disbelief, the illusion of authenticity that makes us accept fictional incidents as credible

on their own terms. If they want Joey to have a high chance of **success**, your GM describes the distance between bridge and vehicle as impressive (so it feels exciting if you make it) but not insurmountable (so it seems believable if you make it).

In other words, in *QuestWorlds* your GM will pick a **resistance** based on dramatic needs and then justify it by adding details into the story.

Resistance numbers are derived from a **base resistance**, which is modified according to the **resistance class**, as per the following table:

2.3.3.1 RESISTANCE CLASS TABLE

Class	Value
Extreme	Base +M2
Huge	Base +M
Very High	Base +9
High	Base +6
Raised	Base +3
Moderate	Base
Low	Base -3
Very Low	Base -6
Tiny	Base -9 or 6, whichever is lower
Rock-bottom	Base -M or 6, whichever is lower

By default, the **base resistance** starts at 14.

It is often easier to remember that resistances follow the usual range of incrementing by 3: +3, +6, +9, and then incrementing by masteries etc. Similarly resistances decrement by 3: -3, -6, -9 and then decrement by masteries with a floor of -6.

All **contests** use the base number + **resistance class**, except for **contests** to determine **augments**.

Augmenting always faces a **moderate resistance**, this is always the unmodified base value.

2.3.4 Die Rolls

To determine how well you use an **ability**, roll a 20-sided die (D20). At the same time, your GM rolls for the **resistance**.

Compare your rolled number with the **TN** to determine the **result**, a level of **success** or **failure** for the roll (not the **contest** as a whole).

- **Critical**: If the die roll is 1 (even when the **TN** is 1), you succeed brilliantly. This is the best **result** possible.
- **Success**: If the die roll is greater than 1 and less than or equal to the **TN**, you succeed, but there is nothing remarkable about the success.
- **Failure**: If the die roll is greater than the **TN** but not 20, you fail. Things do not happen as hoped.
- **Fumble**: If the die roll is 20, you fumble (even when the **TN** is 20). You fail miserably. This is the worst **result** possible.

Note that whatever your **result** the **outcome** will depend on comparing your roll with your opponents. So you might *succeed, but still lose the **prize**. At the same time, your GM should take into account your **result** when narrating the **outcome**, and not use your incompetence as a reason you failed to gain the **prize** if you succeeded, instead focusing on the **resistance**'s superiority despite your **success**.

2.3.5 Outcome

Your roll and that of your GM's roll are compared to determine your overall **outcome** which will be either **victory** or **defeat** for the **contest** as a whole.

If you have a better **result** than the GM, then you have a **victory** and you gain the **prize** set out when the **contest** was framed.

If you have a worse **result**, then you are **defeated** and do not gain the **prize**.

If you both have the same **result**, the better roll wins.

If your rolls tie, then it is a standoff.

A **critical** is a better result than a **success** which is, in turn, a better result than a **failure**, which is a better result than a **fumble**.

Your GM describes what happens, based on their interpretation of the **outcome**.

2.3.5.1 Better Roll   *QuestWorlds* supports two options for the "better roll": the highest roll, or the lowest roll. Some groups prefer lowest roll, some higher. The preference toward "low is better", is often because 1 is a **critical** and 20 a **fumble**, and toward "high is better" because the winner has rolled a higher number. Groups wanting higher abilities to win out slightly more often should use higher roll.

We also use the phrase "worse roll" to indicate the losing roll.

2.3.5.2 Confusing Ties   Your GM will describe most tied **outcomes** as inconclusive standoffs, in which neither of you gets what you wanted.

In some situations, ties become difficult to visualize. Chief among these are **contest**s with binary **outcomes**, where only two possible results are conceivable.

Your GM can either change the situation on such a tie, introducing a new element that likely renders the original **prize** irrelevant to both participants, or they can resolve the ties in your favor as a **marginal victory**.

2.3.5.3 Bumps A **bump** affects the degree of **success** or **failure** of your die roll. A **bump** up improves your **result** by one step, changing a **fumble** to a **failure**, a **failure** to a **success**, or a **success** to a **critical**. **Bump** ups come from two sources: **masteries** and **hero points** (applied in that order). A **bump** down reduces **result** by one step, changing a **critical** to a **success**, a **success** to a **failure**, or a **failure** to a **fumble**. **Bump** downs come from one source: **masteries**.

Bumps always affect **results** not **outcomes**, although the outcome could change as a effect of gaining a different **result**.

2.3.5.4 Bump Up with Mastery If you're engaged in a **contest** against a **resistance**, and you have an **ability** of 10M versus a **resistance** of 10, you enjoy an advantage. You get a **bump** to your die roll from that **mastery**.

You get one **bump** up for each level of **mastery** your PC has greater than your opponent's. So against a **resistance** of 14 a PC's **ability** of 7M is treated as 7 vs. 14 but we **bump** the **result** one step in the favor of the PC; a PC's **ability** of 3M2 is treated as 3 vs. 14 but we **bump** the **result** two steps in favor of the PC.

This reflects the fact that an **ability** above 20 would always succeed on a D20. Because each **mastery** represents **automatic success** (apart from a **fumble**) on a D20, you roll against the remainder, and treat the **mastery** as a **bump**. So on an **ability** of 27 is 7M, which means a **target number** of 7 and **bump** the **result**; an **ability** of 43 means 3M2 or a **target number** of 3 and **bump** the **result** twice.

Opposed **masteries** cancel out, each contestant reducing their **rating** by the same number of **masteries** until only one or neither of them has **masteries**. If you have two **masteries**, then you enjoy the same great advantage over an opponent with a single **mastery** as someone with one **mastery** has over an opponent with no **masteries**. If you have an advantage of two or more **masteries** over an opponent, you can pretty much count on pounding them into the dust.

This allows *QuestWorlds* to represent large differences in ability or **resistance**.

2.3.5.5 Bump Up with Hero Points You can spend a **hero point** to **bump** up any **result** by one step. You may only **bump** your own rolls, not those of

other PCs or **supporting characters**—with the exception of **sidekicks** and **retainers**, which, as extensions of your character, you may spend **hero points** on. You can decide to use a **hero point** for a **bump** after the die roll **results** are calculated (including any **bump** ups from **masteries**).

You can only spend one **hero point** per roll.

2.4 Augments

You may sometimes face **contests** where more than one **ability** may be applicable to the conflict at hand. In such cases, you may attempt to use one **ability** to give a supporting bonus to the main ability you are using to frame the **contest**. This is called an **augment**. For example, if your character has the **abilities** "The Queen's Intelligencer" and "Master of Disguise", you might use the latter to **augment** the former when infiltrating a rival nation's capitol. Similarly, a character with "Knight Errant" and "My Word is my Bond" **abilities** might use one to **augment** the other when in conflict with a **story obstacle** the character has sworn to overcome.

Abilities that represent special items, weapons, armor, or other noteworthy equipment can be a common source of **augments**. However, this grows tired if over-used and you should try and restrict repeated use equipment used in this way to **contests** where they are particularly interesting or apropos.

Augments can also come from other characters' **abilities** if one character uses an **ability** to support another's efforts rather than directly engaging in the **contest**. **Augments** can even come from outside resources like support from a community, see §8, or other circumstantial help.

If you have a good idea for an **augment**, propose it to your GM while the **contest** is being framed. When making your proposal, describe how the **augmenting ability** supports the main one in a way that is both *entertaining* and *memorable*. Don't just hunt for mechanical advantage, show your group more about your PC when you **augment**, their attitudes, passions, or lesser known **abilities**. If you are **augmenting** with a **broad ability** like "Fool's Luck", be prepared to describe the unlikely events that tilt the scales in your favor. Your GM will decide whether the **augment** is justified and can refuse boring and uninspired attempts to **augment**, where you are just looking for a bonus to your roll and not adding to the story.

You may only use one of your own **abilities** to **augment** the **ability** you are using in the **contest**, and you may not use an **ability** to **augment** itself. However, **augments** from other players supporting you can add together with your own, along with other **modifiers**, including those from **benefits of victory** and from **plot augments**.

If you GM accepts your **augment** proposal, it will be resolved by one of the methods below. The main **contest** then proceeds as normal, with any bonus

from the **augment** added onto the **rating** of the **ability** chosen when **framing the contest**. The **augment** remains in effect for the duration of the **contest**.

2.4.1 Rolled Augments

To grant an **augment** to yourself, or another PC, in an upcoming **contest**, you engage in a **simple contest** against a **moderate resistance** before the main contest begins to determine whether the **augment** attempt results in an advantage. Frame this **augment contest** with your GM, making it clear how your supporting **ability** will achieve the goal of making your **ability** in the main **contest** more effective. **Augment contests** may not themselves be **augmented**, and if your **augment** attempt ends in **defeat**, you may not make another attempt at an **augment** for the main **contest**.

If you are victorious in the **augment contest**, your GM will award a bonus of +3 to the **ability** used in the main **contest**. If your description of how you were using the **augmenting ability** was particularly entertaining, your GM may increase the bonus to +6.

If you are using the advanced mechanic for **degrees of victory or defeat**, use the table below to interpret the **outcome** of the **simple contest**. Note that **penalties** for **defeat** when attempting an **augment** are much lessened compared to a regular **contest**.

2.4.1.1 AUGMENT TABLE

Contest Outcome	Modifier
Complete Victory	+M
Major Victory	+9
Minor Victory	+6
Marginal Victory	+3
Marginal Defeat	0
Minor Defeat	0
Major Defeat	0
Complete Defeat	-3

2.4.2 Quick Augments

While an **augment contest** before the main **contest** can be dramatic and exciting, it does also slow down the flow of play. An alternative approach, called a **quick augment**, alleviates this by replacing rolling with a bonus equal to one-fifth of the **augmenting rating**. If your GM accepts your proposal for an **augment**, simply divide the **augmenting ability rating** by five, round down if necessary, and add the modifier as a bonus to your **ability** in the upcoming

contest.

It is at your GM's discretion whether to roll **augments** or use **quick augments**. Your GM may choose one preferred approach and use it in every instance, or choose one or the other on a case-by-case basis based on interest and flow of play.

2.4.3 Plot Augments

A plot **augment** occurs when your GM decides that your **victory** over a previous **story obstacle** is sufficiently relevant to the **contest** at hand as to warrant a bonus much like a supporting **ability** can. The previous **contest** need not have been immediately prior to the current one, as long as its **outcome** remains relevant. The magnitude of a plot **augment** can be +3, +6, +9, or +M. The more challenging the previous **contest** was and the more relevant that **victory** is to the current challenge, the higher the **augment**.

2.5 Advanced Mechanics

You can play *QuestWorlds* with just the basic mechanics and we recommend you start with this simpler set of rules whilst your GM masters the less-familiar ideas like **story obstacles** instead of task resolution, that make *QuestWorlds* different from traditional RPGs.

The advanced mechanics add detail to the Basic mechanics, which add detail, or generate in-game story developments, at the cost of more complexity.

2.6 Resolution Methods

2.6.1 Long Contest

Your GM should resolve most conflicts using the **simple contest** rules. However, every so often, your GM may want to stretch out the resolution, breaking it down into a series of actions.

An advanced rule, **long contests**, lets you zoom-in to task-level in **contests** to focus on your character struggling with a series of tasks in order to overcome the **story obstacle**, such as blow-by-blow exchanges with the king's champion in front of the tower where your father is held hostage, or exposing the lies of a witness in the court room to free a wrongly accused innocent man. Your GM should do this when they want to give you a chance to make your PC shine, by focusing in on how they handle themselves in a difficult situation, and giving them a chance to show their range of abilities.

As a rule of thumb, if you want resolution that moves closer to the task level, a **long contest** may be appropriate.

A sequence of die rolls, between one or more PCs and one or more **supporting characters**, breaks the conflict resolution into a series of actions.

A **long contest** trades speed for detail. For the flow of a story we recommend using **simple contest**s as much as possible. If you come from other roleplaying games that have task based **contests**, we recommend playing only using **simple contests**, until you have mastered the different approach of conflict based **contests**, before introducing **long contests**.

More details on **long contests** are available in §5.

2.6.2 Escalating Contests

If your GM chooses either the **scored contests** or **chained contests** form of **long contest** you can use an option called **escalating contests**.

Escalating contests allow your GM to switch a **simple contest** to a **long contest**. To do this, simply re-interpret the **simple contest outcome** as the first **round** of a **scored contest** or **chained contest**. For example, in a **contest** of magic at the Thaumaturgical Academy, Billiard, your PC, gains a **marginal victory** over their opponent Crowsky. The GM narrates the **outcome**, but although you get what you agreed, you want Crowsky to be humiliated. Your GM agrees to **escalating contest**, treating the **outcome** as the first **round** of a **scored contest**, and scores 1 **RP** against Crowsky before beginning adjudication with the second **round**.

Escalating contests can serve three functions:

- If you take part in a **contest** and after hearing the narrative feel aggrieved that you could not bring more **abilities** to bear, and the GM agrees that it would be interesting to let you shine for a moment, an escalating **contest** helps you bring more **abilities** into the **contest**.
- If you take part in a **contest** but the degree of **success** was not emotionally satisfying, an escalating **contest** gives you another chance to achieve the **outcome** you want.
- If your GM is unsure if a **simple or long contest** is appropriate then they can default to a **simple contest** and switch to **escalating** if required.

If you wish to use **escalating contests**, you need to choose **scored contests** as your **long contest** option.

2.7 Resistance Progression

Your GM may decide that **resistance** to your actions gets harder, as the campaign progresses. This reflects the trope of the type of challenges you face

getting tougher as you improve.

Your GM should adopt a strategy that mimics a TV show where the **resistance** does not increase during a season of the show, allowing our protagonists to get more competent as the show progresses towards its climax. In the next season though the **resistance** usually goes up, and the writers reflect this with more challenging opposition in the new season of the show. At the same time, the opposition that was tough in the first season, now become mooks that can be easily dispatched to show the increased competence of the protagonists.

In that case your GM should increment the **resistance** by +3, +6 or +9 for the next campaign you play with the same characters. The size of the change should reflect the increase in your previous **abilities** in the last campaign. For example, if in the last season you increased your **occupation keyword** by +6, your GM may decide to increase the **resistance** by +3 or +6 to reflect the more challenging opposition in the new campaign. Your GM should also take into account that the opposition you were improving with respect to in the previous season should now be considered more-easily defeated mooks, and use lower **ratings** for them when they appear in the story.

2.7.1 No Progression

Your GM may also decide that the **resistances** do not get harder as the campaign progresses, reflecting the PCs **ability** to disregard minor challenges, and simply choose harder **resistances** to challenge the players.

2.8 Degree of Victory or Defeat

Often all you need to know to interpret the **outcome** of a resolution is whether you gained **victory** or suffered a **defeat**.

Sometimes, you'll want to know how great a **victory** you won, or how bad a **defeat** you endured. This may be important in providing **consequences or benefits** that drive further story.

All of the resolution methods have an option to yield the **Degree of Victor or Defeat** for the PC. The possible **Degree of Victory or Defeat**, from least to greatest, are: **marginal**, **minor**, **major**, **complete**. **Ties** are also possible.

If you struggle against NPCs or abstract forces, the interpretation of the **outcome** reveals whether you overcome the **story obstacle**, and any **consequences or benefits**; your GM narrates the fate of the NPCs or other forces depending on what makes sense. However, when you and another PC engage in a **contest** then a **victory** for one contestant means a corresponding **defeat** for the loser.

So whilst in a PC vs. PC duel the PC would only be killed on a **complete defeat**, an NPC, described as a **resistance**, might be killed on any **victory**, depending on how the **contest** was framed.

Tie: Tie means no **outcome**. Effort was expended, but the net **outcome** is that nothing consequential occurs, or else both sides lose or gain equally. If this is confusing, and you are not contending with another PC, your GM can rule that you gain a **marginal victory**.

Marginal Victory: Yes, but... You get what you want, the **prize**, but there are complications, the effect is more limited than you desired, or you have to make a hard choice between benefits or accept a loss to get one

Minor Victory: Yes... You get exactly what they want i.e. whatever was the **prize** in the **contest**.

Major & Complete Victory: Yes, and... You get the **prize**, and something else. You gain something, stealing a possession, gaining a new **follower**, or become renowned in song. If you want to distinguish a **complete** the effect is often permanent and no new **contests** should be framed for this **story obstacle**.

