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## The Calypso Compendium

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# Acknowledgments

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The Calypso system is a mashup of stripped-down *Apocalypse World* mechanics and *Lady Blackbird* character generation, with a heaping helping of general soloing techniques, run through the blender of my idiosyncratic playstyle.

A huge thanks to Vincent Baker for creating *Apocalypse World* and for his generous posts explaining how it all goes together, and to John Harper for creating *Lady Blackbird*, which was my first experience with a game where the fiction actually matters.

And to *Simple World*, without which I don't think I would ever have wrapped my head around all this stuff.

Other influences are *Batman*, *Superman*, and of course *Spiderman* (*Citywatch*), *The Shadow*, *The X-Files*, and *Haven* (*Darkness Falls*), *Trollbabe* and *Dungeons & Dragons* (*Fantastic Journey*), any number of paranormal romances and urban fantasy novels (*Secrets & Shadows*), the science fiction novels of the 70s and 80s, and *Star Wars* (*Starfarer*), and the legends of King Arthur, Tristan, and the rest of the Round Table, and *The Lord of the Rings* (*The Sword & The Rose*).

Sized to print on standard letter or a4 paper.

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Powered by the *Apocalypse*

This DRAFT document was last updated **April 27, 2017**. If this date is more than two weeks ago, you should check the website for an updated version.

<https://exposit.github.io/katamoiran/rpglets.html>

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## *Chapter 1*

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# **Overview**

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## Welcome to Calypso

**If you're reading this, you're interested in solo gaming, and you want to try a narrative approach.**

Or maybe you just really like one of the games this one's based on, that's fair too.

But let's assume that that you are interested in solo gaming, and that you're basically familiar with what a roleplaying game is, and that you want to explore the "writing" angle of solo gaming.

*Calypso* is designed to support open-ended, strongly narrative solo gaming. It's designed to provide a framework for you to run games that create stories, stories that will surprise and hopefully delight you as you experience them.

And it's designed to leverage two amazing group-play games – *Lady Blackbird* and *Apocalypse World* – for solo play, and to be compatible with both of them and their derivatives.

## How to Play

Grab a pen and some paper or a program like Pythia Oracle or Google Docs or MacDown. It doesn't really matter as long as you can type or write your thoughts down easily.

You'll also need at least two six-sided dice or a dice rolling program.

Begin with the **General Rules** chapter.

Read over the *Agenda*, *Principles*, and what to *Always Say*.

These serve as your roadmap when you are creating the world and the events in it; they influence everything about the game and give you direction when it comes time to play a Dramatic Move (which is a fancy way of saying "the world is going to hit your hero now").

Remember, the *Agenda* and *Principles* are not guidelines – they're rules.

Now make a character, who will be your avatar and protagonist and the hero of this story.

Pick a scenario from the **Scenarios** chapter if one appeals, or follow the general rules and use the options presented in the **Character Options** chapter.

Roll on the charts as directed, or pick options that speak to you (and this holds true any time the rules tells you to roll on a chart).

You should have a pretty good idea who this character, this hero, is by now, so it's time to give your hero a name and put him through his paces.

Does the character interest you? Are you excited to see what she can do, what trouble she'll get into, how she'll handle all the adventure the world is about to throw her way?

Move to *The Beginning*, either in the general rules or the scenario you chose. Follow the steps listed; write down your thoughts and impressions as you go.

It doesn't have to be amazing prose. It doesn't even have to be prose at all – just jot down what you need to keep yourself oriented.

Keep going. What must happen next, logically, given what has already happened? Write that down next, and repeat until you don't know what will happen next – ask the Oracle or play a Dramatic Move – or you run into a situation where your hero wants to achieve something but success is not a given.

Build a modifier and roll two of your d6s to see if he succeeds or fails – but either way there will be consequences. And those consequences will drive the story forward.

If you get stuck or things don't feel right, check the *Agenda*, then the *Principles*, then use a Dramatic Move.

And that's really all there is to it. There's no right way or wrong way, as long as you're having fun with it.

Happy Solo Gaming!

## *Chapter 2*

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# **General Rules**

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## Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Make the hero's life dangerous and exciting.  
Play to find out what happens.

## Principles

Be a fan of the main character, but make him prove he deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

## Always Say

What the Principles demand. What the Rules demand. What Drama demands.

## Character Creation

Choose four Traits and 16 Tags split between those Traits; these are the things the hero is good at or that are part of him. If a Trait is in brackets you may take it more than once, specifying a new aspect each time.

Choose two Keys that show what the hero values when the game begins. Keys are how you earn experience, so choose keys you want to use.

Choose two Secrets that give the hero power or special abilities.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define the hero. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

If you have any unspent Traits, Keys, or Secrets, you can cash them in for 5xp each now and choose new ones, or hold the xp in reserve for later.

Table 2.1: Basic Ingrained Conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	adrift	green	phobia	clumsy	aggressive	impatient
2	untrusting	ruthless	blunt	reckless	lonely	sheltered
3	bottled up	alienated	owed	cashiered	stubborn	arrogant
4	sickly	glib	wound up	cold	beaten	naive
5	dedicated	impulsive	vengeful	anxious	fighting self	trusting
6	betrayed	easily tempted	noncommittal	protective	self-destructive	easy-going

## Harm

The hero's Harm track is *grazed* • *bruised* • *wounded* • *injured* • *badly injured* • *broken* • *dying*. The active step on the track is treated as a Condition. When the hero takes Harm, move one step down the track.

Note there's no "dead" step. If your hero moves off the Harm track, he still only dies if you and the fiction agree that he does. Otherwise, he survives, with a new Ingrained Condition to reflect the traumatic experience.

## The Beginning

The hero starts with the Condition *angry • hurt • lost • hungry • cornered • compromised*.

The hero is being chased • stalked • attacked • confronted • seduced • provoked.

The complication is an attack • duty • conspiracy • theft • romance • war, and it is illicit • secret • surprise • pretext • forbidden • world-ending.

Roll two Scene Keywords to frame the scene, then roll up a Dramatic Move and play it soft against the hero, keeping the Agenda & Principles in mind.

Table 2.2: Scene Keywords

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	attack	resist	future	agent	secret	revenge
2	distance	anger	supplies	power	desire	choice
3	phobia	ice	lust	dirt	machinery	water
4	love	betrayal	honor	duty	mistake	debt
5	fire	air	death	time	self	history
6	laugh	obsess	pride	pain	malice	plot

## Dramatic Moves

Dramatic Moves are the way you implement the Agenda and Principles concretely against the hero and drive the story forward.

A **hard move** is one that moves from setup to consequences with no chance for the hero to act.

A **soft move** gives the hero a chance to react after the setup and to potentially change the likely outcome.

When you're at a loss as to what should happen next, the hero leaves himself vulnerable, or the rules tell you to, choose or roll a Move and play it.

Table 2.3: Dramatic Moves

d6	d6	
3-	1	Put someone in a compromising, bad, or high-stakes position.
	2	Expose a weakness or a past mistake's consequences.
	3	Reveal an unexpected danger.
	4	Promise future pain or inflict harm as promised.
	5	Tempt or provoke a reaction.
	6	Take something or someone away.
4+	1	Use the hero's Traits, Conditions, or Secrets against them.
	2	Turn the hero's move back on them.
	3	Show off-screen badness.
	4	Bring in someone interesting with an agenda.
	5	Show a drawback to or new facet of the hero's gear or abilities.
	6	Offer a hard bargain or an ugly choice.



## Sequence of Play

Begin by choosing or rolling a Dramatic move that makes sense in the context of the fiction.

The fiction is the key; it drives the game forward and determines what is and isn't possible. Keep the established fiction in mind when determining what happens next or what is plausible.

Use the hero's Conditions to provoke action and shape events. Use a Dramatic Move when you're at a loss as to what should happen next or the fiction suggests it. Let the Agenda and Principles guide you.

When the hero triggers the **Strive** Move, build a modifier. Then roll to see what happens, then finish by asking the hero, "What do you do?"

Add and remove Conditions, including Harm, as the fiction dictates. Ask an Oracle when you need details or direction, or if you're not sure if a Tag or Trait or Condition applies to a roll.

## Building a Modifier

Choose a single Trait that applies; add one for it and one for each Tag under it that also applies.

Add one for each helpful Condition or bonus. Subtract one for each Condition that hinders. If a Condition has already affected the roll in another way, don't count it again now.

If the modifier is above +4, reduce it to a cap of +4, unless a mechanic adjusts the cap. If it's below -1, you can choose to roll anyway, or to change your action if you accept that the goal is temporarily unobtainable.

## The Strive Move

When you **try to achieve something but success is not a given or it should come at a cost**, define what you want to accomplish and what danger you are risking. Risks spring from the fiction and from prior Dramatic Moves; taking harm is always on the table. Then roll +modifier.

On a 10+, you succeed at the goal and avoid the risk. Choose one that fits: gain 1d6/2 Currency, gain a +2 bonus on the next Strive roll, or lose, change, or gain a Condition.

On a 7-9, you succeed at the goal or avoid the risk, your choice. If you choose success, deliver the risk by following up on a previous soft Move with the consequences or playing a new hard Move. Otherwise, introduce a new soft Move that makes achieving the goal harder.

On a 6-, you fail at the goal and the risk hits you. Deliver on the risk's threat with the consequences of a previous soft Move or deliver a new hard Move, then introduce a new soft Move that makes achieving the goal impossible in the short term. Earn one Currency.

If you choose, you may reduce a successful roll by one step in exchange for one Failure Currency.

## Currency

Currency is situational and expires when the situation changes. Track each pool of Currency separately.

When you earn Currency with a success and ask the oracle a question that could be affected by your fictional success, spend one get the answer you want.

When you earn Currency on a failure, use it to reroll one die of your choice on a one for one basis.

## The Oracle Move

When you **ask a meta question about the world**, determine the most likely answer. The modifier is 0 if the answer is even odds; adjust it up or down between -3 (very unlikely) and +3 (very likely).

On a 10+, the answer is true (a “yes”), with no qualifiers.

On a 7-9, the answer is true, but the result is qualified with an unexpected twist. If the first die is higher, add an “and”, an intensifier, that makes the answer or situation more extreme. Otherwise, add a “but”, a caveat, that makes the answer or situation weaker or introduces a flaw.

On a 6-, the answer is not true. If the first die is higher, add an “and” qualifier, otherwise, add a “but”.

If the dice match, interrupt the scene with a Dramatic soft move. If the question is still relevant after, roll again.

## Why?

If you find yourself stuck when thinking up good results for Moves, use this method.

Before you roll two or more dice, assign one qualifier to each die. If you succeed on the roll, whichever die is highest is the reason for success. If you fail, the lowest die indicates why.

Luck • Skill • Time • Knowledge • Style • Emotion

If the dice match, it's outside influences.

## Plot Callback List

Make a d66 chart – six rows, six columns, a total of thirty-six empty elements. Whenever a significant event occurs, a character acts decisively or interestingly, or there's an unexpected twist, write it down as one of the list elements.

When the dice match on a roll, roll again on the Plot List. If you hit a filled in element (as opposed to an empty element), that element crops up again in play, becomes suddenly relevant, or is cast in a new light by current events.

## Advancement

When you hit a Key, mark 1xp. When you buy off a Key, mark 10xp.

Buy Traits, Tags, Keys, and Secrets for 5xp each, if the narrative supports it.

If the narrative demands the loss of something you'd have to spend xp to replace, lose it, but gain 3xp.

## Compatibility

These rules are intended to be compatible with Apocalypse World and its derivatives, as long as they expect a modifier of roughly -3 to +4. If the Strive Move isn't enough, feel free to use the Moves and additional mechanics from your favorite pbtA game!

## *Chapter 3*

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# **Scenarios**

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## Citywatch

Patrol the city in search of  
adventure • redemption • mystery • crime • revenge • fame

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Make the hero's life bold and full of larger than  
life dilemmas.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

Look for the extremes of good and evil but explore the gray areas in between.  
Be a fan of the main character, but make him prove he deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am struggling with my life-long dream • family pressures • unrequited love • juggling two lives • my social life • making ends meet.

One of my Traits is a *Physical, Transportation, Elemental Control, Psychic, Biologic, or Meta Power*. Choose three more Traits, then split 16 Tags split between my Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

In addition to my two Secrets, I have the *Secret of a Secret Identity*.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

The source of my powers is scientific • alien • mutation • parentage • magic • unknown.

I start out *depressed • bored • anxious • brooding • bold • shy*.

### The Beginning

Is this my origin story or have I been doing this for a while?

If I've been doing this for a while, I am in *Place* watching for trouble when I spot *Problem* and *Person*, about to collide in a way that can only have terrible consequences.

My powers first showed when I was near death • hurt someone else • reach a milestone age • have a mysterious encounter • find an artifact • try something I've never tried before.

If this is my origin story, I am in *Place* when an innocent *Person* runs into *Problem* and we're caught in the middle of a *Dramatic Move*.

