



THE COURT OF ALPHAME

A POLITICAL RPG



Designer: Noah Crissey, Spring 2025, DES 335-A

Everything you need to play a game of political intrigue and social manipulation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3	ASSETS	20
THE WORLD OF ALPHAME	4	MISSIONS AND PLAYING THE GAME	21
CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATION CREATION	8	APPENDIX A: CREDITS	23
SOCIAL ARCHETYPES	11	APPENDIX B: DETAILS AND SECRETS TABLES	23
BACKGROUNDS	12	APPENDIX C: BLANK CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATION SHEETS	24
SOCIAL INTERACTION IN ALPHAME	13	APPENDIX D: SAMPLE CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATION SHEETS	26
SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS	16		
ORGANIZATIONS	18		

INTRODUCTION



WELCOME TO THE COURT OF ALPHAME, A WORLD of backstabbing, scheming, and complex political machinations.

In this game, players will assume the role of political agents with diverse skillsets who have formed a political organization. The players will go on missions to achieve their goals in the cesspool of scheming that is the city of Suncrest.

This is a mechanics-light and roleplay-heavy system, suited for play groups that enjoy inhabiting their characters and engaging in social subterfuge. This document contains everything that a GM and their players need to play The Court of Alphame. To get started, go ahead and read the instruction in the section below.

HOW TO PLAY

The Court of Alphame is played by a group of players, usually between three to five. The game is not suited for larger playgroups, but will still function.

In addition to the players, The Court of Alphame also requires a GM, an individual who runs the game and inhabits all of the game's non-player-characters (NPCs). The GM will need to roleplay a lot of different people, so make sure they are up for it!

Before getting started with character creation, it is highly recommended that all players and the GM read the **Setting Overview** section in **The World of Alphame** section. New characters are already involved politically with the world, and the players should understand the basics of the setting before beginning character creation.

In addition, both the GM and the players should read the entirety of The World of Alphame section prior to play, though doing so is not required before starting beginning Character and Organization Creation.

Speaking of which, after everyone has read the Setting Overview, go ahead and flip to the **Character and Organization Creation** section to begin Character and Organization Creation.

Once all players have made characters and an organization, the GM must create a **Mission** for them. This is The Court of Alphame's version of a standard adventure. Go to the next **Missions and Playing the Game** section for guidance on creating and running missions.

NECESSARY MATERIALS

You need the following materials to play The Court of Alphame: Four character sheets (Appendix C), an organization sheet, (Appendix C) a four-sided die (d4), a six-sided die (d6), and eight-sided die (d8), a ten-sided die (d10).

MISSIONS

The game's primary unit of adventure is Missions. In a Mission, the goal of the player's organization and the circumstances of the Alphame come together to create a series of events that allow the players to advance their political power. The GM (or a pre-written adventure) puts together all of the **Events** and NPCs necessary for the Mission, as well as room for pivotal choices that allow the players to achieve their goals in their own unique way.

Missions generally involve players going to locations within the city of Suncrest and interacting with important NPCs through Social Encounters, which they can resolve in their own way to advance towards their Mission Goal. In between Social Encounters are periods of **Downtime**, where players decide what to do next.

This is just a brief overview of Missions, further detail can be found in the Misions and Playing the Game section. Once a goal has been completed, it becomes time to start a new Mission!

ON ROLEPLAYING

Roleplay is all about stepping into the shoes of someone else, a character of your own construction, in a new world unlike our own.

The Court of Alphame is a roleplay-heavy game. Play is all about interacting with other characters, forming relationships and connections, and controlling conversations to your own goals.

Players are incentivized to roleplay as much as possible, and to tailor their roleplay to the results of their rolls. Doing so creates a more engaging and narratively rich gameplay experience.

INTERPRETING MECHANICS

Most things that the players can do are left intentionally vague in these rules. The way a player expresses the Intimidate Social Skill or the way the player's organization Removes a Problem is entirely up to them.

Feel free to customize the flavor for these actions to each unique player and organization in order to enrich the gaming experience. You can even ignore rules entirely if doing so would make for a more enjoyable game.

THE WORLD OF ALPHAME

SETTING OVERVIEW

The Court of Alphame takes place in the Warring World, a place where large nations vie for power over one another.

More specifically, the game takes place within the City of Suncrest, the capital of Alphame. Alphame is expansive and powerful, but its capital city of Suncrest is a bloated cesspool of political scheming.

The general technology level of the Warring World is reminiscent of the Industrial Revolution, with complex mechanical machines being developed at rapid speed.

Humans are the only sapient inhabitants of the Warring Worlds. Magic does certainly exist in the Warring World, but it is rare, nebulous, and extremely difficult to utilize.

In essence, The Court of Alphame takes place in a city wrought with manipulation and subterfuge, as political players of all backgrounds seek to utilize new technology, ongoing conflicts, and perhaps even magic to advance their own agendas.

INTERPRETING WORLD DETAILS

Keep in mind that this section is not comprehensive. Plenty of more minute details are not included, and the GM will need to make their own decisions about the world of Alphame.

Additionally, the GM is free to change anything listed here. Remember: the most important thing is that the GM and players are having fun. If changing something about the world makes your game more fun, do it!

TECHNOLOGY AND MAGIC

Alphame has begun to evolve beyond the standards of medieval technology. While functioning steam engines or firearms are still being developed, technologies like the printing press and clocks have become all but commonplace.

Horses and carriages are still the primary method for travel, and warfare is still conducted with swords and bows, but many of the political players in Suncrest work tirelessly to develop (and then control) new technologies for use in subterfuge and warfare.

Magic does exist in Alphame, but it is far from commonplace. It takes years of study to produce the most mundane effects like manipulating light or producing a spark. It also produces a great deal of physical fatigue for the user.

Most people in Alphame will never use magic or even witness it being used. However, it is studied extensively by the College of Bahati, and some powerful individuals believe that magical phenomena may be the secret to seizing control over Alphame.

ALPHAME'S HISTORY

Alphame has a long and complicated history that the GM and players are free to fill in as they please. These are merely the broad strokes of the nation's past that impact how it functions today.

FOUNDATION

Alphame was founded over a five hundred years ago when Baroness Alphameena conquered the nearby territories and united them under her rule. She became the first Queen of Alphame.

The nature of Alphameena's rise to power is hotly debated, but her founding of Alphame is not.

THE MONARCHY

For over three hundred years, Alphame was governed by the King or Queen in an absolute monarchy, who tended to look after their own goals and the goals of the other nobility. The status quo was upheld, but dissent in the greater populace grew.

ASTOR KIND-EYE AND THE GREAT REBIRTH

Roughly two hundred years ago, the heir to the throne Prince Astor had different plans for Alphame. He saw the total control of his family of the nation as a profound injustice and spoke against it, earning him the title of Kind-Eye by the common people. Despite the attempts of the nobility, Astor and the people of Alphame took apart the monarchy and replaced it with the Court of Alphame.

ALPHAME TODAY

ENVIRONMENT AND SIZE

Alphame is a cold and wet place. There are warmer and more hospitable regions in the south, but the nation is windy everywhere you go.

Additionally, Alphame is roughly 50,000 square miles overall, or about the size of England.

ECONOMY

The most valuable resource in Alphame is Windgrain. It is a type of wheat that is highly resistant to the windy and inhospitable regions of Alphame, and it continues to grow in all seasons.

In addition to Windgrain, Siltis Berries are a valuable commodity. They are used to create Siltis Wine, something beloved by both the common folk and large-scale political players.

Finally, Alphame has access to a great wealth of mineral deposits, including iron, copper, and coal. Alphame does not export its resources, instead trading within itself.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The official governing body of Alphame is The Court, a group of politicians from all over Alphame who reside in Suncrest and make decisions on policy. In addition to the Court are the High Speakers and the High Magistrate.

THE COURT

By default, there are 60 Speakers of the Court, 20 from each of the nation's 3 Regions. Speaker of the Court are elected to 10-year terms, and each Speaker's vote is worth the same.