Marginal Defeat: No, but... You don't get what you want, you lose the **prize**, but it's not a total loss. You are able to salvage something from the **defeat**, a little more if you sacrifice something other than the **prize** to your opponent, that the opponent agrees to take instead.

Minor Defeat: No... You don't get what you want, you lose the **prize**. Any consequences or complications such as injury or loss of influence are short term and easily shrugged off. Just take the loss and rest up.

Major & Complete Defeat: No and... You don't get what you want, you lose the **prize**, and there are long-term consequences. The situation might grow worse or more complicated or you might suffer adverse consequences that will require other conflicts to resolve: an injury that needs a healer, an insult that requires a formal apology, a loss of influence with the community that requires a triumph to win their trust again etc. You might be dead, or as good as. The **prize** is likely lost to you permanently. Or perhaps you lose something, an item is taken from you, a **follower** deserts you, your reputation lies in ruins as poets mock your defeat. If you want to distinguish, a **complete** should be bigger loss than a **major**, but you can often ignore this distinction.

Your GM will use the **degree of success** to determine any **benefits and consequences**, but be sure to describe the **success** in narrative terms.

If you are using a **stretch**, see §2.12.1, then **major or complete victories** you obtain are instead treated as **minor victories**.

2.9 Benefits and Consequences

Contests, in addition to deciding whether you overcome a **story obstacle**, carry additional **consequences**. These are negative if you lose, and positive if you win.

Your GM may simply determine these from what makes fictional sense, given the agreed **prize** for the **contest**, as described above. Optionally your GM may impose **consequences of defeat** or provide **benefits of victory** if they desire ongoing **penalties** or **bonuses**. This rule is used in conjunction with **degree of victory or defeat**. Your GM should always respond to the flow of the story, if narrative consequences are enough, they should not reach for additional mechanical **penalties**.

2.9.1 The Consequences of Defeat

When you lose a **contest**, you may suffer **consequences**: literal or metaphorical injuries which make it harder for you to use related **abilities**.

- In a fight or test of physical mettle, you wind up literally wounded.
- In a social contest, you suffer damage to your reputation.
- If commanding a war, you lose battalions, equipment, or territories.
- In an economic struggle, you lose money, other resources, or opportunities.
- In a morale crisis, you may suffer bouts of crippling self-doubt.

From the least to the most punishing, the five **states of adversity** are: **hurt**, **impaired**, **injured**, **dying**, and **dead**. The first four are possible **consequences** of any **contest**. **Dying** PCs become **dead**, unless they receive intervention of some sort.

Although the levels refer to physical **states of adversity**, the consequences can be emotional, social, spiritual, magical, and so on.

2.9.1.2 Hurt If you are **hurt**, you show signs of adversity and find it harder to succeed at **contests** related to your **defeat**. Either your flesh or pride may be bruised. Until you recover, you suffer a –3 **penalty** to all related **abilities**.

You may suffer multiple **hurts** to the same **ability**. These are cumulative until recovery occurs.

Unless your GM has a dramatic reason to decide otherwise, your **hurts** vanish at the end of a session, after one day of rest per accumulated **hurt**, or when in-game events justify their removal.

2.9.1.3 Impaired If you are **impaired**, you have taken a jarring blow, physically, socially, or emotionally, and you are much likelier to fail when attempting

similar actions in the future. You suffer a –6 **penalty** to all related **abilities**. Impairments combine with **hurts** and with other impairments.

As bad as your condition may be, there's nothing wrong with you that some prolonged inactivity won't fix. A single **impairment** goes away after one week of rest, or when an in-game event (like miraculous or extraordinary treatment) occurs to make their removal seem believable.

2.9.1.4 Injured If you are **injured**, you have suffered a debilitating blow which leaves you reeling. Physically you may have lost the use of a limb or sense, socially you may be shunned, and emotionally you may in shock. Although you should heal with time, you suffer a -9 **penalty** to all related **abilities**. Injuries combine with impairments and **hurts**.

A single **injury** goes away after a month's rest, or by miraculous intervention, as above.

2.9.1.5 Dying If you are **dying** you will, without rapid and appropriate intervention, expire. To save you, the other PCs must overcome a **story obstacle**. Their attempt must be credible, using medicine or magic, as defined by your genre. Your GM should use a **very high resistance** for this **contest**, unless the story suggests otherwise. According to the conventions of dramatic storytelling, the character typically has just enough time left for the other characters to make this one attempt.

Successful intervention leaves the PC **injured**. Depending on the narrative circumstances, a **complete victory** on the intervention attempt may leave them merely **impaired**.

If intervention fails, you will die, but not necessarily immediately. Although irrevocably doomed, your GM may rule that the story suggests that you survive long enough to take one final, heroic, action.

To even take that **final action** if the GM offers you the chance, then you must succeed at a prior **contest of wherewithal** to rouse yourself to action. Appropriate abilities for the **contest of wherewithal** include:

- Physical action: Endurance, High Pain Threshold, Grim Determination, etc.
- Intellectual activity: Concentration, Iron Will, Love of Country (if action to be attempted is patriotic), etc.
- Social humiliation: Savoir Faire, Unflappable, Stoic Dignity

A **contest of wherewithal** faces a **moderate resistance**. Even if you succeed at the **contest of wherewithal**, you take an automatic **bump** down **penalty** whenever you use any related **ability** in a **contest**. (The **bump** down does not apply to the **contest of wherewithal** itself.) Where it seems apt, your

GM may choose to ignore the **bump** down if you score a **major or complete victory** on the **contest of wherewithal**.)

Any active **hurts** or **impairments** continue to be counted against you as well.

Your **final action** cannot reverse the **outcome** of the **contest** that you lost, it must involve a new **story obstacle**. Your GM will rule if your action is allowable.

Like other **states of adversity**, **dying** may be literal or metaphorical. Your standing in society, business or politics may be on the brink of permanent extinction. You may be facing mental death — a permanent lapse into madness or senility.

2.9.1.6 Dead   If you die as a consequence of physical injuries, you are gone from the game, period.

Death from a non-physical **contest** will likely be metaphorical. If you die in an economic, social, spiritual, or artistic **contest**, you permanently lose abilities.

Even only metaphorically dead, your GM may declare that you have undergone changes so dire as to make your PC unplayable. You may be incurably insane, or be so socially shamed that you retire to a life of obscurity or religious meditation. You may be shunned by all around you, sent into permanent exile, or sentenced to long-term imprisonment with no hope of escape.

2.9.1.7 CONSEQUENCES OF DEFEAT TABLE

Defeat Level	State of Adversity	Penalty
Marginal	Hurt	–3 penalty to appropriate abilities
Minor	Impaired	–6 penalty to appropriate abilities
Major	injured	–9 penalty to appropriate abilities
Complete	Dying	No actions allowed. If 'final action', automatic **bump** down on uses of appropriate **ability**

2.9.2 Benefits of Victory

Just as when you experience **defeat** you can suffer ongoing ill effects in addition to the loss of the **prize** at hand, when you win you can gain benefits from that **victory**.

A **benefit of victory** gives you a bonus on the selected **abilities**, or in the specified situation, as determined by your **victory** level.

- In a fight or test of physical mettle, your workout leaves you sharp for the

next encounter.
- In a social contest, you gain confidence and admiration from your triumph.
- If commanding a war, you gain strategic advantage over your enemy.
- In an economic struggle, your profits can be re-invested, or you drive competitors into the ground.
- In a morale crisis, you are buoyed up by success, nothing can stop you now.

Remember that the **benefit** does not have to be directly related to the **ability** used. Look to the goal of the **contest**. The abilities or situation should reflect the **story obstacle** that was overcome and the **tactic** used to overcome it.

- In a fight or test of physical mettle, your triumph has everyone rallying to your cause.
- In a social contest, you win powerful **allies** who will strengthen you in your fight against your enemies.
- If commanding a war, you pillage the enemy city and enrich your army.
- In an economic struggle, you gain status as one of the wealthy elite.
- In a morale crisis, your rallied troops strengthen your army.

A PC may apply **bonuses** from multiple **benefits** to a single **contest**.

From the least to the most robust the four **states of fortune** are: **fresh**, **pumped**, **invigorated**, and **heroic**.

2.9.2.1 Fresh   If you are **fresh**, you are lively and find it easier to succeed at **contests** related to your **victory**. You are on a roll and feel confident and able. Until you are **defeated**, you gain a +3 **bonus** to all related abilities.

You may be refreshed multiple times on the same **ability**. These are cumulative until **defeat** occurs.

Unless your GM has a dramatic reason to decide otherwise, your **freshness** vanishes at the end of a session, after one day of idleness, or when in-game events justify their removal.

2.9.1.3 Pumped   If you are **pumped**, you are energized, physically, socially, or emotionally, and you are much likelier to succeed when attempting similar actions in the future. You gain a +6 **bonus** to all related abilities. **Pumped** combines with **fresh** and **pumped**.

As good as your condition may be, an extended period of idleness will cause you to lose your edge. A single **pumped** goes away after one week of idleness, or when an in-game event (like long drunken party) occurs to make their removal seem believable.

2.9.1.4 Invigorated   If you are **invigorated**, you are pulsing with hormones, mentally focused, or exuding confidence. Physically you can push your body to new personal bests of achievement, socially confidant and exuding charisma, and emotionally you are in touch with your feelings and resonate with those of others. Although this will fade with time, you gain a +9 **bonus** to all related abilities. **Invigorated** combines with **pumped** and **fresh**.

Being **invigorated** goes away after a month's idleness, or an in-game event, as above.

2.9.1.5 Heroic   If you are **heroic**, you have become unstoppable, physically at peak performance, socially, everyone wants to be you or be with you, and emotionally you have gained new insights into yourself and others around you. Although this will fade with time, you gain a **bump bonus** to all related abilities. Being **heroic** combines with **invigorated**, **pumped** and **fresh**.

Being **heroic** goes away after a season's idleness, or an in-game event, as above.

2.9.1.6 BENEFITS OF VICTORY TABLE

Victory Level	State of Fortune	Benefit
Marginal	Fresh	+3
Minor	Pumped	+6
Major	Invigorated	+9
Complete	Heroic	You receive an automatic **bump** up on uses of an appropriate **ability**

2.9.2 Clearly Inferior Opponents

Defeating clearly inferior opponents neither teaches you anything nor significantly enhances your reputation; you are ineligible for a **benefit of victory** if the **resistance** you used in the **contest** exceeded the **resistance** by 6 or more. If, in the case of a **long contest**, you or your opponent used multiple **abilities**, compare the best **ability** you used to their worst.

2.9.3 Recovery and Healing

Consequences of **injured** or less lapse on their own with the passage of time. However, you'll often want to remove them ahead of schedule, with the use of **abilities**.

2.9.3.1 Healing Abilities   The **ability** used to bring about recovery from a **state of adversity** must relate to the type of harm.

You can heal physical injuries with medical or extraordinary **abilities**.

You can remove mental traumas, including those of confidence and morale, with mundane psychology or through **extraordinary abilities**. You might also remove them through a dramatic confrontation between the victim and the source of the psychic injury.

You use social abilities to heal social injuries. You probably have to make a public apology of some sort, often including a negotiation with the offended parties and the payment of compensation, either in disposable wealth or something more symbolic.

You can fix damage to items and equipment with some sort of repair **ability**. If you want to fix an extraordinary item, you may require genre-specific expertise: a broken magic ring may require a ritual to reforge.

Your GM should almost always resolve healing attempts as **simple contests**. An exception might be a medical drama, in which surgeries would comprise the suspenseful set-piece sequences of the game, and your GM might chose a **long contest**.

2.9.3.2 Healing Resistances   Default **resistances** to remove states of adversity are as follows:

2.9.3.3 HEALING RESISTANCES TABLE

Consequence of Defeat	Difficulty
Hurt	Low
Impaired	Moderate
Injured	High
Dying	Very High

2.9.3.4 Outcomes of Healing   When you make a successful healing attempt, you remove one level of **adversity** for each level of **victory**. A **major defeat** increases the subject's **consequences of defeat** by 1; a **complete defeat** adds an additional 2 levels to the **state of adversity**.

2.9.4 Waning Benefits

Just as you recover from **consequences** with time, or through healing, so **benefits** fade with time.

At the end of a storyline, especially when a significant period of game-world time passes between the conclusion of one episode and the beginning of the next, the GM may declare that all **benefits** have expired.

2.9.5 Benefits Meet Consequences

Because it is confusing to track both **benefits and consequences** against the same **ability** your GM may simply rule that one cancels the other out. This is particularly true of social **contest**s where a moment of shame can erase your previous triumphs, or your confidence eroded by a **failure**. Physical benefits may cancel out, flushed with victory you may be able to ignore pain, but it may defy credibility for wounds to be healed by an athletic performance.

Your GM may simply rule that **benefits** and **consequences** cancel out, or they may take the difference between the two benefits and create a new one. For example if you are **invigorated** by your previous performance in the dance **contest**, but then suffer a **hurt**, your GM may rule that your twisted ankle cancels out your energy from the last performance, or your GM might rule that your success sees you through the pain, but you are now only **pumped**.

2.10 Modifiers

Your **rating** represents a general **ability** to succeed in the narrative, but modifiers reflect specific conditions that may make it easier or harder to overcome particular **story obstacles**. They are applied to your **ability** to get a final **target number** (**TN**).

Positive modifiers are called **bonuses**; negative modifiers are called **penalties**.

Bonuses, may raise your **ability** high enough to gain a **mastery**, in which case you get the **bumps** up or down that a **mastery** would normally supply.

Penalties, may lower an **ability** to the point where it loses one or more **masteries**. In this case, you lose the **bumps** up or down you would normally get.

Your GM should only use modifiers to alter your **target number** due to unusual circumstances you helped to create, or have some control over. If an unusual situation applies to a **resistance**, the GM should choose a **resistance** that reflects that. Modifiers never apply to the **resistance**.

If **penalties** reduce your **target number** to 0 or less, any attempt to use it automatically **results** in **failure**. You must find another way to achieve your aim.

2.10.1 Stretches

When you propose an action using an **ability** that seems completely inappropriate, your GM rules it impossible. If you went ahead and tried it anyway, you'd automatically fail—but you won't, because that would be silly.

In some cases, though, your proposed match-up of action and **ability** is only somewhat implausible. A successful attempt with it wouldn't completely break the illusion of fictional reality—just stretch it a bit.

Using a somewhat implausible **ability** is known as a **stretch**. If your GM deems an attempt to be a **stretch**, the PC suffers a -3, –6, -9 **penalty**, or a **bump** down, to their **target number**, depending on how incredible the **stretch** seems to the GM and other players. Your GM should **penalize** players who try to create a 'do anything' **ability** that they then **stretch** to gain from raising fewer **abilities** in advancement to ensure balance with other PCs.

A default **stretch penalty** should be -6.

The definition of **stretch** is elastic, depending on genre.

Your GM should not impose **stretch penalties** on action descriptions that add flavor and variety to a scene, but do not fundamentally change what you can do with your **ability**. These make the scene more fun but don't really gain any advantage.

2.10.2 Situational Modifiers

Your GM may also impose **modifiers** when, given the description of the current situation, believability demands that you should face a notable **bonus** or **penalty**. Your GM should choose **modifiers** of +6, +3, –3, or –6. **Modifiers** of less than 3 don't exert enough effect to be worth the bother. Those higher than 6 give the situational **modifier** a disproportionate role in determining **outcomes**.

During a **long contest**, they should typically last for a single **round**, and reflect clever or foolish choices.

2.11 Combined Abilities

On certain occasions your GM may rule that you can only hope to achieve the **prize** by using two disparate **abilities**. When this occurs, average your two **ability ratings**, then apply any modifiers, to arrive at your **TN**.

Combining your abilities, rather than using the best one and **augmenting** it with other, is always a disadvantage. Your GM should only require combined **ability** use when story logic absolutely demands that you face a lower chance of **success**, because you have to do two things at once.

2.12 Mobs, Gangs, and Hordes

Sometimes you will face large numbers of opponents. Your GM can treat many as one. Your GM divides the number of opponents by the number of contesting PCs. Your GM then treats each of these sections of the crowd as a single opponent with one **rating**. Their numbers are factored into the **rating** your GM assigns to them.