Table 3.1: Person

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	reporter	noble	agent	sidekick	boss	photographer
3-4	friend	rival	hunter	love	crush	scientist
5-6	doctor	physicist	astronaut	alien	cultist	hired muscle

Table 3.2: Place

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	aircraft	concert	altar	museum	dream	memory
3-4	castle	sewer	alien planet	jungle	warehouse	boardroom
5-6	rooftop	on a call	my day job	fighting	prison cell	gala

Table 3.3: Problem

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	police	kidnapping	giant robot	hostages	murder	trap
3-4	a rival	aliens	a bomb	more thugs	a challenge	a raid
5-6	my nemesis	hallucinations	accident	a crime	my other life	emergency

Traits	Resources
<p>All-American</p> <p>Acrobatic, Athletic, Runner, Camping, Fishing, Hunting, Boy Scout, Quick, Agile, Baseball, College Degree, First Aid, [College Job], Social Media, Clean-cut, Charming</p>	<p>Wealth, Company, Employees, Data, Powerful Computer, State of the Art Lab, Occult Bookstore, Inherited Cache, Family, Government, Law Enforcement, Military, Hobby Group, Scientists, Academia</p>
<p>Biologic Power</p> <p>Acid, Poison, [Animal] Shape, Mimicry, Duplicate Human Form, Elasticity, Chameleon, Liquid Form, Elemental Form, Gaseous Form, Grow, Shrink, Alter Density, Finesse, [Weakness]</p>	<p>Scientist</p> <p>Precise, [Field], [Specialty], Peer, Academia, Lecture, Teach, Research, Experiment</p>
<p>Criminal</p> <p>Fast-talk, Sneak, Security, Hold-out, Reflexes, Read Situation, Know Score, Contacts, Gear, Escape, Evade</p>	<p>Secret Identity</p> <p>Mild-Mannered, Feisty, Clumsy, Competent, [Profession], Wealthy, Ordinary, Dilettante, Playboy, A Face in the Crowd, Bystander, Coincidence, Privileged Class, Teenager, Harmless, Reclusive, Evil</p>
<p>Elemental Control Power</p> <p>Fire, Air, Water, Ice, Earth, Wind, Electricity, Light, Darkness, Gravity, Magnetic, Radiation, Energy, Sound, Nature, Mastery, [Weakness]</p>	<p>Social</p> <p>Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense</p>
<p>Meta Power</p> <p>Self-Duplication, Absorb Powers, Negate Powers, Manipulate Luck, Illusion, Pocket Space, Chaos, Order, [Weakness]]</p>	<p>Transportation Power</p> <p>Teleporting, Climbing, Swimming, Flying, Jumping, Phasing, Tunneling, Running, Short Range, Long Range, Fast, [Weakness]</p>
<p>Physical Power</p> <p>Strong, Fast, Tough, Agile, Healing, Sight, Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch, Sense Danger, Longevity, Regeneration, Intelligence, Talent, [Weakness]</p>	<p>Keys</p> <p>The Key of the Anti-Hero</p> <p>You do what needs to be done, no matter the cost. Hit this key when you act on behalf of others and they don't know or appreciate it, or they disapprove of your methods. BUYOFF: pass up an opportunity to hit this key.</p>
<p>Psychic Power</p> <p>Telekinesis, Telepathy, Mind Control, Manipulate, Mind Reading, Mind Blast, Manifest Weapon, Locate, Force Field, Psychometry, Clairvoyance, Prophecy, Manipulate Probability, Invisibility, Prodigy, [Weakness]</p>	<p>The Key of the Fool</p> <p>Your secret identity is much less capable or moral – or both – than you are. Hit this key when you play this role convincingly. BUYOFF: demonstrate that you are more than you seem to someone who cares.</p>

### The Key of the Innocent Bystander

There's someone you care about who has a keen interest in your superhero persona and a reckless disregard for their own safety. Hit this key when you suffer harm, embarrassment, or inconvenience in order to protect them or to keep them from connecting the dots about you. BUYOFF: lose them or let them go.

### The Key of the Most Wanted

Someone – a government agency, an interstellar being, a group of your ex-wives – wants you dead or dissected or to do something you don't want to. Hit this key when you evade or otherwise thumb your nose at them. BUYOFF: beat them, join them, or just give them what they want.

### The Key of the Secret Identity

Your secret identity is vitally important to you. Hit this key whenever you protect your secret identity from being blown. BUYOFF: merge your two identities publicly.

### The Key of the Unwilling Superhero

You really don't want to be a superhero, or even to be super at all. Hit this key when you avoid using your powers when doing so would be easier. BUYOFF: embrace your powers.

## Secrets

### The Secret of the Candle

You're willing to burn your resources to succeed at any cost. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may add +1, ignoring the modifier cap, for every step down your Harm track you take. Roll the bonus in d6s; for every 6, gain a Condition like *broken arm*, *bleeding*, or *unconscious*.

### The Secret of Collateral Damage

Unless wielded carefully, your powers cause massive amounts of collateral damage. When you cause collateral damage while using your powers, ignore the cap, but if you exceed +4, gain a Condition like *remorseful*, *hunted*, or *in debt*.

### The Secret of Dedication

You are dedicated to one of your ideals and this gives you strength. Choose one of your Keys; when it is struck, gain +1 to any rolls where dedication to that Key would help until you sleep or hit a Key, whichever comes first. If you buy off the chosen Key, choose a new one for the purposes of this Secret.

### The Secret of Notoriety

Your secret identity is public knowledge. Replace *Secret Identity* with *Notoriety*, keeping or replacing Tags as appropriate. Gain *Resources* with one Tag and the Conditions *exposed* and *famous*, then make a Dramatic move by one of your enemies against someone or something your formerly secret identity cares about as soon as you can.

### The Secret of a Secret Identity

You have a secret identity that you value. When you roll to protect your secret identity, take 1 Currency that may be used for that purpose or to protect someone or something important to you. This Currency lasts until you switch guises for the second time after gaining it.

### The Secret of the Wildcard

Your powers do what they want most of the time. Sometimes it's helpful, sometimes it's not. If your powers could affect a roll, roll an extra d6; if that d6 is the highest die, drop the lowest, but if it's the lowest die, drop the highest instead. If it matches another die, nothing happens.

## Darkness Falls

*The sleepy town of Darkness Falls hides  
violence • mystery • horror • demons • murder • answers*

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Fill the hero's life with darkness to throw the light into relief.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

Juxtapose the normal and the horrific, the mundane and the uneasily other.  
Be a fan of the main character, but make him prove he deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am looking for answers • in a downward spiral • underestimated • fighting the good fight • already dead • a ticking bomb.

Choose four Traits and 16 Tags split between those Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

I have the *Secret of Sanity*, in addition to my other two Secrets.

Choose three ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

I start out *terrified* • *angry* • *blind* • *hungry* • *tempted* • *wounded*.

### The Beginning

I arrive in town after an accident • a long drive • an anonymous tip • a pleading letter • a strange taxi ride • an odd encounter in the woods.

I'm here looking for a missing person • a lost item • an old friend • a criminal • help • treasure.

Something *Odd* happens, and *Person* is hurt.

I could run, but I'm here for a reason, and *Person* – maybe the whole town – needs my help.

Then an *Odd Dramatic Move* changes the stakes – can I survive it?



Table 3.4: Ingrained Conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	experienced	angelic	impulsive	decisive	evasive	loyal
2	inventive	educated	reserved	psychic	spirited	clever
3	energetic	courageous	curious	suspicious	lucky	striking
4	methodical	haunted	lusty	devilish	arrogant	perceptive
5	deft	two-fisted	gutsy	insensitive	passionate	sexy
6	level-headed	provocative	strong	hot-headed	tough	confident

Table 3.5: Oddities

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	no reception	stigmata	things move	shadows	animal attack	mad laughter
2	bad dream	hostile folk	odd taboo	odd scent	handprint	bitter cold
3	smells	lights	sounds	footsteps	deserted	blood
4	whispering	dead body	demagogue	bullies	hallucination	bad vibes
5	spiders	maggots	blood	dead thing	vertigo	roll twice
6	invisible blow	unseasonal weather	vicious illu- sion	unexpected touch	phantom noise	forced feel- ing

Table 3.6: People

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Type	ingenue	kid	authority	owner	hunter	teacher
Role	bully	victim	outcast	abettor	source	info
Kin	child	rival	spouse	cousin	mentor	drifter

Table 3.7: Coping Conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	binge	talkative	ignore	hide	flee	fight
3-4	research	anger	nightmares	check out	berserk	disbelief
5-6	fugue	amnesia	obsess	repeat	cruel	laugh

Traits	Humanity
Athletic (Modern)	Will, [Cause], [Love], Devotion, [Ideal], [Virtue], Stubborn
Run, Climb, Jump, Dodge, Hide, Sneak, Acrobatics, Endure, Reflexes, Swim, Focus, Martial Arts, Competition	Psychic
Clever	Sense, Medium, Exorcise, Empathy, Telepathy, Telekinesis, Psychometry, Visions, Pain, Focus
Perceptive, Negotiate, Trickery, Beginner's Luck, Trivia, Fast-Talk, Distract, Seize Opportunity	Resources
Cursed	Wealth, Company, Employees, Data, Powerful Computer, State of the Art Lab, Occult Bookstore, Inherited Cache, Family, Government, Law Enforcement, Military, Hobby Group, Scientists, Academia
Taint, Alter Perception, Inflict Pain, Occult Lore, Read Mind, Know Sin, Cause Nightmare, Heal, Locate, Sense	Social
Expert	Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense
Well-Read, Folklore, History, Peer, Research, Talk Shop, [Field], [Profession], [Specialty]	Warped
FBI Agent	Mutation, Deformity, Handicap, Tentacle, [Animal] Shape, Repellant, Cause Bad Luck, Strong, Tough, Shield, Blast, Read Minds, Hex, Terrify, Enthrall, Poison, Beacon for Aberrations
Profiler, Crack Shot, Empathetic, Hard to Read, Hard to Rattle, Human Nature, Streetwise, Negotiate, Straight-laced, By the Book, Crime, Investigate	Keys
Framed	The Key of the Answer
Bitter, Fight Dirty, Hardened, Improvise, Served Cold, Know the Score, Betrayal, Reformed, Iron Stomach, Why?, Fugitive, Old Cellmates, Scarred, Tough, Innocent	Hit this key when you solve a mystery or ferret out a truth someone else would rather stayed hidden. BUYOFF: let a secret stay that way.
Good	The Key of the Committed
Friendly, Kind, Do the Right Thing, Honest, Brave, Trustworthy, Determined, Defy Evil, Spirited	You value something above all else. Hit this key when you protect or care for it. BUYOFF: let it go.
Investigator	
Determined, Curious, Procedure, Perceptive, Deduction, Interrogate, Profile, Handcuffs, Guns	

### The Key of Redemption

You were the stuff of nightmares, but you found your way back into the light. Hit this key when you resist the darkness within when it would be easier to surrender or when your dark past causes you trouble. BUYOFF: relapse and do something terrible.

### The Key of the Skeptic

Hit this key when you dismiss the supernatural in favor of a rational explanation. BUYOFF: accept something supernatural at face value.

### The Key of the Believer

Hit this key when you accept a supernatural explanation without seriously considering a rational one. BUYOFF: dismiss a supernatural event out of hand.

### The Key of Vice

Choose one of the seven vices or invent your own. Hit this Key when you indulge in your vice. BUYOFF: swear off the vice.

## Secrets

### The Secret of the Callous Angel

It feels like someone's watching out for you – but they don't seem to care about anyone else. When you would take Harm, roll a d6; on a 5+ you don't take the Harm, but someone or something nearby does.

### The Secret of the Cursed

Your powers are the product of a curse, hellish prophecy, demonic pact, or similar malevolent force. Choose the things that it wants. When you satisfy that force, apply your modifier twice, ignoring any caps, to a subsequent roll of your choice where those powers would help. After that roll, gain a Condition like *possessed*, *perverse craving*, or *temporarily evil*.

### The Secret of Occult Immunity

You are less susceptible to the powers of supernatural creatures and recover more quickly when you are affected. When such powers affect you directly, re-roll the lowest die.

### The Secret of Sanity

You have a wide variety of coping mechanisms. When you face mind-bending horror, you may take a Condition from the Coping Conditions chart to move your roll result up one step.

### The Secret of Toughness

You're tougher than you look. Pick how. Each scene, swap one Condition of that type (or move one step up the Harm track, if you picked "physically") for one like *focused*, *angry*, or *tired*.

### The Secret of the Warped

Somewhere along the line, you meddled with something that shouldn't be meddled with, and it meddled with you back. Gain the Warped Trait, and three Tags for it.

## Fantastic Journey

Explore wondrous realms in search of  
adventure • sanctuary • redemption • answers • power • treasure

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Fill the hero's life with dilemmas and wonder.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

The hero is a wild card and people will look to her to solve their problems.  
Be a fan of the main character, but make her prove she deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am at loose ends • hunting • grieving • exiled • hunted • without memory.

Of my four Traits, one is *Human* or *Non-Human*. Another is *Strong*, *Tough*, *Nimble*, *Wise*, *Genius*, or *Charismatic*.