The Court meets once a week, presents policies, and votes.

THE HIGH SPEAKERS

In addition to the Speakers of the Court, there are 5 High Speakers who serve for life and are chosen by the other High Speakers. They have no official power, but are considered the personal council of the High Magistrate.

THE HIGH MAGISTRATE

The highest position of Alphame. Elected by the Court, and serves for life. Cannot present policy, but their vote is worth 10 votes and they break ties.

REGIONS

Alphame is made up of three regions, each with their own unique history and strengths.

HILLS OF HOLDEN

A relatively flat and snowy tundra to the north. The people are hardy and industrious, and produce the bulk of the nation's mineral resources.

STORMSWEEP

A region to the east full of rolling plains and fields. Known for its terrible storms, and for producing the bulk of the nation's Windgrain.

BOGBEND

An area to the west full of cold, wet bogs. Siltis Berries are grown here, and houses tend to be elevated to avoid flooding.

RELIGION

Alphame is a deeply secular nation. While the general populace believes in magic, few believe in any form of higher power.

THAELAX AND THE WAR

To the south of Alphame is the nation of Thaelax, a militant and proud country bent on expansion and domination. Their aptitude for conquest and their deeply religious nature makes them natural enemies of Alphame.

The two nations have been at war several times over the ages, and they are locked in a bloody conflict to this day. This war is different however; Alphame is slowly losing.

The gradually approaching Thaelaxian front is a source of constant pressure on Alphame and Suncrest. The war is a continual source of unrest and chaos in the country, and is a major contributor to the nation's current political state.

The tides of war are ever changing, but Thaelax is mighty and will not back down. In their eyes, Alphame is a rotten nest of heresy and scheming that needs to be brought into line.

THE CITY OF SUNCREST

Suncrest is the actual city in which all gameplay will take place. It sits in the center of Alphame, on the Lake Bayah. It is dense and congested, full of people trying to carve out their own nook of power and importance.

EAST AND WEST SIDE

Suncrest is split between the East and West side. The west side of Suncrest is where Castle Astor is located, and it is generally the wealthier region of the city. The east side of Suncrest is the seedier region of the city, where the criminal activity of the city thrives. The poor and common folk live throughout.

CRIMINAL UNDERBELLY

Despite the best efforts of the Sunguard, crime thrives in certain regions of Suncrest. All kinds of political organizations can be found in the city, and some Speakers of the Court have distasteful deals with them.

Most criminal outfits stick to petty crime like pickpocketing and robbery, but many of them can be persuaded to engage in far bolder action. Better for a politician to let a criminal outfit take the risk than their own men.

CASTLE ASTOR.

The seat of power of Suncrest, where the High Magistrate and High Speakers live, and where the Court convenes. Castle Astor was named after Astor Kind-Eye and is extremely secure, but there are rumors of hidden passages in and out of the castle.

THE DOCKS

Suncrest sits on Lake Bayah, which connects the regions of Alphame. Every day, riches worth of goods move through the ports, and control of them is desperately sought after.

THE CURRENT POLITICAL STAGE

While the politics of Alphame are ever-fluctuating, here is how it looks currently.

THE HIGH MAGISTRATE

The current High Magistrate is Willem Highwind, a noble from Stormsweep who has held the office for over thirty years. He is 93, sick, and will likely die soon, leaving the position open.

THE HIGH SPEAKERS

The current High Speakers are:

- Kirk Morningstorm: A brutal industrialist from an ancient family.
- Bella Talthrang: A spymaster controlling a network of informants.
- Jezal Kalvak: A shipmaster with a military background.
- Vivian Fillia: A shrewd woman with a grip on Alphame's trade.
- Richard Shorthilt: A nobleman with a great public image but an abusive personality.

FACTIONS OF ALPHAME

Various factions compete with each other for power and wealth in Alphame. They all have some presence in Suncrest, with different motives and methods.

THE SUNGUARD

Suncrest's police and guard force is called the Sunguard. They are a group of soldiers that patrol the city's streets. They are led by the Sun Commander, and they are deeply corrupt. Most politicians have at least one agent in the Sunguard, and the organization can scarcely be relied upon.

THE COLLEGE OF BAHATI

A place of academic learning and magical research, the College is where all new magical developments originate. A decent amount of the organization is earnestly committed to magical research, but the rest of it is layered in bureaucracy and politics. They are an ancient institution, and tend to look down on newer political groups.

THE BANK OF BONES

The Bank of Bones is a decentralized banking operation in Suncrest. Where the Royal Phameen bank handles the finances for high-ranking politicians and merchants, the Bank of Bones helps bankroll the smaller fish in Suncrest.

The Bank of Bones aims to have financial influence on the new, growing members of Suncrest's political stage. It is run out of Branches, buildings where the Bank handles its deals. Deals are made by Brokers, who report directly to the Bankmaster, a mysterious figure who even members of the Bank do not know.

THE COVEN

The Coven is a secret order of assassins operating in Suncrest. To most they are a children's tale, but to the

big names in Suncrest they are a very important organization.

For the right price, anyone can contact the Coven and pay their fee to eliminate an enemy. The Coven utilizes dark magics in their business, and are run by a group of shadowy witches.

THE BREAKERS

The Breakers are one of the two major political factions controlling the Court of Alphame. They control roughly half of the Speakers in the Court, and advocate for meaningful change in Alphame. They seek to "break" the status quo and create new systems and policies to help and improve Alphame and its people. They also advocate for peace with Thaelax.

However, the Breakers are far from noble. There is no shortage of Breakers who seek their own personal gain, and many of them want to break Alphame and rebuild it in their own vision.

THE ORDER OF OLD

The Order of Old is one of the two major political factions controlling the Court of Alphame, controlling roughly half of the Court's Speakers.

They generally reject new ideas or developments, and advocate for the maintenance of the status quo. They do not think that the common folk deserve anything more than what they have, and they refuse to resolve the war with Thaelax in any other way than total victory.

However, the Order of Old is not entirely stagnant. There are those within the Order who understand that the world is changing, and hope to change with it to avoid becoming redundant.

THE STORMTRADER'S GUILD

The Stormtrader's Guild is the dominant merchant and trade organization in Alphame. They handle all goods entering and leaving Suncrest through the docks, and are overall the heralds of Alphame's commerce.

With their money and assets, they seek to manipulate the political stage in Alphame so that they can continue to grow their wealth. They have no inherent allegiances, and tend to back whoever will support their goals.

THE GILDED GAUNTLETS

The Gilded Gauntlets is the largest outfit of organized crime in Alphame. They engage in everything from drug trading, smuggling, illegal prostitution, and petty robbery.

However, unlike other criminal outfits, they have a rigid power structure led from the top by someone known only as the Jackal. They make their living through crime, but they also run a tight ship.

The Gilded Gauntlets have also been known to get involved in Alphame's politics for the right price. If a Court Speaker needs their rival's financial basis to crumble, they can approach the Gilded Gauntlets and organize having that opponent's valuable merchant ships "disappear."

THE PLAYERS

Far more important than all of these minute details is how the actual player character's fit into Alphame.

As Rank 1 characters, the players have just formed a new, small-scale political organization. They do not yet hold influence over the Court, and are most likely focused on accruing a meaningful amount of power so that they can begin advancing towards their long-term goals.

Thinking about those long-term goals, what factions might the players want to connect with? Who might they seek to antagonize and take down? What relationship do they have with Alphame's history? What is their outlook on the war with Thaelax?

All of these are things to consider when creating player characters and an organization, but they are also important for planning Missions. Within the context of the player's goals and the world of Alphame, what would the players try to accomplish first?

If you're having trouble coming up with ideas for your Missions, try consulting the Possible Missions list below.

POSSIBLE MISSIONS

- Our organization wants to uncover and control the secrets of the arcane, so we are attempting to gain power over an influential researcher at the College of Bahati.