If in doubt, your GM should think of the **resistance** that would be dramatically appropriate for a single opponent and then adjust it with a **bonus** of +3, +6 or +9 depending on how outnumbered you are. No more than six foes can typically contend with you in a physical confrontation, or two in a social one, or they tend to get in each other's way.

When the mob loses an exchange, your GM describes individuals within it as being hurt or falling away. When it wins, describe them overwhelming you, or swelling in numbers.

2.13 Ganging Up

Sometimes you may outnumber your opponent. For a **simple contest** this can be often be handled by having your PC on point, and the other PCs **augmenting** you, breaking the usual rule on multiple **augments** if more than one person should be able to support you. Your GM may only allow as many of you to **augment** as they feel would help, not get in each other's way. For a **group contest, long or simple** if you enjoy a numerical advantage you should separately contest against a reduced **resistance**. Your GM should adjust the **resistance** to reflect your superior numerical advantage.

As above, if in doubt, the GM should think of the **resistance** that would be dramatically appropriate for a one-on-one confrontation and then adjust it with a **penalty** of -3, -6, or -9 depending on how significantly you outnumber them. As above, note that unless your opponent is extraordinarily large, you cannot confront them physically with more than about six people (include **followers**) or socially with about two people (again include **followers**) or people just get in each other's way.

2.14 Mass Effort

Clashes of massive forces resolve like any other **contest**, **simple** or **long**. These include:

- Military engagements
- Corporate struggles for market share • Building competitions
- Efforts to spread a faith or ideology • Dance competitions

If you are not participating in the **contest** and have no stake in its **outcome**, then your GM doesn't bother to run a **contest**. The GM just chooses an **outcome** for dramatic purposes.

Otherwise, your GM will start by determining your degree of influence over the **outcome**. They are either:

- Determining factors: The success of the effort depends mostly on your choices and successes. For example, you might be a military leader facing a force of roughly equal potency. As all else is equal, the better general will win the day. In this instance, your **tactic** should be a relevant leadership **ability**.
- Contributors: One of the forces enjoys a clear advantage over the others, but your efforts may tip the balance in favor of a chosen side. Your GM will give you a **TN** to roll against that represents the strength of your force, but you can **augment** that **TN** with an appropriate leadership **ability**.
- Acted Upon: You have little influence over the **outcome**, but are stuck in the middle of the conflict and must struggle to prosper within it. The GM predetermines the **outcome** of the overall competition on dramatic grounds. To determine your fate in the battle, you **contest** against a **resistance** determined by the GM, derived from the overall battle **outcome**.

2.15 Pyrrhic Victories

In a Pyrrhic victory, you **boost** your chance of **success** in a **contest** by accepting negative consequence at its end, even if you succeed in overcoming the **story obstacle**. You gain a **bump** in the **ability** you are using to prosecute the **contest**, but at the **contest**'s end, you suffer a **state of adversity**, as per the Pyrrhic Victory Table.

As with any proposed action, you must convincingly describe the potentially suicidal risks you are taking to achieve their objective. You must also show how these risks can bring you the **victory** they seek.

2.15.1 PYRRHIC VICTORY TABLE

Outcome	State of Adversity
Any Defeat	Dead
Marginal Victory	Dead
Minor Victory	Dying
Major Victory	Injured
Complete Victory	Impaired

2.16 Mismatched and Graduated Goals

Sometimes, the two sides in a **contest** may have goals that do not directly conflict one another. A huntsman pursues a nurse, who is trying to escape through the forest with two small children. The huntsman wants to kill the nurse. The nurse wants to save the children.

When encountering **mismatched goals**, your GM should determine whether the mismatch is complete, or partial.

In a **complete mismatch**, neither side is at all interested in preventing the other's goal. A **complete mismatch** does not end in a **contest**; your GM asks what you are doing, and then describes each participant succeeding at their goals.

In most instances, the **contest** goals are not actually **mismatched**, but **graduated**. You have both a **primary** and a **secondary** goal. In this case, your GM frames the **contest**, identifying which goal is which. To achieve both, you must score a **major or complete victory**. On a **minor or marginal victory**, you achieve only the **primary** goal. Your GM may present you with the choice of which objective you obtain, where that choice illuminates your PC's priorities.

2.17 Difficult Automatic Victory

Two distinct methods allow your GM to create a sense of difficulty without allowing for the prospect of **failure**: the **arduous automatic victory**, and the **costly automatic victory**. Your GM will use a **costly automatic victory** where **failure** offers no entertaining plot branches, but when they still want the group to work for victory. In a **costly automatic victory**, you succeed, but at a price.

2.17.1 Arduous Automatic Victory

Your GM will use an **arduous automatic victory** to help with pacing. They will simply allow you to succeed without a **contest**, and then describe in sweat-inducing detail your hard-won **victory**. Unlike the standard **automatic victory**, the objective here is not to make you feel competent (though it may do that as well) but to emphasize the rigors of your grueling task, preserving suspension of disbelief.

2.17.2 Costly Automatic Victory

Your GM may use a **costly automatic victory** where **failure** offers no entertaining plot branches, but they still want you to work for **victory**. In a **costly automatic victory**, you succeed, but at a price.

Even if you suffer a **defeat**, you still overcome the **story obstacle**. You also, however, suffer a **state of adversity** to one or more **abilities**, in keeping with the **defeat** level, as per the **consequences of defeat** table.

The **state of adversity** might apply, as in an ordinary **contest**, to the abilities you used in that **contest**. Usually, though, they apply to some other resource-related **ability**, which may come to haunt you later on. When in doubt, ask yourself if the **penalty** will cripple the group in dealing with **contests**.

3.0 Character Creation

The first step in creating your character is to come up with a concept that fits in with the genre of game that your GM intends to run. With that, you can assign **abilities**, **ratings** for those **abilities**, and if required **flaws**.

In addition, you will want to give your character a name, and provide a physical description. We recommend focusing on three physical things about your PC that others would immediately notice, over anything more detailed.

3.1 As-You-Go Method

1. Concept

The concept is a brief phrase, often just a couple of words that tells the GM and other players what you do and how you act. Start with a noun or phrase indicating your **occupation keyword** or area of expertise, and modify it with an adjective suggesting a **distinguishing characteristic**, a personality trait that defines you in broad strokes:

- haughty priestess
- hotshot lawyer
- noble samurai
- remorseful assassin
- sardonic ex-mercenary
- slothful vampire
- naive warrior

2. Now provide your character with a name.
3. If the series uses other **keywords**, such as those for culture or religion, you may gain one for free.
4. When events in the story put you in a situation where you want to overcome a **story obstacle**, make up an applicable **ability** on the spot. The first time you use an **ability** (including the two you start play with: **distinguishing characteristic** and **occupational keyword**), assign a **rating** to it. This may be a **breakout ability** from a **keyword**. You are restricted to only one **sidekick**.

5. If you want, describe **flaws**.
6. Once you have 12 **abilities** (including the two for character concept), and up to three **flaws** you are done creating your character.

3.2 Assigning Ability Ratings

You have now defined your **abilities**. These tell everyone what you can do. Now assign numbers to each **ability**, called **ratings**, which determine how well you can do these things.

Assign a starting **rating** of 17 to the **ability** you find most important or defining. Although most players consider it wisest to assign this **rating** to their **occupational keyword**, you don't have to do this. Assign a **rating** of 17 to your **distinguishing characteristic**. In some cases, you may treat your **distinguishing characteristic** as a **breakout ability** from a **keyword** in this case, treat it as a +4.

All other **abilities** start at a **rating** of 13.

Now spend up to 20 points to increase any of your various **ratings**, including **keywords**. Each point spent increases a **rating** by 1 point. You can't spend more than 10 points on any one **ability**.

Some genre packs may require you to have additional **keywords** that reflect the setting. These additional **keywords** come from the 12 **abilites** allowance, so in many genres you will have fewer wildcard **abilities** but better fit the setting.

3.3 Keywords

You may build your PC around one or more **keywords**. A **keyword** gives you a package deal: you get a number of **abilities** by selecting a pre-existing character concept, which the player then modifies.

Keywords are best suited for use as the PC's **occupation**.

In certain genres, you may require multiple **keywords**: for example, one for **occupation**, another for species or culture, and perhaps a third for religious affiliation.

Here are two ways to handle **keywords**. If in doubt, choose Umbrella.

Keywords as Packages: Treat **keywords** simply as shorthand for a package of **abilities**. These can be increased together during character creation, but are too unrelated to increase together during a game. You are still free to use the **keyword** as an **ability**, and in fact may prefer to write only the specific **abilities** they've improved on their character sheet.

Keywords as an Umbrella: Treat **keywords** both as raisable **abilities** and as a collection of more specific **abilities**. This approach keeps the character sheet from getting too cluttered but encourages specialization. If your character is particularly good at an aspect of that keyword, you create a **breakout ability** under the **keyword** at a **bonus** from the **rating** of the **keyword** you write these specialized **breakout abilities** under the **keyword**, along with how much they've improved from the **keyword**:

Detective 17 Forensics +2 Handgun +1

In this example, whilst the **rating** for most **contests** in which Detective was an appropriate **tactic** would be 17, for contests involving Forensics it would be 19, and for those involving firing a handgun it would be 18.

In some settings, an **ability** may be listed in more than one of a PC's **keywords**. Choose only one to detail it under.

3.4 Flaws

You may assign up to three **flaws** to their PC. Common flaws include:

- Personality traits: surly, petty, compulsive.
- Physical challenges: blindness, lameness, diabetes.
- Social hurdles: outcast, ill-mannered, hated by United supporters.

Flaws are assigned a **rating** equivalent to your **abilities**. The first **flaw** is rated at the highest **ability**, the second shares the same **rating** as the second-highest **ability**, and the third equals the lowest **ability**.

Certain **keywords** include **flaws**. **Flaws** gained through **keywords** do not count against the limit of three chosen **flaws**. All **flaws** after the third are given the same **rating** as the third **ability**. You may designate **flaws** from **keywords** as your first or second-ranked **flaw**. When **flaws** manifest during play, your GM places you in a **contest** against them, and rolls their associated **ratings** as **resistances** to your efforts. This method applies to **flaws** that primarily present you with additional **story obstacles** to overcome.

Your GM may decide during play that certain **flaws** are better expressed as **penalties** to your attempts to overcome other **resistances**. Divide the value by 5 and round (a **flaw** of 19 imposes a –4 **penalty**). This is appropriate where the player specifies that your **ability** to solve problems drops under certain specific conditions. Examples might include:

- Tongue-tied in large gatherings.
- Lousy with a stick shift.
- Can't stand snakes.

3.5 Advanced Character Creation

QuestWorlds offers two advanced methods of character creation: prose and list.

3.5.1 The List Method

This is like the As-You-Go method (see §3.1) but you spend all their points before the game begins. This is possible with the As-You-Go method as well, but the list method allows you to signal what they want the game to be about from the abilities you pick, as opposed to reacting to material once the game begins.

3.5.2 The Prose Method

This is the most different method as you write a piece of prose and then pull **abilities** from that. Its intent is to emulate a character description in fiction, and indeed PCs can be built by copying text from a story and then identifying **keywords**. It is the least 'fair' of the character creation options.

3.6 List Method

1. Concept

The concept is a brief phrase, often just a couple of words that tells the GM and other players what you do and how you act. When in doubt, start with a noun or phrase indicating your **occupation**, and modify it with an adjective suggesting a **distinguishing characteristic**:

- haughty priestess
- hotshot lawyer
- noble samurai
- remorseful assassin
- sardonic ex-mercenary
- slothful vampire
- naive warrior

2. Now provide the character with a name.
3. Note their **occupation**, which is usually a **keyword**. You probably already picked this when you came up with your character concept.
4. If the series uses other **keywords**, such as those for culture or religion, you may have one of them for free.
5. Pick 10 additional **abilities**, describing them however the player wants. Only one of these **abilities** may be a **sidekick**.
6. If you want, describe up to 3 **flaws**.

3.7 Prose Method

You write a paragraph of text like you would see in a story outline, describing the most essential elements of your character. Include **keywords**, personality traits, important possessions, relationships, and anything else that suggests what you can do and why. The paragraph should be about 100 words long.

Compose the description in complete, grammatical sentences. No lists of **abilities**; no sentence fragments. Your GM may choose to allow sentences like the previous one for emphasis or rhythmic effect, but not simply to squeeze in more cool things you can do.

Once your narrative is finished, convert the description into a set of **abilities**. Mark any **keywords** with double underlines. Mark any other word or phrase that could be an **ability** with a single underline. Then write these **keywords** and **abilities** on your character sheet.

There is no limit to the number of **abilities** you can gain from a single sentence, as long as the sentence is not just a list of **abilities**. If your GM decides a sentence is just a list, they may allow the first two **abilities**, or they may tell the player to rewrite the sentence. Note, however, that you cannot specify more than one **sidekick** in your prose description.

4.0 Simple Contests

Simple contests are the default resolution method for all **story obstacles**.

4.1 Simple Contest

4.1.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.
2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** and any **modifiers**. The PCs **TN** is the **rating** of their **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.
3. Your GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.
4. Roll a D20 to determine your **success or failure**, then apply any **bumps**. Your GM does the same for the **resistance**. Compare your rolled number with your **TN** to see how well you succeeded or failed with your **ability**. Remember to apply any **bumps** from **masteries** or **hero points**.
5. Determine **victory** or **defeat**
6. Describe the **outcome** based on the **story obstacle**.

4.2 Group Simple Contest

In the **group simple contest**, multiple participants take part in a **simple contest**. Each of you in your group conducts an individual **simple contest** against the GM, and the **outcomes** for each side are collated to determine the victor.

A **group simple contest** may pit all of you against a single **resistance**, representing one **story obstacle**. Alternatively, a **group simple contest** may be a series of paired match-ups between two groups of contestants. If you are forced to participate in more than one **contest**, then you face the standard multiple opponent **penalties**.

4.2.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.
2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** and any **modifiers**. Your **TN** is the **rating** of their **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.
3. Your GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.
4. For each of your group, roll a D20 to determine your **success or failure**, then apply any **bumps**. Your GM does the same for the **resistance**. Compare your rolled number with your **TN** to see how well you succeeded or failed with your **ability**. Remember to apply any **bumps** from **masteries** or **hero points**.
5. Determine the number of **Outcome Points (OPs)** scored by the victor in the **contest** from the **group simple contest** table. On a tie the **victory** goes to the **better roll**.
6. Sum the **OPs** gained for each side.
7. The side with the highest number of **OPs** is the victor in the **contest**.
8. Describe the **outcome** based on the agreed **prize**.

4.2.2 Group Simple Contest Resource Points

4.2.2.1 GROUP SIMPLE CONTEST TABLE

	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Critical	1	2	3	5
Success	2	1	2	3
Failure	3	2	1	2
Fumble	5	3	2	0

4.3 Advanced Simple Contests

Advanced options for a simple contest allow greater granularity of the **outcome**, through **benefits of victory** and **consequences of defeat**.

4.4 Simple Contest

4.4.1 Advanced Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.

2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** of your **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.

3. Your GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.

4. Roll a d20 to determine your **degree of victory or defeat**, then apply any **bumps**. Your GM does the same for the **resistance**. Compare your rolled number with your **TN** to see how well you succeeded or failed with your **ability**. Remember to apply any **bumps** from **masteries** or **hero points**.

5. Determine **victory** or **defeat**

   *1. Determine **degree of victory**. Compare your **success or failure** with the GM's on the **simple contest table**.*

   *2. Determine **benefits of victory** or **consequences of defeat**.*

6. Describe the **outcome** based on the **story obstacle**.

4.4.2 Degree of Victory

4.4.2.1 SIMPLE CONTEST TABLE

Roll	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Critical	Better roll = Marginal Victory, else tie	Minor Victory	Major Victory	Complete Victory
Success	Minor Victory	Better roll = Marginal Victory, else tie	Minor Victory	Major Victory

Roll	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Failure	Major Victory	Minor Victory	Better roll = Marginal Victory, else tie	Minor Victory
Fumble	Complete Victory	Major Victory	Minor Victory	Tie*

- In a **group simple contest** (see below), your GM may declare that both contestants suffer a ***marginal defeat** to indicate that, although their **results** cancel out with respect to each other, their situation worsens compared to other contestants.

4.5 Advanced Group Simple Contest

4.5.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.

