



You have experienced some strange or extreme weather event.

Perhaps there was snow in the summer, drought during the rainy season, or a delay in the changing of the leaves. If this happened near your birth, you may have been blamed for this event.

Desert

You have a distinguishing feature.

Snow Flurries  
Grassland

Unfortunately some things never go your way.

Rain  
Mountains

You were born at a strange time.

Windy  
City

1. Weapon
2. Animal
3. Leaf or Flower
4. Geometric Shape
5. Bone or Skull
6. Dragon
7. Large red stain
8. Letter or Symbol
9. Spider or Web
10. Heart

1. Have or give bad luck.
2. Have an unattractive physical feature.
3. Carry a disease.
4. Often accused of being guilty.
5. Hate cities.
6. Suffer from insomnia.
7. Have nightmares.
8. Have or had a stutter.
9. Affected by the full moon.
10. Always losing things.

1. Sunset or Sunrise
2. New or Full moon
3. Blue moon
4. Solar or Lunar eclipse
5. Midnight or Noon
6. Rainbow
7. New Year's Day
8. Astronomical conjunction
9. Premature
10. Same day as a relative.

from Backer, Justin Alexander Dorsev  
“Grand Tell and Shake The Heavens!” – King Alexander XVII

1. A famous person died when you were born.
2. Your mother died in childbirth.
3. Your family were refugees.
4. Your twin died young.
5. You were born during wartime.
6. A family member died the same day you were born.
7. Your birth was foretold as a bad omen.
8. You lost a digit in an accident.
9. You were born during a plague.
10. One of your parents tried to kill you.

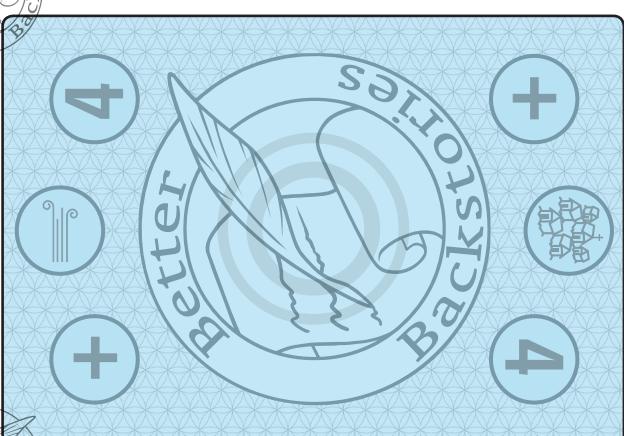
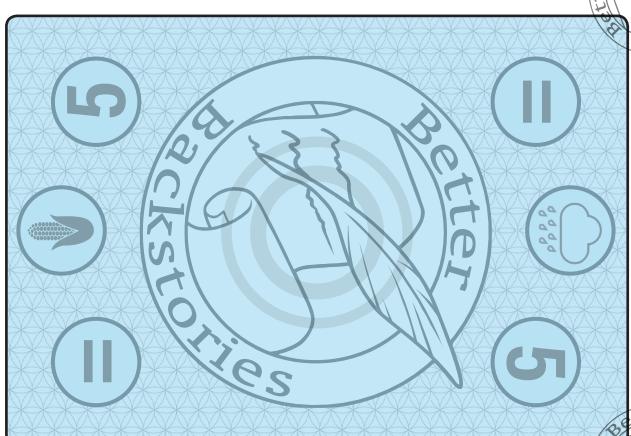
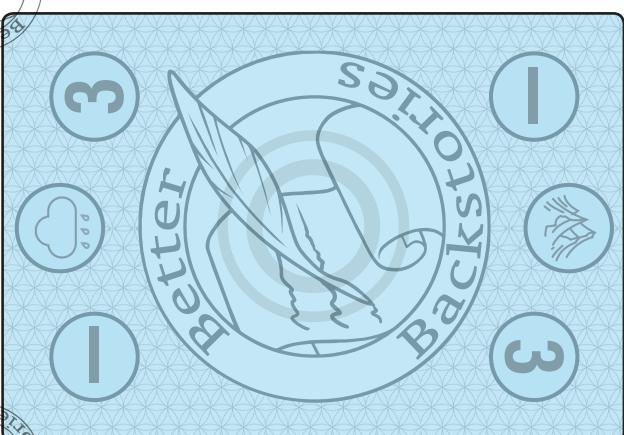
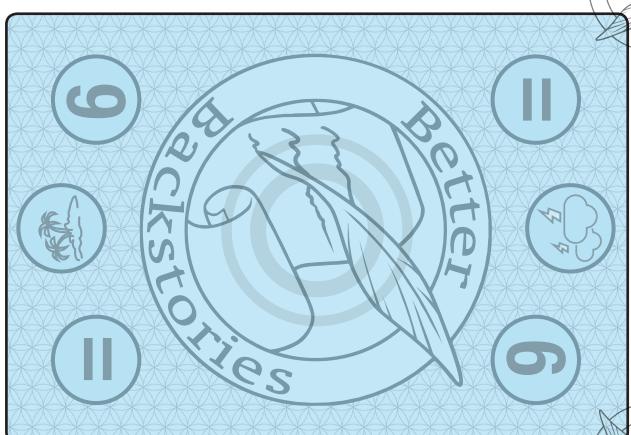
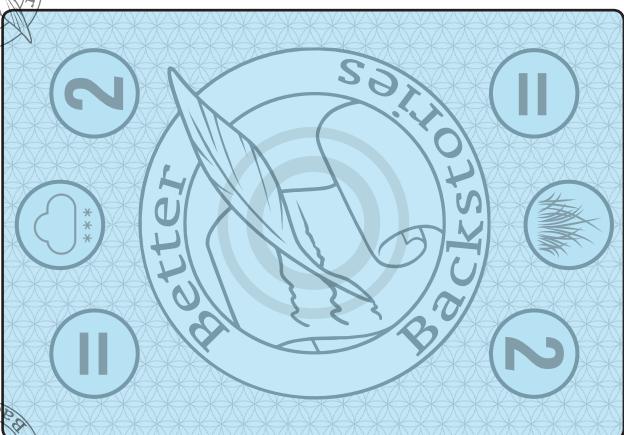
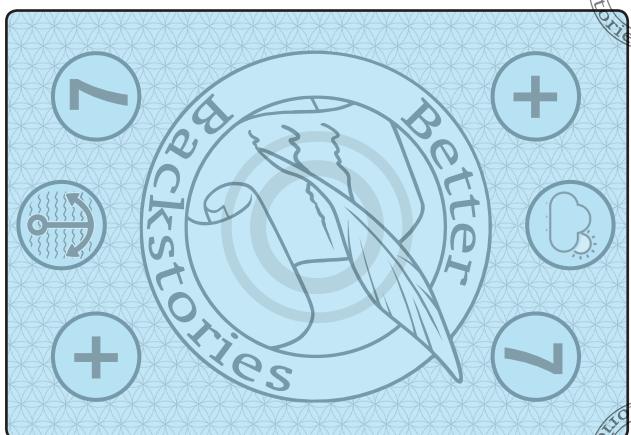
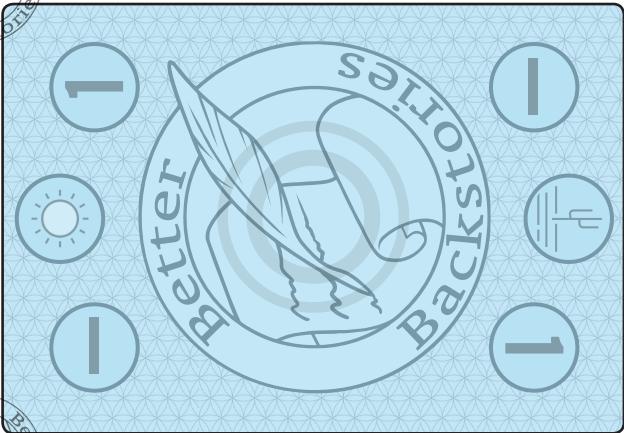
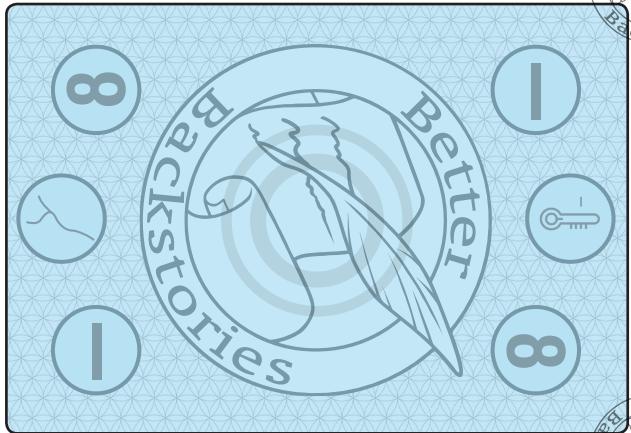
1. Collecting something
2. Acting or Entertaining
3. Dance
4. Sports or Athletics
5. Exploration or Investigation
6. Field of study (chemistry, programming, engineering, etc.)
7. Crafting or Model making
8. Art or Sculpture
9. Music or Singing
10. Writing or Storytelling

1. A cave.
2. A barn or farm building.
3. The family home, or at a friend's home.
4. A far off place.
5. A vehicle while traveling.
6. A prison.
7. A temple or hospital.
8. A tavern or office.
9. Out in the Wilderness.
10. A palace.

You may have been hidden away from your family, or your parents were exiled with you. If your birth was not recorded, it may be hard to prove you exist at all.

from Brazeau

"You have no number and the police archives seem to be lacking your birth certificate. So who are you, Mister Mysterious?"  
—Detective Maddox, New Angeles Police Department





## BLESSING

Fortunately fate has  
smiled upon you.

Fog  
Lake

1. You are considered beautiful.
2. You're good at making new friends.
3. You have a good voice.
4. You have or give good luck.
5. You always know which way is North.
6. Your parents were in a secret society.
7. You look young.
8. You're good with numbers.
9. Your family is naturally long-lived.
10. You always know the correct time.

## INSPIRING

Overscast  
Farmland

You have a large heart.

## PET

You have or had  
unique animal friend.

Tornado  
Ruins

1. Large Dog or Wolf
2. Big Cat
3. Songbird or Hawk
4. Snake or Lizard
5. Spider or Bat
6. Rodent or Ferret
7. Barnyard Animal
8. Monkey or Parrot
9. Tiny Dragon
10. Stuffed Animal or Robot

## WEALTHY

Thunder  
Hills

You have a large heart.

## THRIFTY

A family member is  
or was well known.

Sunny  
Ruins

Balmy  
Mountains

Your family comes from above

- Your parents began saving  
when you were young. By the  
time you came of age, they  
were able to provide you with  
money, a special item, higher  
education, land or stocks. You may  
or may not still have this prize.

## CELEBRITY

A family member is  
or was well known.

Grassland

Mountains

Your family comes from above

- While growing up, you found  
an animal and nursed it back  
to health. You either gained  
the animal as a companion  
or you gained an affinity for  
small animals. You can't talk  
to them, but they trust you  
more than average people.

## ANIMALS

Snow Flurries  
Shoreline

Sunny  
Ruins

Your family threw  
a big party for you.

## SHINDIG

Windy  
Lake

Shoreline  
Ruins

Your family threw  
a big party for you.