- Our organization seeks to gain influence over the Court, so we are working with the Gilded Gauntlets to organize the downfall of a Speaker of the Court so that one of us can take her place.

- Our organization seeks riches, so we are gathering information from the Stormtrader's Guild so that we can cut a nobleman out of a trade deal and secure it for ourselves.

CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATION CREATION



BEFORE JUMPING RIGHT INTO PLAY, PLAYERS NEED TO create Characters to inhabit. Character Creation in The Court of Alphame is a fundamentally collaborative matter. Decide as a group what kinds of political agents you would like to play, and consider what ramifications that will have on the organization as a whole.

Remember that your characters need to have some reason to have come together into an Organization. Especially in this world where trust is hard to come by, why have your characters come together?

Once the group has come to an agreement on what kind of organization they want to be part of, what kinds of characters they want to play, and how those characters formed that organization, follow the listed steps in order for creating a new Character and Organization.

Use a blank Character Sheet and a blank Organization Sheet (both found in Appendix C) to start. Also, find sample Character Sheet and Organization Sheets in Appendix C.

1. CHOOSE A SOCIAL ARCHETYPE

Navigating conversation is the most common and important thing a politician in Alphame can do. Everyone has their own strengths, weaknesses, and techniques when it comes to how they spin their words.

You will spend more time verbally sparring than anything else, so the biggest decision for a you to make about your Character is how they navigate such exchanges. This is represented through a **Social Archetype**.

Before choosing a Social Archetype, read the **Archetype Overview** of each Social Archetype in the Social Archetypes Section. Remember that a more balanced organization is generally a stronger one, but feel free to choose any Social Archetype you like.

Once you have selected a Social Archetype, write it into your character sheet. Also, locate that Archetype's Defensive Strength and and write it into your sheet. Finally, write the Archetype's **Archetype Trait** into your Traits section on your character sheet.

2. CHOOSE A BACKGROUND

Most people in Alphame have no consequence on the nation's politics. Your character is not most people.

One way or another, your character came to be of some political significance in this country. This is represented through a **Background**, which has major ramifications on your character's backstory and what kinds of **Organization Resources** they bring to the table.

Navigate to the Background section, and read the **Background Overview** for each Background. These explain, in broad strokes, how your character came to

be of political significance in Alphame. Choose the Background that is most compelling to you, then write it into your character sheet. Also, write that Background's **Background Trait** into the Traits sections of your character sheet.

3. ASSIGN CONVERSATIONAL QUALITIES

Every politician in Alphame has some degree of aptitude with conversation. However, everyone is different in their strengths and weaknesses.

The Court of Alphame features its own set of three character attributes that all characters have. These are called **Conversational Qualities**, and they impact how a character to navigate different aspects of conversation.

The three Conversational Qualities are **Guile**, **Insight**, and **Stability**. Flip to the **Social Interaction in Alphame** section for more information on what each Conversational Quality is used for.

All Conversational Qualities start at zero. A player has 3 points to allocate amongst the three Qualities. Spending a point increases a Quality by one, to a maximum of 4 at Rank 1.

Additionally, players may opt to reduce Conversational Qualities below zero in order to gain more points, which can then be used to increase other Qualities further (up to a maximum of four at Rank 1).

In the following example, the player reduced their Insight to -1, increasing their available points from 3 to 4. They then spent two of their points to increase their Guile to 2, and two more of them to increase their Stability to 2. This gives them the following set of Conversational Qualities.

Guile	Insight	Stability
2	-1	2

When deciding where to allocate points, consult your Conversational Archetype's section. Each one contains a Primary and Secondary Quality that the Archetype uses most. Prioritize making those values higher.

Once you have decided on your character's Conversational Qualities, write them into your character sheet.

4. DETERMING STARTING APITUDES

Not everyone utilizes their Guile the same. Some political agents use their clever words to Intimidate others into submission, while others use it to Flatter others into giving them what they want.

Intimidate and Flatter are two of the game's several Social Skills, which are the ways that Conversational Qualities are usually employed in the game. Different characters excel or fall short at different Social Skills.

ARCHETYPE ATTRIBUTES

Look at your Archetype's section and find its Starting Aptitudes. There are four levels of **Aptitude**: Poor, Standard, Adept, and Excellent.

Your Archetype will determine what Skills your character is initially Poor or Adept at. Any Skills not stated are Standard.

ADDITIONAL APITUDE BONUSES

While some individuals in Alphame behave similarly in social situations, they are not all the same.

In addition to a character's starting Archetype Aptitudes, every character gets three **Aptitude Points** to spend. Spending an Aptitude Point increases a character's aptitude with a specific Social Skill by one level.

For example, I can spend one Aptitude point to increase my Intimidate from Adept to Excellent, or my Prod from Poor to Standard.

APTITUDE AND DICE

Each Aptitude level has a type of dice associated with it. More information can be found in the Social Interaction in Alphame section.

For now, use your Archetype's starting Aptitudes and additional Aptitude Points to determine your character's Aptitude with each Social Skill. Then, consult the table below that describes which dice are used by which Aptitude levels. Use table to find out which dice your character uses for each Social Skill, and write them beside those Social Skills on your character sheet.

Aptitude	Die
Poor	d4
Standard	d6
Adept	d8
Excellent	d10

5. CREATE MOTIVATION

The big players in Alphame are big players because they want something. Everyone in Alphame is driven by some core Motivation, and so is your character.

Create a Motivation for your character that drives their actions and behaviors. These can be as simple or layered as you like. Examples include:

- *I want to start a violent revolution and overthrow the government of Alphame.*
- *I want to use my resources to discover arcane secrets and answers to the big questions of existence.*
- *I want to get filthy rich.*

You should make an effort to ensure that your character's Motivation reasonably aligns with the kind of Organization that you and the other players want to create.

Once you have decided on a Motivation, write it into your character sheet.

6. CREATE A SECRET

Nobody gains a seat of power in Alphame without some skeletons in their closet. No politician is exactly as they appear. They all have secrets, and your character is no different.

Secrets in The Court of Alphame are weak points in a character's personality that can totally throw them off. Secrets can also be closely tied with a character's Motivation. Examples include:

- *I have a nasty gambling problem.*
- *I was born into a noble house, but was disowned.*

Once you have decided on a Secret, write it into your character sheet. You may or may not share it with the other players.

7. CREATE DETAILS

Characters have plenty of traits that make them who they are, and can come up in Social Encounters to a player's benefit or harm. Details are anything that are important to a character's personality. Examples include:

- *I respect dueling as a way of resolving conflict.*
- *I earned my wealth through hard work.*
- *I dislike drinking and those who partake in it.*

Make three Details for your character to round them out, and write them into your character sheet in the Details section.

Give your character a name, then they're done! Now it is time to move on to Organization Creation.

8. CREATE AN ORGANIZATION

Now that everyone has made their characters, it is time to flesh out the Organization that the players are a part of.

In the context of Alphame, an organization is a political body made up of a number of individuals working together towards a common goal. Examples include:

- *A new merchant guild trying to sway the government to favor them.*
- *A new political party vying for power in the Court.*
- *A group of Thaelaxian agents trying to overthrow the government.*

The players are the most important members of an organization's creation, and their political status and background influence the Resources of an Organization and its goals.

8A. ASSIGN ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

An organization has Organization Resources, which determine the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Flip to the **Organizations** section for more details on what each Organization Resource is used for.

All Organization Attributes start at 0. Then, each player adds the Base Organization Attributes of their Background to the Organization's Attribute.

For example, if my background is Commander, I add 1 Wealth, 3 Image, and 4 Manpower to the Organization's Resources.

Once the sum for all Organization Resources has been computed, write them into the Organization sheet.

8B. CREATE AN ORGANIZATION GOAL

Every organization in Alphame is trying to achieve something. Some of them have lofty, perhaps even noble, political goals. Others simply covet wealth and power.