2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** of your **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.

3. Your GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.

4. For each of your group, roll a D20 to determine your **degree of victory or defeat**, then apply any bumps. Your GM does the same for the **resistance**. Compare your rolled number with your **TN** to see how well you succeeded or failed with your **ability**. Remember to apply any **bumps** from **masteries** or **hero points**.

5. Determine the number of **OPs** scored by the victor in the **contest** from the **group simple contest table**. On a tie the **victory** goes to the **better roll**.

6. Sum the **OPs** gained for each side.

7. The side with the highest number of **OPs** is the victor in the **contest**.

   *1. Determine **degree of victory** based on the difference between the winner and loser's **outcome point** totals on the **group simple contest table**.*

   *2. Determine **benefits of victory** or **consequences of defeat**.*

8. Describe the **outcome** based on the agreed **prize**.

4.5.1.1 DEGREE OF VICTORY TABLE

Difference Between OPs	Winning Group's Degree of Victory
1	Marginal
2	Minor
3-4	Major
5+	Complete

4.5.2 Consequences and Benefits

Depending on which approach seems to grow from the story, your GM may assign **consequences of defeat** or **benefits of victory** from **group simple contests** to the entire group, or to individual members who performed either especially well, or especially poorly. Your GM should default to rewarding or penalizing everyone. Your GM should resort to individualized repercussions or benefits only when a group reward defies dramatic credibility, or when competition within the group is a pivotal dramatic issue.

4.5.3 Boosting Outcomes

Because they average together the **outcomes** of multiple participants, **group simple contests** tend to flatten **outcomes**, making **victories** more likely to be **marginal** or **minor** than **major** or **complete**.

To overcome this flattening effect, you can, at the beginning of a **group simple contest**, spend one or more **hero points** to purchase a **boost**. A **boost** assures a clearer **victory**, should you prevail.

The cost varies by the number of PCs participating:

- 1 **hero point** for 1-3 PCs.
- 2 **hero points** for 4-6 PCs.
- 3 **hero points** for 7-9 PCs.

- and so on. . .

You may spend twice as many **hero points** as required to gain a **double boost**. The points may be spent by any combination of players. They remain spent no matter how the **contest** resolves.

On a **tie** or a **victory**, the **boost** increases the collective **victory** level by one step. A **double boost** increases it by two steps.

5.0 (Advanced) Long Contests

Most conflicts should be resolved simply and quickly, using the **simple contest** rules.

However, every so often, your GM wants to draw out the resolution, breaking it down into a series of smaller actions, increasing the suspense you feel as you wait to see if they **succeed** or **fail**.

Think of the different ways a film director can choose to portray a given moment, depending on how important it is to the story, and how invested they want us to feel in its **outcome**.

For example, there are two ways to shoot a scene in which a thief breaks into the bank to steal the contents of the safe.

The action can be portrayed quickly, cutting to a moment with the thief, their ear pressed against the safe trying to get the tumblers to fall into place. Then they sigh with relief, open the safe, and get whatever is inside. In this instance, the story is about what happens after the thief gets what's in the safe, not about what might happen to them if they fail.

Another film might instead choose to make the bank robbery a pivotal turning point in the story, if not its climactic moment. It would spend many scenes building up to the safe-cracking sequence: obtaining the plans of the bank, learning the movements of the guards, crawling through the air conditioning ducts, sliding past the motion sensors and pressure plates, and finally cracking the safe itself. All of these scenes would be **rounds** of a **long contest**.

Remember that *QuestWorlds* uses conflict resolution. If you want to describe how you overcome a sequence of **story obstacles** to overcome the **resistance** then your GM should use a **long contest**, if you just want to move on to the next scene, use a **simple contest**.

Even a movie driven by action and suspense will typically include only a handful of these set-piece sequences. They need the rest of their running time to build up to their big moments, to make us care about the characters, and to give us quiet moments to contrast with the white-knuckle parts.

So pacing may always trump your desire to work through the sequence of events, as your GM may wish to resolve this conflict quickly. This is especially true if only one player is involved.

Your GM may be tempted, to adjudicate every fight with a **long contest**, because fights seem like they should be played out blow-by-blow. They should resist this temptation, as fights are often repetitive trading of blows that can drag when everyone repeats actions from **round** to **round**. Only use **long contests** for fights where the PCs want to do more than slug it out toe-to-toe with their opponents until only one is left standing.

There are three types of **long contest**. Your GM should choose one to use with their campaign: **scored contest**, **extended contest**, or **chained contest**.

5.1 Scored Contest

Scored contests are longer and more dramatic than **simple contests**. Your GM uses **scored contests** when the **outcome** of the struggle is important, to generate suspense for you, or when your GM want a back-and-forth struggle. It is something you and your GM should visualize and describe.

A **scored contest** consists of one or more **rounds**, in which you perform actions that are similar to **simple contests**. However, actions and **rounds** do not decide the **outcome** of the whole **contest**, only who gains or loses **resolution points** at that time. In a **scored contest** there is no distinction between aggressor and defender, each **round** represents attempts by both parties to overcome their opponent. Your GM should determine who has the initiative to describe what they are doing for any **exchange**, based on their interpretation of the flow of events. If in doubt your GM should defer to you over your opponent to describe what you do in the **round**, and describe the NPC reacting to that.

5.1.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.
2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** of your **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.
3. Your GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.
4. Carry out one or more **rounds**, repeating as necessary.
    1. A **scored contest** unfolds as a series of **simple contests**. At the end of each **simple contest**, the winner scores a number of **resolution points (RPs)** to their tally, which varies between 1 and 5, depending on the **result**. Tied **results** leave the score unchanged.
    2. Your GM decides which opponent has the initiative and describes what they are trying to do to achieve the **prize**, the 'aggressor'. The 'defender' describes how they counter the aggressor's attempt to seize the **prize**. If it is not obvious from the unfolding narrative, your GM should choose your PC as the 'aggressor'.
    3. Conduct a **simple contest** as normal, but once the **outcome** has been determined, it becomes a number of **resolution points** scored by the winning side.
    4. The number of **resolution points** the winner garners at the end of each **round** depends on the **degree of victory** they scored. They get 1 point for a **marginal victory**, 2 for a **minor victory**, 3 for a **major victory**, and 5 for a **complete victory**.

 5. The first to accumulate a total of 5 points wins; their opponent is knocked out of the **contest** and loses the **prize**.
5. Determine the **scored contest outcome** based on **rising action** or **climax** (below).
6. Determine **benefits of victory** or **consequences of defeat**.
7. Describe the **outcome** based on the **story obstacle**.

Unlike in an **extended contest** (see below), where you usually take part in two **exchanges** with your opponent per **round** (one in which you choose the **AP bid**, and one in which your opponent does), here you and your opponent engage in a single **exchange** per **round** (in which whoever the GM determines has initiative describes an action to seize the **prize** and their opponent how they intend to stop them).

Your **resolution point** score tells you how well you're doing, relative to your opponent, in the ebb and flow of a fluid, suspenseful conflict. If you're leading your opponent by 0–4, you're giving them a thorough pasting. If you're behind 4–0, you're on your last legs, while your opponent has had an easy time of it. If you're tied, you've each been getting in some good licks.

In a fight, scoring 1 **RP** might mean that you hit your opponent with a grazing blow, or knocked him into an awkward position.

Scoring 2 **RPs** might mean a palpable hit, most likely with bone-crunching sound effects.

A 3 **RP** hit sends them reeling, and, depending on the realism level of the genre, may be accompanied by a spray of blood.

However, the exact physical harm you've dished out to them remains unclear until the **contest's** end. When that happens, the real effects of your various **victories** become suddenly apparent. Perhaps they stagger, merely dazed, up against a wall. Maybe they fall over dead.

In a debate, a 1 **RP** might occasion mild head nodding from spectators, or a frown on your opponent's face.

2 **RPs** would occasion mild applause from onlookers, or send a flush to your opponent's face.

On 3 **RPs**, your opponent might be thrown completely off-track, as audience members wince at the force of your devastating verbal jab.

In interpreting the individual **simple contests** within a **scored contest**, your GM is guided by two principles:

1. No consequence is certain until the entire **scored contest** is over.
2. When a character scores points, it can reflect any positive change in fortunes, not just the most obvious one.

5.1.1.1 Resource Point Table

	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Critical	1	2	3	5
Success	2	1	2	3
Failure	3	2	1	2
Fumble	5	3	2	n/a

5.1.2 Scored Contest Outcomes

As with all **contests**, if the contest involved a resistance we care about your **outcome**, win or lose, and the GM should feel free to narrate the **outcome** for the **resistance** depending on their interpretation of your **outcome** which may not be symmetrical. For example, if the **benefit of victory** for your PC is **pumped** the GM should feel free to interpret what this means for the resistance: in a melee they might be dead, in a social contest they might be exiled, or they might surrender in the melee or cede ground in a social contest. Your GM should focus on the **prize** that was agreed when determining how to narrate over the outcome for the **resistance**.

In a PC vs. PC contest however, your GM should treat the results as symmetrical when determining the **outcome**.

5.1.2.1 Rising Action   **Rising action** refers to all of the many plot events and complications that occur between the beginning and the climax of a story. During this phase of your GM's story, they will use the **rising action** consequence table to assess **outcomes**.

Find the difference between you and your opponent's **resolution point** scores at the **contest**'s conclusion. Your GM then determines your **outcome** by cross-referencing with the following table to find your **benefits of victory** or **consequences of defeat**.

Note, you may suffer a **state of adversity**, even if you win the **prize**.

5.1.2.1 RISING ACTION CONTEST TABLE

Difference Between RPs	Negative Consequences for Loser	Consequences/Benefit for Winner	Victory/Defeat Level
1	Hurt	Hurt	Marginal
2	Hurt	Fresh	Marginal
3	Impaired	Pumped	Minor
4	Impaired	Pumped	Minor

Difference Between RPs	Negative Consequences for Loser	Consequences/Benefit for Winner	Victory/Defeat Level
5	Injured	Invigorated	Major
6	Injured	Invigorated	Major
7	Dying	Heroic	Complete
8	Dead	Heroic	Complete
9	Dead	Heroic	Complete

5.1.2.3 Climax For the final, climactic confrontation that wraps up your GM's story, you may suffer a **state of adversity**, even if the **outcome** shows that you won the **prize**. This represents that at the **climax** you may triumph, but be laid low by the effort.

First, determine your **outcome** for the **contest** as for rising action, but in addition, if the outcome show that you gained the **prize** your GM now cross-references the **resolution points** scored against you by your opponent on the **climactic state of adversity** table to determine the **state of adversity** you suffered in winning that **victory**. If you lost the **prize** use the **RPs** scored against you to determine your **outcome** as per the **rising action** table above.

5.1.2.4 CLIMACTIC STATE OF ADVERSITY TABLE

Total Resolution Points Scored Against PC	State of Adversity
0	Unharmed
1	Dazed
2	Hurt
3	Hurt
4	Impaired
5	Impaired
6	Injured
7	Injured
8	Dying
9	Dead

5.1.3 Parting Shot

In the **round** immediately after you take an opponent out of the **contest**, you may attempt to increase the severity of the consequences your opponent suffers by engaging in a **parting shot**. This is an attempt (metaphoric or otherwise) to kick your opponent while he's down:

- Striking an incapacitated enemy • Attacking a retreating army • Attaching

one more punitive rider to a legal settlement • Demanding additional money from a business partner • Delivering one last humiliating insult

Your GM should not use a **parting shot**.

If you succeed in your **parting shot** roll, you add the result from your roll to the final number of **resolution points** scored against your opponent in the round that removed them from the **contest**.

However, if your opponent succeeds, they take the number of **resolution points** they would, in a standard **round**, score against you, and instead subtracts them from the number of **resolution points** scored against them in the **round** that removed them from the **contest**. If the revised total is now less than 5 **RPs**, they return to the **contest**, and may re-engage you. Your GM describes this as a dramatic turnaround, in which your overreaching has somehow granted them an advantage allowing them to recover from their previous misfortune. The provisional consequences they suffered now go away, and are treated as a momentary or seeming disadvantage.

The **ability** you use must relate to the consequences the opposition will suffer, but needn't be the same one you used to win the **contest**. If the loser is a PC they use a suitable **ability** to resist; otherwise the GM rolls a suitable **resistance** value.

Where it makes sense, unengaged PCs may attempt **parting shots** against opponents taken out of the **contest** by someone else. You may not revive your teammates by using your lamest abilities to make **parting shots** on them; this, by definition, does not pass a **credibility test**.

5.1.4 Asymmetrical Round

You may choose to briefly suspend your attempt to best your opponent in a **scored contest**, in order to do something else. An instance where you are trying to do something else and your opponent is trying to win the **contest** is called an **asymmetrical round**.

In an **asymmetrical round**, you do not score **RPs** against your opponent if you win the **round**. Instead, you succeed at whatever else you were doing. You still lose **RPs** if you fail. Often you will be using an **ability** other than the one you've been waging the **contest** with, one better suited to the task at hand. This becomes additionally dangerous when the **rating** associated with your substitute **ability** is significantly lower than the one used for the rest of the **contest**.

In addition to secondary objectives, as in the above example, you may engage in **asymmetrical round** to grant **augments** (see above) to yourself or others.

5.1.5 Disengaging

You can always abandon a **contest**, but, in addition to failing at the **story obstacle**, you may also suffer negative consequences. In a **contest** where your opponent intends to harm you, you will always suffer negative consequences if you withdraw, unless you successfully disengage.

To disengage, you make an **asymmetrical round**, using the **ability** relevant to the **contest** you're trying to wriggle out of.

If you fail, your effort is wasted and the score against you increases, as it would have during a normal **round**. If you succeed, you escape the clutches, literal or metaphorical, of your opponent, without further harm from a **contest** during the **rising action**. In a **climactic** scene, however, **RPs** scored during **contests** you disengaged from are still taken into account when determining **consequences**. In the case of a **group contest**, **consequences** against you are determined as soon as you disengage.

5.2 Group Scored Contest

Group scored contests proceed as a series of **scored contests** between pairs of PC and opponents, interwoven so that they happen nearly simultaneously.

As in a **scored contest** between a single PC and an opponent, only one **simple contest** per pair of adversaries occurs each **round**. Usually the PCs make up one team, and their antagonists the other.

A **group scored contest** continues until one side has no active participants. If you **defeat** your opponent you can pair with a new opponent. The new opponent might be unengaged, but might also be engaged in an existing pairing. When you pair with a new opponent, you begin a new **contest**, even if your opponent is already engaged in a **contest**. Alternatively, if you are unopposed, you may choose to **assist**. Of course, you may be later engaged by an opponent who becomes free yourself.

You may lose some pairings amongst the PCs, but still win if the last participant standing is a PC; otherwise if the last participant belongs to the opposition you lose.

To determine the winning side's **victory** level, as opposed to individual **outcomes**, if there is only one opponent, use their **consequence of defeat**, otherwise, use the second-worst **consequence** among the defeated opponents.

5.2.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.

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2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number** (**TN**) using the **rating** of your **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you.
3. The GM determines the **resistance**. If two PCs contend, your opponent figures their **TN** as described in step 2.
4. The PCs to choose their opponents in order of their **TN** where it makes sense. Otherwise your GM will allocate opponents to you dependent on what makes narrative sense.
5. Establish an order of the paired **contests**. There is no significant advantage to going first, but use your group's **TN**s from highest to lowest if no other option presents itself.
6. For each pairing your GM carries out one **round**. Then they repeat by carrying out more **rounds** in order, as necessary. The Group **scored contest** ends as soon as there are no active participants on one side of the conflict. The side with one or more participants left standing wins.
    1. A **scored contest** unfolds as a series of **simple contests**. At the end of each **simple contest**, the winner scores a number of **resolution points (RPs)** to their tally, which varies between 1 and 5, depending on the result. Tied results leave the score unchanged.
    2. Your GM decides which opponent in a pair has the initiative and describes what they are trying to do to achieve the **prize**, the 'aggressor'. The 'defender' describes how they counter the aggressor's attempt to seize the **prize**. If it is not obvious from the unfolding narrative, your GM should choose your PC as a the 'aggressor'.
    3. Conduct a **simple contest** as normal, but once the **outcome** has been determined, it becomes a number of **resolution points** scored by the winning side.
    4. The number of **resolution points** the winner garners at the end of each **round** depends on the **degree of victory** they scored. They get 1 point for a **marginal victory**, 2 for a **minor victory**, 3 for a **major victory**, and 5 for a **complete victory**.
    5. The first to accumulate a total of 5 points wins; their opponent is knocked out of the **contest**.
        1. As one of a pair is eliminated from the **group contest**, their victorious opponents may then move on to engage new targets, starting new **contests**, which are then added to the end of the existing sequence.
        2. If participating in multiple pairings, each pairing is the first to 5 points, points already scored do not count. But the accumulated points do count when determining **consequences** in the **climatic** phase.
7. Determine **degree of victory** based on **rising action** or **climax** (above).
8. Determine **benefits of victory** or **consequences of defeat**.
9. Describe the **outcome** based on the **story obstacle**.