Choose two more Traits, then split 16 Tags split between my Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

Choose two Secrets that give me power or special abilities.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

I start out *angry* • *cold* • *lost* • *hungry* • *tempted* • *wounded*.

### The Beginning

Yesterday I was on the farm • in a prison • in a palace • on the streets • in a magical land • offered a bargain.

Today I'm walking nowhere in particular with everything I own on my back.

I come across a *Place*, where I stumble over a *Problem* and a *Person*.

I'm accused • bribed • made an offer • begged for help • insulted • attacked.

And then a *Person* makes a *Dramatic Move* and things get complicated.

Table 3.8: Person

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Who	farmer	crafter	youth	elder	noble	wanderer
Mien	lost	desperate	afraid	angry	bored	outraged
Goal	attack	covet	hide	owe	revolt	steal

Table 3.9: Place

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Place	hamlet	town	farmstead	camp	mine	ruin
Look	wet	cold	poor	broken	busy	haunted
People	surly	afraid	quiet	cheery	few	none

Table 3.10: Problem

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	bad water	feud	plague	famine	curse	scarcity
3-4	spirits	mutation	rivalry	bandits	killer	fight
5-6	territory dispute	hidden monster	secret lovers	monster clan	bad weather	fell magic

Traits	Mage
Animal	Lore, Bargain, Communicate, Evade, Research, Peers, Solve Puzzle, Decipher Text
Instinct, Wings, Claws, Teeth, Escape, Stalk, Keen Sight, Keen Hearing, Keen Smell, Fur, Aquatic, Amphibious, Large, Small, Tiny, Quick, Strong, Tough	Nature
Arcane Magic	Transform, Weather, Forage, Survive, Hunt, Flora, Fauna
Components, Gestures, Ritual, [Element] Blast, [Element] Wall, Summon [Creature], Shield Self, Teleport, Grant Bonus, Illusion, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Animate Dead, [Type of Magic]	Nimble
Charismatic	Fast, Stealthy, Pilfer, Swordplay, Climb, Acrobatics, Evade
Beautiful, Lead, Persuade, Cold Read, Negotiate, Seduce, Perform	Non-Human
Cleric	Aquatic, Fast, Strong, Tough, Beautiful, Wise, Smart, Long-lived, Half-sized, Huge, Keen Senses, [Elemental], Magic, Unholy, Holy, Customs, Darkness, Change Self, Mimic, Fly, Petrify, Enchant
Beseech, Heal, Smite, Banish, Nature, Deity, Herbs, Tough	Social
Clerical Magic	Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense
Ritual, Holy Symbol, Heal Harm, Cure Disease, Cure Poison, Restore Ability, Control Nature, Control Weather, Smite, Create Food, Create Water, Bless, Shield Other, Invigorate, Reverse Spell, Revive Dead	Stranger In a Strange Land
Fighter	Curious, Perceptive, Exotic, Outsider, Sophisticated, Savoir-faire, Pidgin, Customs
Swordplay, Brawl, Hunt, Survive, Know Foe, Strong, Fast, Tough	Strong
Genius	Strong, Haul, Lift, Swordplay, Brawl, Force, Athletic
Smart, Plot, Solve, Academia, Science, Study, Entrap	Thief
Human	Fast-talk, Stealthy, Security, Fast, Know Score, Contacts, Pilfer, Escape
Dabbler, Tough, Defy, Customs, Duck, Sturdy, Curious, Indomitable, Legend, Free Will	Tough
	Tough, Endure, Brawl, Iron Will, Hard, Athletic, Defy

**Wise**

Wise, Know Heart, Empathy, Read Situation, Scheme, Tempt, Counsel

**Keys****The Key of the Adventurous**

You really like experiencing new things, places, and people, for every value of “experiencing” and “new”. Hit this key when you have an experience that is new to you in some way. BUYOFF: pass up the chance to experience something new.

**The Key of Chaos**

Hit this key when you break the rules when doing otherwise would be safer. BUYOFF: follow the rules when it costs you.

**The Key of Evil**

Hit this key when you do evil things for evil reasons. BUYOFF: do a good deed at great cost to yourself.

**The Key of Good**

Hit this key when you do good things for good reasons. BUYOFF: commit an evil act on purpose, for gain.

**The Key of Law**

Hit this key when you uphold the law when doing otherwise would be easier. BUYOFF: disregard the law for your own gain.

**The Key of Treasure**

Hit this key when you spend wealth gained through adventure. BUYOFF: leave treasure behind.

**Secrets****The Secret of the Animal Companion**

You have an animal companion. It has the Animal Trait with two Tags. Choose one Trait or two Tags for each ingrained Condition you add. If you lose it, trade this Secret in for 5xp and gain a Condition like *grieving*, *clumsy*, or *crippled*.

**The Secret of the Candle**

You’re willing to burn your resources to succeed at any cost. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may add +1, ignoring the modifier cap, for every step down your Harm track you take. Roll the bonus in d6s; for every 6, gain a Condition like *broken arm*, *bleeding*, or *unconscious*.

**The Secret of the Focused**

You seek out opportunities to increase your favored abilities. When you use a Trait and a Tag under it, any identical Tags you have from other Traits apply too.

**The Secret of Magical Training**

You’ve had training in the magical arts. Gain a Magic Trait and three Tags for it.

**The Secret of the Prodigy**

You have had exhaustive training in a specific area. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. Roll a d6 for each point over +4; on a 6 gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *sprain*, or *exhausted*.

**The Secret of Superiority**

You have above normal potential in one area. Pick a Trait; when using that Trait, increase the modifier cap by one.

## Secrets & Shadows

*Danger is everywhere and a sexy stranger promises  
answers • protection • redemption • danger • trouble • nothing*

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Fill the hero's life with tension and unexpected twists.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

Sex is always a factor; everyone wants to consume the hero.  
The hero is special; celebrate it but also make her prove it.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am just going through the motions • feel trapped • am almost successful • am running • hate my life • have everything I thought I wanted but I'm still not happy.

One of my Traits is *Modern Human*. Choose three more Traits, then split 16 Tags split between my Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

Choose two Secrets that give me power or special abilities.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

I start out *angry • embarrassed • lost • hungry • turned on • bruised*.

### The Beginning

I find myself reluctantly in *Place*.

I'm here to help out a friend • out of curiosity • because of work • out of duty • accidentally • because of trickery.

I meet *Actor* and someone gives the wrong impression • suffers mistaken identity • embarrasses themselves • isn't where they're supposed to be • uses powers • needs rescuing.

Then a monster attacks • someone tries to kill me • someone tries to kill him • I get lost • I discover a hidden power • evil recognizes me.

Turns out I'm the Chosen One • the only one who can do it • secretly powerful • the last of the blood • the living embodiment • ripe with potential – and whoever possess me wins.

And then the world hits me with a *Dramatic Move*.



Table 3.11: Ingrained Conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	untrusting	ruthless	blunt	lonely	needy	proud
2	lame	scrawny	clumsy	weakling	short	doe-eyed
3	workaholic	stubborn	reckless	innocent	timid	foolhardy
4	spastic	delicious	magnetic	gauche	green	chaste
5	bottled up	vow	perfectionist	phobia	naive	angry
6	over-confident	self-conscious	bad judge of character	commitment shy	fish out of water	powers out of control

Table 3.12: Ingrained Conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	rakish	charming	brooding	manipulative	hostile	impatient
2	untrusting	ruthless	blunt	lonely	smooth	genius
3	bottled up	polished	protective	controlled	dismissive	reckless
4	wealthy	glib	serious	deft	precise	innocent
5	dedicated	boy scout	easy-going	powerful	connected	louche
6	fighting darkness	arrogant	formerly evil	fighting self	feels unworthy	seeking vengeance

Table 3.13: Actor

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Power	witch	faerie	psychic	investigator	monster	warrior
Style	searcher	schemer	fixer	warrior	hunter	scholar
Goal	power	vengeance	safety	sex	redemption	peace

Table 3.14: Place

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Air	stuffy	unwelcoming	perilous	dark	trapped	hostile
Type	debut	charity	masquerade	work	crime	surprise
Place	museum	gala	bar	store	theater	alley

<b>Traits</b>	<b>Monster</b>
<b>Artist</b>  Creative, Paint, Sketch, Inspire, Communicate, See Beauty, Famous, Sculpt, Fresh Eyes, Craft	Strong, Tough, Fast, Blood, Undead, Bestial, Mesmerize, Transform Self, Dangerously Attractive, At Night, Fangs, Claws, Night Vision, Moonlight, Regenerate, Unnatural, Wealthy, Drain, Tempt, Bargain, Hunt, Berserk, Seduce, Know Prey, Blast, Alluring
<b>Athletic (Modern)</b>  Run, Climb, Jump, Dodge, Hide, Sneak, Acrobatics, Endure, Reflexes, Swim, Focus, Martial Arts, Competition	<b>Professional</b>  [Profession], Bureaucracy, Protocol, Etiquette, Fashion, Multi-Task, Plan, Network
<b>Clever</b>  Perceptive, Negotiate, Trickery, Beginner's Luck, Trivia, Fast-Talk, Distract, Seize Opportunity	<b>Psychic</b>  Sense, Medium, Exorcise, Empathy, Telepathy, Telekinesis, Psychometry, Visions, Pain, Focus
<b>Expert</b>  Well-Read, Folklore, History, Peer, Research, Talk Shop, [Field], [Profession], [Specialty]	<b>Scientist</b>  Precise, [Field], [Specialty], Peer, Academia, Lecture, Teach, Research, Experiment
<b>Faerie</b>  Nature, Magic, Charm, Beguile, Steal Memories, Terrify, Inspire, Enervate, Glamour, Beauty, Water, Truth, Bargain	<b>Social</b>  Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense
<b>Good</b>  Friendly, Kind, Do the Right Thing, Honest, Brave, Trustworthy, Determined, Defy Evil, Spirited	<b>Warrior</b>  Martial Arts, Sword, Guns, Defy, Challenge, Hunt, Survive, Know Prey, Iron Will, Strong, Fast, Tough
<b>Investigator</b>  Determined, Curious, Procedure, Perceptive, Deduction, Interrogate, Profile, Handcuffs, Guns	<b>Witch</b>  Hex, Bind, Magic, Herbs, Ward, Lure, Sanctify, Transform, Heal, Knowing, Erotic, Sacrifice, Ritual
<b>Modern Human</b>  Use Gadget, Healthy, Assured, Trivia, Savvy, Dabber, Educated, Civilized, Attractive, Fashion	<b>Keys</b>  The Key of the Conflicted Lover  Hit this key when you send mixed, confusing, or ambiguous signals to someone who wants to be your lover. BUYOFF: clearly state your emotional position to them.

**The Key of the Dependent**

Hit this key when you rely on someone else completely for your continued security or happiness. BUYOFF: solve a problem yourself.

**The Key of the Do-Gooder**

Hit this key when you go out of your way to do the right thing. BUYOFF: go out of your way to do something wrong.

**The Key of the Hot Mess**

Hit this key when you embarrass yourself. BUYOFF: pull it together when it counts.

**The Key of the Stubbornly Mundane**

Hit this key when you pursue normality or deny the supernatural despite danger. BUYOFF: accept your new reality.

**The Key of the Untamed**

Hit this key when you refuse to submit. BUYOFF: bend a knee.

**Secrets****The Secret of Hidden Potential**

You have a hidden power that manifests when you need it. When you fail a roll, roll a d6. On a 5+, treat as if you rolled a 7-9 instead, but gain a Condition like *noticed*, *drained*, or *overestimated*.

**The Secret of Hollywood Ugly**

Whether out of insecurity or disregard, you hide your beauty behind props like clunky glasses, bad hair, and baggy clothes. When you don't, add +1 to all rolls where it would help against anyone attracted to you.

**The Secret of the Irresistible**

Something about you is irresistible to some people. If an actor is attracted to you, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap on rolls where it would matter against them. If you exceed +4, roll a d6. On a 5+, gain a Condition like *soulmate*, *stalked*, or *jealous lover*.

**The Secret of the Supernatural**

You are a supernatural creature (or the child of one). When using a supernatural Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. If you do, but would otherwise have failed the roll, gain a Condition like *drained*, *hungry*, or *unconscious*.

**The Secret of the Supernatural Gift**

You possess supernatural gifts. When using a supernatural Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. If you do, roll a d6. On a 4+, gain a Condition like *drained*, *shaken*, or *unconscious*.

**The Secret of Toughness**

You're tougher than you look. Pick how. Each scene, swap one Condition of that type (or move one step up the Harm track, if you picked "physically") for one like *focused*, *angry*, or *tired*.

## Starfarer

Explore the universe in search of  
adventure • refuge • mystery • revenge • power • wealth

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Fill the hero's life with risk and adventure.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

Seek out the exotic and strange but interject the familiar.  
Be a fan of the main character, but make him prove he deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am a war hero • secretly gifted • an orphan • the Chosen One • the sole survivor • the lost heir.

I am in debt • unjustly exiled • an outlaw • on the run • barely staying afloat • on the hunt.

One of my Traits is *Future Human*. The other three are up to me.