As a group, decide what your organization is after and why. Make sure it makes sense for all characters, and that it is something that the players can reasonably work towards in the game. Once you have decided, write it into the organization sheet.

Now that your characters and organization are done, you are all ready to begin play!

SOCIAL ARCHETYPES



SOCIAL ARCHETYPES ARE THE PRIMARY TRAITS OF A player character in The Court of Alphame. They dictate what a Social Skills a character excels or lacks at, what unique features they get at Rank 1 and what kinds of Social Maneuvers they are resistant to.

The six available Social Archetypes are the Wall, the Bully, the Manipulator, the Inquisitor, the Socialite, and the Analyst. Each has its own section, with an Archetype Overview that can be used to get a general idea of how the Archetype functions

THE WALL

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Wall is a social bulwark. They are an immutable conversationalist that does not back down from threats. They are extremely difficult to sway and can frighten others easily, but are lackluster at gathering information or forming friendly connections.

In Social Encounters, the Wall tends to speak directly and plainly, and is strong at Secure the Interaction.

Primary Quality: Stability

Secondary Quality: Guile

Defensive Strength: Stability

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Intimidate, Strongarm, Stonewall
- Poor at: Flatter, Observe, Recall

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: UNCOMFORTABLE STOICISM

When making Stability-based rolls in any situation where the target NPC must continue interacting with you (like in a closed-off meeting), gain a bonus equal to your Rank.

THE BULLY

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Bully is a dominant social force. They speak bluntly and are willing to throw their weight around to frighten others. They prefer to achieve their goals through blatant aggression and threats.

In Social Encounters, the Bully tends to speak harshly and brutally, and is strong at Make the Play and Build-Up.

Primary Quality: Guile

Secondary Quality: Stability

Defensive Strength: Guile

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Intimidate, Persuade, Strongarm
- Poor at: Mediate, Question, Recall

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: THREAT OF VIOLENCE

When making Guile-based roll in any situation where you could physically harm the target without major consequence, gain a bonus equal to your Rank.

THE MANIPULATOR

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Manipulator excels at altering the emotions of others. They combine their expert mastery of language with their ability to gather relevant information to help themselves and the team. However, they have a hard time securing situations or keeping their cool.

In Social Encounters, the Manipulator uses their words to take control of the emotions of others, and excels at Make the Play, Build-Up, and Gather Information.

Primary Quality: Guile

Secondary Quality: Insight

Defensive Strength: Guile

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Deceive, Flatter, Prod
- Poor at: Recall, Stonewall, Strongarm

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: OPPORTUNIST

When making a Guile-based roll in any situation where the target NPC has not friends or allies nearby, gain a bonus equal to your Rank.

THE INQUISITOR

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Inquisitor is an up-front presence that excels at learning information from people. They know how to poke people to get information out of them, and can hold their own with regards to verbal sparring, but lack the composure to control a situation.

In Social Encounters, the Inquisitor lays low and tries to pick apart others, and excels at Gather Information, Make the Play, and Build-Up.

Primary Quality: Insight

Secondary Quality: Guile

Defensive Strength: Insight

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Prod, Question, Persuade
- Poor at: Intimidate, Strongarm, Mediate

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: OBSERVE CONNECTIONS

When making an Insight-based roll to learn something about an individual from a friend or ally of theirs, gain a bonus equal to your Rank.

THE SOCIALITE

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Socialite is a big, often endearing, social behaviorist. A Socialite is in their element when they are the center of attention, and excel at captivating others and forming connections. However, they lack mastery in manipulating others.

In Social Encounters, the Socialite is a friendly and boisterous presence, and excels at Secure the Interaction and Gather Information.

Primary Quality: Stability

Secondary Quality: Insight

Defensive Strength: Stability

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Assure, Mediate, Prod
- Poor at: Question, Intimidate, Deceive

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: CENTER OF ATTENTION

When making a Stability-based roll at a social gathering with several people around, gain a bonus equal to your Rank.

BACKGROUNDS



EVERYONE WITH ANY POWER IN ALPHAME GOT TO where they are somehow. Perhaps they served in Alphame's military and rose through the ranks, maybe they built up their own trade operation on Lake Bayyah, or they were just born into the right family.

Regardless, every character in Alphame has a Background. This includes the players. Each Background gives a player a Background Trait, and brings a unique array of Organization Resources to their Organization.

THE COMMANDER

BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

Most people die in war. But not you. You thrived, and rose through the ranks. Your men respected you, maybe even feared you. Now, they have come with you to Alphame to support you in your political endeavors.

BACKGROUND TRAIT: MARTIAL RESPECT

Those with any kind of history in the horrors of warfare have an implicit amount of respect for you and the hells you went through.

ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

Wealth	Image	Manpower
1	3	4

THE ANALYST

ARCHETYPE OVERVIEW

The Analyst is a master of social observation and knowledge. They know how important prior intel is to achieving goals, and relies on their wealth of information to carefully choose their words and control the situation.

In Social Encounters, the Analyst is often comparing the situation against their knowledge-based to gain an edge, and excels at Gather Information and Secure the Interaction.

Primary Quality: Insight

Secondary Quality: Stability

Defensive Strength: Insight

Starting Aptitudes

- Adept at: Recall, Observe, Mediate
- Poor at: Intimidate, Flatter, Strongarm

ARCHETYPE TRAIT: WELL-READ

When making an Insight-based roll to learn something that you could reasonably have read about in a book, gain a bonus to the roll equal to your Rank.

THE MERCHANT

BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

The naïve think that Alphame runs on merit. You understand that merit falls short of wealth. Through great effort, you have amassed enough wealth through business and trade to become someone of importance.

BACKGROUND TRAIT: FINANCIAL CONNECTIONS

You know commerce like the back of your hand. If your Organization ever needs to acquire a unique item or service, you know just the person to go to.

ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

Wealth	Image	Manpower
5	1	2

THE NOBLE

BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

You trace your lineage back to great lords and barons; perhaps you even hold a title yourself. You are known by powerful people just as your ancestors were, and your political relevance comes from the public perception of your status.

BACKGROUND TRAIT: PULL RANK

Your name and title carry weight. Those employed by the nobility are more likely to bend to your whims when you mention your heritage.

ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

Wealth	Image	Manpower
2	4	2

SOCIAL INTERACTION IN ALPHAME



HE COURT OF ALPHAME IS ALL ABOUT SOCIAL and political conflict. Nobles and moneylenders spar with words at social events and meetings, all trying to control one another and gain power. The outcomes of these interactions make or break the your haracter's attempts to achieve their goals.

CONVERSATIONAL QUALITIES

Conversational Qualities are The Court of Alphame's primary attributes that govern play. There are three Conversational Attributes, and they are all utilized differently.

GUILE

Guile defines a character's ability to craft and deliver words that cut others down. It is the game's primary "offensive" stat and is used to manipulate others so that you can achieve your goals.

Guile is used for Social Skills like Intimidate, Flatter, Persuade, and Decieve

STABILITY

Stability defines a character's ability to keep their composure. It is the game's primary "defensive" stat, and is used to control social situations through one's composure.

Stability is used for Social Skills like Assure, Mediate, Stonewall, and Strongarm.

INSIGHT

Insight defines the combination of a character's knowledge, and their ability to observe situations and other characters. It is the stat used most for getting a read on others.

Insight is used for Social Skills like Prod, Observe, Recall, and Question.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Past a character's core Conversational Qualities are the specific ways that they utilize those Conversational Qualities in social situations. Do they use their Guile to Flatter their targets, or Intimidate them?

These approaches are called Social Skills, which are the primary actions that the players take during the game. Here is the list of Social Skills, along with the Conversational Qualities associated with each Skill:

Flatter (Guile)

Use clever compliments and admirations to heighten someone's opinion of you.

Intimidate (Guile)

Use your presence and your threatening words to frighten someone.

Persuade (Guile)

Use compelling arguments and framing to sway someone's opinion.

Deceive (Guile)

Bend or break the truth to confuse and mislead someone.