5.2.2 Group Scored Contest Outcomes

In a **group scored contest** the side that has the last undefeated contestant gains the **prize**.

If the PCs won, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-best **outcome** obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one opponent, the **outcome**. If the PCs lost, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-worst outcome obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one PC, the **outcome**.

For example, your PC Lieutenant Jackson of the Royal Navy has led a shore-action against a French outpost. Lieutenant Jackson and two other PCs have **victory outcomes** *at the end of the contest, so the Royal Navy wins the day. To determine how well the Royal Navy has done your GM looks at the three* **victorious outcomes** *for the Royal Navy, a* **major victory***, a* **minor victory** *and a* **marginal victory***. The second best outcome is a* **minor victory** *so your GM declares that the Royal Navy have a* **minor victory** *and have overrun the French outpost, but gained little else.*

Later you lead your men in a spirited defense against a French boarding action of your ship. However, the French win the day, with Lieutenant Jackson and the other PCs suffering **defeat outcomes** *at the end of the* **contest***. Looking at your PCs* **outcomes** *there is a* **major defeat***, two* **minor defeats** *and a* **marginal defeat***. The French win the day with a* **minor defeat** *for your Royal Navy crew.*

To determine individual **consequences** or **benefits**, in **rising action**, even if you engage multiple opponents in a **rising action scored contest**, only use the last opponent you engaged to determine your individual **outcome**. In a climatic contest total the **resolution points** scored against you by all your opponents. If you engage more than one opponent, be sure to add the **resolution points** scored against you by all of them. If you lost, add 1 to your total. Your GM cross-references the total against the **climactic state of adversity** table.

5.2.3 Unrelated Actions

If you are not currently enmeshed in a **round**, either after a successful disengagement, or after winning a **round**, you may take actions within the scene that do not directly contribute to the **defeat** of the other side. These **unrelated actions** may grant an **augment** to yourself or to a teammate. You may achieve a secondary story objective. This resembles an **asymmetrical round**, except that, as you are not targeted by any opponents, there is no additional risk.

5.2.4 Assists

You may take an **unrelated action** to grant an **assist** to a teammate enmeshed in a **round**. **Assists** are subject to the same restrictions as **augments**: they must be both credible and interesting.

Your first **assist** faces a **moderate resistance**. Each subsequent **assist** attempt to the same beneficiary, steps up by one factor on the table: high, then very high, then **nearly impossible**. The **resistance** escalation occurs even when another PC steps in to make a subsequent **assist**. This escalation allows the occasional dramatic rescue but makes it difficult for players to prolong losing battles to excruciating length. Your GM should make it seem credible by justifying the increasing **resistances** with descriptions of ever-escalating countermeasures on the part of the opposition.

Your GM may adjust the starting **resistance** up or down by one step to account for campaign credibility or other dramatic factors. If an **assist** as proposed seems too improbable or insufficiently useful, your GM should collaborate with you to propose alternate suggestions which would face **moderate resistance**.

The **assist** alters the score against your teammate according to the **outcome** of a **simple contest**

5.2.4.1 ASSIST TABLE

Contest Outcome	Change to Score Against Recipient
Complete Victory	-4
Major Victory	-3
Minor Victory	-2
Marginal Victory	-1
Marginal Defeat	0
Minor Defeat	+1
Major Defeat	+2
Complete Defeat	+3

Scores can never be reduced below 0.

5.2.4 Followers

You may choose to have your **followers** take part in **group scored contests** in one of three ways: as full contestants, as secondary contestants, or as supporters.

Contestant: The **follower** takes part in the **contest** as any other PC would. You roll for your **followers** as you would their main characters. However, your **followers** are removed from the **contest** whenever 3 **resolution points** are

scored against them in a given **round**. An additional 2 **resolution points** are then scored against them, increasing the severity of any **consequences** they suffer.

Secondary contestant: To act as a secondary contestant, your **follower** must have an **ability** relevant to the **contest**. The **follower** sticks by your side, contributing directly to the effort: fighting in a battle, tossing in arguments in a legal dispute, acting as the ship's navigator, or whatever. Although you describe this, you do not roll for the **follower**. Instead, you may, at any point, shift any number of **resolution points** to a **follower** acting as a secondary contestant. Followers with 3 or more **resource points** lodged against them are removed from the scene. When a **follower** is removed from the scene, an additional 2 **resolution points** are lodged against them, increasing the severity of **consequences** they suffer.

Supporter: Your **follower** is present in the scene, but does not directly engage your opponents. Instead they may perform **assists** and other **unrelated actions**.

Followers acting in any of these three capacities may be removed from the **contest** by otherwise unengaged opponents. To remove a **follower** from a scene, an opponent engages your **follower** in a **simple contest**. Your GM sets the **resistance**, or if it is another PC's **follower** they determine the relevant **ability** of the **follower** engaging yours. On any failure, your **follower** is taken out of the **contest**. For **consequence** determination purposes, the follower has X+2 **resolution points** lodged against them, where X is the usual number levied by the **resolution point** table.

5.2.5 Risky Gambits

During a **scored contest**, you can attempt to force a conflict to an early resolution by making a **risky gambit**. If you win the **round**, you lodge an additional 1 **resolution point** against your opponent. However, if you lose the **round**, your opponent lodges an additional 2 **resolution points** against you.

If both contestants engage in a **risky gambit**, the winner lodges an additional 2 **resolution points** against the loser.

5.2.6 Defensive Responses

In a **scored contest**, you can make a **defensive response**, lowering the number of **resolution points** lodged against you in a **round**. If you win the **round**, the number of **resolution points** you lodge against your opponent decreases by 1. If you lose, your opponent lodges 2 fewer **resolution points** against you. The total number of **resolution points** assigned by a **round** is never less than 0; there is no such thing as a negative **resolution point**.

5.2.7 Joining Scored Contests in Progress

When you wish to join a **scored contest** in progress, you and your GM should discuss whether you accept the current framing. If so, you can participate. In a **scored contest**, you simply select an opponent and enter into a new **round**. If you want to achieve something other than the goal established during framing, you may instead perform **unrelated actions**, including **assists** and **augments**.

5.2.8 Switching Abilities

You may describe an action in a **scored contest** that is not covered by the **ability** that you started the contest with. There are two possibilities here: either you are trying to provide color to your actions in the **round**, without seeking to gain advantage, or you are seeking to gain advantage over your opponent with a novel **tactic**. In the former case, you can continue to use the **ability** you started the contest with, as you should not be penalized for wanting to enhance the contest with colorful or entertaining descriptions. In the latter case you should switch **abilities**, and your GM must decide if the **resistance** changes because of your new **ability**. Your GM is encouraged to reward **tactics** that exploit weaknesses that have been identified in the story so far with a lower **resistance**. Sometimes your GM may respond with a higher **resistance** because your **tactic** looks less likely to succeed due to conditions already established in the story.

5.3 Extended Contest

Extended contests are longer and more dramatic than **simple contests**. Your GM uses **extended contests** when the **outcome** of the struggle is important, to generate suspense for the players, or when they want a back-and-forth struggle. It is something you and your GM should visualize and describe.

An **extended contest** consists of one or more **rounds**, in which you perform actions that are similar to **simple contests**. However, actions and **rounds** do not decide the **outcome** of the whole **contest**, only who gains or loses **advantage points (AP)** at that time. You take actions in turn, an **exchange**, losing and gaining the advantage, until either you or your opponent runs out of **advantage points** and is **defeated**.

5.3.1 Procedure

1. Your GM **frames the contest**.
2. You choose a **tactic**, and figure your PC's **target number (TN)** using the **rating** of your **ability**, plus or minus **modifiers** the GM may give you. Figure your starting **advantage point (AP)** total using the **TN**,

including all **modifiers** and **augments**. The **AP** include +20 for each level of **mastery**, and can also be increased by **followers**.

3. The GM determines the **resistance**. The GM opposes the PC with a **resistance**—the harder the task or tougher the opponent, the higher the **resistance**. The GM figures starting **APs** for the **resistance** from the **resistance TN**.

4. Carry out one or more **rounds**, repeating as necessary.
    1. Each **round** consists of two **exchanges**: an action and immediate response.
        1. Describe your action towards the desired **prize**, what **ability** you use, and how much risk you take. "I want to climb straight up to that outcrop, taking chances if needed." You can specify your **AP bid**; if you do not, your GM determines this based on the amount of risk you are taking. The size of the **bid** mirrors how bold and risky your character's action is. Extreme or aggressive actions mean a high **AP bid**, and cautious actions require less.
        2. The **ability** used can be varied, but **APs** are always calculated on the first **ability** that you use in a contest. That **ability** must be used in the first **round**.
        3. You gamble a number of your **APs** in an attempt to reduce your opponent's **AP**, but if you fail the attempt you lose the **AP**.
        4. Roll a die to determine your **degree of victory or defeat**, then apply any **bumps**. Your GM does the same.
        5. Compare the results of the two die rolls on the Extended Contest Table to determine who loses **AP**; only when you have a **critical** can you gain **AP** from your opponent. The **AP bid** is multiplied by this number before applying the results. Thus, if you **bid 3 AP** and the result is "Loser loses 2x **bid**," the loser loses 3 x 2 = 6 **AP**. Round half points up.
        6. Determine **outcome**. Each contestant's **AP** total rises or falls during the contest as they gain the upper hand or are driven back. **Exchanges** continue until one contestant reaches 0 **advantage points** or fewer. At that point, the contest is over (even if it is the middle of a **round**). The loser's final **AP** total determines the **outcome** for the victor.
        7. The GM then hazards a number of **APs** for the **resistance**, in the same way.
    5. **Advantage points** are only relevant for the length of a particular **contest**. Your PC does not have any until the next **extended contest** begins, when you calculate them all over again

5.3.1.1 EXTENDED CONTEST TABLE

	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Critical	Worse roll transfers ½x bid, else tie**	Loser transfers 1x bid**	Loser transfers 2x bid**	Loser transfers 3x bid**
Success	Loser transfers 1x bid**	Worse roll loses ½x bid, else tie	Loser loses 1x bid	Loser loses 2x bid**
Failure	Loser transfers 2x bid**	Loser loses 1x bid	Worse roll loses ½x bid, else tie	Loser loses 1x bid**
Failure	Loser transfers 3x bid**	Loser loses 2x bid	Loser loses 1x bid**	Tie*

- In a **group extended contest**, the GM may declare that both contestants lose 1/2x **bid** to indicate that, although their results cancel out with respect to each other, their situation worsens compared to other contestants. ** If the loser has **ability** 6 less than their opponent or worse, do not transfer, loser just loses AP instead.

5.3.2 Advantage Points

5.3.2.1 Bidding Advantage Points   The size of your **AP bid** reflects the risk inherent in your actions. You describe your action and intent, and say how many **APs** you want to **bid**. If you describe an all-out offensive with your sword cutting vicious arcs, you need to bid a lot of **APs**; if you say that you are circling your foe cautiously, a low **bid** is in order. Your GM will look at the level of risk you are taking, and may suggest that you change your **bid** to better match your actions. If you do not declare a **bid** before rolling the die, your GM will decide how many points are **bid** (using 3 as a default), with riskier actions calling for higher **AP bids**.

5.3.2.3 Followers and Advantage Points   **Followers** can act in different ways during a **contest**, **augmenting** you with their **abilities** or allowing you to use one of your **abilities** as if it were your own. Alternatively, a **follower** with a relevant **ability** or **keyword** can simply add their **APs** to the PC's at the beginning of the **contest**.

Remember to figure any **modifiers** into your **follower's ability** before adding it to your starting **AP** total.

Neither you nor the GM makes rolls for **followers**. Instead, their actions are subsumed into yours. The **follower's** relevant **ability** or **keyword** is used solely as a source of **advantage points**.

You can assign your **followers** to someone else, although you may have to succeed at a contest to persuade a reluctant follower to go along.

5.3.2.3 Advantage Point Knowledge   Once your opponent has won or lost **APs** during the current contest, you can ask the GM what the opposition's **AP** total is. This is where the element of skill comes in. When choosing how many **APs** to stake, you must weigh the effect they want to gain if you succeed versus the risk you face if the action fails.

5.3.3 Extended Contest Outcomes

At the end of the contest the **APs** of the loser determine the **benefits** for the winner or **consequences** for the loser. As with all **contests**, if the contest involved a **resistance**, and not another PC, we care about your **outcome**, win or lose, and the GM should feel free to narrate the **outcome** for the **resistance** depending on their interpretation of your **outcome**, which may not be symmetrical. For example, if the **benefit of victory** for your PC is **pumped** the GM should feel free to interpret what this means for the **resistance**: in a melee they might be dead, in a social contest they might be exiled, or they might surrender in the melee or cede ground in a social contest. Your GM should focus on the **prize** that was agreed when deciding how to narrate the resolution of the contest.

5.3.3.1 EXTENDED CONTEST TABLE

Final AP Total	Level of Defeat	Consequence for Loser	Benefit for Winner
0 to –10 AP	Marginal	Hurt	Fresh
–11 to –20 AP	Minor	Impaired	Pumped
–21 to –30 AP	Major	Injured	Invigorated
–31 or fewer AP	Complete	Dying	Heroic

5.3.3 Group Extended Contests

When an **extended contest** involves three or more contestants, it is a **group extended contest**. The conflict is often between two groups; each side wants to knock the other out of the contest by reducing all of its opponents to 0 or fewer **APs**.

Sometimes a contest will be a free-for-all involving three or more groups.

Rounds in a **group extended contest** differ in that the order of resolution is more complicated. At the start of the **round**, you state your action and **AP bid** and single out one or more opponents. Your GM then determines the order in

which the contestants act. Taking surprise, withdrawals, and similar situations into effect, they have three options:

- Contestants can go in order from most daring to least daring **bid**: a reckless **bid** goes before a daring **bid**, as defined in "Bidding Advantage Points" above. Thus, the most heroic actions take precedence, acting in order of decreasing boldness. (In case of a tie, the contestant whose actual **bid** is higher goes first.)

- Contestants can go in order from highest **bid** to lowest: a **bid** of 20 **APs** goes before a **bid** of 5 **APs**. (In case of a tie, the contestant whose **bid** is the most daring goes first.)

- Contestants can go in order from highest to lowest **AP** total. (In case of a tie, the highest or most daring **bid** goes first.)

During a standard **extended contest** an opponent immediately responds to your action with their own, but in a **group extended contest** this is not true—they cannot act (against you or anyone else) until their turn comes. You may want to change your declared action if another character attacks you first, and your GM will normally allow you to do so, usually to return an attack in kind.

The order in which contestants act is also important because a character (whether PC or **resistance** such as an NPC) can be knocked out of the contest before their turn comes. If your chosen opponent is knocked out before your PC acts, the GM decides if you can change your declared action.

You always have the option of delaying and allowing other contestants to act before you. You can jump back into the action at any time during the **round**, although again your GM determines if you can change your stated action.

When all characters still in the contest have completed their action the **round** ends and a new one begins.

5.3.2.5 Group Extended Contest Outcomes   In a **group extended contest** the side that has the last undefeated contestant gains the **prize**.

If the PCs won, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-best **outcome** obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one opponent, the **outcome**. If the PCs lost, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-worst outcome obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one PC, the **outcome**.