Split 16 Tags split between my Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

Choose two Secrets that give me power or special abilities.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

I start out *angry* • *afraid* • *lost* • *hungry* • *tempted* • *wounded*.

### The Beginning

I crash land • hit the bar • don't think I'm alone • wake up way off course • arrive at the meet • find the wreckage.

Roll up a *Habitat* or a *Ship*, your choice.

I stumble over an *Enigma* and maybe a *Person*.

It is a double-cross • not what it looks like • dangerous • a trap or setup • a secret • a crime in progress.

Someone's in cold sleep • kidnapped • betrayed • mindwiped • set up • called out.

And then *Person* makes a *Dramatic Move*, and things go south fast.

Table 3.15: Genre

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	apocalyptic	gothic	dystopian	cyberpunk	dying earth	military
3-4	steampunk	time travel	colonization	space opera	social	mundane
5-6	post-apocalyptic	science fantasy	romance	mystery	Western	spy

Table 3.16: Habitat

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	megacity	alien zoo	arcology	cyberspace	domed city	floating city
3-4	ice planet	asteroid	pirate haven	cloud city	moon	theme park
5-6	jungle planet	space station	underground city	desert planet	pleasure planet	artificial world

Table 3.17: Ship

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Look	beat up	pristine	sleek	practical	rickety	alien
Plus	fast	tough	long-range	stocked	agile	roomy
Perk	sentient	cloak	turbo	enigma	inhabited	secret

Table 3.18: Enigma

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Where	ruins	high place	colony	transport	person	ruins dig
Danger	guarded	in stasis	coveted	attacked	minions	activated
Function	rewrite	warn	empower	alter	absorb	devour

Table 3.19: People

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	android	cyborg	robot	replicant	mind being	scientist
3-4	space pirate	supersoldier	wingman	fish	dinosaur	alien
5-6	hive mind	mutant	shapeshifter	clone	symbiont	superhuman

<b>Traits</b>	<b>Off-Worlder</b>
<b>Alien</b>	Zero-Gee, High Gravity, Tough, Pioneer, Guns, Barter, Loyal, Hard, Mine, Scavenge, Farm
Strong, Tough, Fast, Alluring, Healer, Regenerate, Sense, Aquatic, Plant, Telekinesis, Empathy, Telepathy, Teleport, Clairvoyance, Precognition, Retrocognition, Force Action, Force Thought, Force Emotion, Painful, Wild, Blast, Pheromones, Tank	<b>Pilot</b>
	Reflexes, If It Has Wings, Navigate, Go Fast, Seduce, Evasive, Cocky, Fighter, Aim
<b>Athletic (Future)</b>	<b>Social</b>
Run, Parkour, Dodge, Sneak, Acrobatics, Endure, Quick, Swim, Focus, Martial Arts, Zero-Gee, Competition	Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense
<b>Criminal</b>	<b>Soldier</b>
Fast-talk, Sneak, Security, Hold-out, Reflexes, Read Situation, Know Score, Contacts, Gear, Escape, Evade	Martial Arts, Sword, Guns, Defy, Explosives, Hunt, Survive, Know Prey, Rules, Strong, Fast, Tough
<b>Cyborg</b>	<b>Specialist</b>
Headjack, Prosthetic Limb, Fast, Tough, Strong, Numb, Painful, Prosthetic Organ, Blast, Skill Chip (Type)	Doctor, Science, Mechanic, Engineer, Tinker, Computers, Guns, Brilliant, Insight, Research, Talk Shop
<b>Explorer</b>	<b>Tactician</b>
Cultures, Pidgin, Spot, Danger Sense, Curiosity, Improvise, Lucky, Leap, Seen It Before	Sharp, Observant, Spot Weakness, Negotiate, Trickery, Plan Ahead, Tactics, Shrewd
<b>Future Human</b>	<b>Keys</b>
Use Gadget, Healthy, Assured, Trivia, Savvy, Dabbler, Educated, Civilized, Attractive, Fashion, Technophile	<b>The Key of the Committed</b>
	You value something above all else. Hit this key when you protect or care for it. BUYOFF: let it go.
<b>Heir</b>	<b>The Key of the Daredevil</b>
Culture, Wealth, Connected, Contacts, Upper Class, Diplomacy, Seduce, Educated	Hit this key when you take a risk that you don't have to. BUYOFF: play it safe.

Table 3.20: Speculative Fiction Themes

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	cloning	alteration	artificial	biohacking	military	language
2	growing	dimensions	evolution	shrinking	catastrophe	human fears
3	singularity	humanity	identity	alien contact	creation	transhumanism
4	isolation	parallels	philosophy	governance	religion	sexuality
5	physics	AI	alienation	life extension	memory	mind swap
6	end of hu- manity	destiny of humanity	end of the universe	return to civ- ilization	collective conscious- ness	the nature of reality

**The Key of the Goal**

You have a specific, long term goal. Hit this key when you try for it. BUYOFF: achieve, give up on, or refuse it.

**The Key of the Good Guy**

Hit this key when you do the right thing and it costs you. BUYOFF: do something wrong for gain.

**The Key of the Impulsive**

Hit this key when you act on instinct or impulse. BUYOFF: make a careful plan and follow it.

**The Key of the Unfettered**

Hit this key when you avoid commitment or chains. BUYOFF: commit.

**Secrets****The Secret of the Alien**

Whether because of parentage, genetic modification, mutation, or something else, you are either partly or entirely something other than human. When using the Alien Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap in exchange for a Condition like *altered*, *craving*, or *unconscious*.

**The Secret of Boosting**

You've mastered using one ability to boost another. Pick two Traits. When you use one, add up to two Tags from the other that apply.

**The Secret of the Hidden Ace**

You always have an ace up your sleeve. If you need a small item on your person, a useful friend nearby, or a trick prepared yesterday, you have it, but roll a d6; on a 4+ it betrays you later.

**The Secret of Hidden Reserves**

You have a well of hidden reserves you can draw on in a crisis. When you fail a roll, you can add up to +3 to your modifier, ignoring the modifier cap, and recalculate the result. For each +1, take Harm; if you add the full +3, also gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *broken arm*, or *dazed*.

**The Secret of the Legend**

You're legendary at something you do. Pick a Trait; you always have a +1 when using that Trait and your modifier cap for it is increased by one.

**The Secret of Luck**

You're lucky, but you always seem to need to be. If you choose, add an extra d6 to a roll and drop the lowest die, but gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *smitten* or *blind* after the roll is resolved.

## The Sword & The Rose

*Brave knights roam the realm in search of  
wrongs to right • duty • romance • tests of mettle • honor • worthy foes*

### Agenda

Challenge yourself; ask difficult questions.  
Fill the hero's life with chivalry and romance.  
Play to find out what happens.

### Principles

The truth is all-powerful; oaths and bargains have their own magic.  
Be a fan of the main character, but make him prove he deserves the role.  
Nobody has plot immunity; nothing is safe.  
Build the world and mythos as you go.  
Be honest, even when it hurts; follow the fiction where it leads.

### The Hero

I am at loose ends • hunting • grieving • exiled • hunted • without memory.

One of my Traits is *Knight*, though I might not be recognized for it. Choose three more Traits, then split 16 Tags between my Traits.

Choose two Keys that show what I value.

Choose two Secrets that give me power or special abilities.

Choose two ingrained Conditions that hamper or otherwise define me. Choose from one of the Ingrained Conditions charts or pick something you find interesting.

I start out *angry • cold • lost • hungry • tempted • wounded*.

### The Beginning

I am standing before the king • in durance vile • wandering lost • approaching the court • within sight of the city's gates • preparing to charge.

I am here because I fought • loved • rebelled • strayed • witnessed • sinned.

My *Quest* is a dangerous and onerous one, but it will prove my worth.

And then a *Person* makes a *Dramatic Move* and things get complicated.



Table 3.21: People

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	knight	squire	serf	farmer	lord	lady
3-4	hermit	witch	seer	faerie	druid	priest
5-6	healer	barmaid	beast	criminal	prisoner	wanderer

Table 3.22: Quests

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Target	grail	beast	criminal	truce	wooing	magic
Danger	temptation	harm	retaliation	love	broken oath	loss of face
Goal	love	prestige	restoration	wealth	duty    ful- filled	freedom

<b>Traits</b>	<b>Purity</b>
Athletic (Past)	Innocence, Naivete, Idealism, [Ideal]
Fencing, Acrobatics, Endurance, Stealth, Contortion, Dodge, Reflexes, Run, Climb, Swim, Brawl, Spar	<b>Tempter</b>
Bard	Seduce, Promise, Cozen, Persuade, Demand, See Heart, Illusion, Veil Truth, Tempt
Escape, Sleight of Hand, Perform, Influence, Music, Lore, Healer, Friends, Satire	<b>Witch-breaker</b>
Bardic Magic	Defy Magic, Defy Evil, Iron Will, Hunt, Ambush, Occult Lore, Know Signs, Sense Evil, Danger Sense
Terrify, Charm, Debilitate, Curse, Heal, Change Area, Inspire, Shout, Shield, Polymorph Self, Illusion, [Other Class Tag], Reverse Spell	<b>Wizard</b>
Fae-blood	Wisdom, Trickery, Lore, Dabble, Chemistry, Explosives, Prophecy, Staff
Seeming, Illusion, Speak Truth, See Truth, Bargain, Wild, Youthful, Faerie	<b>Keys</b>
Giantkin	<b>The Key of Betrayal</b>
Strong, Tough, Large, Booming Voice, Hit Hard, Brawl, Giant Speech, Giant Lore, Giant Kin	You are predestined to betray those who trust you but you resist. Hit this key when you have the opportunity to betray someone and do not. BUYOFF: betray someone who trusts you.
Knight	<b>The Key of Courtly Love</b>
[Virtue], Prowess, Riding, Chivalry, Honor, Joust, Armor, Horses, Tactics, Religion	You have a pure and unsullied love for someone you cannot have. Hit this key when you uphold the tenets of courtly love. BUYOFF: disavow your relationship or consummate it.
Lord	<b>The Key of the Half-Breed</b>
Fief, Serfs, Heraldry, Management, Farming, Trade, Negotiate, Lead, Mete Justice, Oathholder	You are half human and half something else. Hit this key whenever your heritage causes you trouble or is important in a scene. BUYOFF: accept the destruction of either half of your nature.
Low Magic	<b>The Key of the Long-Lost Love</b>
Spirit Bargain, Ritual, Spark Fire, Sway Mind, Sway Heart, Speak Truth, Demand Answer, See Truth, Bar Path, Call Creature	You loved, you lost. Hit this key when your lost love is used against you, when you do something

to try and reunite, or when you sacrifice for them.  
BUYOFF: Let them go.

#### The Key of Vice

Choose one of the seven vices or invent your own. Hit this Key when you indulge in your vice. BUYOFF: swear off the vice.

#### The Key of Virtue

Choose one of the seven virtues or invent your own. Hit this Key when you uphold your virtue. BUYOFF: indulge an opposing vice.

### Secrets

#### The Secret of the Candle

You're willing to burn your resources to succeed at any cost. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may add +1, ignoring the modifier cap, for every step down your Harm track you take. Roll the bonus in d6s; for every 6, gain a Condition like *broken arm*, *bleeding*, or *unconscious*.

#### The Secret of Dedication

You are dedicated to one of your ideals and this gives you strength. Choose one of your Keys; when it is struck, gain +1 to any rolls where dedication to that Key would help until you sleep or hit a Key, whichever comes first. If you buy off the chosen

Key, choose a new one for the purposes of this Secret.

#### The Secret of the Fae Upbringing

You were raised by fairies and have learned much from them. Gain a Condition like *truthful*, *chaste*, or *cruel*; as long as you have it, you may use fairy magic to create minor illusions or perform small tricks. Each time you do, roll a d6; on a 5+, gain a Condition like *enervated*, *weary*, or *craving*.

#### The Secret of Love's Elation

You carry the favor of a lady or some other small token of her affection. Gain a +1 to all interactions where a morale boost helps. When fighting for her honor, re-roll the lowest die.

#### The Secret of the Prodigy

You have had exhaustive training in a specific area. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. Roll a d6 for each point over +4; on a 6 gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *sprain*, or *exhausted*.

#### The Secret of Purity

You are pure of heart and body and unsullied by worldly concerns. Gain +1 when this would be an asset. When rolling against evil or temptation, re-roll the lowest die.