Assure (Stability)

Use your own security to calm someone down and reduce tension.

Mediate (Stability)

Use your words to deescalate conflict.

Stonewall (Stability)

Lock yourself down, giving off no reactions to what is happening or your current emotional state.

Strongarm (Stability)

Utilize your own level-headedness to exert social pressure over someone.

Prod (Insight)

Steer the conversation and dance around the things you want to know to gather information.

Observe (Insight)

Use your intuition to read the room or an individual, picking up on telling signs.

Recall (Insight)

Pull on your personal knowledge to remember vital information.

Question (Insight)

Ask a direct question of someone, and draw conclusions based on their response.

USING SOCIAL SKILLS

Whenever you are interacting with an NPC and you want to accomplish something with them that you reasonably could in a single action, you can roll a Social Skill.

To do so, choose a Skill and an Objective. For example: "I am going to try to Persuade (Skill) this merchant into giving me intel on Count Vathrin (Objective)."

Then, the player rolls a die determined by their Aptitude with the given skill, and the GM rolls a hidden die for the NPC based on their Resistance.

GAME DICE, APTITUDE, AND RESISTANCES

All players have an Aptitude level with each of the game's 12 Social Skills. The Aptitude level determines what die that player rolls when using that Social Skill.

Aptitude Die	Description
Poor d4	The character is actively bad at the Skill.
Standard d6	The character is not meaningfully good or bad at the skill.
Adept d8	The character is quite good at the skill.
Excellent d10	The character is exceptionally good at the skill.

Similarly, NPCs have Resistance Levels to each Skill, which determine what die they use to contest against that Skill.

Resistance Die	Description
Vulnerable d4	The character is highly susceptible to the Skill.
Standard d6	The character is neither vulnerable nor resistant to the Skill.
Resistant d8	The character has a meaningful amount of resistance to the Skill.
Defiant d10	The character is highly resistant to being swayed by that skill.

Once both the player and the NPC have rolled, they both add bonuses to their results based on the Conversational Quality of the Skill used.

The player adds a bonus equal to their score for the Social Skill's associated Conversational Quality, and the NPC adds a bonus equal to their score for the Conversational Quality that defends against the Conversational Quality being used to utilize the Skill:

- Stability defends against Guile
- Insight defends against Stability
- Guile defends against Insight

ROLEPLAY BONUSES

The Court of Alphame is a roleplay-heavy game. Players should speak out their Social Skills in-character and play out the conversation that they are having.

If your delivery when using a Social Skill is particularly powerful, the GM may reward you with a

bonus to your roll of up to +3 for extremely evocative delivery.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Once the rolls have been made, it is time to determine the result. Most outcomes for Social Actions are not exactly quantifiable, so the GM needs to use the following Degrees of Success and Failure to interpret the outcome based on the results of the die.

Major Failure

Your result is less than or equal to half of the NPC's result. The Social Skill does not work at all, and produces an additional unforeseen negative consequence.

Moderate Failure

Your result is less than the NPC's result, but more than half the NPC's result. The Social Skill does not produce the intended outcome, but there are no other negative consequences.

Moderate Success

Your result is greater than or equal to the NPC's result, but less than double the NPC's result. The Social Skill has a degree of success, not producing the exact desired outcome but still moving you in the right direction.

Major Success

Your result is equal to or more than double the NPC's result. The Social Skill is a total success, producing the exact desired outcome as well as additional positive results.

OUTCOME EXAMPLE

Let's revisit the example from earlier, where the player is trying to get intel on Count Vathrin from a merchant using the Persuade Social Skill. Here is how a GM could interpret the different results:

Major Failure

The merchant does not provide any information and feels entirely insulted that the player would even ask. The player's reputation with this character is irreparably harmed.

Moderate Failure

The merchant will not provide any information, but is not offended by the request.

Moderate Success

The merchant gives vague hints regarding relevant information about Count Dathrin, but directs the player towards other NPCs that may have more answers.

Major Success

The merchant tells the NPC everything they know about Count Dathrin, and offers to meet with them later to discuss further plans against the Count.

NON-SKILL ROLLS

Some actions that you may try to take will not cleanly map to one of the twelve Social Skills. Such actions are resolved in the same manner, but the GM rules on what Conversational Quality you use, what Aptitude level is appropriate based on the character making the roll, and what Resistance level is appropriate based on the NPC defending against the roll.

TARGET VALUE ROLLS

Sometimes, you may attempt actions for which the standard contested roll of a Social Skill does not make sense. For example, if a you wanted to utilize the Recall Social Skill to remember a relevant piece of Alphame's history. In this case, an NPC rolling against the player like normal would not make sense.

In such cases, the GM judges the difficulty of the action and utilizes the table below to produce a Target Value that they do not share with the players.

Then, the player rolls like normal, but the GM instead compares their result against the Target Value, rather than an NPC's roll. The same Degrees of Success and Failure listed above are used.

DETAILS AND SECRETS

Everyone in Alphame has Details, which are core pieces of information that make a character who they are.

Perhaps Count Vathrin despises alcohol and those who partake in it, and maybe he also has a military background.

Just like in real life, these kinds of Details can be utilized when interacting with characters to interact with them more optimally.

Additionally, many important individuals in Alphame also have Secrets. In fact, once you get high enough up the food chain, just about everyone has some skeletons in their closet. Similarly to Details, these can be used to great effect.

DETAIL AND SECRET BONUSES

Every Detail and Secret has an Importance value associated with it. If the players have acquired Details or Secrets about a character, they can use those when they interact with that character for huge bonuses.

DETAILS

To use a Detail, a player must mention the Detail or when using a Social Skill. For example, let's say I know the following detail about Count Vathrin: he loves his family dearly. Let's also say that this Detail has an Importance of 2.

When I try to Intimidate Count Vathrin into giving me and my organization a lucrative trade deal, I can opt to threaten his family as a part of my Skill. If I do so, I gain a bonus to my roll equal to that Detail's Importance (2).

Alternatively, if I am trying to Persuade Count Dathrin into giving my organization the trade deal, I can opt to mention the importance of family in my argument

to gain the same bonus. Details can be used any number of times against the same NPC.

SECRETS

Secrets are even more potent. They are utilized in the exact same manner as Details, but they tend to have larger Importance Values than Details. They also change the ways that roll results determine Degrees of Success and Failure.

Any result of a player's roll that is less than the NPC's results in a Moderate Success, and any roll higher than the NPC's results in a Total Success. Failure is impossible when utilizing Secrets.

Secrets can only be used once against an NPC.

MAJOR AND MINOR CHARACTERS

Every NPC has some number of Details and/or Secrets. Major players that are highly relevant to the your mission tend to have more than one Detail, and at least one Secret. These Details and Secrets are also preset as part of the Mission.

However, minor unnamed characters (like a guard) tend to only have one or two Details, and no Secrets. These Details can be created on the fly by the GM, but the GM may also use the table in Appendix B for help generating Details.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS



OT ALL SOCIAL ACTIONS CAN BE RESOLVED IN one fell swoop. Sometimes, the players are trying to do something that is impossible or extremely difficult to do with one turn of phrase, and requires and extended interaction to accomplish.

For example, perhaps the players are trying to convince a Court Speaker they have never met that they are in danger of assassination. To do so, the players need multiple Social Skills and time to use them in order to accomplish their goal.

These cases are called Social Encounters, and they occur whenever the players are trying to socially accomplish something that requires their combined, continual effort. Follow these steps for running Social Encounters:

1. STATE OBJECTIVE AND DETERMINE DIFFICULTY BONUS

Every Social Encounter starts because you and your allies want something, and Social Encounters are defined by working towards that goal. So, the first step to running a Social Encounter explicitly defining what you hope to accomplish, and what “success” entails.