*For example, your PC Lieutenant Jackson of the Royal Navy has led a shore-action against a French outpost. Lieutenant Jackson and two other PCs have **victory outcomes** at the end of the contest, so the Royal Navy wins the day. To determine how well the Royal Navy has done your GM looks at the three **victorious outcomes** for the Royal Navy, a **major victory**, a **minor victory** and a **marginal victory**. The second best outcome is a **minor victory** so your*

*GM declares that the Royal Navy have a **minor victory** and have overrun the French outpost, but gained little else.*

*Later you lead your men in a spirited defense against a French boarding action of your ship. However, the French win the day, with Lieutenant Jackson and the other PCs suffering **defeat outcomes** at the end of the **contest**. Looking at your PCs **outcomes** there is a **major defeat**, two **minor defeats** and a **marginal defeat**. The French win the day with a **minor defeat** for your Royal Navy crew.*

To determine individual **consequences** or **benefits**, use the **AP** of last opponent you engaged to determine your individual **outcome**.

5.3.4 Parting Shot

When you **defeat** an opponent in an **extended contest**, you can act again immediately to try to make their **consequences of defeat** more severe. This is called a **parting shot**. You once again **bid AP** and use an appropriate **ability** against your opponent. If you succeed, their **AP** will decrease; their **outcome** may or may not change, but they cannot finish the **round** by taking an action against you.

Parting shots are risky; if you fail, an **AP** transfer might bring your opponent back into the **contest**. Your stumble can give them an opening that they can exploit in an effort to snatch **victory** from the jaws of **defeat**.

The **consequences of defeat** can remain after a **parting shot**, if the GM chooses. Thus, an opponent might keep a **penalty** from a defeat even if they are handed another chance by their opponent's failed **parting shot**.

5.3.5 Final Action

If your PC falls to 0 or fewer **advantage points** in a standard **extended contest**, you are **defeated**. In a **group extended contest**, however, you can still try a **final action** to stay in the **contest** as long as you are not **dying** (which allows for no actions). A **final action** represents the knack to come back when your opponent turns away to gloat or deal with the other player characters. A character may only attempt one **final action** in any **contest**.

To attempt a **final action**, you must be free from attention by the opposition. You must spend a **hero point**. This does not provide a **bump** up on the roll to come; it is the cost of performing a **final action**. You can use a relevant **ability** in a **simple contest** against the number of **APs** your PC is below 0. Even if you succeed, the original **consequences of defeat** still apply: a **hurt** still takes a –3 to appropriate **abilities** until healed.

If you win the **simple contest**, you rejoin the contest with a positive **AP** total. Your new total is a fraction of your original **AP** total at the outset of the **contest**. If you fail the **simple contest**, your **AP** total drops even further, perhaps worsening your **outcome**.

Your GM should not use a **final action** for the **resistance** (and has no **hero points** which are required for this).

5.3.5.1 FINAL ACTION RESULTS TABLE

Result	AP change
Marginal Victory	Rejoin contest with 1/8 of your starting APs
Minor Victory	Rejoin contest with 1/4 of your starting APs
Major Victory	Rejoin contest with 1/2 of your starting APs
Complete Victory	Rejoin contest with full starting APs
Marginal Defeat	Lose APs equal to 1/8 of your starting value
Minor Defeat	Lose APs equal to 1/4 of your starting value
Major Defeat	Lose APs equal to 1/2 of your starting value
Complete Defeat	Lose APs equal to your full starting value

5.3.6 Desperation Stake

You can stake more **advantage points** than you currently have, to a maximum of your starting **AP** total. This allows you to attempt a **desperation stake** even when you are within a single **AP** of **defeat**. Your GM can never stake more **advantage points** than they have.

5.3.7 Unrelated Action

If you are unengaged, you can forfeit your action to do something unrelated to the object of the contest. You might want to try to open a door, haul an important piece of equipment out of your saddlebags, heal yourself with magic, or **augment** an **ability**. Depending on the circumstances, you may have to engage in a **simple contest** to find out if you succeed at the **unrelated action**.

5.3.8 Asymmetrical Exchange

If you are engaged, you may choose to briefly suspend your attempt to best your opponent in an **extended contest**, in order to do something else. An instance where you are trying to do something else and your opponent is trying to win the **contest** is called an **asymmetrical exchange**.

In an **asymmetrical exchange**, you do not score **APs** against your opponent if you win the **exchange**. Instead, you succeed at whatever else you were doing. You still lose **AP** if you fail. Often you will be using an **ability** other than the one you've been waging the **contest** with, one better suited to the task at hand. This becomes additionally dangerous when the **rating** associated with your substitute **ability** is significantly lower than the one used for the rest of the **contest**.

In addition to secondary objectives, as in the above example, you may engage in **asymmetrical exchange** to grant **augments** (see above) to yourself or others.

5.3.9 Switching Abilities

You can usually switch freely from one **ability** to another in the middle of an **extended contest**. It makes sense to do so if you think a different **ability** will yield an advantage. You may need to do an **unrelated action** to switch abilities—for example, when changing weapons or equipment.

Your **AP** total stays the same when you change your **ability**, so it makes sense to start the contest with your best **ability** (appropriate to your goal, of course). If this seems odd, remember that **advantage points** measure advantage—how well the character is doing in the contest at the current moment. They do not measure proficiency; that is what the **target number** is for.

When you switch **abilities**, your **prize** does not change, just the means by which you pursue it.

5.3.10 Disengaging

To disengage from an **extended contest** when your opponent is actively trying to keep you in the conflict, take an **unrelated action** to make a **simple contest** roll against the **resistance**. You use an **ability** relevant to your attempt to disengage; the opponent counters with the **resistance** or, if a PC, an appropriate **ability**. If the GM attempts to disengage, they use the **resistance** to do so. These **abilities** may or may not be those used in the main **contest**.

On any **victory**, you are able to leave the **contest**. On any **defeat**, you must remain in the **contest**, and transfer a fraction of your current **APs** to your opponent.

If you withdraw from a **group extended contest** and later decide to rejoin it (or are forced to), you rejoin with the **advantage point** total you had when you left. If you can show how your leaving and returning substantially changes the situation, the GM may restore some of your **AP**—for example, if you leave a street fight to get your **followers** from a nearby tavern. Leaving a **contest** just to pick up a weapon or catch your breath is an **unrelated action**, and does not change your **advantage points**.

AP TRANSFER FRON FAILED DISENGAGEMENT

Level of Defeat	AP transferred
Marginal	1/8 of your current total
Minor	1/4 of your current total
Major	1/2 of your current total
Complete	Your current total - 1

5.3.10 AP Lending

AP lending is a common and important option in **extended contests**. You can transfer some or all of your **advantage points** to another PC engaged in a **group extended contest** on your side. With more **advantage points**, they can stay in the **contest** for longer, or make larger **bids** without driving themselves to **defeat**.

You cannot lend **advantage points** to yourself.

If a **follower's AP** are already included in your **AP** total, the **follower** cannot lend them to you.

Use an **unrelated action** and describe what your character is trying to do to improve the position of the target. For example, your PC might throw them a weapon, jeer at an opponent, or simply shout words of encouragement. Then, state the number of **AP** you are trying to **lend**. (The GM may suggest a higher or lower **bid** based on the action you describe.) This determines the **resistance** you face in a **simple contest**, with **outcomes** as determined below. Beware: PCs trying to aid their comrades in this way risk worsening their friend's position.

AP LENDING

Outcome	AP Transferred
Complete Victory	Target gains the attempted AP; lender does not lose AP
Major or Minor Victory	Target gains the attempted AP; lender loses the AP
Marginal Victory	Target gains ½ the attempted AP; lender loses ½ the attempted AP
Tie	No Effect
Marginal Defeat	Target gains nothing; lender loses ½ the attempted AP
Minor or Major Defeat	Target gains nothing; lender loses the attempted AP
Complete	Target and lender each deduct the attempted AP from their totals

5.3.11 AP Gifting

If you are uninvolved in the contest you can also increase a participant's **AP** total. You **bid** a number of **APs** which may not exceed your **target number**. The **resistance** is twice the **bid**. The amount transferred depend on the **outcome**.

AP GIFTING

Outcome	AP Transferred
Complete Victory	Recipient gains 2x bid
Major or Minor Victory	Recipient gains bid
Marginal Victory	Recipient gains 1/2 of bid
Tie	No Effect
Marginal Defeat	Recipient's opponent gains 1/2 bid
Minor or Major Defeat	Recipient's opponent gains bid
Complete	Recipient's opponent gains 2x bids

5.3.12 Edges and Handicaps

Your GM may want rules to represent opponents who strike rarely but with great effect or who strike often but with little impact per blow. The first quality can be represented with an **edge**; the second, with a **handicap**. **Edges** and **handicaps** are designated using ˆ (ˆ5, for example), **handicaps** with a minus sign (−ˆ5).

Edges and **handicaps** affect only the **advantage points bid** in an **extended contest**. Your **edge** is added to your **AP bid** when your opponent must **lose** or **transfer APs**. Your **handicap** is subtracted from your bid when your opponent **loses** or **transfers APs**. A contestant's **edge** or **handicap** never affects his **AP** when he defends, only when he is attacking.

Most GMs find **edges** and **handicaps** more trouble than they're worth, and depict these phenomena with description alone. Earlier books made more extensive use of **edges** and **handicaps** to represent the quality of equipment carried by the PCs. For example, your suit for chainmail might be ˆ4 and your sword ˆ3. In games where restricted access to equipment is a significant part of the setting and your GM wants to use extended contests it may make sense to use them, otherwise we recommend ignoring them.

5.4 Chained Contest

Chained contests do not defer **consequences** to the end of the **contest**, instead your GM applies the **consequences of defeat** to the loser in the

contest immediately following a **round**. This leads to a grittier feel to the **contest**, but at the price of a death spiral: once you lose the **consequences of defeat** make it likelier that you will lose again.

To run an **extended contest** your GM runs a **simple contest** as normal, and then applies the **outcome** according to the following table, with the **consequences** taking immediate effect.

You decide if you wish to continue the **chained contest**, and your GM makes a similar determination for the **resistance**. Both you and your GM then express your intent. If your or your GM wishes to continue, play out another **simple contest**.

If you, or your GM, wishes to **disengage**, then on any **victory** you leave the contest, without inflicting consequences on the opposition. If both you and the GM wish to leave the contest, then you both **disengage**, and the contest ends. If any contestant is reduced to a **complete defeat**, the **contest** ends automatically.

Chained contests are the simplest form of **long contest**, and you may prefer them for that reason. They also tend to produce the most extreme **outcomes**, as participants tend to continue until **complete defeat**.

Chained contests are symmetric, in that they indicate the **outcome** for the loser, and as this is applied in steps, give the GM no freedom to interpret the **outcome** for the loser when narrating.

5.4.1 CHAINED CONTEST TABLE

Roll	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Critical	Worse roll is **hurt**. If tied, no effect.	Opponent **hurt**. If already **hurt** in this contest, Injured. If already injured, Dying	Opponent Injured. If already Injured in this contest, Dying	Opponent Dying: player has them at complete mercy. Contest is over.
Success	PC is **hurt**. If already **hurt** in this contest, Injured. If already injured, Dying	Worse roll is **hurt**. If tied, no effect	Opponent **hurt**. If already **hurt** in this contest, Injured. If already injured, Dying	Opponent Injured. If already Injured in this contest, Dying

Roll	Critical	Success	Failure	Fumble
Failure	PC is Injured. If already Injured in this contest, Dying	PC is **hurt**. If already **hurt** in contest, Injured. If injured, Dying	Worse roll is **hurt**. If tied, no effect	Opponent **hurt**. If already **hurt** in this contest, Injured. If already injured, Dying
Fumble	PC Dying: opponent has them at complete mercy. Contest is over.	PC is Injured. If already Injured in this contest, Dying	PC is **hurt**. If already **hurt** contest, Injured. If already injured, Dying	Both make a mistake. No effect on contest. Side effects at GM's discretion

5.4.1 Group Chained Contest

In a **group chained contest** opponents pair off and fight a series of **chained contest rounds** with each other.

Your GM should determine the order of action, but as all rounds represent actions by both aggressor and defender there is no advantage to be obtained by going first. If there are surplus characters on your side, you may engage an already engaged opponent in a second **contest**; your GM may choose to apply a **penalty** to them as they are already engaged with one opponent. Alternatively you may choose to **augment** an existing player character, reflecting aiding them in their fight instead.

5.4.2 Group Chained Contest Outcomes

In a **group chained contest** the side that has the last undefeated contestant gains the **prize**.

If the PCs won, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-best **outcome** obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one opponent, the **outcome**. If the PCs lost, determine the group's overall **outcome** by using the second-worst outcome obtained by the PCs, or if there is only one PC, the **outcome**.

*For example, your PC Lieutenant Jackson of the Royal Navy has led a shore-action against a French outpost. Lieutenant Jackson and two other PCs have **victory outcomes** at the end of the contest, so the Royal Navy wins the day. To determine how well the Royal Navy has done your GM looks at the three **victorious outcomes** for the Royal Navy, a **major victory**, a **minor victory** and a **marginal victory**. The second best outcome is a **minor victory** so your*

*GM declares that the Royal Navy have a **minor victory** and have overrun the French outpost, but gained little else.*

*Later you lead your men in a spirited defense against a French boarding action of your ship. However, the French win the day, with Lieutenant Jackson and the other PCs suffering **defeat outcomes** at the end of the **contest**. Looking at your PCs **outcomes** there is a **major defeat**, two **minor defeats** and a **marginal defeat**. The French win the day with a **minor defeat** for your Royal Navy crew.*

Individual **consequences** or **benefits** will have already been determined by the **chained contest outcomes** on each **round**.

5.4.3 Followers in a Chained Contest

Followers may augment your character in a **chained contest**.

In addition, if you suffer a defeat in a round of a **chained contest** you may transfer that **outcome** to a follower, but they suffer a **state of adversity** one level worse than you would do, so marginal becomes minor etc., and the **follower** is removed from the **contest**.

5.5 No Nesting

Your GM should never "nest" one **long contest** inside another. If a **long contest** is in progress and you want to perform an action your GM should treat it as an **unrelated action**, or disallow it completely during the current **contest**.

5.6 Extended vs Scored Contests vs Chained Contests

We recommend that your GM chooses one form of **long contest** only, and sticks to it, within a given campaign of *QuestWorlds*. If in doubt, use a **scored contest** by default.

Scored contests have the advantage of speed and simplicity. **Extended contests** have the advantage of each **exchange** allowing both parties to take turns acting, over your GM adjudicating who has the initiative; the bidding system also adds drama. **Chained contests** offer the benefit of grittier exchanges where the **outcomes** of each **round** have impact, as opposed to being 'cosmetic' until the end of the **contest**.

Scored contests require more interpretation by your GM, to determine who has the initiative and describe the nature of the next **round**. **Extended contests** drama comes at the cost of increased complexity, and some harder to interpret

corner cases. **Chained contests** create a death spiral which can be hard to break out of.

Both **scored contests** and **chained contests** can be used as an **escalating contest**, see §2.8.2

5.7 Extremely Long Contests

There's no particular time scale associated with **contests**. But some **contests** may by their very nature be a drama that can't be resolved at one point in the narrative. Examples include political campaigns, construction projects, or seductions. These can be resolved by **long contests** where each **round** is conducted at an appropriate moment, rather than sequentially. Your GM will need to keep track of the **resolution or advantage points** and the **resistance**, though this might change as the context changes (a civil war started by the players could impede their castle-building plans). The challenges of each round will vary, and you may use a different **ability** or **augment** in the next exchange.

6.0 Relationships

Abilities may represent your relationship to NPCs.

6.1 Supporting Characters

Many relationships connect you to NPCs controlled by the GM.

When you try to use one of these relationships to solve a problem, your **tactic** is your relationship **ability**. You can't simply go to the **supporting character** you have a relationship with, stick them with the problem, and expect to see it solved.

If you succeed, the **supporting character** helps you solve the problem. If you fail, they don't. As with any **ability**, you must still specify how the NPC goes about overcoming the **story obstacle**. Calls on relationships are almost always **simple contests**.

In crucial situations, it may seem dramatically inappropriate for you to solve a problem indirectly, by working through others. Your GM can expose the **supporting character** to serious risk. If the character dies or otherwise suffers a change of status that renders them useless to you, you permanently lose the relationship **ability**.

Before putting **supporting characters** at serious risk, your GM should make sure the players understand the magnitude of the possible consequences.