## STAMIN

Lake

Ruins

Your family threw  
a big party for you.

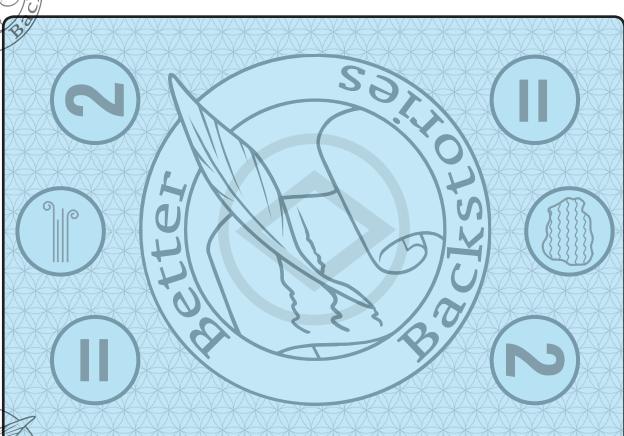
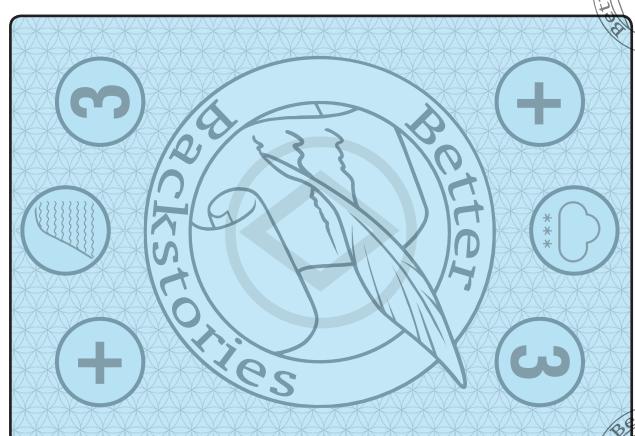
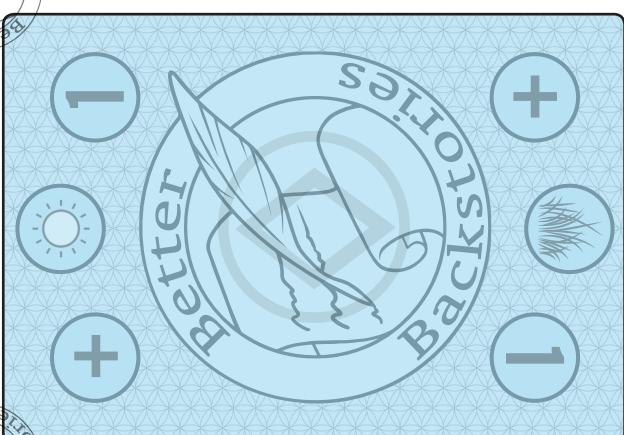
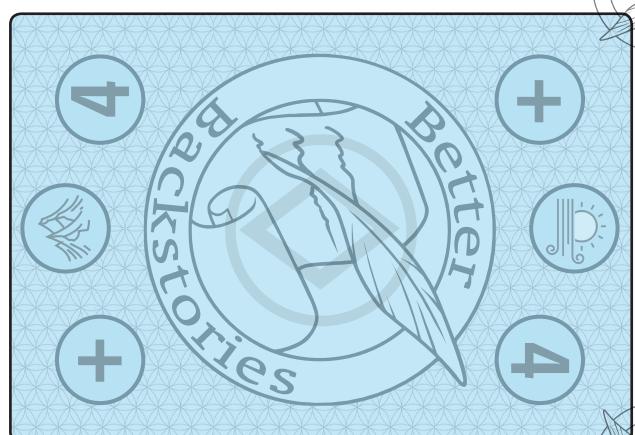
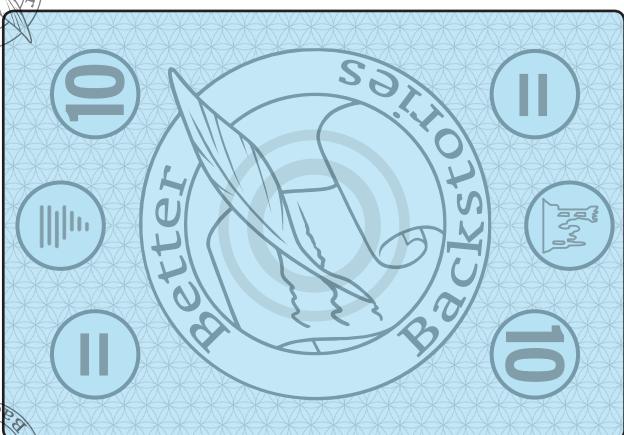
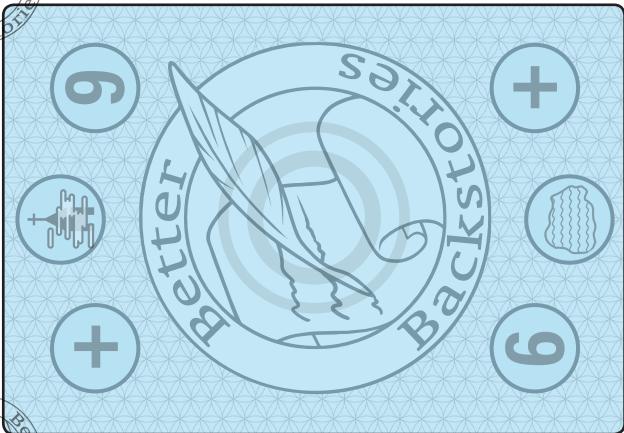
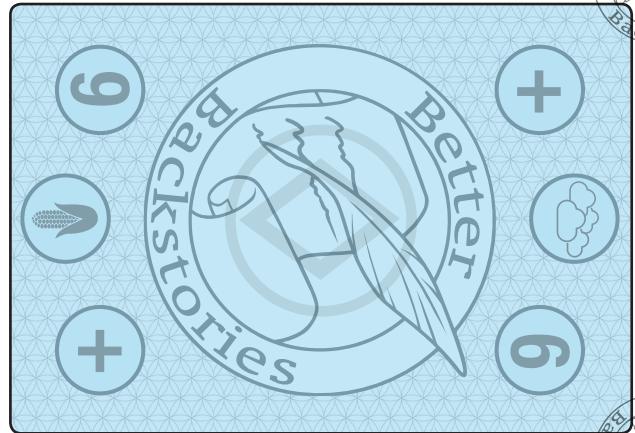
1. You are helpful to strangers.
2. You are very punctual.
3. You are patient and calm.
4. You are careful with your money.
5. You are respectful and polite.
6. You are warm-hearted and friendly.
7. You are sure of yourself.
8. You prefer to get things done quickly.
9. You always tell the truth.
10. You are adept at making peace between people.

from Jay Stilipec  
*"Had I not been abandoned as a baby, who knows where I might be in this life?" -Ferros Stonecore*

from Backer Wolf Pack  
*The rogue, trying to interact with the shifty character in the shadows, opens her trench coat. "G' wanna buy a sunfish?"*

-Caffiea

from Backer Delmer FVY  
*"...and then, I accidentally became a Druid." -a Druid named Bobby*





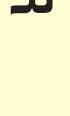
## CRAFTSMAN



## FAMOUS



## DESTITUTE



## UNPOPULAR



## TRAGEDY



A family member is or was good with their hands.

Frost Town

Mostly Cloudy Savannah

You helped someone and they still owe you.

Hail River

You have or had an influential supporter.

Heatwave Palace

- Weaver, Tailor or Cobbler
- Metalsmith or Carpenter
- Engineer or Shipbuilder
- Blacksmith or Silversmith
- Teacher or Animal trainer
- Hunter, Fisherman or Butcher
- Chef or Baker
- Pilot, Sailor or Driver
- Jeweler or Instrument maker
- Stoneworker or Mason

from Backer Phil Sweet<sup>†</sup>

"Don't forget my loves, for I shall seduce them!"  
-Deganon Hippolite



You lost someone very close to you.

Grassland Bama

Your family struggled with the working the land, watching basest messtresses, possibly

- A parent was murdered.
- Best friend died.
- Parent died in an accident.
- A sibling died mysteriously.
- A family member died from a long illness.
- Sudden death in the family.
- Both parents died.
- A grandparent died.
- Young love died.
- Someone vanished mysteriously.

from Backer Kox The Kobold  
"If you don't really want to know what I did, don't ask," she said  
with an innocent smile. -Kox The Kobold



- Detractor has set the majority of people against you. It may just be a big misunderstanding. Maybe you often get blamed for things that go wrong. Maybe you are bullied for being different.

Something about you or something you did has set the majority of people against you. It may just be a big misunderstanding. Maybe you often get blamed for things that go wrong. Maybe you are bullied for being different.

- You have a litter trait.
- Wild animals attacked your farm.
- You lost your pet.
- Your family home was destroyed in an accident.
- A family heirloom was lost.
- You trusted the wrong people.
- A family member treated you badly.
- You feel haunted.
- You accidentally killed someone.
- You were banished from your home.



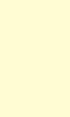
Sometimes bad things happen.

Hills Sunny

Sometimes bad things happen.