Encounter Objectives can be anything the you want them to be, as long as it is at least somewhat reasonable that you could accomplish it. Examples of good, reasonably Objectives include:

- We want to make Count Dathrin so upset that he loses his temper and makes a fool of himself at this event.
- We want to convince the merchant Vakera to give us a lucrative trade deal.

Examples of unreasonable or vague Objectives include:

- We want Count Dathrin to like us.
- We want to convince a random attendee at a party to arrange an audience for us with the High Magistrate.

Once an Objective has been decided, the GM chooses a Difficulty Bonus based on how difficult they think achieving that Objective is. When doing so, they should observe both the Objective itself, and the NPC that the players are interacting with. Then, they look at the target NPC’s Rank and use the table below to set a Difficulty Bonus.

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5
Easy	6	8	10	12	14
Medium	8	10	12	14	16
Hard	11	13	15	17	19
Very Hard	15	17	19	21	23

Note: These numbers do not need to be used exactly, rather they serve as general guidelines for setting Difficulty Bonuses.

2. TAKE TURNS AND USE SOCIAL SKILLS

Next, both the player and the NPCs take Turns until the Encounter has been resolved.

TURN ORDER

Unless otherwise stated, the players go first and the NPCs go last. The players can take Turns in any order that they wish.

Once all the players have taken turns, the NPCs take their Turns in whatever order the GM decides. Then, the players take their Turns again, and the cycle continues until the Social Encounter has been resolved. Note that the players are free to change their Turn orders after each time the NPCs take their turns.

3. RESOLVE THE ENCOUNTER

Social Encounters can end in multiple ways. Once one of the following has occurred, the Encounter ends.

- *The players opt to leave the Encounter*

The players may choose to leave an Encounter at any point. This is generally done when things are looking bad, and there isn’t a good reason to play out the rest of the Encounter.

- *One of the players has a Major Failure at the Make the Play Action. Decrease the player organization’s Image by 1.*

When Making the Play, it is entirely possible to say something that is ruinous for the Objective. This immediately ends a Social Encounter, and reduces the player organization’s Image.

- *The Patience of an NPC that is crucial to the Objective has reached 0.*

A crucial NPC (perhaps the only NPC) has, for whatever reason, run out of Patience for the players and leaves the Encounter. This leaves the Objective unaccomplished.

- *A player has achieved a Moderate or Major Success on the Make the Play Action.*

The ideal outcome for every Social Encounter. The players succeed at their Objective, and the GM resolves the Objective in the way that feels the most appropriate for the context.

ON YOUR TURN

On your turn, you may take one of the Following Actions. You may take as long as you like before deciding on an Action, and you are encouraged to strategize with your allies.

MAKE THE PLAY

It's time to make the bold play, and move to attempt the words necessary to accomplish the Objective.

Use a Guile Social Skill against an NPC in the Encounter, where success would reasonably mean accomplishing the Objective. The NPC adds the Encounter's Difficulty Bonus to their roll, and the player adds +2 for each Progress Tick that has been accumulated for the Encounter.

Major Failure

The Objective is not accomplished, and the Encounter ends. Reduce your Organization's Image by 1.

Moderate Failure

The Objective is not accomplished, but the Encounter continues.

Moderate Success

The Objective is successfully accomplished as the players described it.

Major Success

The Objective is successfully accomplished, with a major additional benefit or bonus

BUILD-UP

Manipulate and control the situation to set-up and make the Objective easier to attain.

Use a Guile Social Skill against an NPC in the Encounter where the result could reasonably progress the players towards their Objective.

Major Failure

The players lose a Progress Tick, if they have any.

Moderate Failure

The players do not gain or lose any Progress Ticks.

Moderate Success

The players gain a Progress Tick.

Major Success

The players gain two Progress Ticks.

GATHER INFORMATION

Obtain useful information about the strengths and weaknesses of the people in this Social Encounter,

Choose a Social Skill. Use an Insight Social Skill against an NPC in the Encounter that is relevant to the Objective.

Major Failure

The players lose a Progress Tick, if they have any.

Moderate Failure

Gain no meaningful information.

Moderate Success

Learn the NPC's Resistance Level for the specified Social Skill.

Major Success

Learn the NPC's Resistance Level for the specified Social Skill, then choose an additional Social Skill and learn the NPC's Resistance Level for that Social Skill as well.

SECURE THE INTERACTION

Control the social fabric to extend this Encounter so that you and your allies can continue to work towards your Objective.

Use a Stability Skill against an NPC in the Encounter in a way that would reasonably extend the length of the overall Encounter.

Major Failure

Reduce the Patience of an NPC in the Encounter by 1.

Moderate Failure

No change to Patience.

Moderate Success

Increase the Patience of an NPC in the Encounter by 2.

Major Success

Increase the Patience of an NPC in the Encounter by 4.

ON THE NPC'S TURNS

NPCs act in Social Encounters, but they behave differently than players. They do not choose the possible Actions that the players do, and instead use Maneuvers.

Maneuvers inhibit the player's ability to achieve their Objective. Each NPC in a Social Encounter uses one Maneuver from the NPC Maneuvers list on their turn, then ends the turn.

NPC MANEUVERS DICE

For NPCs, a Maneuver is made the Maneuver die relative to their Rank:

Rank	Die
1	d6
2	d6
3	d8
4	d8
5	d10

PLAYER DEFENSE DIE

NPC Maneuvers all force the players to make a Quality Roll (rolling a die and adding a specific Conversational Quality value to the result). By default, players roll a d6 for these rolls. However, if the Quality being rolled is the same Quality as a player's Defensive Strength, they roll a d10 instead.

NPC MANEUVERS LIST

CHANGE THE SUBJECT

The NPC tries to alter the course of the conversation to a new topic. The NPC rolls their Maneuver Die and adds their Insight. The players roll Insight. Each player that rolls lower than the NPC can only take the Gather Information Action on their next Turn.

EVALUATE KNOWLEDGE

The NPC tries to evaluate how much the players know. The NPC rolls their Maneuver Die and adds their Insight, and each player rolls Insight. For each player that rolls lower than the NPC, the NPC gets a +2 bonus to their next roll.

FEIGN COMPETENCE

The NPC flings an array of words and ideas with overwhelm and confuse the players. The NPC rolls their Maneuver Die and adds their Guile, and each player rolls Guile. Each player that rolls lower than the NPC cannot use the Gather Information Action on the their next turn.

TEST WITS

The NPC probes the player's mental acumen, to see if they are worth their time. The NPC rolls their Maneuver

ORGANIZATIONS

NOBODY MAKES THINGS HAPPEN IN ALPHAME ON their own. Even powerful politicians have a faction that supports them, or a small group of like-minded individuals that help them in achieving their goals. The players are no different. In fact, at the start of the game, they've just founded their own, brand-new organization!

WHAT IS AN ORGANIZATION?

An organization is a group of some size working together towards some end. They can vary and are usually led by a small handful of individuals with grand ideals and plans.

However, most of the members of an organization are simple employees; personal guards, accountants, propagandists, cooks, cleaners, tailors, that are all vital to keeping an organization running.

Die and adds their Guile, and each player rolls Guile. For each player that rolls lower than the NPC, reduce the NPC's Patience by 1.

EXERT PRESSURE

The NPC tries to discomfort the players with their stoicism. The NPC rolls their Maneuver Die and adds their Stability, and each player rolls Stability. Each player that rolls lower than the NPC cannot take the Build-Up Action on their next turn.

IGNORE

The NPC tactfully ignores the players and forces them to go out of their way to continue the Encounter. The NPC rolls their Maneuver Die and adds their Stability, and the players each roll Stability. Each player that rolls lower than the NPC must roll an Insight Social Skill of their choice against the NPC at the start of their next Turn. If they do not get a Moderate or Major Success, their turn immediately ends.

PATIENCE

People of importance in Alphame are constantly busy and remiss to give up their time to interact with the players. This is represented in Social Encounters through Patience.

All NPCs have a Patience Value, that starts at a set number determined by the character at the start of a Social Encounter.