## *Chapter 4*

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# **Character Options**

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## Traits

### Alien

Strong, Tough, Fast, Alluring, Healer, Regenerate, Sense, Aquatic, Plant, Telekinesis, Empathy, Telepathy, Teleport, Clairvoyance, Precognition, Retrocognition, Force Action, Force Thought, Force Emotion, Painful, Wild, Blast, Pheromones, Tank

### Adventurer

Delve, Spot, Henchman, Supplies, Know Monster, Navigate, Quest, Forage, Demand, Customs, Picking

### All-American

Acrobatic, Athletic, Runner, Camping, Fishing, Hunting, Boy Scout, Quick, Agile, Baseball, College Degree, First Aid, [College Job], Social Media, Clean-cut, Charming

### Animal

Instinct, Wings, Claws, Teeth, Escape, Stalk, Keen Sight, Keen Hearing, Keen Smell, Fur, Aquatic, Amphibious, Large, Small, Tiny, Quick, Strong, Tough

### Arcane Magic

Components, Gestures, Ritual, [Element] Blast, [Element] Wall, Summon [Creature], Shield Self, Teleport, Grant Bonus, Illusion, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Animate Dead, [Type of Magic]

### Artist

Creative, Paint, Sketch, Inspire, Communicate, See Beauty, Famous, Sculpt, Fresh Eyes, Craft

### Athletic (Future)

Run, Parkour, Dodge, Sneak, Acrobatics, Endure, Quick, Swim, Focus, Martial Arts, Zero-Gee, Competition

### Athletic (Modern)

Run, Climb, Jump, Dodge, Hide, Sneak, Acrobatics, Endure, Reflexes, Swim, Focus, Martial Arts, Competition

### Athletic (Past)

Fencing, Acrobatics, Endurance, Stealth, Contortion, Dodge, Reflexes, Run, Climb, Swim, Brawl, Spar

### Bard

Escape, Sleight of Hand, Perform, Influence, Music, Lore, Healer, Friends, Satire

### Bardic Magic

Terrify, Charm, Debilitate, Curse, Heal, Change Area, Inspire, Shout, Shield, Polymorph Self, Illusion, [Other Class Tag], Reverse Spell

### Biologic Power

Acid, Poison, [Animal] Shape, Mimicry, Duplicate Human Form, Elasticity, Chameleon, Liquid Form, Elemental Form, Gaseous Form, Grow, Shrink, Alter Density, Finesse, [Weakness]

### Charismatic

Beautiful, Lead, Persuade, Cold Read, Negotiate, Seduce, Perform

### Charm

Command, Nobles, Servants, Soldiers, Fast Talk, Deception, Seduce, Enchant, Sweet Talk, Impress, Persuade

**Cleric**

Beseech, Heal, Smite, Banish, Nature, Deity, Herbs, Tough

**Clerical Magic**

Ritual, Holy Symbol, Heal Harm, Cure Disease, Cure Poison, Restore Ability, Control Nature, Control Weather, Smite, Create Food, Create Water, Bless, Shield Other, Invigorate, Reverse Spell, Revive Dead

**Clever**

Perceptive, Negotiate, Trickery, Beginner's Luck, Trivia, Fast-Talk, Distract, Seize Opportunity

**Cop's Kid**

Good Old Boy, Police, Contacts, Common Man, Criminal, Streetwise, Cop Culture, Moral, Honorable, Make 'em Proud

**Criminal**

Fast-talk, Sneak, Security, Hold-out, Reflexes, Read Situation, Know Score, Contacts, Gear, Escape, Evade, Steal

**Cursed**

Taint, Alter Perception, Inflict Pain, Occult Lore, Read Mind, Know Sin, Cause Nightmare, Heal, Locate, Sense

**Cyborg**

Headjack, Prosthetic Limb, Fast, Tough, Strong, Numb, Painful, Prosthetic Organ, Blast, Skill Chip (Type)

**Demon**

Read Desires, Seduction, Deception, Bargain, Tempt, See Soul, Inflict Taint, Illusion, Manipulate Emotion, Devilishly Attractive, Demagoguery, Fly,

Ancient, Enforce Bargain, Wrinkle Reality, Control Fire, Nonflammable, Hot-Blooded, Strong, Regenerate

**Demon Prince**

Command, Etiquette, Demons, Impeccable, Politics, Connections, Educated, History, Hell, Vice, Cold Stare, Arrogance, Charm, Unfeeling, Tough, Souls, Punishment, Torture, Cruelty

**Elemental Control Power**

Fire, Air, Water, Ice, Earth, Wind, Electricity, Light, Darkness, Gravity, Magnetic, Radiation, Energy, Sound, Nature, Mastery, [Weakness]

**Expert**

Well-Read, Folklore, History, Peer, Research, Talk Shop, [Field], [Profession], [Specialty]

**Explorer**

Cultures, Pidgin, Spot, Danger Sense, Curiosity, Improvise, Lucky, Leap, Seen It Before

**Fae-blood**

Seeming, Illusion, Speak Truth, See Truth, Bargain, Wild, Youthful, Faerie

**Faerie**

Nature, Magic, Charm, Beguile, Steal Memories, Terrify, Inspire, Enervate, Glamour, Beauty, Water, Truth, Bargain

**FBI Agent**

Profiler, Crack Shot, Empathetic, Hard to Read, Hard to Rattle, Human Nature, Streetwise, Negotiate, Straight-laced, By the Book, Crime, Investigate

**Fighter**

Swordplay, Brawl, Hunt, Survive, Know Foe, Strong, Fast, Tough

**Framed**

Bitter, Fight Dirty, Hardened, Improvise, Served Cold, Know the Score, Betrayal, Reformed, Iron Stomach, Why?, Fugitive, Old Cellmates, Scarred, Tough, Innocent

**Future Human**

Use Gadget, Healthy, Assured, Trivia, Savvy, Dabbler, Educated, Civilized, Attractive, Fashion, Technophile

**Genius**

Smart, Plot, Solve, Academia, Science, Study, Entap

**Giantkin**

Strong, Tough, Large, Booming Voice, Hit Hard, Brawl, Giant Speech, Giant Lore, Giant Kin

**Good**

Friendly, Kind, Do the Right Thing, Honest, Brave, Trustworthy, Determined, Defy Evil, Spirited

**Heir**

Culture, Wealth, Connected, Contacts, Upper Class, Diplomacy, Seduce, Educated

**Human**

Dabbler, Tough, Defy, Customs, Duck, Sturdy, Curious, Indomitable, Legend, Free Will

**Humanity**

Will, [Cause], [Love], Devotion, [Ideal], [Virtue]

**Human Magic**

Alchemy, [Minor Demon Magic], [Minor Fae Magic], Ritual, Coerce Demon, Coerce Fae, Bind Demon, Bind Fae, Scholarship

**Investigator**

Determined, Curious, Procedure, Perceptive, Deduction, Interrogate, Profile, Handcuffs, Guns

**Jewel Thief**

Sneak, Dextrous, Locks, Perceptive, Traps, Appraise, Break and Enter, Case the Joint, Fast-Talk, Second-Story Man, Sense, Lucky

**Knight**

[Virtue], Prowess, Riding, Chivalry, Honor, Joust, Armor, Horses, Tactics, Religion

**Lord**

Fief, Serfs, Heraldry, Management, Farming, Trade, Negotiate, Lead, Mete Justice, Oathholder

**Low Magic**

Spirit Bargain, Ritual, Spark Fire, Sway Mind, Sway Heart, Speak Truth, Demand Answer, See Truth, Bar Path, Call Creature

**Mage**

Lore, Bargain, Communicate, Evade, Research, Peers, Solve Puzzle, Decipher Text

**Mentalist**

Cold Read, Human Nature, Trick, Sleight of Hand, Cozen, Predict Future, Dazzle, Scam, Lie, Detect Lies, Exploit Weakness, Plan

**Meta Power**

Self-Duplication, Absorb Powers, Negate Powers, Manipulate Luck, Illusion, Pocket Space, Chaos, Order, [Weakness]

**Modern Human**

Use Gadget, Healthy, Assured, Trivia, Savvy, Dab-  
bler, Educated, Civilized, Attractive, Fashion

**Monster**

Strong, Tough, Fast, Blood, Undead, Bestial, Mes-  
merize, Transform Self, Dangerously Attractive, At  
Night, Fangs, Claws, Night Vision, Moonlight, Re-  
generate, Unnatural, Wealthy, Drain, Tempt, Bar-  
gain, Hunt, Berserk, Seduce, Know Prey, Blast, Al-  
luring

**Nature**

Transform, Weather, Forage, Survive, Hunt, Flora,  
Fauna

**Nimble**

Fast, Stealthy, Pilfer, Swordplay, Climb, Acrobat-  
ics, Evade

**Non-Human**

Aquatic, Fast, Strong, Tough, Beautiful, Wise,  
Smart, Long-lived, Half-sized, Huge, Keen Senses,  
[Elemental], Magic, Unholy, Holy, Customs, Dark-  
ness, Change Self, Mimic, Fly, Petrify, Enchant

**Off-Worlder**

Zero-Gee, High Gravity, Tough, Pioneer, Guns,  
Barter, Loyal, Hard, Mine, Scavenge, Farm

**Old Money Scion**

Wealth, Contacts, Do You Know Who I Am?, Old  
Money, Founding Family, Servants, Upper Class,  
Educated, Arrogant, Wild Past, Brat Pack

**Physical Power**

Strong, Fast, Tough, Agile, Healing, Sight, Hearing,  
Smell, Taste, Touch, Sense Danger, Longevity, Re-  
generation, Intelligence, Talent, [Weakness]

**Pilot**

Reflexes, If It Has Wings, Navigate, Go Fast, Se-  
duce, Evasive, Cocky, Fighter, Aim

**Professional**

[Profession], Bureaucracy, Protocol, Etiquette,  
Fashion, Multi-Task, Plan, Network

**Psychic**

Sense, Medium, Exorcise, Empathy, Telepathy,  
Telekinesis, Psychometry, Visions, Pain, Focus

**Psychic Power**

Telekinesis, Telepathy, Mind Control, Manipu-  
late, Mind Reading, Mind Blast, Manifest Weapon,  
Locate, Force Field, Psychometry, Clairvoyance,  
Prophecy, Manipulate Probability, Invisibility,  
Prodigy, [Weakness]

**Purity**

Innocence, Naivete, Idealism, [Ideal]

**Resources**

Wealth, Company, Employees, Data, Powerful  
Computer, State of the Art Lab, Occult Book-  
store, Inherited Cache, Family, Government, Law  
Enforcement, Military, Hobby Group, Scientists,  
Academia

**Secret Identity**

Mild-Mannered, Feisty, Clumsy, Competent, [Pro-  
fession], Wealthy, Ordinary, Dilettante, Playboy, A  
Face in the Crowd, Bystander, Coincidence, Privi-  
leged Class, Teenager, Harmless, Reclusive, Evil



### Scientist

Precise, [Field], [Specialty], Peer, Academia, Lecture, Teach, Research, Experiment

### Shapeshifter

Humanoid Shape, Disguise, Blend In, Gills, Wings, Much Smaller, Much Larger, Borrow Memories, Imitate

### Social

Small Talk, Fast Talk, Interrogate, Empathize, Music, Perform, Cold Read, Charm, Persuade, Sense

### Soldier

Martial Arts, Sword, Guns, Defy, Explosives, Hunt, Survive, Know Prey, Rules, Strong, Fast, Tough

### Specialist

Doctor, Science, Mechanic, Engineer, Tinker, Computers, Guns, Brilliant, Insight, Research, Talk Shop

### Stranger In a Strange Land

Curious, Perceptive, Exotic, Outsider, Sophisticated, Savoir-faire, Pidgin, Customs

### Strong

Strong, Haul, Lift, Swordplay, Brawl, Force, Athletic

### Tactician

Sharp, Observant, Spot Weakness, Negotiate, Trickery, Plan Ahead, Tactics, Shrewd

### Tempter

Seduce, Promise, Cozen, Persuade, Demand, See Heart, Illusion, Veil Truth, Tempt

### Thief

Fast-talk, Stealthy, Security, Fast, Know Score, Contacts, Pilfer, Escape

### Tough

Tough, Endure, Brawl, Iron Will, Hard, Athletic, Defy

### Transportation Power

Teleporting, Climbing, Swimming, Flying, Jumping, Phasing, Tunneling, Running, Short Range, Long Range, Fast, [Weakness]

### Unreal

Seeming, Perceptive, In Tune, Faded, Hears Voices, Visions, Clairvoyant, Psychometry, Auras, Steal Life, Steal Dreams, See Dreams, Inspire Mortal

### Upper Class

Carouse, Connected, Cultured, Seduction, Wealth, Winning Smile, Charm, Entitled, Cozen, Trendsetter, Healthy, Favors, Privilege

### Vampire

Blood, Undead, Strong, Tough, Fast, Mesmerize, Dangerously Attractive, Fast Healing, Mostly Only Wood Hurts Me, Night-vision, Dominate, Gaseous Form, Fascinating, Alluring, Lift a Car, Regeneration, Ancient, Unnatural, Creepy, Relic, Old-Fashioned, Wealthy

### Warped

Mutation, Deformity, Handicap, Tentacle, [Animal] Shape, Repellant, Cause Bad Luck, Strong, Tough, Shield, Blast, Read Minds, Hex, Terrify, Enthrall, Poison, Beacon for Aberrations

### Warrior

Martial Arts, Sword, Guns, Defy, Challenge, Hunt, Survive, Know Prey, Iron Will, Strong, Fast, Tough

### Wise

Wise, Know Heart, Empathy, Read Situation, Scheme, Tempt, Counsel

### Witch

Hex, Bind, Magic, Herbs, Ward, Lure, Sanctify, Transform, Heal, Knowing, Erotic, Sacrifice, Ritual

### Witch-breaker

Defy Magic, Defy Evil, Iron Will, Hunt, Ambush, Occult Lore, Know Signs, Sense Evil, Danger Sense

### Wizard

Wisdom, Trickery, Lore, Dabble, Chemistry, Explosives, Prophecy, Staff

## Keys

### The Key of the Adventurous

You really like experiencing new things, places, and people, for every value of “experiencing” and “new”. Hit this key when you have an experience that is new to you in some way. BUYOFF: pass up the chance to experience something new.

