

Before you can play *Asunder*, you'll need a character. This chapter walks you through the steps you need to think about in order to make an avatar for yourself in the game world. The Keeper can provide you with a character if you wish, but this chapter allows you to make one that is yours in every way.

When you create a character, you can make all the decisions about what the character looks like, acts like, and where they come from, or you can leave many of those choices to chance. While having full control over your character can be satisfying, rolling random traits for your character can often generate ideas you'd never have come up with otherwise!

WHAT IS A SEEKER?

Most people in *Asunder* are content to live their lives: merchants, hunters, sailors, craftspeople, artists, and myriad other professions. Some, though, know that something is wrong with the world. Some go beyond muttering about end times and want to know more, to find out what the truth of the matter is, and maybe to stop it. They are Seekers.

Before you create your Seeker, ask yourself: what do you seek?

ANSWERS

One thing many Seekers have in common is their need for answers. They wonder why the world is dying, why the dead sometimes rise from battlefields, why there's a perpetual storm that haunts the seas, why the demons spill forth from the earth, why the gods left. They recognize that the world is full of mystery, and they make it their mission to investigate that mystery, to learn why things are the way they are, why they work the way they do.

REDEMPTION

Some become Seekers in order to atone for some past misdeed. They believe that, if they can unravel the mysteries of the world, if they can protect people from its dangers, if they can find its hidden places and its wonders, they can make up for the things they've done.

BELONGING

Many Seekers start off as outcasts. They're people who don't belong in the communities to which they were born for some reason or another, and they're looking for a place to call home. Seekers often organize into bands, and these bands can become incredibly tight-knit. When you're out in the world, facing its dangers on a regular basis, you want to do so with people you trust. You come to rely on those people, and they become your family, even if only for a time.

ADVENTURE

Some become Seekers purely out of a sense of wanderlust. They want to see the wide world, make their mark, and have a good time doing it. It's a simple motivation, but a common one.

FAME AND FORTUNE

There are a lot of valuable artifacts in the forgotten places of the world, and there's plenty of money and notoriety to be made by finding those objects and bringing them back to civilization. There are those who become Seekers because working a trade just isn't for them and they have to make money *somewhat*.

ORIGINS

Once you've thought about why your character might become a Seeker, it's time for you to choose your Origin. Your Origin describes where in the world you come from, but it goes a bit beyond that. While every Seeker in *Asunder* is human, humans are a widely divergent lot in this world. When the gods created humanity, they imbued humans with a spark of divine Essence. When the gods left, the humans' Essence bonded with various aspects of their environment, with their physical bodies, or even with their own souls, giving humans from different parts of *Asunder* myriad strange and wondrous powers.

The following Origins are available in the world of *Asunder*. Other Origins, or even Ancestries from Schwalb Entertainment's *Shadow of the Demon Lord*, might be available at the Keeper's discretion.

THE MAINLAND

People from the mainland have no special powers unless they seek them out. Those from the mainland delve deep into their professions, bond with symbiotic gear, or seek out Chaos so that they can wield its incredible, unpredictable power.

PACARI

On Pacari, the people bonded with beasts. This bond gives the Pacari bestial traits and abilities, as well as the power to communicate with and even control their bonded beasts.

BLACK ISLE

The Black Isle is a place of desolation and hardship where people have learned to turn their Essence inward. Through intense training and powerful meditative techniques, the Black Islanders have made themselves capable of superhuman feats.

SKY CITY

The people of Sky City live among the clouds, and their bond allows them to defy gravity. Most can leap great distances, and some can even fly!

FATAL FLAWS

Each Origin has a *Fatal Flaw* table. While you can feel free to choose one from the table or make up your own Fatal Flaw, please ensure that your Fatal Flaw is something that will complicate your life from time to time. Ideally, it'll get in your way one or two times per session. Don't worry; when your Fatal Flaw complicates your life, you get a mechanical reward and it'll lead to fun situations! Check out Chapter 3 for more information on how fatal flaws work.

NEW GAIA

On New Gaia, people bond with plants, learning to create, mold, and control them in unique and powerful ways. Additionally, some people on New Gaia bond with insects instead of plants, though these individuals are rare.

THE SEA

The people of The Sea, known as Seafarers, are a changeable and tumultuous people, and this is represented by the ongoing mutations of their bodies. Some even learn to create additional mutations, allowing them to consciously adapt to their environment.

ORIGIN BENEFITS

Each Origin will provide you with a number of benefits, starting traits, and access to special Essence powers.

ORIGIN STORY

In each Origin, you'll see suggestions for what your character might be like, as well as a number of tables that include even more twists and turns in your personal story. You're free to roll on these tables, choose options, or make up your own (with help from your Keeper), as you see fit. While random chance can act as a catalyst for story ideas you may never have thought of before, ultimately your Seeker is *your* character in this game, and you should make sure you're happy with who you're playing before the game begins.