Whenever a player ends their Turn, the Patience value of each NPC in the Encounter goes down by one. Player can increase or decrease this value. When an NPC's Patience hits 0, they leave the Encounter. If that NPC was crucial to the Encounter's Objective, the Social Encounter ends.

THE PLAYER'S ORGANIZATION

At the start of the game, the player characters are the leaders of a fledgling organization, with likely no more than thirty people in total. Their organization is new and fresh, with no major connections yet. It is the player's job to put their organization on the map.

As the player's gain Rank, their organization will grow with them, acquiring more power.

ORGANIZATION GOAL

Every organization has a goal. Some of them are layered and complex, such as seeking to overthrow the government of Alphame or uncover magical secrets. However, they can be as simple as wanting to get rich or create a powerful public image.

For non-player organizations, goals are a great way to extrapolate how big politicians will react to the player's actions. For the player's organization, the goal is a great

way to decide on new Missions and how to complete them.

ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

Your organization has Resources, which describe how its power is spread amongst different avenues. The three Organization Resources are Wealth, Image, and Manpower.

WEALTH

Simply put, this is the amount of material wealth that your organization has access to. This can take many different forms, including gold, land, ships, trade deals, food, etc.

Wealth is primarily used for buying and selling Assets and buying Manpower.

MANPOWER

Manpower is the amount of physical force that an organization has access to. This usually comes in the form of guards, but can also be represented through weaponry.

Manpower is primarily used to take military action.

IMAGE

Image describes the public perception of an organization. This includes what the general populace thinks of them.

Image is primarily used if the organization is trying to do something that requires public participation, like winning an election.

ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

Organization Actions are large-scale political plays that players can take during their **Mission Downtime**. They can have a ton of influence on the trajectory of a campaign, but they also exact a cost on an Organization's Resources. Refer to the **Mission and Playing the Game** section for more details on how Organization Actions are used.

REMOVE A PROBLEM

Sometimes, diplomacy is not the answer. Use your organization's Manpower to have someone killed, at the loss of your Image.

Choose an individual that is known in Alphame. Lose an amount of Image and Manpower equal to their Rank. Roll a d6 and add your Manpower. If the result is equal to three times the individual's Rank, they are killed by your forces.

HIRE MERCENARIES

Empty your coffers to hire more muscle. Spend an amount of Wealth to gain that much Manpower.

SHOW FORCE

Send your men into the streets to cause chaos, and make it clear that your organization is not one to be trifled with.

Choose an amount of Manpower to expend. For the next two Events, gain a bonus to Guile rolls equal to the Manpower expended for all players.

EMPLOY SPIES

Create or pay for a spy network to gain valuable information

Choose an amount of Wealth to expend. For the next two Events, gain a bonus to Insight rolls equal to the Wealth expended for all players.

LOBBY

Form connections with miscellaneous unsavory members of the political stage to secure your position.

Choose an amount of Image to expend. For the next two Events, gain a bonus to Insight rolls equal to the Image expended for all players.

ORGANIZATION COLLAPSE

No matter how big or small, any organization can fall, including yours. While your character cannot die as a part of normal gameplay, your organization can go through a total Organization Collapse.

HOW DO ORGANIZATIONS COLLAPSE?

An Organization Collapses when any of its Organization Resources reaches 0. The manner of the collapse depends on which Resource hit 0.

MANPOWER

Your organization could no longer defend itself, or back any of its words up. An organization that cannot protect itself is not worth anyone's time.

WEALTH

The well has run dry. Without money, you cannot afford to pay for the upkeep of your organization or have any kind of political relevance.

IMAGE

The perception of your organization has been so entirely tarnished that nobody will give its members the time of day.

WHAT DOES COLLAPSE MEAN?

In normal gameplay, characters do not die like in other systems. However, an Organization Collapse is a game-over for a campaign. A game of The Court of Alphame is defined by the progress of the player's organization; no organization means no campaign. Make sure you are aware of this before expending Organization Resources.

ASSETS



HE COURT OF ALPHAME DOES NOT HAVE equipment or tools in the same way that other TTRPG systems do. Instead, it has Assets, which are specific items that players can purchase with Organization Resources (usually Wealth) in order to gain specific benefits.

Assets are sorted between Temporary and Permanent Assets. Temporary Assets are expended when they are used, but Permanent Assets are just that: permanent.

Name	Cost	Type	Function
High-End Clothing	3 Wealth	Permanent	While a player is wearing High-End Clothing, they gain a +1 Bonus to all Rolls made against the wealthy and pompous.
Perfect Forgery	2 Wealth	Temporary	Perfect Forgery can be expended to gain temporary access to most otherwise restricted areas.
Undetectable Poison	2 Wealth	Temporary	If you can get access to an NPC's drink, you can expend Undetectable Poison. Roll a d6. If it exceeds the NPC's Rank, kill that NPC and suffer no loss of Image. If you roll a 1, you are caught.
Quality Headquarters	10 Wealth	Permanent	If you can get NPCs to meet you at the Headquarters, get a +2 Bonus to all Rolls made against them.
Informant	X Wealth, 1 Manpower	Temporary	Choose a known NPC. X is their Rank. After every Event, roll a d10. On an 8 or 9, learn a Detail about the NPC. On a 10, learn a Secret about the NPC. On a 1, the Informant is caught and killed. Roll no more, and lose 2 Image.
Coveted Jewel	1 Wealth	Temporary	You may choose to offer the Coveted Jewel as a bribe when Rolling Persuade. Get a +4 Bonus to the roll. Only expended if the roll is a Moderate or Major Success.

BUYING ASSETS

Assets may be bought at any point during Downtime, but they must be bought through group consensus. One player may not decide to spend the Organization Resources themselves. Once Assets have been bought, they cannot be sold back. After an Asset has been bought, write it into the Assets section for the character who is taking ownership of the asset.

Heirloom	2 Wealth	Permanent	Once per Event, reveal the Heirloom and gain a +2 bonus to the next roll made against any NPC with noble heritage.
Ornate Armor	1 Wealth	Permanent	While a player is wearing Ornate Armor, they gain a +1 Bonus to all Rolls made against those with military backgrounds.
Lavish Vintage	1 Wealth	Temporary	Can be expended at an Event to gain a +1 Bonus to all rolls made while trying to build or maintain positive connections for the rest of the Event.
Speaker Loyalty	2 Wealth	Permanent	Once per Week, when the Court meets, you can choose the way that the given Court Speaker votes.

MISSIONS AND PLAYING THE GAME



POLITICIANS ORGANIZING HIDDEN MEETINGS TO discuss treasonous plans to gain power. Powerful merchants working out deals with local crime operations to undercut their competitors. Peasant revolutionaries organizing protests to create meaningful change.

Everyone powerful in Alphame is up to something, and the players are no different. In order to work towards their Organization Goal, the players go on Missions to achieve more short-term goals.

Missions are self-contained campaigns that involve a smaller, short-term goal and the players navigating the political space to achieve that goal. A mission is comprised of a series of Events, with Organization Downtime in-between.

EVENTS

A dinner party of nobles and merchants. A meeting in a bar. A criminal court case. All of these are **Events**, which are the main units that make up a Mission. An Event can be any kind of gathering that the players go to in order to advance towards the final goal of the mission.

A mission is usually made up of 3-5 Events that build into one another. For example:

- Mission Goal: Secure a trade deal with Count Vathrin, whose previous shipping company went out of business.
- Event 1: Meet with a member of the previous shipping company to gather information about why things with Vathrin fell apart.
- Event 2: Go to a bar and talk with Joshua, a dear friend of Count Vathrin.
- Event 3: Attend a pre-organized meeting with Count Vathrin to persuade you to give you the trade deal.

Each Event has one or more Named NPCs and one or more Standard NPCs for the players to interact with in order to achieve their goals.