### The Key of Anagape

For whatever reason you lack the ability to feel love or even to truly understand it – though you may remember what it was like. Hit this key whenever you seek to understand love or to feel love, however vicariously. BUYOFF: give up on love entirely or regain the ability to love.

### The Key of the Answer

Hit this key when you solve a mystery or ferret out a truth someone else would rather stayed hidden. BUYOFF: let a secret stay that way.

### The Key of the Anti-Hero

You do what needs to be done, no matter the cost. Hit this key when you act on behalf of others and they don’t know or appreciate it, or they disapprove of your methods. BUYOFF: pass up an opportunity to hit this key.

### The Key of Balance

Hit this key when you seek to maintain the balance. BUYOFF: commit to one aspect.

### The Key of the Believer

Hit this key when you accept a supernatural explanation without seriously considering a rational one. BUYOFF: dismiss a supernatural event out of hand.

### The Key of Betrayal

You are predestined to betray those who trust you but you resist. Hit this key when you have the opportunity to betray someone and do not. BUYOFF: betray someone who trusts you.

### The Key of the Blood

The blood sustains your unnatural existence and you crave it. Hit this key whenever you indulge when it would be safer or wiser not to. BUYOFF: stop being a creature of the night.

### The Key of Chaos

Hit this key when you break the law or rebel against standards or authority when doing otherwise would be safer. BUYOFF: follow the rules when it costs you.

### The Key of the Committed

You value something above all else. Hit this key when you protect or care for it. BUYOFF: let it go.

### The Key of the Conflicted Lover

Hit this key when you send mixed, confusing, or ambiguous signals to someone who wants to be your lover. BUYOFF: clearly state your emotional position to them.

### The Key of Courtly Love

You have a pure and unsullied love for someone you cannot have. Hit this key when you uphold the tenets of courtly love. BUYOFF: disavow your relationship or consummate it.

### The Key of the Daredevil

Hit this key when you take a risk that you don’t have to. BUYOFF: play it safe.

### The Key of the Deal

Hit this key whenever you strike a deal or make an exchange of value. BUYOFF: pass up a good deal.

### The Key of the Dependent

Hit this key when you rely on someone else completely for your continued security or happiness. BUYOFF: solve a problem yourself.

### The Key of the Do-Gooder

Hit this key when you go out of your way to do the right thing. BUYOFF: go out of your way to do something wrong.

### The Key of Evil

Hit this key when you do evil things for evil reasons. BUYOFF: do a good deed at great cost to yourself.

### The Key of the Fool

Your secret identity is much less capable or moral – or both – than you are. Hit this key when you play this role convincingly. BUYOFF: demonstrate that you are more than you seem to someone who cares.

### The Key of the Former Hotshot

You used to be the young gun of the team, but things have changed and you're forced to use your non-physical talents now. Hit this key whenever you solve a problem without using superior physical means. BUYOFF: Accept your new role or regain your former ability.

### The Key of the Goal

You have a specific, long term goal. Hit this key when you try for it. BUYOFF: achieve, give up on, or refuse it.

### The Key of Good

Hit this key when you do good things for good reasons. BUYOFF: commit an evil act on purpose, for gain.

### The Key of the Good Guy

Hit this key when you do the right thing and it costs you. BUYOFF: do something wrong for gain.

### The Key of the Half-Breed

You are half human and half something else. Hit this key whenever your heritage causes you trouble or is important in a scene. BUYOFF: accept the destruction of either half of your nature.

### The Key of the Hot Mess

Hit this key when you embarrass yourself. BUYOFF: pull it together when it counts.

### The Key of the Impulsive

Hit this key when you act on instinct or impulse. BUYOFF: make a careful plan and follow it.

### The Key of the Innocent Bystander

There's someone you care about who has a keen interest in your superhero persona and a reckless disregard for their own safety. Hit this key when you suffer harm, embarrassment, or inconvenience in order to protect them or to keep them from connecting the dots about you. BUYOFF: lose them or let them go.

### The Key of Law

Hit this key when you abide by or uphold the law when doing otherwise would be easier. BUYOFF: disregard the law for your own gain.

**The Key of the Long-Lost Love**

You loved, you lost. Hit this key when your long-lost love is used against you, when you do something to try and reunite, or when you sacrifice for them. BUYOFF: let them go.

**The Key of the Lost Home**

Your former home is lost to you, possibly forever. Hit this key any time part of your old life interferes with your new one or you move towards reopening the way. BUYOFF: make a new life and give up on the old.

**The Key of the Most Wanted**

Someone – a government agency, an interstellar being, a group of your ex-wives – wants you dead or dissected or to do something you don't want to. Hit this key when you evade or otherwise thumb your nose at them. BUYOFF: beat them, join them, or just give them what they want.

**The Key of the Protector**

You know what it's like to be taken advantage of; you won't stand by and let anyone else suffer, even if it costs you. Hit this key whenever you step up or stand up for someone else. BUYOFF: Let someone be bullied in silence.

**The Key of the Real**

You desperately crave Real interactions, even as you fade into Unreality. Hit this key whenever you indulge in a grounding act of some sort like eating, drinking, having sex, or watching TV. BUYOFF: become fully Real or fully UnReal.

**The Key of Redemption**

You were the stuff of nightmares, but you found your way back into the light. Hit this key when you resist the darkness within when it would be easier to surrender or when your dark past causes you trouble. BUYOFF: relapse and do something terrible.

**The Key of the Reluctant Monster**

You hate what you've become but the temptation of your dark nature is constant and unrelenting. Hit this key when you wallow in your inhuman nature. BUYOFF: accept your new nature or lose it.

**The Key of the Ruthless**

Hit this key when you do what must be done, regardless of the cost. BUYOFF: demonstrate that the ends don't justify the means.

**The Key of the Secret Identity**

Your secret identity is vitally important to you. Hit this key whenever you protect your secret identity from being blown. BUYOFF: merge your two identities publicly.

**The Key of the Skeptic**

Hit this key when you dismiss the supernatural in favor of a rational explanation. BUYOFF: accept something supernatural at face value.

**The Key of the Stranger**

You're a stranger in a strange land and the people of that land find you equal parts unsettling and intriguing. Hit your key any time you gain or lose something because you're not from around here. BUYOFF: Learn a custom of these people.

**The Key of the Stubbornly Mundane**

Hit this key when you pursue normality or deny the supernatural despite danger. BUYOFF: accept your new reality.

**The Key of the Tarnished Hero**

You're a person of honor, proud and lonely, in search of truth – and you keep it all under wraps, because you're flawed. Hit this key when you do something proud, lonely, or honorable and don't brag about it. BUYOFF: Let an innocent suffer, bad men win without opposition, or explain yourself.

### The Key of Treasure

Hit this key when you spend wealth gained through adventure. BUYOFF: leave treasure behind.

### The Key of the Unfettered

Hit this key when you avoid commitment or chains. BUYOFF: commit.

### The Key of the Untamed

Hit this key when you refuse to submit. BUYOFF: bend a knee.

### The Key of the Unwilling Superhero

You really don't want to be a superhero, or even to be super at all. Hit this key when you avoid using your powers when doing so would be easier. BUYOFF: embrace your powers.

### The Key of Vice

Choose one of the seven vices or invent your own. Hit this Key when you indulge in your vice. BUYOFF: swear off the vice.

### The Key of Virtue

Choose one of the seven virtues or invent your own. Hit this Key when you uphold your virtue. BUYOFF: indulge an opposing vice.

## Secrets

### The Secret of the Alien

Whether because of parentage, genetic modification, mutation, or something else, you are either partly or entirely something other than human. When using the Alien Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap in exchange for a Condition like *altered*, *craving*, or *unconscious*.

### The Secret of the Animal Companion

You have an animal companion. It has the Animal Trait with two Tags. Choose one Trait or two Tags for each ingrained Condition you add. If you lose it, trade this Secret in for 5xp and gain a Condition like *grieving*, *clumsy*, or *crippled*.

### The Secret of Beginner's Luck

You tend to succeed when trying something for the first time. When rolling with no applicable Traits, re-roll the lowest die once.

### The Secret of Boosting

You've mastered using one ability to boost another. Pick two Traits. When you use one, add up to two Tags from the other that apply.

### The Secret of Breadth

You've paid attention to all aspects of your craft, even when you didn't focus on them. Choose a Trait. When you use a Trait but no Tags, you can use an applicable Tag from that Trait that you don't have.

### The Secret of the Callous Angel

It feels like someone's watching out for you – but they don't seem to care about anyone else. When you would take Harm, roll a d6; on a 5+ you don't take the Harm, but someone or something nearby does.

### The Secret of the Candle

You're willing to burn your resources to succeed at any cost. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may add +1, ignoring the modifier cap, for every step down your Harm track you take. Roll the bonus in d6s; for every 6, gain a Condition like *broken arm*, *bleeding*, or *unconscious*.

### The Secret of Collateral Damage

Unless wielded carefully, your powers cause massive amounts of collateral damage. When you cause collateral damage while using your powers, ignore the cap, but if you exceed +4, gain a Condition like *remorseful*, *hunted*, or *in debt*.

### The Secret of the Cursed

Your powers are the product of a curse, hellish prophecy, demonic pact, or similar malevolent force. Choose the things that it wants. When you satisfy that force, apply your modifier twice, ignoring any caps, to a subsequent roll of your choice where those powers would help. After that roll, gain a Condition like *possessed*, *perverse craving*, or *temporarily evil*.

### The Secret of Dedication

You are dedicated to one of your ideals and this gives you strength. Choose one of your Keys; when it is struck, gain +1 to any rolls where dedication to that Key would help until you sleep or hit a Key, whichever comes first. If you buy off the chosen Key, choose a new one for the purposes of this Secret.

### The Secret of Demonblood

One of your ancestors was a demon. When you have a deal with someone, you can perform demon magic to facilitate the bargain; otherwise, you're limited to minor magics with a target of yourself. You have the Demon Trait with five Tags.

### The Secret of Escape

You put yourself in someone else's hands once, and you'll never do it again without an ace up your sleeve. When you roll to escape imprisonment, treat a 6- as a 7-9 result.

### The Secret of the Fae Upbringing

You were raised by fairies and have learned much from them. Gain a Condition like *truthful*, *chaste*, or *cruel*; as long as you have it, you may use fairy magic to create minor illusions or perform small tricks. Each time you do, roll a d6; on a 5+, gain a Condition like *enervated*, *weary*, or *craving*.

### The Secret of the Focused

You seek out opportunities to increase your favored abilities. When you use a Trait and a Tag under it, any identical Tags you have from other Traits apply too.

### The Secret of the Hidden Ace

You always have an ace up your sleeve. If you need a small item on your person, a useful friend nearby, or a trick prepared yesterday, you have it, but roll a d6; on a 4+ it betrays you later.

### The Secret of Hidden Potential

You have a hidden power that manifests when you need it. When you fail a roll, roll a d6. On a 5+, treat as if you rolled a 7-9 instead, but gain a Condition like *noticed*, *drained*, or *overestimated*.

### The Secret of Hidden Reserves

You have a well of hidden reserves you can draw on in a crisis. When you fail a roll, you can add up to +3 to your modifier, ignoring the modifier cap, and recalculate the result. For each +1, take Harm; if you add the full +3, also gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *broken arm*, or *dazed*.

### The Secret of Hollywood Ugly

Whether out of insecurity or disregard, you hide your beauty behind props like clunky glasses, bad hair, and baggy clothes. When you don't, add +1 to all rolls where it would help against anyone attracted to you.

### The Secret of the Irresistible

Something about you is irresistible to some people. If an actor is attracted to you, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap on rolls where it would matter against them. If you exceed +4, roll a d6. On a 5+, gain a Condition like *soulmate*, *stalked*, or *jealous lover*.

### The Secret of the Legend

You're legendary at something you do. Pick a Trait; you always have a +1 when using that Trait and your modifier cap for it is increased by one.

### The Secret of Love's Elation

You carry the favor of a lady or some other small token of her affection. Gain a +1 to all interactions where a morale boost helps. When fighting for her honor, re-roll the lowest die.

### The Secret of Luck

You're lucky, but you always seem to need to be. If you choose, add an extra d6 to a roll and drop the lowest die, but gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *smitten* or *blind* after the roll is resolved.

### The Secret of Magical Training

You've had training in the magical arts. Gain a Magic Trait and three Tags for it.

### The Secret of Mental Power

Choose a psionic Trait; you are exceptionally powerful in it. Start with that Trait and three Tags under it. You may apply the *take harm* Tag, if you have it, multiple times when using it.