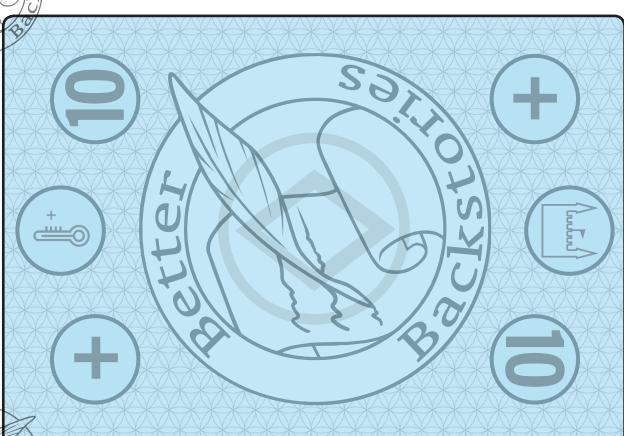
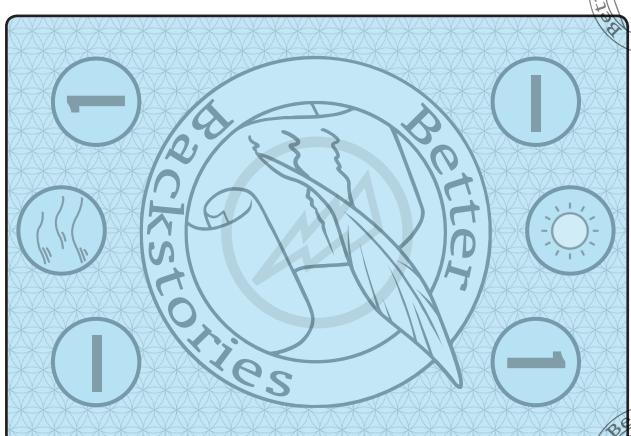
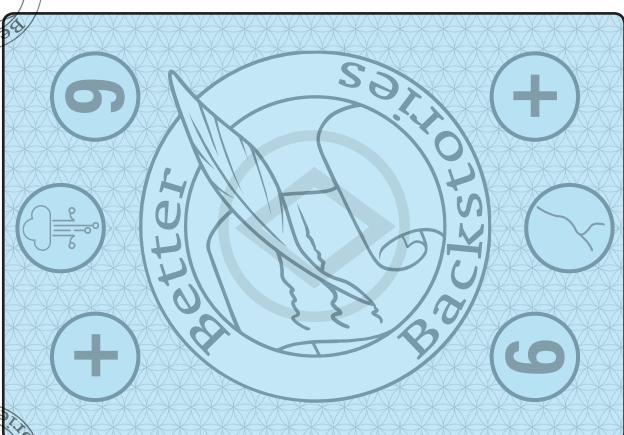
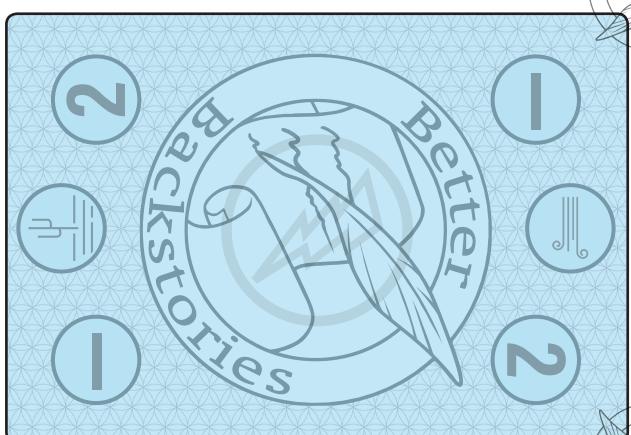
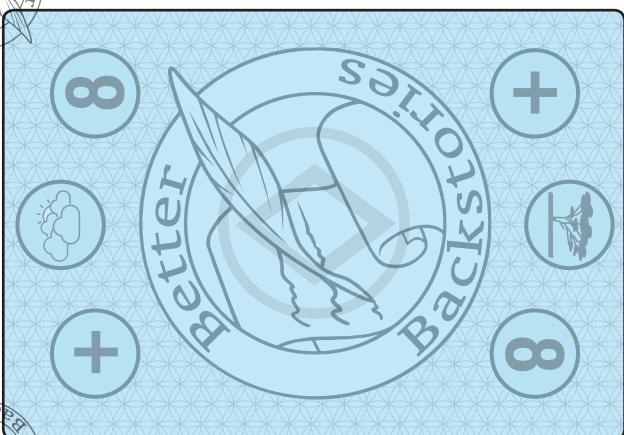
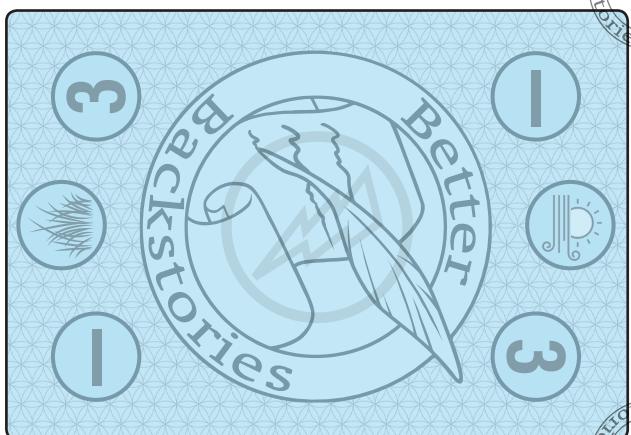
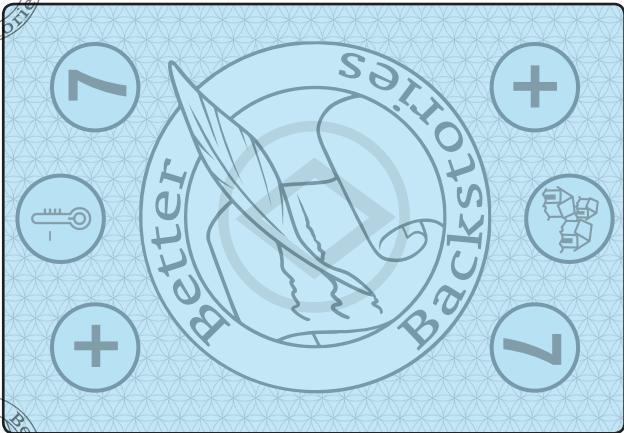
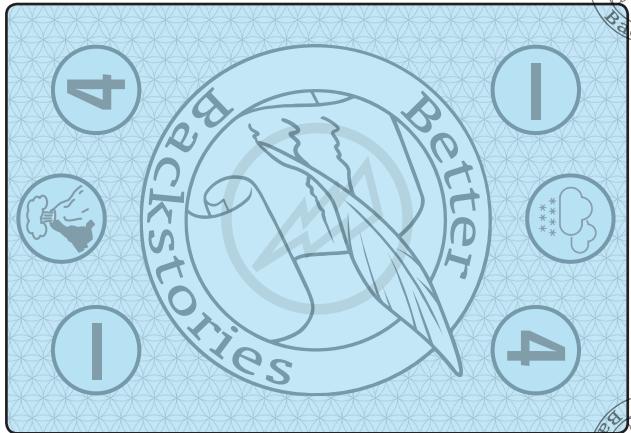
Heavycold Palace

## PATRON



- Wizard or Doctor
- Famous entertainer
- Retired criminal
- Regional merchant
- Government official
- Knight or Lady
- Mysterious figure
- Member of the Town Guard
- Reclusive hermit
- Underworld figure

from Backer Kevin L.  
"The head is the important part." -Lupe





## KIDNAPPED

## WORL'DLY

You were taken  
and held for a time.

Party Cloudy  
Glacier



1. In the end, the kidnapper escaped.
2. You were suddenly abandoned.
3. Your family paid the ransom.
4. You were told disturbing information.
5. You escaped on your own.
6. You were tortured.
7. You were rescued very quickly.
8. You were brainwashed.
9. You were taken on a long journey.
10. You were sold into slavery.



## INFAMOUS

## TATTOO

A family member was  
known but not liked.

Overcast  
Forest



1. Assassin
2. Criminal
3. Unlucky or Cursed
4. Bureaucrat or Tax collector
5. Informant
6. Doomsayer
7. Sheriff or Legislator
8. Town fool
9. Member of the secret police
10. Known for a near death experience.



1. You're seeking vengeance.
2. You are only out to make money.
3. You're trying to forget the past.
4. You lied to get something you wanted.
5. The way you see it, some people are just asking to be swindled.
6. You don't really care about the affairs of others.
7. You are selfish and self-serving.
8. You trust no one.
9. You always look at the bad side of things.
10. You take what you want.



## SCOUNDREL

## SOURPUSS

You do what has to  
be done for yourself.

Mostly Cloudy  
City



- A villain caused great pain to you or your family. Maybe they took your family holdings, threatened your homeland, or killed a family member.

Bah humbug.

Drought  
Island



- "Living is not for the weak."  
from Backer Jim Pinkston



## DESPOT

## PHOBIA

Thunder  
Town



- You have a serious phobia of some activity, creature, emotion or item. It may be the result of some trauma, or the reason might be a mystery. You have a very hard time dealing with this thing when it comes around.



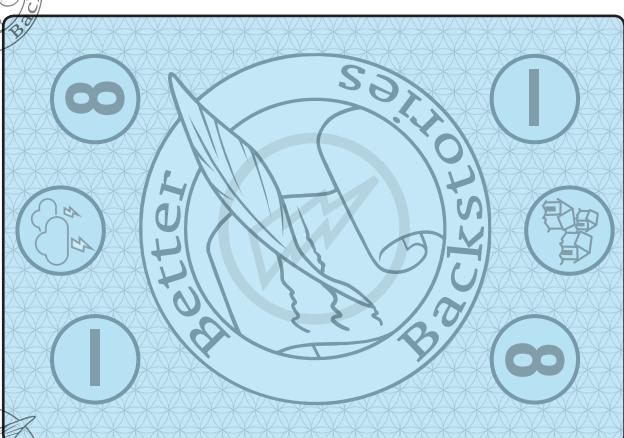
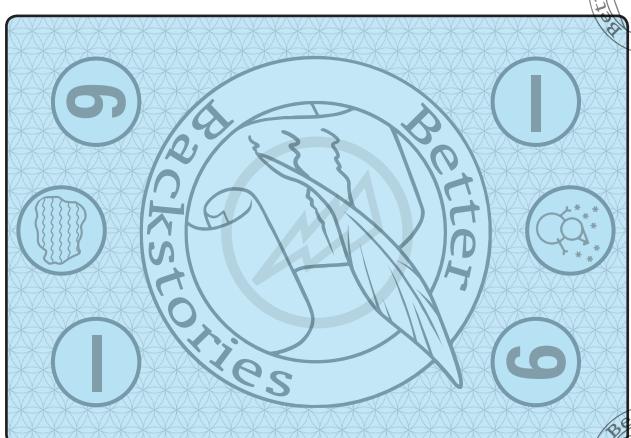
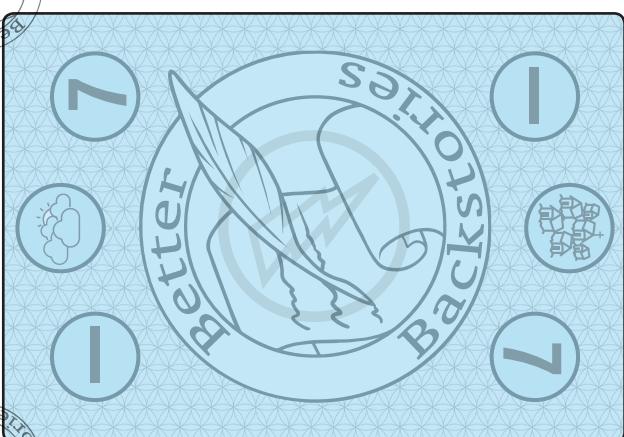
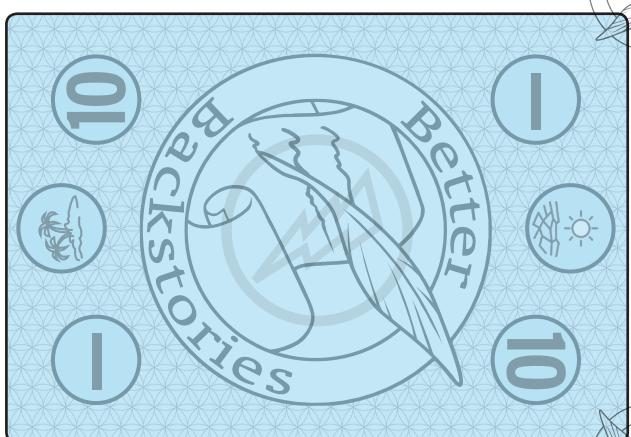
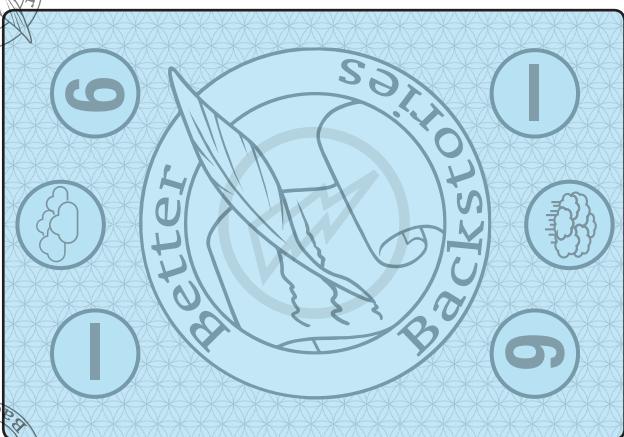
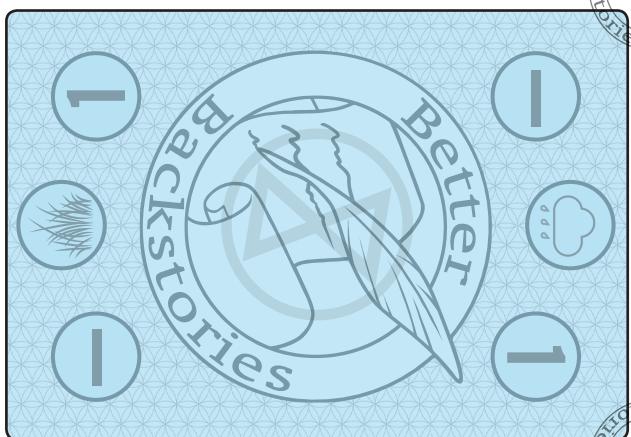
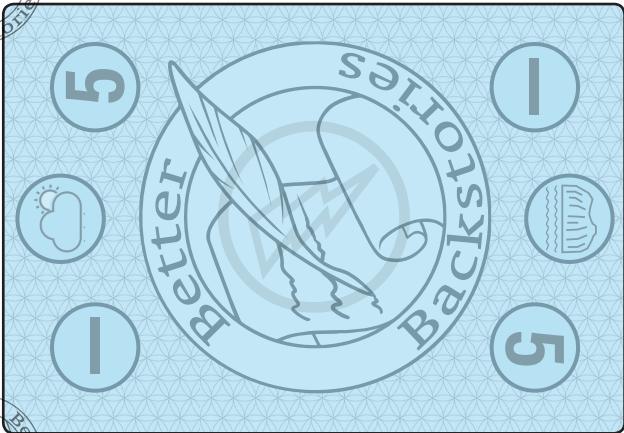
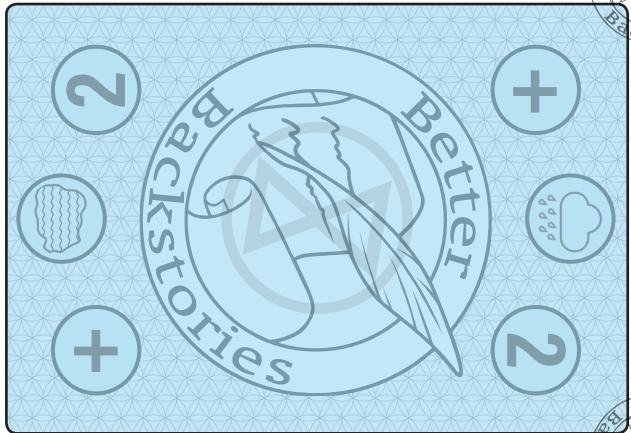
You had a widely-traveled friend or family member who told you all manner of stories about their journeys. Through them, you either learned details about a specific culture, or you know many odds and ends about various people and their ways of life.