When **supporting characters** undertake significant risk, the **supporting character** may suffer a **consequence of defeat** commensurate with the level of the **defeat** in the **contest**. Or it may simply be your relationship that is damaged or destroyed.

6.2 Allies

An **ally** is a character of roughly the same level of accomplishment as you, often in the same or a similar line of work. For every favor you ask of them they'll ask one of you. These reciprocal favors will be roughly equivalent in terms of risk, time commitment, resistance class, and inconvenience.

6.3 Patrons

Patrons enjoy greater access to assets than you, either through personal ownership (as in a Merchant Prince) or authority (as in the governor of a province). They may lend you advice or provide you with assets but are too busy and important to personally perform tasks for you. They may hire you to do jobs, or issue orders within a command structure to which you both belong.

When you roll your **patron** relationship, your GM adjusts the resistance class depending on what you have done for them lately.

6.4 Contacts

A **contact** is a specialist in an **occupation**, skill, or area of expertise. **Contacts** provide your information and perform minor favors, but will expect information or small favors from you in return.

You can describe a **contact** as being a particular individual, or as a group of similar individuals.

6.4.1 Occupational Contacts

Any **occupational keyword** can be treated as a source of **contacts**. However, using an **occupational keyword** as a source of **contacts** will always be a **stretch**. To more reliably draw on particular **contacts** associated with your occupation, you should take an explicit ability. Use a **breakout ability** if you are using **umbrella keywords**.

6.5 Followers

A **follower** is a **supporting character** that travels with you and contributes on a regular basis to your success.

There are two types of followers: **sidekicks** and **retainers**.

Followers need not be people, or even sentient beings: you can write up a spirit guardian, trusty robot, or companion animal as a **follower**.

6.5.1 Sidekick

A **sidekick** is a **supporting character** under your control. Most of the time they stay at your side to render assistance, but they can also go off and perform errands or missions on their own.

You should give your **sidekick** a name. You should, when asked, explain how the **sidekick** came to be your **follower**, and why they continue in that role.

Sidekicks start with three **abilities**, one rated at 16 and the others at 13. Any of these **abilities** may be a **keyword**. At least one of them should indicate a **distinguishing characteristic**.

If the sidekick is nonhuman or a member of an unusual culture, one of its three starting **abilities** must be its species or culture **keyword**.

Once you have determined the **sidekick's** base **abilities**, they allocate 15 additional points between three of them, spending no more than 10 on any one **ability**.

You can improve these **abilities** through the expenditure of **hero points**.

You may use any of your **sidekick's abilities** as your own. The **sidekick** can go off and do things without you.

6.5.2 Replacing Lost Sidekicks

As a **consequence of defeats** in which they participated, **sidekicks** can be killed or leave your service permanently.

Defeat in physical **contests** can lead to literal death. Metaphorical deaths from non-violent **contests** indicate a break you. The **sidekick** may angrily withdraw from your service, but is more likely to sorrowfully retire. You may be able to bring a **sidekick** back from metaphorical death by overcoming **story obstacles**.

If you lose a **sidekick**, you may create a new one without needing to spend a **hero point**. You must explain how the new **sidekick** has come to be your new **follower**.

You may find it convenient to promote **retainers** to **sidekick** status, giving them names and personalities, with a sudden improvement in **abilities** and **ratings** to match.

6.5.3 Retainers

A **retainer** is a more or less anonymous servant or helper. You may specify a single **retainer**, or, where appropriate to your character concept, an entire staff of them.

Like any other **ability**, a **retainer ability** allows you to overcome relevant **story obstacles** by engaging in a **contest**. To model the contribution of **retainers**, when you are acting, you can use them to **augment** your **ability**. Your GM can rule that **consequences of defeat** apply to **retainers**.

Retainers generally regard you with all the affection and loyalty due to an employer or master. If you treat them more poorly than is expected for their culture, your GM should increase the **resistance class** of attempts to make use of their talents.

If you lose **retainers** for any reason, you can replace them simply by providing a convincing explanation of how you go about it.

6.6 Relationships as Flaws

Certain relationships with **supporting characters** act as **flaws**. They impose obligations on you, prompting your GM to present you with **story obstacles** you have no choice but to overcome.

6.6.1 Dependents

A **dependent** is a person, usually a family member or loved one, who requires your aid and protection. Your GM should periodically create storylines in which your **dependent** is endangered.

Rather than taking a **dependent** as a **flaw**, you may find it more fruitful to specify the nature of your relationship as an **ability**, such as *Love for Wife* or *Love for Son.*

6.6.2 Adversaries

An **adversary** is a rival, enemy or other individual who can be relied upon to periodically disrupt your plans.

The **adversary's** goals are probably the opposite of yours, although they could be a bitter rival within the same community, organization, or movement.

To treat an **adversary** as an **ability**, rather than a **flaw**, describe your emotional response to them. Examples: *Hates Leonard Crisp*, *Fears the Electronaut*, *Sworn Vengeance Against Heimdall.* That way, you still inspire your GM to add the plot elements you desire, but can use your antipathy toward the enemy to **augment** your **target number**s against them.

7.0 Hero Points

Hero points (HP) are a resource that you must carefully allocate. They allow you to heighten your **victories** and dull your **defeats**. They are the currency you pay to improve your **abilities** over time.

7.1 Improving Your Character

You start each session with one **HP**. Any time that you take a significant action the GM can award you another **hero point**. The action should involve a **contest** but need not be successful. An action should be heroic or villainous in order to earn a **hero point**, not dull. Are the other players interested in what just happened? Don't trigger **contests** just to win **hero points**, your actions should drive story or character development forward.

During a session you can spend those **HPs** as normal.

Your GM should award a maximum of 5 **HPs** in a session to you.

Unspent **HPs** at the end of the session become **experience points (XPs)** and accumulate between sessions.

When you accumulate 10 **XPs**, you can buy an advance. An advance allows you to select two of the following. You cannot choose an element more than once.

- [] +9 to a standalone **ability** or breakout **ability**; or +6 to a **keyword**.
- [] +6 to a standalone **ability** or breakout **ability**; or +3 to a **keyword**.
- [] a new standalone **ability** at 13; or a new breakout **ability** at + 1.
- [] a new standalone **ability** at 13.
- [] Turn a stand-alone **ability** into a **keyword** by adding a new +1 breakout **ability** to it.

In some genres you may wish to maintain a tally of the total **XPs** earned as a measure of your reputation.

7.1.1 Catch-Ups

To encourage well-rounded characters, a package deal, called a **catch-up**, becomes available whenever you acquire via improvement a new **mastery** in one of your **abilities** (**keyword** or stand-alone). Any time you one of your **ratings** crosses a **mastery** threshold (i.e. 20 -> 21, 40 -> 41, etc). you may also improve up to three **abilities** or **keywords** of your choice increase by three points each, as long as the chosen **abilities** are currently rated five or more points lower than your newly adjusted **rating** in the raised **ability** that triggered the **catch-up**.

You may not increase the bonus of **breakout abilities** under a **keyword** with a **catch-up**, nor does net effective value of a breakout **ability** crossing a **mastery** threshold trigger a **catch-up**. Only a **keyword**'s base **rating** is considered in this context.

7.1.2 Directed Improvements

On occasion your GM may increase one of your **abilities**, by +3, +6 or +9, or give you a new **ability**, usually rated at 13. These are called **directed improvements**.

Directed improvements are usually rewards for overcoming particularly important or dramatic **story obstacles**. They happen immediately, rather than at session's end.

Your GM will tend to use them to raise **abilities** that would otherwise fall behind, but should increase due to story logic, or introduce new **abilities** for the same reason.

7.2 Advanced Hero Points

An advanced option for **hero points** allow greater player authorship in the game.

7.3 Plot Edits

QuestWorlds is a co-operative game, and you may create details about the setting as the normal part of narration. Your GM should allow this, as long as they do not break credibility. So, you may describe your PC walking over to the pot of soup bubbling on the fire, swiping a drink from the tray the waiter is carrying at the governor's ball, or taking the monorail to the next city to continue your investigation. Your GM should allow these additions without interruption, providing it does not confer significant advantage to your PC. Mostly this will be using elements that have already been established as part of the setting.

A **plot edit** is a more significant moment of good fortune that you wish to narrate, that provides advantage to your PC. You are not just describing something that is plausible in the environment, but something whose existence aids you in overcoming **story obstacles** or uncovering secrets.

A **plot edit** might be thought of as 'fate' or 'luck.'

Spending **hero points** for a **plot edit** allows you to modify the setting or environment in your PC's favor. The chance encounter in the street with an NPC, favorable weather, car keys in the sun visor, the forthcoming eclipse, the wind that fills the sails.

Your GM is the arbitrator of whether a **plot edit** is allowed. It should not suspend the disbelief of the other players in the game or setting or hamper their enjoyment. It should not derail or short-circuit the game's entertainment. The **plot edit** should, by contrast, be something that enhances the story for all the players.

The cost, in **hero points**, of a **plot edit**, is given by the following table.

7.3.1 PLOT EDIT TABLE

Level	Cost	Impact	Example
Minor	1	A credible change that does not alter the situation but offers an edge that could be exploited	The space suit your PC grabbed from the rack during the escape was a belter's suit with powerful headlamps
Moderate	2	A substantive change that does not alter the situation but offers an alternate avenue for resolution	The gate guard at the secret government facility tonight is an old war buddy established by the PC in a prior scene and cemented as a relationship
Major	3	A substantive change that does not flow from previously established facts in the story. A *deus ex machina* change	The XO of the Patrol ship is an old drinking buddy of your PC, a fact not previously established in play

Level	Cost	Impact	Example
Extreme	5	A stroke of good fortune that is unrelated to prior events and resolves a conflict or reveals a secret	The vampire has failed to notice the approaching sun rise, which disintegrates them just as they are about to drain the incapacitated PC

8.0 (Advanced) Community Resources and Support

Some series revolve around the relationship between a band of influential figures and the community they protect. In defense of the community, they can **bolster**, expend, and juggle its various **resources**.

These advanced rules allow your GM to track the rise and fall of the fortunes of your community, and your impact on them.

If your GM intend to play a game centered around a community, you should have a relationship **ability** to that community.

It is possible that you have relationships with other communities that are not the focus of play. Treat these relationships as **abilities** that you can call on, but your GM should not track these communities with these rules. Your GM should pick the level of community that provides the greatest dramatic potential from its competition for **resources**, friendly or otherwise, with its rivals.

Some campaigns do not center on a community, with the adventurers being footloose wanderers. In that case, even if you have community **abilities**, your GM will not track any community. Before you decide this though, consider where your PCs might turn for help, succor, or aid. Is there somewhere in the campaign defined as a place of refuge and safety for you. It may well be that there is a community, the bar where other footloose adventurers all meet, who will help each other out in a tight spot for example, that your GM can model.

8.1 Community Design

8.1.1 Defining Resources

Communities can have a type of **ability** called a **resource** that your GM defines. Your PC can try to draw on their community's **resources** to use them as **abilities**. Your GM should focus on no more than five or so broadly-labeled

resource types, so that the PCs can care about (and have a chance of successfully managing) all of them.

Most communities have variants of the following **resources**, perhaps with more colorful names:

- Wealth — the **ability** of the community to provide financial help, whether counted primarily in dollars, credits, or cattle
- Diplomacy — the **ability** to extract favors from other communities, while minimizing the cost of its reciprocal obligations
- Morale — the community's **ability** to believe in its capacity to achieve its goals, and willingness to follow the directives of its leaders

The following abilities might appear, depending on setting:

- Military — its **ability** to defend itself from outside threats, and to aggressively achieve its own aims through force of arms (for settings where communities of the size you're tracking field their own armed units)
- Magic — the collective **ability** of its people to perform supernatural acts (for fantasy worlds)
- Technology — its access to specialized, rare or secret devices or scientific knowledge not shared by its rivals (for post- apocalyptic or SF worlds)

Similar communities in the genre, should have the same set of **resources**.

8.1.2 Specify an interval

Your GM chooses a suitable interval to mark changes in **resources**. For genres bound by the agricultural season, this is usually a season, for a military genre it might be a campaign, for a ship a voyage.

8.1.3 Assigning Ability Ratings

Your GM distributes the following **ratings** between the five abilities: 12W, 9W, 18, 18, and 12. Note that the size of the group doesn't affect the **ratings**.

Your GM may create a questionnaire that asks the players to make choices about the history of their community. They can choose their multiple-choice answers by consensus, majority vote, or take turns. Each question secretly assigns a score to one or more resource types. When you're done, rank the **resources** in the order of the scores, assigning the high **ratings** to the highest questionnaire results and the lowest to the low.

A questionnaire introduces your setting in a punchy, interactive format, and tailors the community to the players' desires, increasing their investment in it.

8.1.4 Resource Notation

Your GM will keep track of **modifiers** to community **resources** with a copy of the following record sheet. They will use a pencil, because the numbers will fluctuate.

Your GM lists the names and **ratings** of your chosen **resources** in the first row. Under the total column for each, your GM will list the total current modifier. Under the PC column, your GM lists **bonuses** resulting from PC activities (as opposed to un-cemented **background events**.) When PCs **cement a background benefit**, your GM adds its bonus to the PC column.

When PC activity reduces a **penalty** but does not eliminate it, your GM will alter the entry under the Total column to reflect the reduction, but leave the PC column blank.

8.1.4.1 RESOURCE NOTATION TABLE

Total	PC	Total	PC	Total	PC	Total	PC	Total	PC

8.2 Drawing on Resources

You can use community **resources** as **abilities** after convincing the community to let you expend precious assets. This requires a preliminary **contest** using a social **ability**, most likely your community relationship. Your GM will use a **moderate resistance** as the baseline, with higher **resistance**s when your proposals seem selfish or likely to fail, and lower ones when everyone but the dullest dolt would readily see their collective benefits. Your GM may increase **resistance**s if your group draws constantly on community **resources** without replenishing them.

The lobbying effort and the actual resource use require framing, a clear description of what you are doing, and other details to bring them to fictional life. You can use **resource abilities** directly, or to **augment** your own **abilities**.

Unlike character abilities, each use of community **resources** temporarily **depletes** it.

On a **victory**, you win the **prize** specified by **contest framing**, and a **penalty** is applied to subsequent uses of the **resource**.

On a **defeat**, you lose the **prize** and an even more severe **penalty** is applied to subsequent **resource** uses. If you fail to secure the **prize** you were seeking, the depletion **penalty** is also applied to your social and community **abilities**

when interacting with members of your community. This reflects community displeasure at your fruitless expenditure.

Penalties from the Resource Depletion Table replace standard **penalties** for **defeat**, not add to them.

Like other **modifiers** to **resources**, depletion **penalties** end at the end of the current interval. These include **depletion penalties** applied to character **abilities**. However, a **depletion penalty** left unattended at the end of the interval can result in a permanent drop in the relevant **resource**.

If your GM wants resource depletion to lead to longer-lasting social **penalties**, at the cost of some extra bookkeeping, they can have the characters shed a 3-point **penalty** at the end of each interval.

8.2.1 RESOURCE DEPLETION TABLE

Contest Outcome	Depletion Penalty
Complete Victory	0
Major Victory	-3
Minor Victory	-3
Marginal Victory	-3
Marginal Defeat	-6
Minor Defeat	-6
Major Defeat	-6
Complete Defeat	-9

8.2.2 Required Resource Use

As part of your GM's setting design, they may specify that certain actions in a setting always require the use of a community **resource**. Because the **resource** use is obligatory, it need not meet the usual criteria for entertainment value. Also, when the resource is used as an **augment**, you can also add a second **augment** from some other **ability**, adjudicated according to the standard rules, including entertainment value criteria. (This way, the required **resource** use doesn't penalize you by forcing you to **augment** with a low-rated **resource** when you could otherwise use a higher-rated **ability**.)

8.2.3 Penalties to Resources

Threats to community **resources** act as a spur to PC action. Your GM may rule that the **penalty** from any **outcome** may be applied to a **resource**. (It might at the same time be applied to one or more PC **abilities**.)

When choosing a **penalty** arising from a player **defeat** in a **simple contest**, your GM will use the **consequences of defeat** table. For a **long contest**, the **penalty** corresponds to the second worst **state of adversity** suffered by a defeated group member.

If your group voluntarily concede a **contest** by withdrawing, your community suffers **resource depletion** equivalent to a **major defeat**.