### The Secret of Notoriety

Your secret identity is public knowledge. Replace *Secret Identity* with *Notoriety*, keeping or replacing Tags as appropriate. Gain *Resources* with one Tag and the Conditions *exposed* and *famous*, then make a Dramatic move by one of your enemies against someone or something your formerly secret identity cares about as soon as you can.

### The Secret of Occult Immunity

You are less susceptible to the powers of supernatural creatures and recover more quickly when you are affected. When such powers affect you directly, re-roll the lowest die and keep the best.

### The Secret of the Prodigy

You have had exhaustive training in a specific area. Choose a Trait. When using it, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. Roll a d6 for each point over +4; on a 6 gain a Condition like *unconscious*, *sprain*, or *exhausted*.

### The Secret of Purity

You are pure of heart and body and unsullied by worldly concerns. Gain +1 when this would be an asset. When rolling against evil or temptation, re-roll the lowest die.

### The Secret of the Requirement

Choose a non-ingrained Condition; your powers depend on having it. If you don't have it, your powers are limited or inaccessible. While you have it, you may apply your modifier a second time, ignoring the cap, to any rolls where your powers would help, after rolling. If you exceed the cap, gain a Condition like *reckless*, *power drunk* or *unconscious* or take Harm.

### The Secret of Sanity

You have a wide variety of coping mechanisms. When you face mind-bending horror, you may take a Condition from the Coping Conditions chart to move your roll result up one step.

### The Secret of a Secret Identity

You have a secret identity that you value. When you roll to protect your secret identity, take 1 Currency that may be used for that purpose or to protect someone or something important to you. This Currency lasts until you switch guises for the second time after gaining it.

### The Secret of Seeming

You have a Seeming, a personal glamour, that affects how people see you. The magic reinforces itself, subtly and overtly, by altering minds and memories. Choose a Condition to reflect your Seeming. You may change your Seeming at will, as long as you know how.

### The Secret of Superiority

You have above normal potential in one area. Pick a Trait; when using that Trait, increase the modifier cap by one.

### The Secret of the Supernatural

You are a supernatural creature (or the child of one). When using a supernatural Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. If you do, but would otherwise have failed the roll, gain a Condition like *drained*, *hungry*, or *unconscious*.

### The Secret of the Supernatural Gift

You possess supernatural gifts. When using a supernatural Trait, you may choose to ignore the modifier cap. If you do, roll a d6. On a 4+, gain a Condition like *drained*, *shaken*, or *unconscious*.

### The Secret of the Thrall

You are a vampire's thrall, inextricably linked to them until they release you. Choose two physical areas like strength, nimbleness, or attractiveness; when one of those areas is involved in a roll, double the modifier. If the dice on this roll match, your master commands you; gain a Condition like *dominated*, *obsessed*, or *possessed*.

### The Secret of Toughness

You're tougher than you look. Pick how. Each scene, swap one Condition of that type (or move one step up the Harm track, if you picked "physically") for one like *focused*, *angry*, or *tired*.

### The Secret of the Unreal

Maybe you have a Fae parent or maybe you've just spent too much time out of the Real, but you're only partly Real. You can see both Real and Unreal creatures and most Seemings are like ghostly overlays to you. Gain the Unreal Trait and five Tags under it, as well as the "Slightly Unreal" Condition. Pick one aspect of your Unreality that is beyond your control and create a Condition for it.

### The Secret of the Vampire

You're a vampire. Gain the Vampire trait and five Tags under it. If being a vampire would be an asset

and you do not have any hunger Conditions, you may choose to re-roll one or both dice and keep the highest. Roll a d6 for each die you re-roll; on a 6, gain a Condition like *hungry*, *starving*, or *blood-mad*, or take Harm.

### The Secret of the Warped

Somewhere along the line, you meddled with something that shouldn't be meddled with, and it meddled with you back. Gain the Warped Trait, and three Tags for it.

### The Secret of the Wildcard

Your powers do what they want most of the time. Sometimes it's helpful, sometimes it's not. If your powers could affect a roll, roll an extra d6; if that d6 is the highest die, drop the lowest, but if it's the lowest die, drop the highest instead. If it matches another die, nothing happens.

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## Tips for Playing Calypso

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Listen to the fiction; the heart of the game is using the established fiction to push the story forward.

You can always choose an option from a list instead of rolling it, or make up your own! Look for options that speak to you or feel like they “fit”.

Scenarios are suggestions, packages to create a certain “feel” to your game. Take options you like, even if they’re not part of the scenario. Make it yours.

Choose the character options and Conditions you want to use and explore in play, that define your hero, not that you think will be mechanically advantageous.

If a character option is almost right but not quite, change it.

Use the flavor text as part of the fiction. That’s what it’s there for, to provide grist for the fiction mill and to inspire you. If it doesn’t, or doesn’t feel right, change it.

Ask the oracle questions that matter and choose interesting outcomes for those questions. If an outcome will end progress or halt the story, don’t even consider it. Just say “yes” and move on, or play a Dramatic Move.

In a solo game, balance is irrelevant. Build your hero as powerfully as you want; if the challenges seem too easy, look for harder challenges.

Don’t beat yourself up about the prose on the page. Don’t even think twice about it. It’s not about writing a novel on the first pass, it’s about having an exhilarating experience **right now**.

You don’t have to fill in all the details in play. Skip ahead. Just play it quick and dirty and if you want to go back later there will be a skeleton waiting to be fleshed out.

And finally... have fun with it!

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## The Odds

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	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	keep high	keep low
-6	72.22	58.3	41.66	27.77	16.66	8.33	2.77	-	-	-	19.44	52.3
7-9	25	33.3	41.66	44.44	41.66	33.33	25	16.66	8.33	2.77	44.9	37.03
+10	2.78	8.3	16.66	27.77	41.66	58.33	72.22	83.33	91.66	97.22	35.6	10.64

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## Random Generators

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## Dangers & Risks

Table 1: Complications

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	You suffer harm.	You are slowed down.	Someone learns something you'd rather they didn't.	One of your worst qualities hinders you.	One of your best qualities is used against you.	You are caught in the act.
2	You attract unwanted attention.	You are put in a bad position.	Something goes out of control.	Something malfunctions and is no longer usable.	Someone taunts you or reveals your failings.	You look foolish.
3	You take a physical condition.	You suffer an emotion.	You are made emotionally vulnerable.	You are made physically vulnerable.	You discover something you'd rather not.	Someone's feelings toward you are revealed.
4	A trauma from your past hinders you.	Something you did in the past comes back to bite you.	One of your long-term goals is set back significantly.	One of your cherished dreams or illusions is shattered.	Someone you don't want to will suffer harm.	Someone's regard for you changes.
5	A part of you you cherish will be tarnished or lost.	Something you did yesterday comes back to bite you.	One of your weakness will be revealed.	One of your secrets will be revealed.	The environment changes for the worse.	You are forced to compromise your morals or ethics.
6	A path is closed or barred.	A short term goal is no longer achievable.	Something breaks.	You lose control.	You gain a status effect like blind or unconscious.	Roll a random event.

## Actors

### Quirks

Table 2: Visible Quirks

		1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	gap in front teeth	unusual eye color	unusual hair color	very tall	very short	plump or well-nourished
	2	thin or underfed	extremely average; they must work at it	limping	distinctive facial feature	many hair braids	no eye contact
1-2	3	very pale	smells of alcohol, drugs, or another vice	smells clean	smells strongly	black eye	light freckles
	4	heavy freckles	clumsy	looks tired	mole	clothes don't fit well	clothes very tailored
	5	graceful	intense eyes	distant stare	prominent birthmark	prominent scar	disfiguring scar
	6	faint scar	tanned	broken limb	bite or claw mark scar	paint or dye on hands	flower or leaves in hair
	1	rubbing back of neck	military bearing	openly displays a totem	has a pet	sunburned	paragon of their kind
	2	exemplar of their kind	minor tattoo or mark	many tattoos or marks	untreated wound	inappropriate attire	beautiful
3-4	3	plain	ugly	mark of special heritage	unnaturally beautiful	unnaturally ugly	incredibly charismatic
	4	appealing	disturbing demeanor	repellent	immobilizing or slowing injury	minor birthmark	mark of unnatural heritage
	5	mark of distasteful heritage	stocky	mismatched clothes	soft hands	innocent	lithe
	6	muscular	wiry	athletic	distinctive jewelry	distinctive weapon	distinctive clothes
	1	wearing an item of military gear	looks tired	looks shocked	looks surprised	looks terrified	carrying a wounded pet
	2	carrying a child	carrying a wounded person	carrying too little gear to be prepared for surroundings	chewing on something	barely remaining standing	falling unconscious
5-6	3	typical hair color for a group	typical eye color for a group	tall for gender	short for gender	robust for gender	undersized for gender
	4	physically exceptional	exceptional in an obvious way	paragon of gender	very long hair	very short hair	definite case of bed-head
	5	sweating heavily	cool and collected	shrewd or piercing gaze	constantly assessing	completely covered in tattoos or marks	carrying a dangerous animal
	6	sharpened teeth	obvious mutation	royal bearing	haughty or arrogant bearing	delicate hands	obvious power

Table 3: Hidden Quirks

		1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	fond of rhetorical questions	incorrigible gossip	keeps secrets	cusses like a sailor	really bad cook	really good cook
	2	taciturn	gestures while talking	physically very friendly	stutters	falls in love easily	accent
1-2	3	very perceptive	very unperceptive	chip on shoulder	placid temperament	volatile temperament	paranoid
	4	explosive temper	hard to rouse to anger	holds grudges	lets bygones be bygones	superstitious	conceited
	5	nods frequently	has a pet	carries a totem	pouty	vicious when crossed	mixes up two languages in speech
	6	has a soft spot for children	has a soft spot for orphans	can't stand small children	hates a common pet type	loves a common pet type	thinks they're superior
	1	down to earth	wistful for the past	apprehensive about the future	afraid of change	loves variety	pessimist
	2	optimist	pauses frequently when speaking	dry sense of humor	slapstick sense of humor	openly prejudiced	rigorously prepared in area of expertise
3-4	3	a very good friend	values loyalty above all else	values honor above all else	values family above all else	values self above all else	emotionally damaged
	4	emotionally centered	feels at peace	feels guilty	bad at small talk	bad at flirtation	bad at negotiation
	5	nervous when around object of attraction	easily embarrassed	has no shame	easily distracted	single-minded	cannot read or write
	6	unfailingly polite	extremely rude	has a phobia	very sophisticated	jaded and cynical	negative
	1	mutation or odd power	prefers to wing it	wasn't taught better	was taught better but doesn't care	rejects social mores	ignores social mores
	2	upholds social mores	is steered by past event	never looks back	fastidious	a taker from or user of people	very self-sacrificing
5-6	3	very selfish	bossy	high maintenance	low maintenance	skittish and conflict averse	not easily frightened
	4	arrogant	lacks self-confidence	lecherous despite risks	lecherous but discreet	lecherous and proud of it	discreetly chaste
	5	overtly prudish	overtly chaste	private with personal affairs	boastful	embodies a virtue	embodies a vice
	6	pacifist	will fight anybody, any time	boisterous	has a chronic, hindering injury or infirmity	recklessly brave	does what they have to do, always



## Temperament

When you first encounter an actor, complete the following sentence twice, using a different “Degree” column each time.

The actor feels *Emotion* towards *Target* to *Degree*.

Table 4: Emotion

		1	2	3	4	5	6
3-	1	miserliness	envy	jealousy	love	hate	optimistic
	2	addicted	apathetic	ecstatic	loving	lustful	trusting
	3	admiring	submissive	apprehensive	fearful	terrified	obsessed
	4	surprised	amazed	disapproving	pensive	sad	vengeful
	5	remorseful	bored	jealous	spiteful	vigilant	annoyed
	6	bitter	protective	aggressive	interested	anticipating	contemptuous
4+	1	interest	curiosity	attraction	desire	admiration	surprise
	2	amusement	alarm	panic	generous	disgust	revulsion
	3	indifference	familiarity	comfort	hope	fear	gratitude
	4	humility	pride	charity	sympathy	avarice	greed
	5	thankfulness	joy	elation	triumph	jubilant	patience
	6	anger	rage	sorrow	grief	frustration	disappointment

Table 5: Target

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	chaos	order	right	wrong	skill	secrets
2	status	power	food	freedom	sex	love
3	change	status quo	death	alcohol	danger	honor
4	pain	ghosts	the divine	wealth	duty	emotional
5	struggle	adventure	the physical	tax	family	violence
6	nearby person	far away person	physical struggle	the intellectual	survival	job

Table 6: Degree

1	traces	overwhelming
2	slight	great
3	just a little	quite a bit
4	weak	strong
5	mild	driving
6	ignorable	nearly consuming

## Motives

When you wish to know why an actor behaves as they do or to give an opponent a reasonable motive, roll twice on the *Motives* chart. Choose if the results are competing motives or part of the same drive.