1. You got it tattooed or branded.
2. It's a gang sign.
3. It has religious significance.
4. You got it on a dare.
5. It reminds you of someone.
6. They are tribal markings.
7. You have many tattoos.
8. You got it in prison.
9. A family crest.
10. You got it in the military.

1. You always play devil's advocate.
2. You rarely consider other people's feelings.
3. You are rude or callous.
4. You are somewhat manic.
5. You lack self-confidence.
6. You are messy or unkempt.
7. You are easily distracted.
8. You are stolid and emotionless.
9. You mock religion.
10. Nothing really excites you.

from Backer Renegade describe  
"Why must everything we do end in fire?" -Mason Fairchild

from Backer Gerrit Deike  
*Grandma Cara always said, "Never wake a sleeping dragon... Unless you have big people along."* -Eldon Mouse' Bentelschneider





## BREAKUP



Your parents split up during your childhood.

Thunder  
Farmland

1. You went through various foster homes.
2. An older sibling took you in.
3. You're now convinced that love is a lie.
4. You stayed with your mother.
5. Moved in with a friend's family.
6. Lived with an aunt or uncle.
7. You stayed with your father.
8. You became a ward of the state.
9. Lived with your grandparents.
10. There was a bitter legal battle over you and/or your siblings.

## CATASTYMS



A disaster ruined your family, home, or homeland.

Humid  
Shoreline

1. Mysterious curse
2. Earthquake
3. Tornado or Hurricane
4. War
5. Famine
6. Flood
7. Economic collapse
8. Meteor or Meteor shower
9. Plague
10. Wildfire

## DEVOTION



City

Sunny

One or both of your parents are very religious. They taught you all the rituals and may have sent you to a religious school. You may have accepted their faith, or you might have been turned off of all religions.

1. You never returned.
2. You fell in with criminals for a period of time.
3. You returned home on your own after a while.
4. You were captured by police and returned home.
5. Taken in by a new family.
6. You wound up very far away.
7. You almost died.
8. You returned home with no memory of where you went.
9. Your parents died looking for you.
10. Your family treats your brief departure as a joke.

## RUNAWAY



You left your family behind.

Party Cloudy  
Island

You received a large sum of money or a special item from an older family member. They may have been close to you in your childhood, or they were a distant relation you'd never met.

from Kevin Clement  
"We barely escaped the Thieves Guild coup, and my father died soon after. All I have to remember him is a strange old bat pin."  
—Yana Whistlock, "Locksmith"

## GIFT



Desert

Sleet  
City

Flood  
Cliffs

1. They got you to commit a crime.
2. Your best friend became your lover.
3. You had an imaginary friend.
4. You were part of a gang.
5. You befriended someone twice or half your age.
6. A bitter rival became a friend.
7. You share a feature with a close friend.
8. A sibling is your best friend.
9. You fought with your friend over a lover.
10. You swore an oath with your friend.

## RELIGION



Lightning  
Forest

Heatwave  
River

Religious experience.

1. You encountered a cult.
2. You sought shelter in a church.
3. You attend church regularly.
4. You are an atheist.
5. You perform a regular daily ritual.
6. You believe mortals can attain godhood in one way or another.
7. You lived in a parochial school, but left before taking vows.
8. You had a divine vision.
9. You changed religions.
10. You accidentally desecrated a holy place.

## FRIENDS

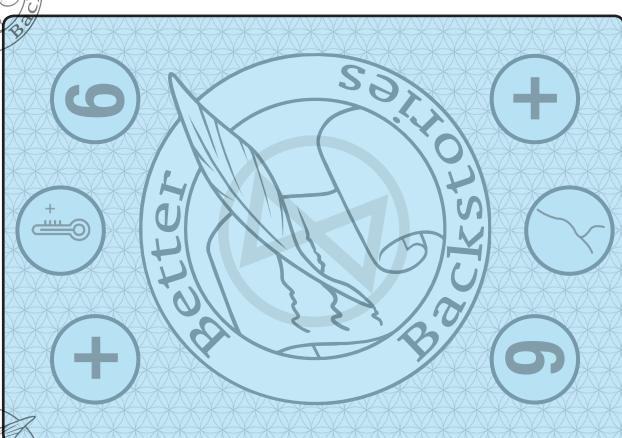
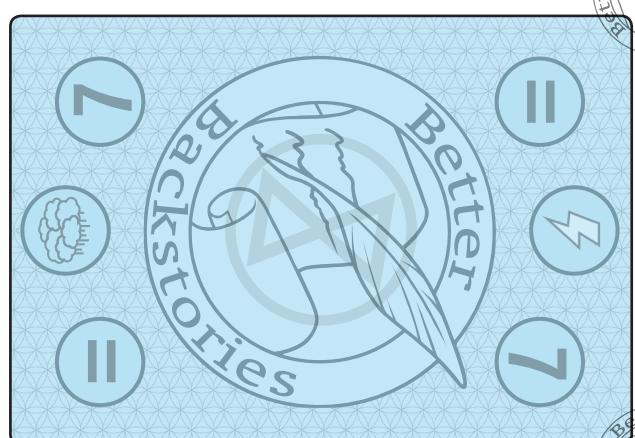
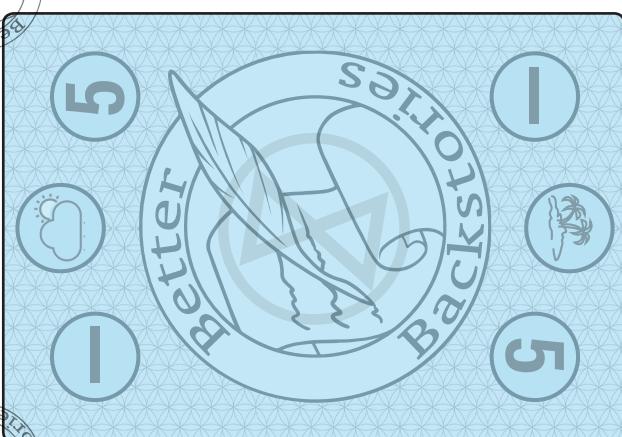
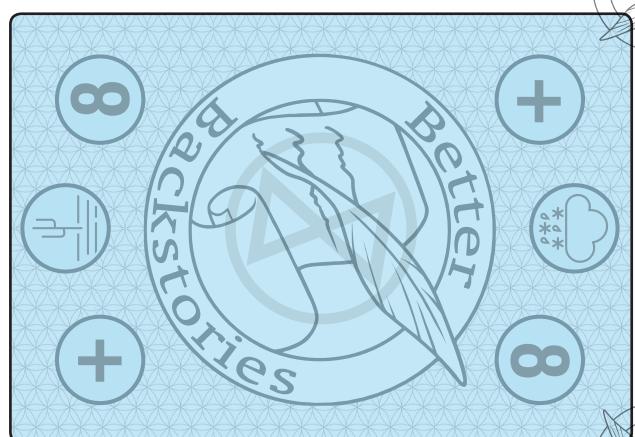
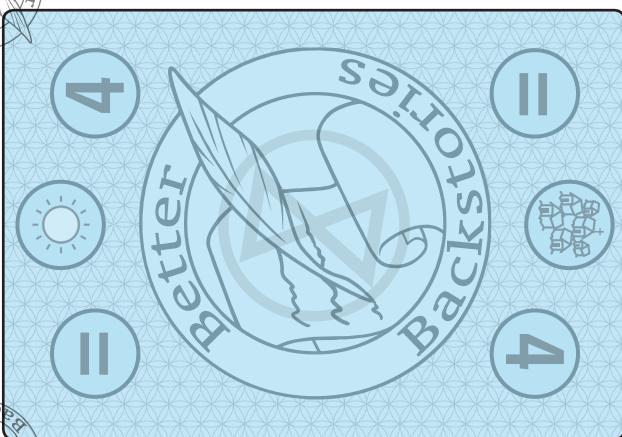
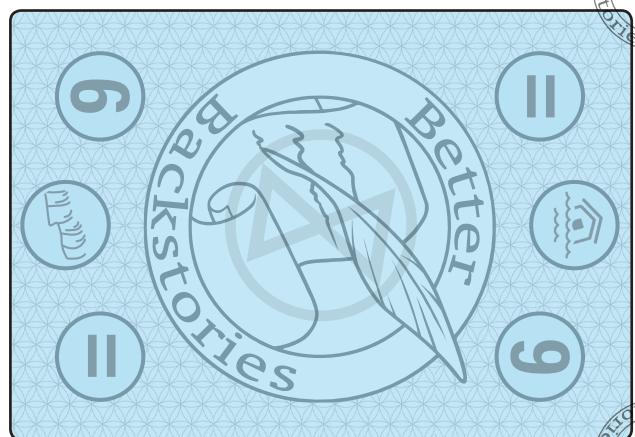
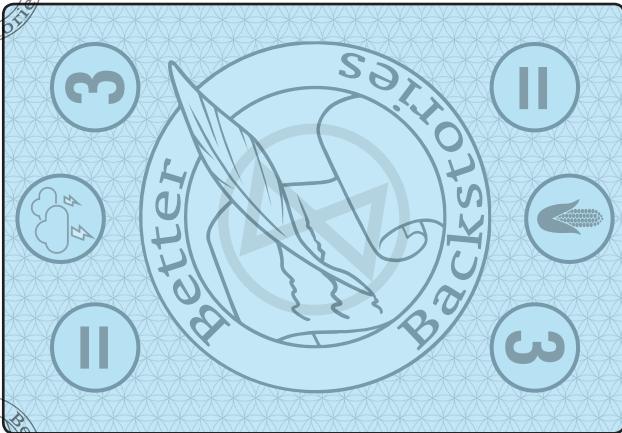


River

Heatwave  
River

You have or had a group of friends or a companion.





from Backer, Jason Joye  
"Just stab them." -Sabine

from Backer Cthulhu Kid  
"Even so our souls will live on."