ORIGIN TRAITS

This game uses attributes and characteristics to describe your capabilities, as well as talents and powers. Your Origin determines what your starting Attributes and Characteristics are, as well as your starting talents (if any), what powers you have access to, and so forth.

ATTRIBUTES

Your Seeker has four attributes: Strength, Agility, Intellect, and Will. Each attribute has a **score** (provided by your Origin) and a **modifier**.

SCORES

Your attributes are rated 1 to 20; this is your **score**. 10 is considered average for a human being. Write down the starting scores for your Origin and modify them as your Origin directs you to.

- ❖ **Adjusting Scores:** You can increase one score by 1 by decreasing another score by 1. You can make this adjustment only once during character creation.
- ❖ **Increasing Scores:** As your group's level increases, so too will your scores.

RANDOM ORIGINS

You can choose your own Origin if you like. If you'd prefer to let the dice decide, roll a d6.

ID6	ORIGIN
1	The mainland
2	Pacari
3	The Black Isle
4	Sky City
5	New Gaia
6	The Sea

MODIFIER

You use your score to determine your modifier. To do so, subtract 10 from your score; the result is the modifier for that attribute. For example, if your Strength is 11, your modifier is +1. If your Agility is 9, your modifier is -1. Note the modifier for each attribute on your character sheet.

CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to your four attributes, your character has several characteristics: Defense, Health, Healing Rate, Perception, Size, Speed, Essence, Damage, Discord, and Strain. Your Origin tells you what to fill in for each of these numbers.

ESSENCE TREE ACCESS

Your Origin determines what your character's Essence has bonded to, or can bond to. Part of this is represented by any talents your Origin gives you, but each Origin also has access to two Essence trees. Essence trees are collections of Essence powers ranked from 0 to 5. Whenever a talent—whether from your Origin or from a path—directs you to choose Essence powers or discover Essence trees, you choose from the trees to which your Origin grants you access.

LANGUAGES & PROFESSIONS

Your Origin also tells you which languages you speak, read, and write, and which professions (if any) you start the game

CHARACTER SHEET

You'll find a character sheet at the end of this book; you can feel free to print or photocopy this sheet as often as you need to in order to record your character's statistics and other important features. You can also download a copy of the character sheet from the *Asunder* website.

with. You might get more of these throughout the game as your group advances.

TALENTS

Your Origin might also give you one or more talents. Some Origins don't start with any talents, while others might start with more than one. Record these talents and what they do on your character sheet.

You gain a special benefit tied to your Origin when your group reaches level 4.

ORIGIN TABLES

Each Origin presents several tables that you can use to flesh your character out. You can feel free to choose options from these tables or even make up your own (with your Keeper's help), but it can sometimes be more fun to roll randomly on these tables. After all, constraints often breed creativity!

THE MAINLAND

People from the mainland don't have the same array of strange and diverse powers that people from other parts of Asunder have. What they do have is determination, versatility, and numbers. Where someone from New Gaia might learn to rely on her ability to control plants, or a person from Sky City might grow dependent on his ability to defy gravity, mainlanders learn to live in the world of Asunder without any of those advantages. They adapt by deepening their knowledge of their professions, banding together into large city-states, and learning to survive by their own grit and gumption.

⦿ **Soul-Bonded:** People from the mainland have Essence just like any other human on Asunder, but their Essence bonded with their own souls long ago. While this doesn't give them any overt powers, it does make them the only people in the world who can learn to harness Chaos or receive blessings from Pure Light.

Mainlanders can also forge deeper bonds with living gear than people of other Origins. Most mainlanders pursue none of these paths, though, leaving such dangerous activities to Seekers and other foolish risk-takers.

- ⦿ **Numerous:** The mainland is larger than any of the islands of Asunder, and its population is correspondingly outsized. Where a settlement on one of the islands might consist of thousands or tens of thousands of people, each city-state on the mainland contains millions of people. While the city-states don't often agree, there's strength in numbers and there's power to be found in cooperation. Mainlanders learned this a long time ago; they know the value of having reliable comrades at your side.
- ⦿ **Deep Knowledge:** Mainlanders, for the most part, don't have to spend time learning how to use strange powers because they have none. As a result, they spend their time learning trades, crafts, professions, and pursuing various specialties of knowledge. The mainland is renowned for its expert craftsfolk and sages, and nearly everyone on the mainland is literate in at least one language.
- ⦿ **Common Names:** Panket, Cindare, Merina, Trask, Alia, Flor, Jaddiah, Nira

CREATING A MAINLANDER

Starting Attribute Scores Strength 10, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 10. Choose one attribute and increase it by 1.