8.2.4 Bolstering Resources

You can add **bonuses** to **bolster** community **resources** by seeking out and overcoming relevant **story obstacles**, specifying in the **contest framing** that the proceeds of **victory** go the community. If you succeed, **bonuses** from the **benefits of victory** table are applied to a resource instead of one or more character abilities. (Your GM may rule that the bonus also applies to you in social situations that involve community members, reflecting gratitude for their efforts on behalf of the community.)

8.2.5 Background Events

Your changes to **resources** take center stage in a series, but in the background all sorts of other events periodically alter the community's prosperity. These include the actions of other community members, who are **depleting and bolstering resources** all the time, as well as the unexpected intrusion of outside forces.

At the beginning of each interval, one of your group should perform a **simple contest** of each **resource** against a **resistance** equal to the average value of all **resources**. These **contests** simulate **background events** outside of your control or influence; they can't be **augmented** or **bumped** up with **hero points**.

The **outcome** of the **contest** may apply a **modifier** to a **resource**, as per the following table:

8.2.6 RESOURCE FLUCTUATION TABLE

Outcome	Depletion Penalty
Complete Victory	+9
Major Victory	+6
Minor Victory	+3
Marginal Victory	0
Marginal Defeat	0
Minor Defeat	-3
Major Defeat	-6

Outcome	Depletion Penalty
Complete Defeat	-9

Except where your group is exceptionally keen on tracking **resources**, your GM should skip the **background events** process when the PCs are long absent from home. Your GM should rejigger them to serve their plot purposes when they return. The GM may also want to shuffle this process offstage when the PCs are occupied by epic events. This prevents them from having to flee from a climactic plot development to go home and tend to the beet crop.

8.2.7 Crisis Tests

When **resources** endure **penalties**, you conduct a **crisis test** at the beginning of each game session to see if trouble strikes the community. A high but **penalized rating** can still lead to crisis, because people have adjusted to the equilibrium it offers and feel squeezed when it shifts on them.

A **crisis test** is a **simple contest** (one for each **penalized ability**) of the **resource rating** against a **resistance** equal to the average of all **resource ratings**. Like **background event** checks, these can't be **augmented** or **bumped** up by player action. On any **defeat**, the community starts to visibly suffer.

Your GM invents the specific reasons for each fluctuation and narrates them to you.

Crisis tests should spur you to action, challenging you to find ways to **bolster** the affected **resources** (see above). When **bolstered**, the **crisis** is reversed. If you neglect your duties or fail, the **crisis** worsens.

Your GM will call for **crisis tests** only as needed, as a tool to generate story. If your group already has enough story on its hands, your GM will suspend them until you next need a new plot hook.

8.2.8 Cementing Benefits of Background Events

Bonuses from **background events** are temporary, unless you take steps to **cement your benefits**. Doing so requires you to overcome a major **story obstacle**, perhaps taking focus for an evening's worth of play. If you succeed, the **background event bonus** may, as per the next section, later solidify into a permanent increase in the **resource's rating**.

When you **cement a background bonus**, your GM changes their notation of that **bonus**.

8.3 Changes to Resource Ratings

At the end of your GM's chosen interval, they review the Resource Notation Table.

Any **resource** with a **bonus** of 3 or more in its PC column increases by 1 for each 3 points of **bonus**, for a maximum increase of 3.

Any **resource** with a **penalty** in its Total column decreases by 1 for each 3 points of **penalty**, for a maximum loss of 2.

Any remaining **modifiers** are now reduced to 0.

The GM now start a new Resource Notation Table, with **resource ratings** altered to reflect any changes from the above process.

Having made permanent changes to the community's **resource ratings**, your GM then restarts the cycle by again testing for a new set of **background events**.

8.4 Changes from Plot Events

Your GM may decide that certain remarkable triumphs or horrifying catastrophes may directly alter a **resource rating**, independent of the resource tracking system given here. The possibility of a dramatic swing in community fortunes should be made clear by your GM during **contest framing**, so that you know the **prize** and can pull out all the stops to secure **victory** or stave off **defeat**.

9.0 Appendix

9.1 Glossary of Terms

Ability Anything you can apply to solve a problem or overcome an obstacle

Advantage Point (AP) A measure of advantage in an **extended contest**.

Ally A **supporting character** of roughly equal ability to your own.

AP Abbreviation for Advantage Point.

AP Gifting When you help another character, whilst uninvolved in a **contest**, by giving them **advantage points** in an **extended contest**.

AP Lending When you help another character, whilst engaged in a **contest**, by lending them **advantage points**, in an **extended contest**.

Asymmetrical Exchange In a **extended contest**, where you are pressed by an opponent, but want to do something other than contend directly for the **prize**.

Asymmetrical Round In a **scored contest**, where you are pressed by an opponent, but want to do something other than contend directly for the **prize**.

Assist In a **scored contest**, if you are unengaged you may use an **assist** to reduce the **resource points** scored against another character.

Augment Using one **ability** to help another **ability**

Automatic Victory You have an appropriate **ability** and the GM feels **failure** is not interesting, or makes the PC looks un-heroic.

Background Event An off-stage **bonus** or **penalty** applied to a **resource**.

Base resistance The **TN** for a **moderate resistance class**, from which all other **resistance classes** are figured as a **bonus** or **penalty**.

Benefit of Victory Long term positive modifier, because you won a **contest**, against a challenging opponent (not -6 or less than your **ability**). Usually a **state of fortune**.

Bid Also an **AP Bid** or **advantage point bid** is your wager in an **extended contest**.

Bolster A **story obstacle** to apply a bonus to a community **resource**

Bonus A positive modifier.

Boost Spending points ahead of a **group simple contest outcome**, to improve the victory.

Bump An increment of the **result** of a roll, up or down. So a bump up moves a **fumble**, to a **failure**, to a **success** to a **critical**, a bump down moves a **critical**, to a **success**, to a **failure** to a **fumble**. One step is moved per **bump**. It is usually the impact of a **hero point** or **mastery**.

Catch-Up When you cross a **mastery** threshold you can increase lesser used **abilities** to ensure they keep pace.

Climax A **long contest story obstacle** that provides the conclusion to a story.

Contact A **supporting character** who shares an **occupation** or interest with your character.

Contest Where there is uncertainty as to whether a PC can overcome a **story obstacle** or discover a secret, then your GM can call for a contest to determine if the PC succeeds or fails. A contest may be **simple** (one roll) of **extended** (a series of rolls).

Consequences of Defeat Long term negative modifier, because you lost a contest. Usually a **state of adversity**.

Contest of Wherewithal A **contest** that allows a **dying** character to complete one **final action**.

Contest Framing Setting the stakes of the **contest**, what is this conflict about. Often not the immediate aftermath of victory.

Complete Defeat No, and.... You have lost, and the impact is long-lasting, maybe even fatal or terminal.

Complete Victory Yes, and... You have won, and the impact is long-lasting, possibly a permanent change in your favor.

Credibility Test Is it possible to perform the action without an **ability**, with an ordinary **ability**, or only with a **extraordinary ability**?

Crisis Test Used to determine if a **resource** that has a **penalty** creates a crisis.

Defeat Your **result** is worse than the **resistance's** result.

Defensive Response In a **long contest** you can choose a defensive **tactic** which reduces the **resource points** you lose on a negative **result**.

Degree of Victory or Defeat How well did you triumph, or how badly did you fail: **Critical**, **Success**, **Failure**, **Fumble**.

Dependent A **supporting character** who depends on your PC.

Depletion Use of a community **resource** leads to its depletion.

Directed Improvement When your GM grants you a new **ability**, or an increase to an existing one, to recognize a story event.

Distinguishing Characteristic The dominant personality **ability** that others recognize in a character.

Dying A **state of adversity**, where the character's **defeat** will end their participation.

Edge In an **extended contest** adds to the **APs** lost or transferred when you win an **exchange**.

Exchange In an **extended contest** a round is divided into two **exchanges** where both aggressor and defender act. In a **group extended contest** a round consists of a sequence of **exchanges** where everyone acts in turn. The GM determines the order of action.

Extended Contest A type of **long contest** in which you track the relative advantage one opponent has over another using **advantage points**.

Experience Points (XP) When you do not spend a **hero point** in a session it becomes an **experience point**, which can accumulate between sessions.

Extraordinary ability Certain genres allow player characters to have **abilities** that exceed human norms, these are **extraordinary abilities**. A genre pack normally outlines what is possible as part of its extraordinary powers framework.

Failure Rolling over your **target number**. It can be a **fumble** or just a plain **failure**.

Final Action An attempt by **defeated**, but unengaged, PCs to re-enter an **extended contest**.

Flaw An **ability** that penalizes you instead of helping you.

Fumble The worst **failure result**, a notable failure either due to incompetence or bad luck.

Follower A **supporting character** under your control. Either a **sidekick** or **retainer**

Framing the contest You and your GM agree on the **prize** for the victor, and your tactic in trying to win it.

Group Chained Contest A **chained contest** in which more than a pair of opponents contend for the **prize**

Group Extended Contest An **extended contest** in which more than a pair of opponents contend for the **prize**

Group Scored Contest A **scored contest** in which more than a pair of opponents contend for the **prize**

Group Simple Contest A **simple contest** where one side has multiple participants.

Graduated Goals When a contestant has a **primary** and **secondary** goal, and may have to choose between them if their **outcome** is not a **major** or **complete** victory.

Handicap In an **extended contest** subtracts from the **APs** lost or transferred when you win an **exchange**.

Hero Point Allows you to alter fate for a player character, either by a **bump** to their **result** or a **plot edit**. If unused, becomes an **experience point** at the end of the session.

Hurt A state of adversity, a flesh wound or injured pride, heals at the end of a session.

Keyword A single **ability** that encompasses a range of abilities within it, such as an **occupation** or culture. An **ability** within an **umbrella keyword** is a **break-out ability**, an **ability** within a **package keyword** is a **stand-alone ability**.

Long Contest A **contest** where we drill-down to the individual exchanges that resolve the conflict. We support **scored**, **extended**, and **chained contests**

Major Defeat No, and. You have lost, and the impact is long-lasting.

Major Victory, Yes, and. You have won, and the impact is long-lasting.

Marginal Defeat No, but. . . You don't get what you want, but the damage may be mitigated.

Marginal Victory Yes, but. . . You get what you want, but you may have to make a hard choice.

Modifiers Adjustments to a **target number** due to circumstance.

Mastery An **ability rating** that rises above 20 is said to have a **mastery**. **Masteries** cancel each other out in **contests**. **Masteries** that are not cancelled provide a **bump**.

Minor Defeat No. . . you don't get the agreed **prize**.

Minor Victory Yes. . . you get the agreed **prize**.

Mismatched Goals When the opposing sides in a **contest** want different **prizes**.

Occupation An **ability** that indicates the profession, or primary area of expertise, of your character.

Outcome A **contest** has an **outcome**, described as a **victory** or **defeat** in obtaining the **prize** that was agreed in **contest framing** for any PCs involved.

Outcome Point A point scored in favor one side in a **group simple contest**

Parting Shot An attempt to make your opponent's **defeat** worse in a **long contest** (**scored** or **extended**), by 'finishing them off'.

Patron A **supporting character** with superior assets.

Penalty A negative modifier.

Prize What is at stake in the **contest**, decided during **framing**.

Rating An ability has a rating, indicating how likely a character is to succeed at using it.

Resistance The forces opposing the PC in a conflict, or concealing a secret that must be overcome by using an **ability** in a **contest**. One of: **Nearly Impossible**, **Very High**, **High**, **Moderate**, **Low**, **Very Low**.

Resistance Class The **bonus** or **penalty** to the **resistance TN**, depending on the GM's interpretation of how *dramatically* hard the **story obstacle** is.

Resolution Point (RP) In a **scored contest** an **RP** tracks the advantage one contestant has over the other.

Resource A community **ability** that your PC may draw on.

Result The **outcome** of a die roll against a **TN**. One of **critical**, **success**, **failure**, and **fumble**.

Retainer A **follower** of your PC who is not 'fleshed out' and cannot act independently.

Rising Action A **scored contest** where the **story obstacle** is a step towards the final **story obstacle** of this story.

Risky Gambit In a **long contest** you can take an action that puts you at more risk on defeat, but enhances victory.

Round A **long contest** is broken into a series of rounds, each of which is an attempt to obtain the **prize**. In an **extended contest** a round is further broken into a number of **exchanges** in which all participants have the chance to act.

Scored Contest A **long contest** where we track the relative advantage one contestant has over another using **resolution points**

Sidekick A fleshed out **follower** of your PC who can act independently.

Supporting Characters Additional characters under the player's control that play a supporting role to their PC.

Simple Contest A one roll resolution method, the default **contest** type, used when learning the **outcome** matters more than the breakdown of how you achieved it.

Stand Alone Ability An **ability** raised separately to a **keyword**. It may have been added to the character as part of a **package keyword**, or on its own.

State of Adversity How 'banged up' a PC is, physically or metaphorically, following a **defeat**: **Hurt**, **Injured**, **Impaired**, **Dying** and **Dead**

State of Fortune A 'boost' to the PC which may be physical or metaphorical.

Story Obstacle Something that prevents you from getting what you want, the **prize**. A **story obstacle** is the trigger for a **contest**.

Stretch A **penalty** applied to an **ability** because it is stretches credibility that it is a reasonable **tactic**.

Success Rolling under your **target number**. It can be a **critical** or just a plain **success**.

Target Number (TN) The number, either an **ability rating**, or a **resistance**, to roll under or equal to in order to **succeed**.

TN Abbreviation for **Target Number**

Unrelated Action An action when you are disengaged in a **long contest** that does not relate to your attempt to win the **prize**.

Victory Your **result** is a better roll than the **resistance**.

9.2 Version Changes

Version 2.2

- Uses of he/she changed to they/their
- Flagged some rules that are not required, as optional to allow those using the SRD to safely omit them if not required.
- Clarified that contest results are only reciprocal between PCs. When the contest is against a resistance set by the GM, the results indicate whether the PC gains the prize, and the GM narrates the result for the resistance based on this.
- Rephrased the contest results to emphasize: Yes, No, And. . . , But. . . , This change is designed to dissuade GMs from misunderstanding that the prize is obtained on a marginal victory, one of the most common result types, and instead encourage GMs to allow PCs to fail forward on such a result by introducing downstream complications.
- Provided clarity that consequences of defeat and benefit of victory are optional and the GM should focus on using the prize to narrate the outcome of a contest, only applying mechanical benefits if they make sense.
- Specific Ability Bonuses are dropped. They were hard for the GM to adjudicate and the same intent is better served by using a stretch on a broad ability when contesting against a PC with a more specific ability.
- A winning group in a Group Simple Contest does not suffer a Consequence of Defeat as a result of a low RP difference victory any more, the GM should narrate consequences from the level of victory, if appropriate.
- Dropped the negative consequences for the winner in an Extended Contest during the Rising Action. If the winner is a PC the degree of success already suggests consequences in addition to the prize on a marginal victory. So this rule is over-complication.
- Made it clear that only a PC should use a parting shot, not the resistance.
- Switched to addressing you the player, using your GM for the Games Master, and we for the game authors
- Long contests include both extended contest and scored contests. Between 1 and 2 extended contests switched to scored contests, this approach restores both variants, but requires changing the generic name to a long contest.
- Dropped edges and handicaps from extended contests - we use a resistance not stats, so makes no sense to have edges and handicaps
- Added alternate mechanisms for determining if resistance advances and when
- Added story-based resistance mechanics
- Added story-based improvements
- Added States of Fortune to mirror States of Adversity. Overall mirrored benefits and consequences more closely
- Added Escalating Contests
- Added Mythic Russia's Plot Edits

- Added Mythic Russia's Pyrrhic Victories for Extended Contests but as Climatic Contests
- Changed degree of success and failure, to degree of victory and defeat, as success and failure are for individual rolls, victory and defeat once compared.
- Simplified how multiple opponents are handled
- Clarified contest outcomes for long contests, and how to determine the overall winner in a long contest
- Do not allow transfers in an extended contest where the abilities differ by 6 or more. Consistent with benefits of victory and prevents 'loading up on mooks' as a strategy.
- Added new resistance classes to preserve the +3, +6, +9 model used elsewhere. Some classes will now have a different value from those that appeared in prior versions.