-Merrus Valgus BuntonBoyle, "Torchbearer"

from Backer Morgen Rich  
"Her name is Magraine, but that one is not for you."  
—Father of Fenn MacMoragh, Magister Mage of Incorrigible

1. Some ornate jewelry
2. A fancy gemstone
3. An interesting puzzle
4. A tome of knowledge
5. A secret location
6. A sealed chest
7. Special clothing or Armor
8. An old weapon
9. A strange map
10. Helmet or Shield

You found something unique.

Desert

Partly Cloudy



## DISCOVERY

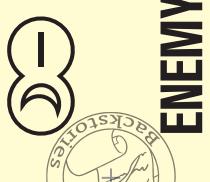
## DENIAL



## MISSING



## ABANDONED



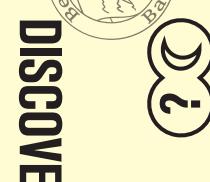
## ENEMY



## STRANGER



## ALTER EGO



## DISCOVERY



## ENIGMA



For some reason, your father has never believed you were his child. Whether it's true or not, he has never given you the attention, support or inheritance he gave to his other children.

You were given up or put up for adoption by your parents. You may have been raised by animals, foster parents, another race/species, or in an orphanage. You may or may not know the identity of your parents.

A mysterious person arrived when you were young and left a gift. This could have been a message, an item, or just a good blessing. Your parents may or may not have abided by the stranger's wishes.

Something very dear to you or your family was lost or stolen. You are determined to find it, or to deal with those responsible for its theft.

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Something very dear to you or your family was lost or stolen. You are determined to find it, or to deal with those responsible for its theft.

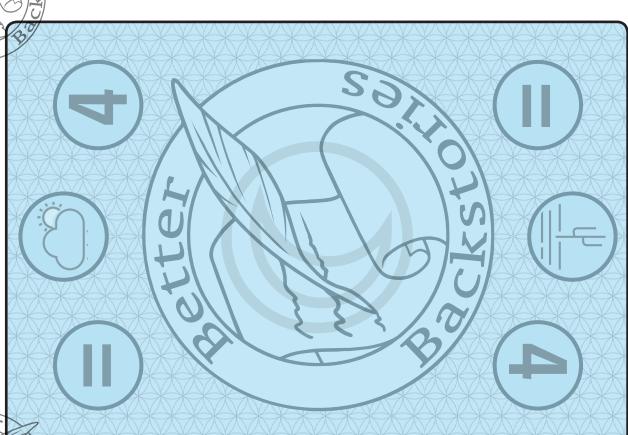
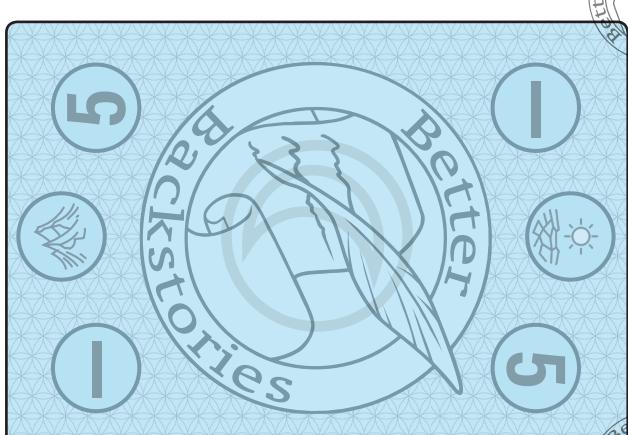
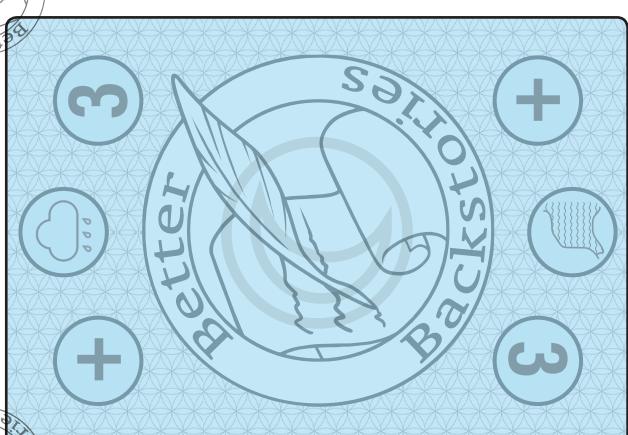
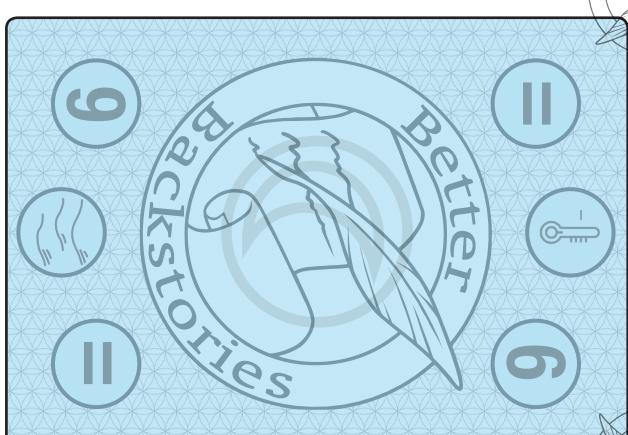
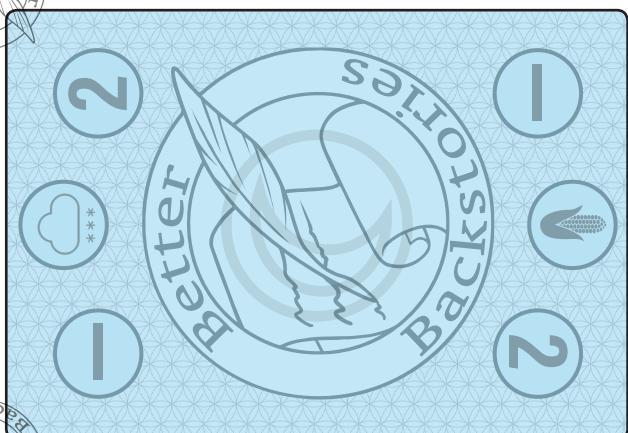
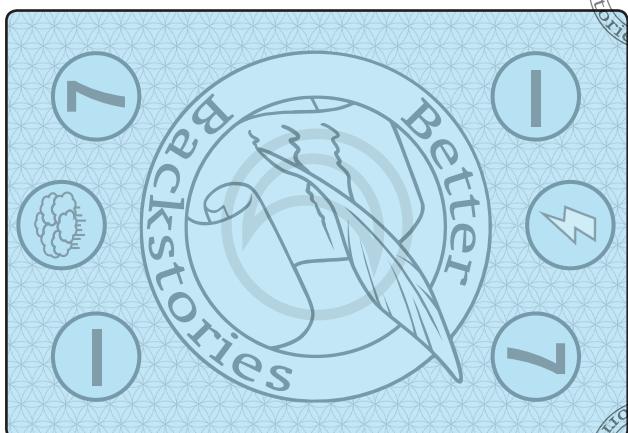
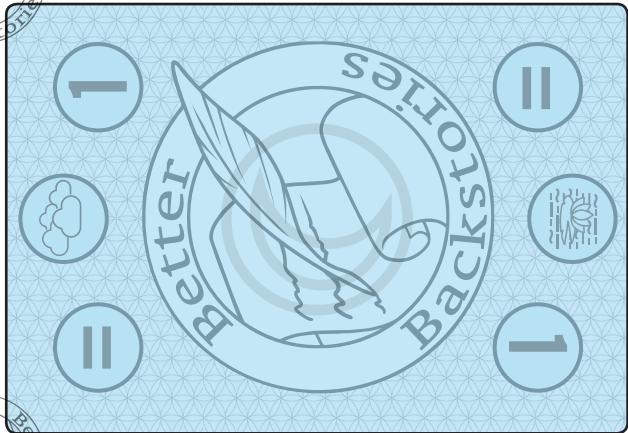
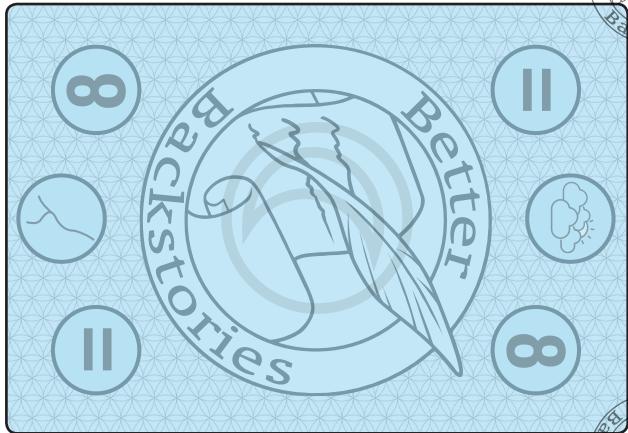
1. Some of the nobility
2. Local townsfolk
3. An old rival
4. A jealous ex-lover
5. A gang or guild
6. Local sheriff and/or guards
7. The rest of your family
8. Local merchant
9. A religious group or cult
10. A specific race/species, or another country

1. They have another family.
2. They are or were a heroic vigilante.
3. They lost their memory.
4. They were a criminal.
5. They're a con artist.
6. They've been avoiding bad debts.
7. They are a spy for a foreign power.
8. They came here to hide from the law, maybe witness relocation.
9. They are a war criminal.
10. They hold a vital secret.

"Are you sure?" she asked.  
"Well that can't be good," Holgrin replied.  
-Holgrin theoreus Elderkin

from Backer Gooddieh

from Backer R. Malm  
"Will suppose you throw a coin enough times... Suppose one day, it lands on its edge?" -Kain





## FABLE



Humid  
Town

Your beliefs are absolute.