Perception equals your Intellect score

Defense equals your Agility score

Health equals your Strength score

Healing Rate equals one-quarter of your Health, rounded down

Size 1/2 or 1, Speed 10, Essence 0

Damage 0, Discord 0, Strain 0

Essence Trees: Chaos, Symbiosis

Languages and Professions: You speak, read, and write Trade Speech, as well as a second language of your choice. You get one random profession.

LEVEL 4 EXPERT MAINLANDER

Characteristics: Health +5

You either learn one Essence power or gain Expertise.

Expertise: Make two choices. For each choice, you can either choose to read, write, and speak a new language or else add a single profession. In addition, whenever one of your professions grants you a boon on a challenge roll, you get 1 extra boon. If any of your boons on this roll generate a result of 1, reroll them, keeping the new result.



(from left to right) A symbiont gear maker, a leader of the Pure Light cult, and a Chaos-wielder whose body has already started to show the effects of too much Discord.

MAINLANDER BACKGROUND

D20 BACKGROUND

- 1 You come from a wealthy merchant family. When you roll for your starting Wealth, add 2 to the roll.
- 2 You were exposed to Chaos not too long ago. You start with 1 Discord.
- 3 You earned a living working in your profession.
- 4 You once hired Jenny Blue-Eyes to assassinate someone.
- 5 You attended one of the academies of Hyden. Add a random area of academic knowledge.
- 6 You're a frequent visitor to the Arena of Megalith.
- 7 You come from one of the outlying settlements and have only visited a city-state once.
- 8 You spent seven years learning to sail with the Seafarers. You start with 1d6 Strain and the Sailor profession.
- 9 You spent time apprenticing for a master craftsperson. Add the Artisan profession.
- 10 You're recovering from an addiction to symbiotic performance-enhancers. You start with 1d6 Strain.
- II You once tried to bond with a Chaos shard and failed, but survived. You start with 1d6 Discord.
- 12 You lost two fingers on one of your hands to your profession. You consider it a fair trade.
- 13 When one of the Naga attacked your caravan, you drove it off.
- 14 You spent time in Storm Point in a part of town inhabited primarily by weavers.
- 15 You were born in Megalith and spent your early years on the streets.
- 16 You've traveled all over the world. You speak an additional language.
- 17 You spent time in Hyden studying linguistics. Choose a language you speak; you can read and write that language.
- 18 You have a spouse and 1d6-2 children (minimum 0).
- 19 You stole something valuable and buried it to keep it safe.
- 20 You lost someone important to you. Their death haunts you to this day.

MAINLANDER FATAL FLAW

3D6 FATAL FLAW

- 3 You're cruel and like causing others pain.
- 4 You're greedy and want to get as much for yourself as you can.
- 5-6 You anger easily and fly into a rage at the slightest provocation.
- 7-8 You hold a deep grudge against someone and you'll do anything to get revenge.
- 9-12 You're reckless, always looking for a thrill.
- 13-14 There's someone you're protecting, and you'll do anything to keep them safe.
- 15-16 You doubt yourself and often hesitate at the wrong time.
- 17 You dislike violence and avoid it whenever you can.
- 18 You believe that everyone is fundamentally good.

MAINLANDER NATIONALITY

3D6 NATIONALITY

- 3 Megalith
- 4-7 Far East
- 8-II Storm Point
- I2-I4 Hyden
- I5-I6 East Twin
- I7-I8 West Twin

MAINLANDER AGE

3D6 AGE

- 3 You're a child, 18 years old or younger.
- 4-7 You're a young adult, 19 to 25 years old.
- 8-I2 You're an adult, 26 to 35 years old.
- I3-I5 You're a middle-aged adult, 36 to 55 years old.
- I6-I7 You're an older adult, 56 to 75 years old.
- 18 You're a venerable adult, 76 years old or older.

MAINLANDER BUILD

3D6 BUILD

- 3 You are short and thin.
- 4 You are short and heavy.
- 5-6 You are short.
- 7-8 You are slender.
- 9-I2 You are average in height and weight.
- I3-I4 You are a bit overweight.
- I5-I6 You are tall.
- I7 You are tall and thin.
- 18 You are very tall and well muscled.

MAINLANDER APPEARANCE

3D6 APPEARANCE

- 3 You're monstrous. You were probably touched by Chaos in the womb, and it gave you an inhuman appearance: a tail, horns, glowing eyes, or the like.
- 4 You're ugly. People find you unpleasant to be around because of your boils, sores, missing nose, or weird body hair.
- 5-6 Most would call you homely. You're not ugly, but you're certainly not beautiful.
- 7-8 You're rather plain. Often, people can't even remember precisely what you look like.
- 9-12 You're average in pretty much every way.
- 13-14 Most consider you attractive for some quality: your hair, your smile, your eyes.
- 15-16 You have a number of attractive qualities that, when put together, make people notice you.
- 17 You're considered one of the great beauties of the land and you likely have many suitors.
- 18 Beauty doesn't quite describe you. People like you come along once in a generation, if that.