EVENT REWARDS

Players can gain or lose Organization Resources as a result of how they resolve Events, up to the GM's discretion. For example, if the players manage to set up a trade deal with someone else at the bar in Event 2, the players may gain 1 Wealth for their Organization. It is even possible to set up Events in such a way where optional Event Rewards are pre-set and ready for the players to uncover.

More generally, Organization Resources are great rewards to give players.

ORGANIZATION DOWNTIME

In between Events, players get Downtime. This can last anywhere from a few hours to several months, depending on the scope of the Mission and the Events contained within it.

During Downtime, players can shop for Assets. They may also agree as a group to take a single Organization Action (see the Organizations section). Then, play moves on to the next Event.

RANKS

The power of politicians in Alphame varies widely. This is represented through a Rank, which all players and NPCs have. The players start at Rank 1.

Rank	Description
0	A common person with no political power, like a guard or a maid.
1	Some small degree of power and sway in Alphame, but not much. Includes minor nobility, lower-tiered military leaders, and fairly profitable business owners.
2	Well known and respected within certain groups or areas, but not yet a major player on the political stage. Includes some Court Speakers, owners of fairly large business, and the heads of minor houses.
3	People with a quite a bit of political power, who are known by just about everyone. Includes most Court Speakers, the majority of the nobility, and those with a lot of military reputation.
4	Highly influential and powerful, but not quite at the top of the food chain. Includes more powerful Court Speakers, leaders of less-mighty Factions, and respected generals.
5	As powerful as a person can be in Alphame, like leaders of the most powerful Factions and High Speakers.

RISING IN RANK

Over the course of a campaign, players and their organization will become more powerful and influential. Once they have grown enough to be considered one Rank higher (judged by the GM), they Rise in Rank. Rising in Rank has a lot of more nebulous consequences.

The players become more well known, more respected, and they are more likely to be included in larger-scale plans for the future of Alphame.

Rewards

In addition to these more nebulous consequences, the players earn some tangible rewards as well. Upon Rising in Rank, each player chooses a reward from the following list.

- Increase the Aptitude Level of two Social Skills by one, or one Social Skill by two.
- Increase a Conversation Quality by 1, up to a max of 6.

- Gain an additional Defensive Strength, other than the one given to you by your Archetype.

CHARACTER BUILDING

To finish off a Rise in Rank, create another Detail for your character that is informed by the events of the game thus far. For example, if your character played a betting game with an NPC at an Event and kept winning, they could gain the Detail: “I quite enjoy gambling.”

APPENDIX A: CREDITS

AUTHOR: NOAH CRISSEY

MADE FOR DES 335A (RPG DESIGN)

PROFESSOR: ERIC CAGLE

PRESIDENT OF DIGIPEN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY: CLAUDE COMAIR

TEACHING ASSISTANTS: ALEX KOO, GABRIEL HOEFLER, CALEB STARR-CRISS

PLAYTESTERS: TY STANLEY, NICK GEHL,
KILLIAN HURLEY

©2025 DIGIPEN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

COVER ART:

<https://www.gmbinder.com/share/-NLYy8CheETDvBTJ6LJT>

APPENDIX B: DETAILS AND SECRETS TABLES

DETAILS

I believe in maintaining a perfect appearance.

I hate sailing.

The common folk are just as important as we are.

Nobody deserves power but me.

I despise horses.

I was raised on a farm.

I cannot pass on a good wine.

I see vulgarity as immature.

I enjoy sailing in my free time.

I take great pride in my physical shape.

SECRETS

I have a terrible gambling problem.

I was raised in Thaelax by a prominent political family.

Despite my accolades, I was a coward on the battlefield.

I am deeply terrified that I will die alone..

I killed innocents at war.

The Court of Alphame – Character Sheet

Name: _____

Conversational Qualities

Guile	Insight	Stability

Social Archetype: _____

Background: _____

Social Skills

Skill	Aptitude Die
Flatter (G)	
Intimidate (G)	
Persuade (G)	
Deceive (G)	
Assure (S)	
Mediate (S)	
Stonewall (S)	
Strongarm (S)	
Prod (I)	
Observe (I)	
Recall (I)	
Question (I)	

Motivation

Secret

Details

Defensive Strength(s): _____

Assets

Traits

The Court of Alphame – Organization Sheet

Name: _____

Goal: _____

Organization Resources

Wealth	Image	Manpower

Assets

The Court of Alphame – Pregen Character Sheet 1

Name: Vivian Thevdak

Social Archetype: Bully

Background: Commander

Social Skills

Skill	Aptitude Die
Flatter (G)	d6
Intimidate (G)	d10
Persuade (G)	d8
Deceive (G)	d8
Assure (S)	d6
Mediate (S)	d4
Stonewall (S)	d6
Strongarm (S)	d10
Prod (I)	d6
Observe (I)	d6
Recall (I)	d4
Question (I)	d4

Defensive Strength(s): Guile

Traits

Threat of Violence

Martial Respect

Conversational Qualities

Guile	Insight	Stability
2	-1	2

Motivation

To make my family proud once again.

Secret

I was born to a noble house, but was disowned

Details

I enjoy horseback riding.

Romantic love is just an obstacle to greatness

I despise hedonism.

Assets

The Court of Alphame – Pregen Character Sheet 2

Name: Camille Wicker

Social Archetype: Inquisitor

Background: Noble

Conversational Qualities

Guile	Insight	Stability
2	3	-2

Social Skills

Skill	Aptitude Die
Flatter (G)	d8
Intimidate (G)	d4
Persuade (G)	d6
Deceive (G)	d6
Assure (S)	d6
Mediate (S)	d4
Stonewall (S)	d6
Strongarm (S)	d4
Prod (I)	d10
Observe (I)	d6
Recall (I)	d6
Question (I)	d10

Defensive Strength(s): Insight

Traits

Observe Connections

Pull Rank

Motivation

Assume control of my household.

Secret

The only reason I want to control my household is because I want to destroy it.

Details

I despise violence in any form.

I enjoy poetry.

I like to know everyone I meet, before I meet them.

Assets

The Court of Alphame – Pregen Character Sheet 3

Name: Gideon Cara

Social Archetype: Manipulator

Background: Merchant

Social Skills

Skill	Aptitude Die
Flatter (G)	d10
Intimidate (G)	d6
Persuade (G)	d6
Deceive (G)	d10
Assure (S)	d6
Mediate (S)	d6
Stonewall (S)	d4
Strongarm (S)	d4
Prod (I)	d10
Observe (I)	d6
Recall (I)	d4
Question (I)	d6

Defensive Strength(s): Guile

Traits

Opportunist

Financial Connections

Conversational Qualities

Guile	Insight	Stability
4	1	-2

Motivation

To get rich, and retire somewhere far away

Secret

My wealth comes from my dealings with criminal organizations.

Details

I believe that money is the most important thing

I am a sucker for a lavish party

I think the Court Speakers are nothing more than fancy merchants.

Assets

The Court of Alphame – Pregen Character Sheet 4

Name: Franklin Ryder

Social Archetype: Socialite

Background: Noble

Social Skills

Skill	Aptitude Die
Flatter (G)	d6
Intimidate (G)	d4
Persuade (G)	d4
Deceive (G)	d6
Assure (S)	d10
Mediate (S)	d8
Stonewall (S)	d8
Strongarm (S)	d6
Prod (I)	d8
Observe (I)	d6
Recall (I)	d8
Question (I)	d4

Conversational Qualities

Guile	Insight	Stability
-2	2	3

Motivation

Attain enough wealth to get back at those that have hurt me.

Secret

I murdered a merchant when I was young, and my family covered it up.

Details

I love to sample different wines.

I respect the old and the wise.

I owe it to my house to make good decisions.

Defensive Strength(s): Stability

Traits

Center of Attention

Pull Rank

Assets

The Court of Alphame – Pregen Organization Sheet

Name: The Conclave of the Sea

Goal: Obtain total control over Lake Bayvah's trade and leverage that power to control the Court.

Organization Resources

Wealth	Image	Manpower
4	10	10

Assets