Fog  
Town

A specific tall tale of adventure or mystery has always fascinated you. You were motivated to emulate the hero of the story, or to discover the truth behind the legend.

from Backer Micah Nielsen  
*"brush off death so easily you would think it a poor tawny weasel."*

-The Deathless King, Rilian Blood

from Backer Wooz  
*"This was happy," he said as the party went over a cliff.* -Scipio

## DIRECT



Sleet  
Shoreline

You have taken on someone else's dream.

## EXPLORER



Hail  
Shoreline

You are eager to travel, to seek out new places, and to explore. Maybe you can never find a place you like, or your love of the open road keeps you moving.

1. They have a strange hobby.
2. They love history and culture.
3. They fanatically follow the actions of the nobility.
4. They love modern art, books or music.
5. They love the military and/or war.
6. They had a mysterious encounter they don't understand or can't prove.
7. They love architecture.
8. They hate germs.
9. They love nature.
10. They love tales of adventure and mystery.

## OBSSESSION



A family member takes something very seriously.

Rain  
Swamp

1. You're overly curious.
2. Clean and orderly.
3. Good sense of humor.
4. You covet certain belongings.
5. You are awed by beautiful things.
6. You try to get along with everyone.
7. You often daydream.
8. Keen attention to detail.
9. You don't get jokes.
10. You prefer to follow others.

## OFFBEAT



You have an interesting personality.

Overcast  
Mountains

You have virtuous goals.

Show Flurries  
Hills

## VALUES

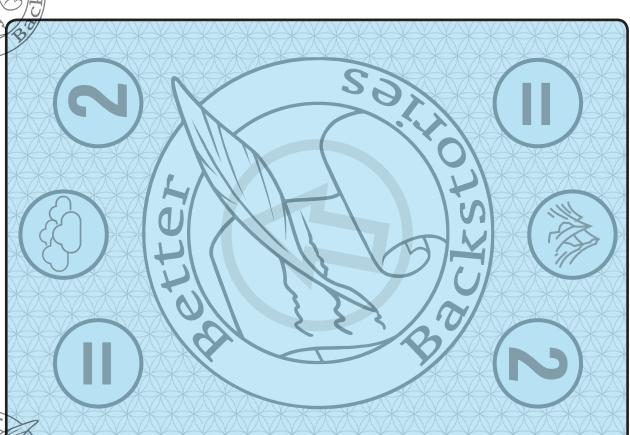
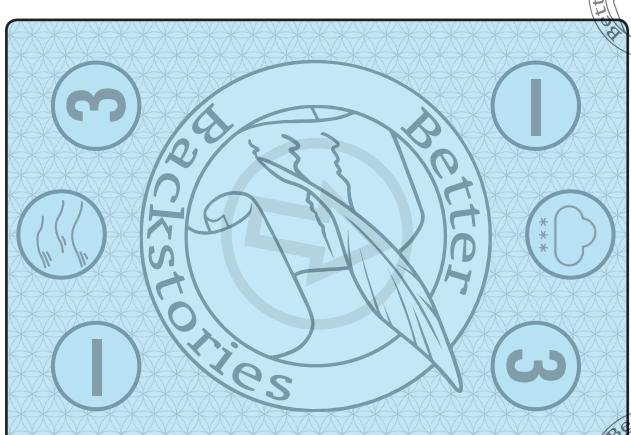
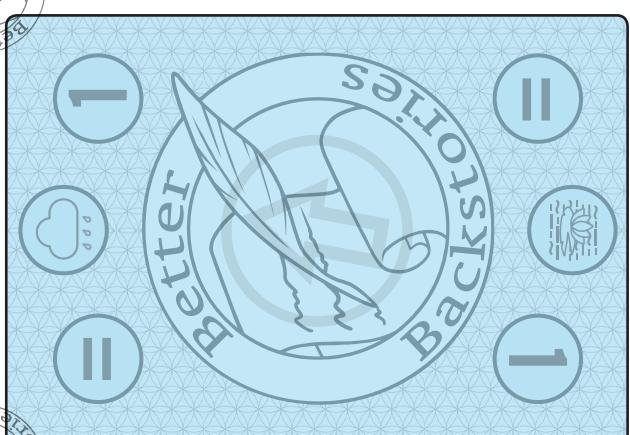
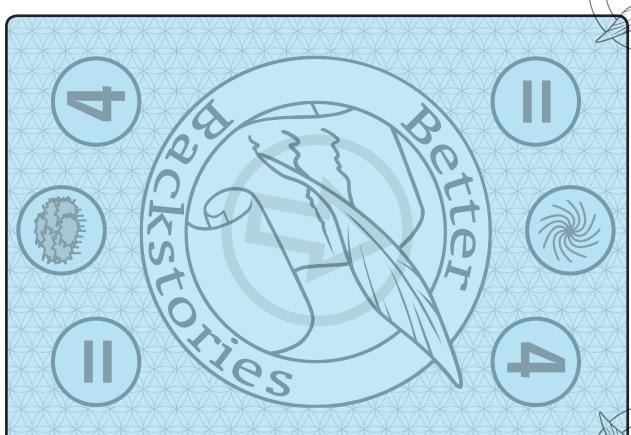
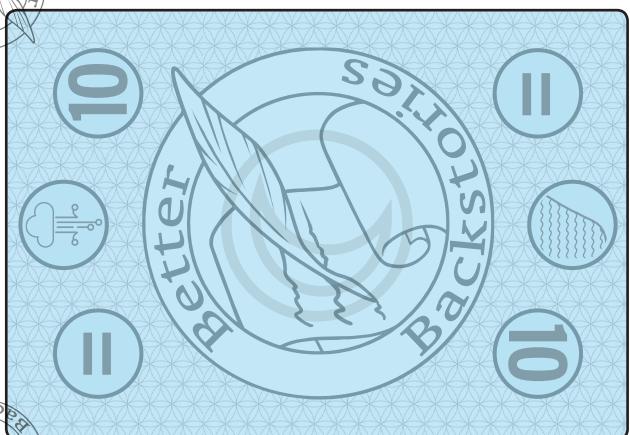
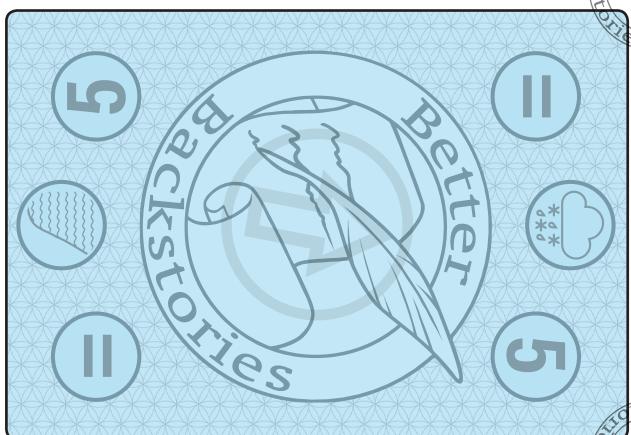
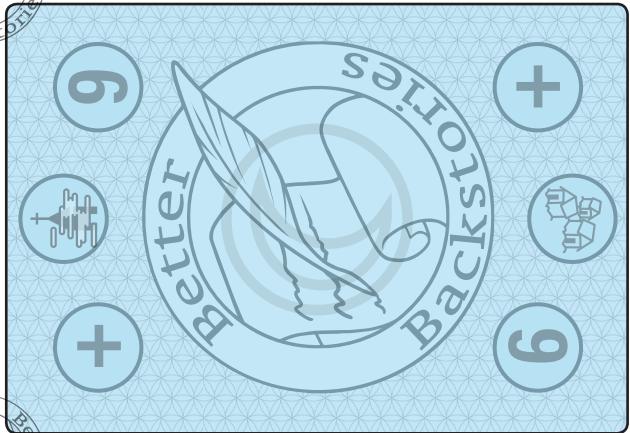
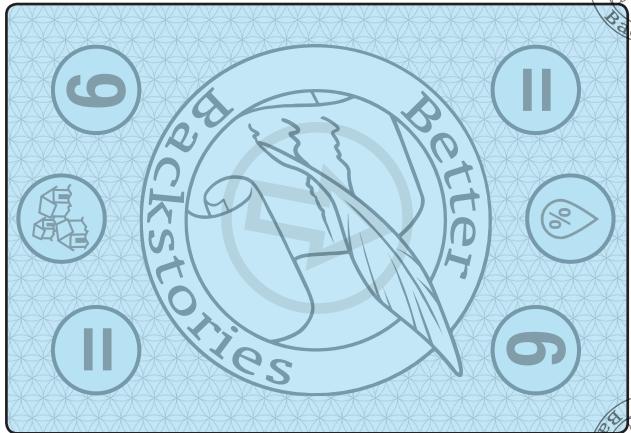


1. You do the job. Period.
2. Everyone deserves to be free.
3. You just want to have fun.
4. Knowledge is power.
5. What goes around comes around.
6. Every man for himself.
7. Everyone deserves to be treated as equals.
8. You prefer action over words.
9. You are inherently skeptical.
10. Silence is golden.

1. Sister
2. Child
3. Father
4. Mother
5. Best friend
6. Brother
7. Twin
8. Grandparent
9. Lover
10. Other relative

1. Served during peace.
2. Led a squad into battle.
3. War ravaged your homeland.
4. Served aboard a ship.
5. Seen a lot of death.
6. Had to pick a side during a civil war.
7. Had to choose between service or prison.
8. Worked behind the lines, far from the fighting.
9. Service is a family legacy.
10. You're a deserter.

1. Honesty
2. Family
3. Knowledge
4. True love
5. Money is the root of all evil.
6. You trust your leaders implicitly.
7. You want power over those who wronged you.
8. Privacy is everyone's right.
9. You're a deserter.
10. Fame





## ROMANCE

To love and be loved is  
the greatest adventure.



Mostly Cloudy  
Gifts

1. You have a child or children.
2. Your love is unrequited.
3. You and your lover grew apart.
4. Your beloved was taken away.
5. You had a wild love affair.
6. You fell in love after a rescue.
7. Someone does not approve of your love.
8. You married your childhood sweetheart.
9. You were forced into an arranged marriage.
10. Your beloved cheated on you.



## REBEL



Deep Snow  
City

You were part of a revolt or revolution against the ruling powers. You may still identify with their goals, or may always be recognized as a member of the group. The revolution might have been put down or you're in hiding, or could still be ongoing and you're an active member.



## DEDICATED



Windy  
Forest

You are particularly devoted to your lord, country, company or occupation. You might work for them directly, or serve them in secret.