Table 7: Motives

		1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	consume out of necessity	scare off interlopers	trade gossip	protect home	make a new friend	serve a master
	2	preserve beauty	pass on a curse	maintain silence	consume endlessly	seduce to ruin	procreate
1-2	3	lure into a trap	encourage lust	find meaning	placate an idol	sacrifice	stop the invaders
	4	preserve life	hoard shiny things	indulge an addiction or craving	protect offspring	deceive for gain	gain resources
	5	be free of a curse	conquer	watch over a ward	achieve power	explore new places	fall in love
	6	avoid passing on a curse	learn about the world	see the world burn	find excitement	stir up mischief	deceive for the greater good
	1	secure their safety	get revenge for a serious matter	test someone's mettle	test the limits of skill	create something of lasting value	to learn for learning's sake
	2	get revenge for a petty slight	experience the thrill of the forbidden	seduce for pleasure	seduce for nefarious purposes	be entertained	be flattered and praised
3-4	3	seduce to a cause or mission or betrayal	seduce away from a cause or mission	prove worthy of an honor	atone for a sin	increase weapons	find a companion
	4	find a cause	be the best at something	gain ridiculous levels of wealth	obtain someone else's loved one	find a great treasure	cuckold or embarrass a rival
	5	be a hero	scout out opportunities	find the truth	find true love	destroy out of necessity	bully the weak
	6	live like a tyrant	live like a king	stop a greater evil	perform a great deed	perform a masterwork	escape a prison
	1	imprison someone	enjoy solitude	avoid others	learn how to socialize	learn a secret	perform an appointed duty
	2	subvert an appointed duty	shirk a duty	feel alive	ruin someone more powerful	murder	steal from by stealth or trickery
5-6	3	take from by force or guile	discredit	break free from	destroy out of malice	overthrow a ruler	repair a great wrong
	4	make things right	create something creative	rebuild that which is destroyed	mend that which is broken	locate the missing	learn news of the outside world
	5	have an intelligent conversation	earn freedom	enslave as labor or cannon fodder	encourage love	acquire magic for magic's sake	solve a puzzle or anomaly
	6	experience other ways of life	entice to a dangerous task	embark on a perilous journey	get someone else to assume the risk	encourage bravery	trade for exotic wares

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## Structure

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## Three Act Structure

### Set the Scene

Each Act has its own Moves. Use them in addition to the core Moves.

Roll or choose the Scene type and Scene purpose, along with a couple of Scene Keywords. If something doesn't fit, roll again, or insert an Interlude to bridge the narrative.

Each scene face a Core Challenge. Pick the most crucial action to your goal or to your survival; just go with your gut feeling. Declare it before you roll.

If you succeed on the Core Challenge with a 10+, move one die of your choice to your Score. If you succeed with a 7-9, roll one die to move to your Score. If you fail, roll a die to move to the Enemy's Score.

When you move a die to a Score, be sure to preserve its face value.

Each scene has an event that will happen by fiat. It might be the Core Challenge or it might not. End the scene after the event and the Challenge have both happened.

Be sure to add scene events and Core Challenges to the Plot Callback List. Roll on the list whenever things seem slow or an Interrupt is called for.

Play any Interludes in the space between the previous and the next Scene. There's no Core Challenge in an Interlude.

If a Scene is an Interlude, you may narrate events to resolve whatever Conditions are plausible during that scene.

### Scene Type

Roll the Act in d6s, keeping the highest:

Montage • Flashback • Interlude • Straight • Interrupt (Difficulty +1) • Obligatory (Justice)

### Scene Purpose

Table 8: Scene Purpose

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-2	Atmosphere	Introduce	Exposition	Transition	Preparation	Aftermath
3-4	Investigation	Revelation	Recognition	A Gift	Escape	Pursuit
5-6	Seduction	Unexpected Visitor	Roll twice	Roll twice	Roll twice	Roll twice

## Pulp Adventure

### The Enemy

The Enemy is always a step ahead of you and always does it with style.

The Enemy is brutal • sadistic • seductive • powerful • judgmental • bitter.

They are • charming • well-connected • intelligent • ruthless • skilled.

They are certain of their cause. They will not stop the Prize is theirs.

### Act One

**Act Moves** It breaks • someone suffers harm • you look bad • you're noticed • you feel something • one of your weaknesses is revealed.

**Status Quo** ends in **Plot Point: Incident**

The same old grind, until a threat is made • someone gets into a fight • it is missing • a map is found • a body is discovered • a stranger arrives.

**Predicament** ends in **Plot Point: Lock In**

Your goal is clear, but now you've got to save yourself • find the cure • clear your name • get it back • help a friend • find out why.

### Act Two

**Act Moves** Someone suffers harm • one of your worst qualities causes you problems • discover something you wish you hadn't • your secret is revealed • you are left vulnerable • you suffer emotional trauma.

**First Obstacle** remember to **Play To Your Strength**

Danger strikes as emotions run high • a lead is found • a target is acquired • someone wants something • someone seduces • a vice is tempted.

**Higher Obstacle** ends in **Plot Point: First Culmination**

The going gets tougher now as the Rival uses a connection • someone is seduced • the rival uses a resource • strong emotions lead to action • a body is found • a threat worsens.

**Subplot** remember to **Compare and Contrast**

You have an immediate, pressing problem – a resource is used up • danger looms • someone is sick • a secret must be dealt with • emotion flares • someone is gone.

**Highest Obstacle** ends in **Plot Point: Main Culmination**

Your usual methods have made things worse! And someone dies • someone is captured • something you care about is lost • the Rival's secret gambit succeeds • someone is tortured • the Rival seizes the initiative.

### Act Three

**Act Moves** Suffer severe harm • a weakness hurts you • be exposed • lose an ally • lose an asset • your past comes back to haunt you.

**New Tension** leads to **Plot Point: Twist**

You know what you want, but you need a new approach. Add a new Condition. You find that the Prize is deadly • it was a lie • you're the chosen one • the Enemy is right • it isn't real • an ally is not an ally.

**Resolution** remember **Don't Pull Your Punches**

Fight! But it will take a sacrifice • means a hard choice • can't be stopped • has captured your allies • will take everything • requires surrender.

You discover someone thought lost • a weakness • an unexpected use • one of your allies knows • a blind spot • a bigger Prize.

If you win this scene, re-roll any of the Enemy's dice you wish to, once.

### Epilogue

Add up the face value of your Score and the Enemy's; if yours is higher, start with two True dice, otherwise, start with zero.

Count your dice that are equal to or higher than the Enemy's lowest die, then divide by two. These are your True dice.

Options may be taken more than once. Any not True are Unknown.

One of you survives • wins a goal • is enriched. Your enemy is defeated • is killed • has no successor.

## Horror

### The Enemy

It seems feral • sadistic • spiteful • sanity-warping • seductive • judgmental.

It is moist • spidery • spiked • acidic • infectious • inside you.

It uses trickery • seduction • violence • stealth • terror • control.

Play to discover what the entity really is or just to escape it.

### Act One

**Act Moves** It breaks • someone suffers harm • you look bad • you're noticed • you feel something • one of your weaknesses is revealed.

**Status Quo** ends in **Plot Point: Incident**

Do what you usually do, until something innocuous attacks • transport fails • communication fails • fog or bad weather settles in • someone is missing • something is missing.

**Predicament** ends in **Plot Point: Lock In**

Your goal is made clear, but now there's no escape until dawn • the doors are stuck shut • someone is missing • it needs to be found • outside is dangerous • a prize awaits the bold.

### Act Two

**Act Moves** Someone suffers harm • one of your worst qualities causes you problems • discover something you wish you hadn't • your secret is revealed • you are exposed • you suffer emotional trauma.

**First Obstacle** remember to **Play To Your Strength**

You've got everything under control, but emotions run high • the entity acts subtly • a body is discovered • a pawn attacks • someone seduces • a vice is tempted.

**Higher Obstacle** ends in **Plot Point: First Culmination**

The tension ratchets as the entity acts overtly • someone is seduced • betrayal ensues • strong emotions lead to action • someone dies • someone is lost.

**Subplot** remember to **Compare and Contrast**

You have an immediate, pressing problem – something is used up • something is in danger • someone is freaking out • someone is sick • someone is convinced • someone wanders off.

**Highest Obstacle** ends in **Plot Point: Main Culmination**

Your usual methods make things worse! And someone dies • someone you care about vanishes • something you care about is lost • it is found, broken • you are tortured • someone loses their mind.

### Act Three

**Act Moves** Suffer severe harm • a weakness hurts you • someone is vulnerable • lose an ally • lose an asset • your past comes back to hurt you.

**New Tension** leads to **Plot Point: Twist**

You know what you want, but you need a new approach. Cruel twist; this isn't the first time • it hates you for a reason • you are connected • it isn't real • you're already infected • you're already dead.

**Resolution** remember **Don't Pull Your Punches**

You or someone you care about might survive but it will take a sacrifice • must be endured • can only be contained • is in your allies • will take everything • is justified.

You discover someone thought lost • it has a weakness • a weapon • one of my allies knows • a way out • you are the only one who can stop it.

If you win this scene, re-roll any of the Entity's dice you want, once each.

### Epilogue

Add up the face value of your Score and the Entity's; if yours is higher, start with two True dice, otherwise, start with zero.

Count your dice that are equal to or higher than the Enemy's lowest die, then divide by two. These are your True dice.

Options may be taken more than once. Any not True are Unknown.

One of you survives • escapes • is defeated • is enriched.



## Beats Structure

### Set Up

During a Sequence, lose or gain the indicated Ally, Resources, or Condition, at least. You might find you lose or gain more than expected.

Each Sequence has a mandatory event and a Core Challenge. Pick the most crucial action to your goal or to your survival; just go with your gut feeling. If you succeed at it, add one to your Coin. If not, add one to your Debt.

If you need a breather or some time to narrate healing, you can buy an Interlude by increasing Debt by one. In an Interlude, you can't earn Coin.

### The World

It is uncaring • faceless • out to get you • brutal • capricious • powerful.

It is one step ahead of you unless it is beating you for information.

It can use all the Dramatic Moves, but it favors deal harm • put someone in a bad position • promise future pain • take something away • use your Secrets against you • reveal a secret.

It targets my main goal • some other goal • me • my friends • my control • the future.

When a notable event occurs, add it to the Plot Callback List. When you roll doubles, roll on the list as normal; if an event comes up, the World throws it in your face.

### Sequences (Noir Mystery Theme)

#### SETUP

##### Opening Image – Define Hero – Establish Premise

the usual [ status quo ] *then* someone tells me [ the lesson ]

work smarter, not harder • violence isn't the answer • use my mind, not my body • luck won't always carry me through • good must act against evil • redemption is possible

but I don't get it and it *ends in the* CATALYST

find the body • an attack • a cry for help • caught in the act • meet the client • lose an ally

*requires the* CHOICE [ to continue ]

#### INTERLUDE

##### Subplot – Gain or Lose a Resource

subplot [ take a break ] *when the*

mentor • professional • friend • rival • peer • lover

*tells me* THE LESSON again [ I still don't get it ]

## EXPLORE THE PREMISE

**Genre Promise – Add an Ally – Add a Resource**

promise of [ explore ] the genre *expect someone to be* [repeatedly]  
 shot at • hit • seduced • interrogated • chased • threatened  
*ends in* MIDPOINT [ where everything is great or everything is awful ]

## COLLAPSE

**Attack – Lose All Resources – Lose an Ally – Gain a Negative Condition**

the bad guys [ attack ] *ruin everything as it*  
 isn't what I really wanted • is lost • is destroyed • isn't what I thought it was • is stolen • comes with  
 untenable strings  
 failure [ make it hurt ] *ends in* LOSS  
 prize • illusions • part of self • social standing • mentor • lover

## DESPAIR

**Mourning – Lose a Trait**

utter failure [ mourn ] *leads to* CHOICE [to try again]  
 inspiration • love • lesson advice • emotion • duty • the greater good

## FINALE

**Climax – Gain a Trait**

turns out [ cruel twist ] *someone*  
 was using you • was secretly working against you • knows the truth about you • set you up to take the  
 fall • is in it for themselves • is a monster  
 [ plan ] *use your new* approach [main plot] and context [subplot] *as*  
 things go wrong • they're prepared for you • there's an unintended consequence • it was a setup from  
 the start • they wanted you to • triple cross

## EPILOGUE

## Resolution

Pay your Debt off now, if you can. Whatever you have left after you can use to purchase outcomes. Each outcome costs one Coin.

justice is served • someone comes out better off • someone is defeated • an at-risk resource or ally is spared

Final Image [ how things have changed ]

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## **Optional Systems**

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## Relationships

My preference is to handle relationships as part of the fiction, asking an oracle as needed for guidance on the actor's actions and motives. But if you want a (slightly) more formal social mechanic, here's one.

When an actor is interesting to you or becomes significant in play, add them to your character sheet as a Condition.

Decide based on the fiction what is the nature of the relationship and add that term followed by the actor's name to your character sheet ("Contact [actor name]", for example).

Use this Condition to guide the fiction, provoke challenges, and add bonuses or penalties, when supported by the fiction, exactly as usual. If the relationship changes in play, change the name of the Condition as necessary, again, as usual.

Sample relationships: Contact, Friend, Lover, Ex-Lover, Mourned, Spouse, Rival, Enemy, Nemesis, Stalker, Mentor, Teacher, Parent

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The End