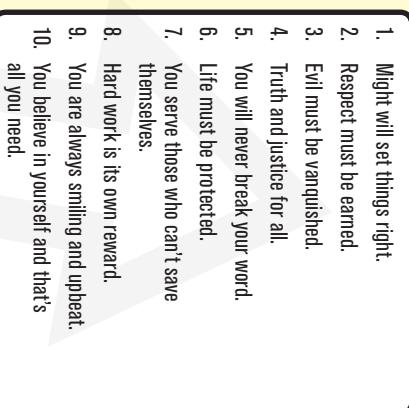
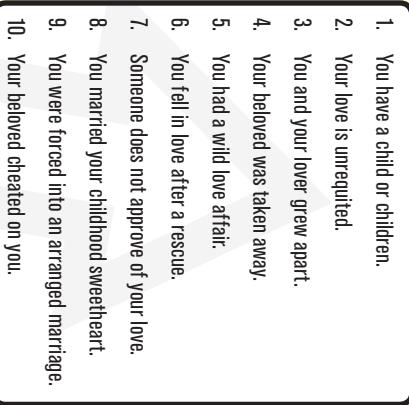


## LAWFUL



Flood  
Island

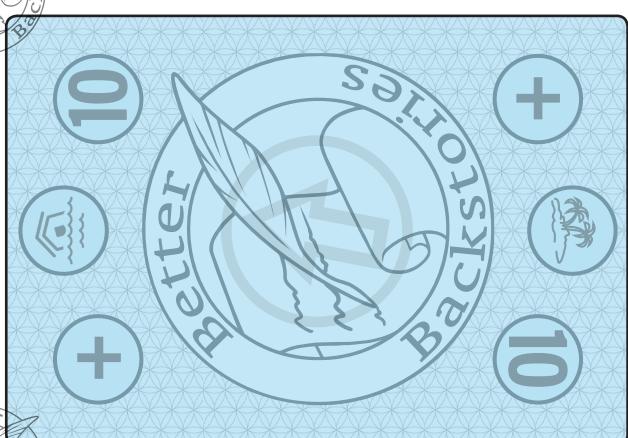
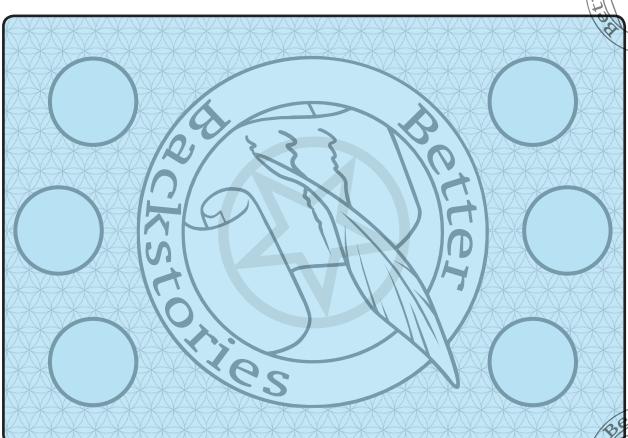
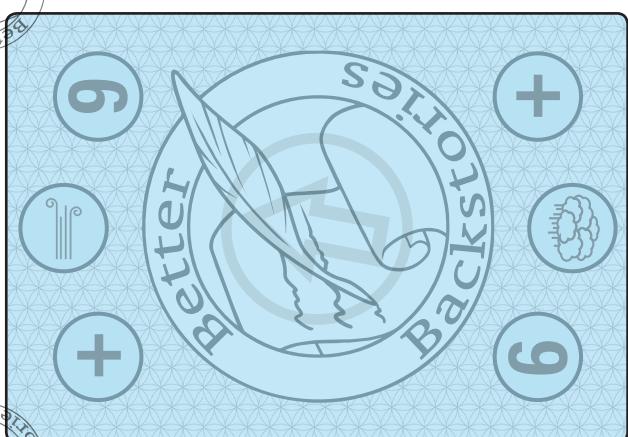
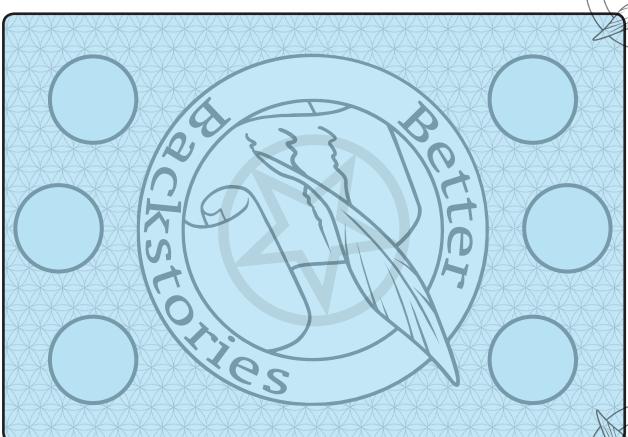
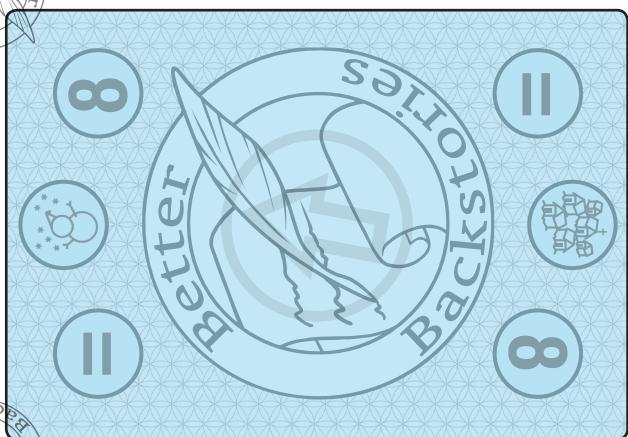
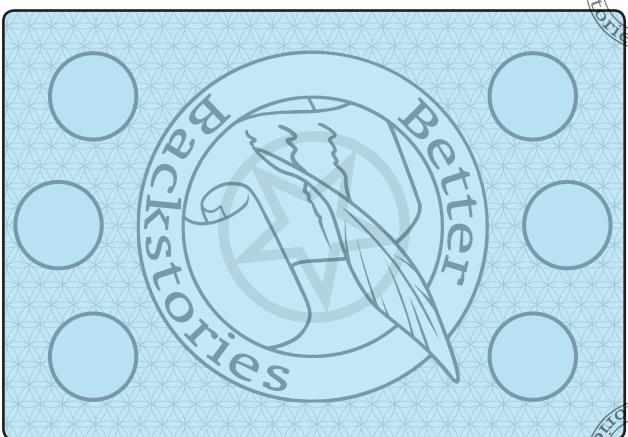
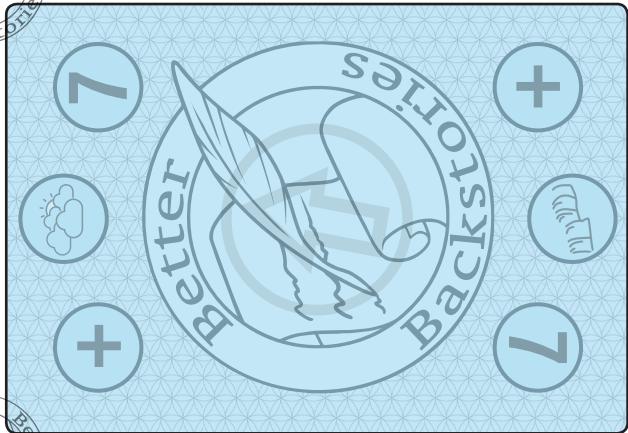
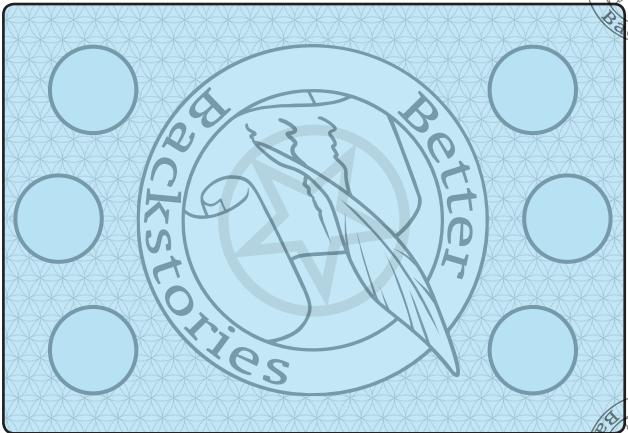
Your heroic sensibilities are absolute.

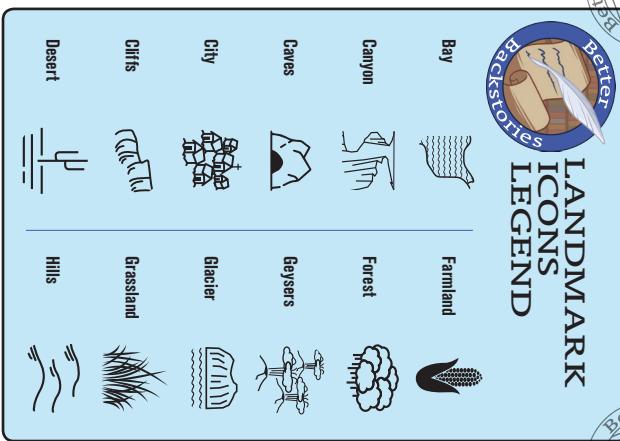
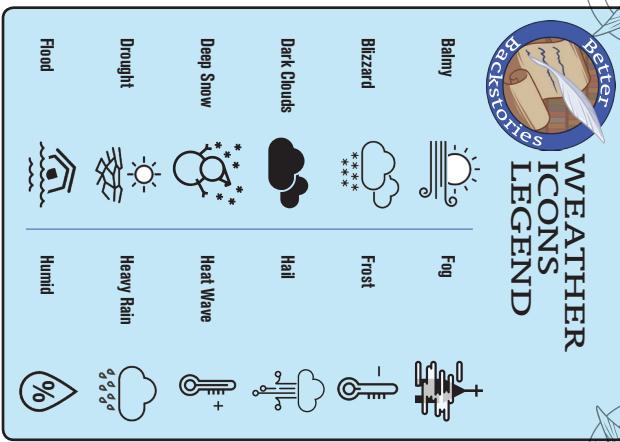
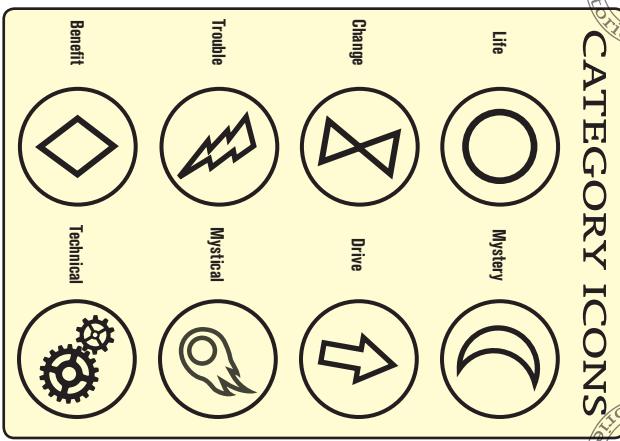
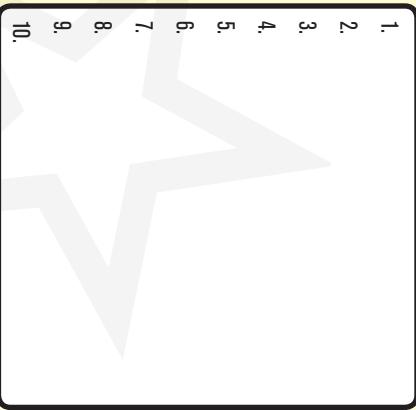


from Becker Courtney, Most  
*"Apparently anything can be a weapon in a tight situation."*

-Adenon Zynthus

from Becker Chris  
*"I know exactly what to do!"* —Fletcher





## ANATOMY OF A CARD

FRONT

### 1 Title:

The main purpose of the card. Usable on its own, if desired.

### 2 Alignment Icon (+, -, =, ?):

Indicates how the card is likely to have affected the character.

### 3 Category Icon:

One of eight (Benefit, Change, Drive, Life, Mystery, Trouble, Mystical, Technical).

### 4 Flavor Text:

A description explaining how the card might affect the character.

### 5 Weather Type:

Explains the weather icon on the back.

### 6 Land Type:

This provides ten ideas for more specific details.

### 1 BIRTHMARK =

#### ④ You have a distinguishing feature.

#### ⑤ Snow Flurries

#### ⑥ Grassland

BACK

### 1 Alignment Icon (+, -, =, ?):

Used for deciding on unknown (?) alignments.  
Used by the Storyteller for random weather events in any game.

### 2 Weather Icon:

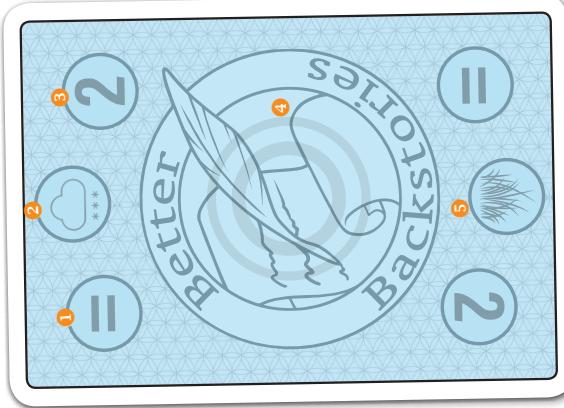
Used by the Storyteller for random Number (1-10):

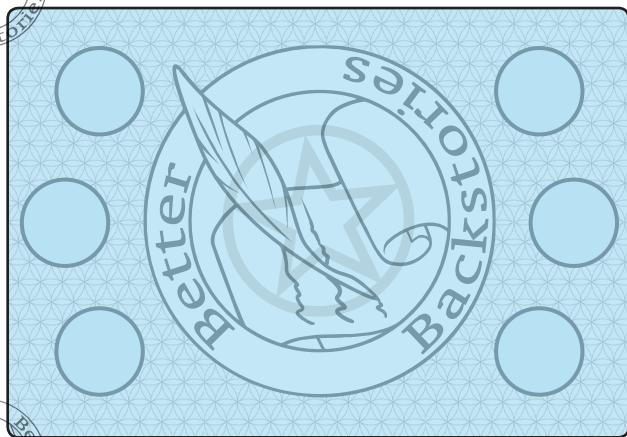
### 3 Category Icon:

The center watermark has the same category as the front for easy sorting.

### 4 Land Type Icon:

Used by the Storyteller for random land elements in any game.





## HOW TO USE BETTER BACKSTORIES

### 1. BETTER BACKSTORIES

is a genre-neutral system for generating life histories for any kind of fictional character.

It can be used for short stories, poems, songs, or role-playing characters. The cards can also be used to provide random weather, land forms, and personalities to spice up any story.

- After shuffling the cards, play a few face-up on a flat surface. You're welcome to use as many cards as you like. Here are some recommendations:
- 1 card: Random townsfolk
  - 3 cards: Recurring character
  - 5 cards: Beginning hero
  - 8+ cards: Experienced hero



3. The cards can be used all together or in smaller groups. For example, if there is no advanced technology in your story, take out the Technical cards. Feel free to customize your deck by removing cards you don't want to encounter.

4. The cards are meant to be used for inspiration and brainstorming.

- You can use the Title alone to decide how it relates to your character's backstory.
- Flavor text provides some additional insight into the possibilities of the card.

5. Suggestion Charts provide even more options. You can choose one you like, roll a 10-sided dice, or play another card face down and use the number on the back.

6. Alignments indicate how this card most likely affected the character. It may be positive (+), negative (-), neutral (=), or random (?). For random alignments, you can pick one, or play another card face down and use the alignment on the back. Alignments are only suggestions, so you can ignore them if you like.

7. All cards played are optional and can be discarded and replaced.

8. While you're writing or game mastering, keep the cards nearby to generate quirks and attitudes for new characters.

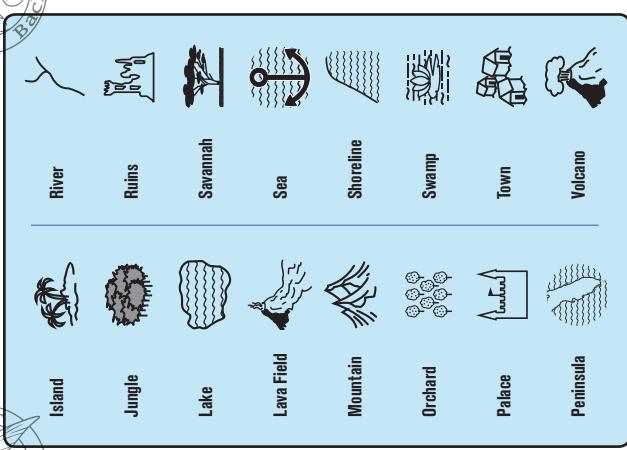
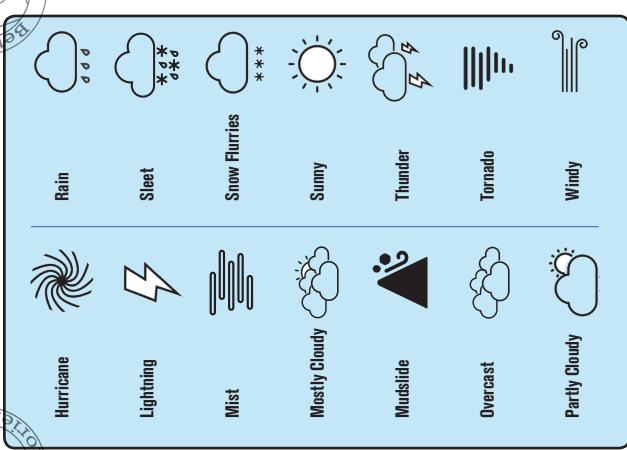
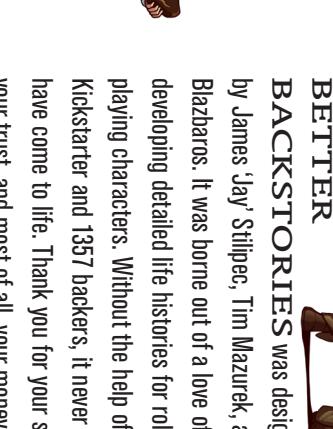
- You decide for the hero to meet an old merchant on the road. Playing one face-up card reveals he is in debt to a sea captain (Patron), and one face-down card indicates he is dismissive of the characters (- Alignment).

9. Also use the cards for random weather patterns, land features or plot points. Here are a few examples:

- The party exits a cave system, and a face-down card suggests it is snowing.
- The hero comes over a hill, and a face-down card suggests a lake in the distance.
- The writer is stuck, so they play a face-up card and find a 'legacy' that must be fulfilled.

## BETTER BACKSTORIES

**BETTER BACKSTORIES** was designed by James 'Jay' Stilipek, Tim Mazurek, and Blazbarros. It was borne out of a love of developing detailed life histories for role-playing characters. Without the help of Kickstarter and 1357 backers, it never would have come to life. Thank you for your support, your trust, and most of all, your money.





## SPELLBOUND ?



You have a small magical creature bound to you.

Caves

You believe you have a mystical or supernatural destiny. You may or may not have magical talents.

from Mathieu Roy  
"Magics is like fire. It is a fundamental force of the universe.  
It can get you burnt, but when you learn to harness it, you can never live without it." -Eljane, Rogue Witch

from Backer Christian Cooper  
"We are far picking a door's lock; the door is warm to the touch, it's always a mimic." -witch

from Backer Ryu Unknown  
"The longer you survive, the more aimless the world becomes.  
Find your purpose in this life before it consumes you like the endless void." -Ryu Unknown

from Backer Chris Cheung  
"Safely the tales of me gorging on corpses are not fabricated.  
Exaggerate? Sure. Embellish? Absolutely. I know that doesn't really help." -Roger of Sable City

1. It only speaks to you
2. Doesn't like you
3. Lazy
4. Secretly a transformed being
5. Appeared mysteriously
6. Always plays Good cop or Bad cop
7. Different ideals or alignment
8. Inherited
9. Easily misplaced
10. Hyperactive

## BEWITCHED ?



You have a minor mystical feature.

Mist

Mountain

Someone in your life had a curious encounter with a magical creature. This could be a tale you've heard, or something more real passed down to you.

You have lived in a past life or you believe that you have. You may have been someone powerful, evil or even mundane.

You or your family were involved with a cult. You may still be a member, or you escaped. Either way, the teachings still affect your life.

1. Abnormal eyes or Ears
2. Odd skin
3. Curious smell
4. Wandering freckles
5. Vestigial wings
6. Extra finger(s)
7. Spines or Feathers
8. Small tail or Horns
9. Unique hair
10. Strange aura

## REINCARNATED ?



A relative was skilled in magic or some other mystic art form.

Dark Clouds

River

Bay

Geyser

Geysers

Peninsula

Caves

You either believe in or openly debunk the power of things like crystals, aura massage, astrology and/or aromatherapy.

You grew up with many safe and/or holistic tendencies. You either believe in or openly debunk the power of things like crystals, aura massage, astrology and/or aromatherapy.

1. Summoning or Runes
2. Illusion or Divination
3. Conjuration or Binding
4. Healing or Necromancy
5. Ki or Blood Magic
6. Apportation or Transformation
7. Warding or Charms
8. Elements or Alchemy
9. Psionics or ESP
10. Thaumaturgy or Evocation

## MAGE ?



Rain

Dark Clouds

Bay

Geysers

Peninsula

Caves

You grew up with many safe and/or holistic tendencies. You either believe in or openly debunk the power of things like crystals, aura massage, astrology and/or aromatherapy.

from Backer Taylor Schmidt  
"When I was in the order I hated all their rules and regulations, but out there I can see exactly what they were preparing me for."  
-Isabell, Paladin of the Alabaster Union

## OCCULT



Rain

Dark Clouds

Bay

Geysers

Peninsula

Caves

You grew up with many safe and/or holistic tendencies. You either believe in or openly debunk the power of things like crystals, aura massage, astrology and/or aromatherapy.

## SPIRITUAL



Rain

Dark Clouds

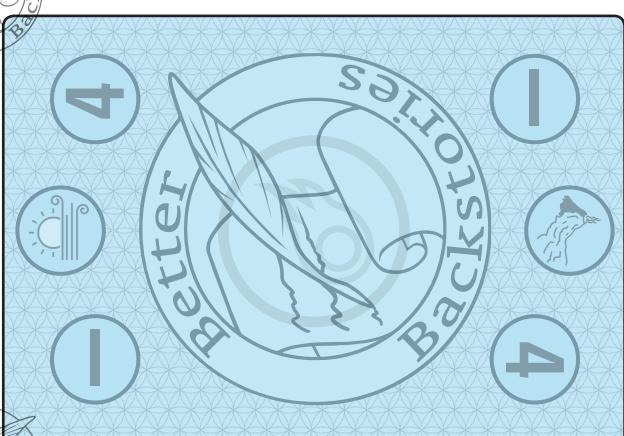
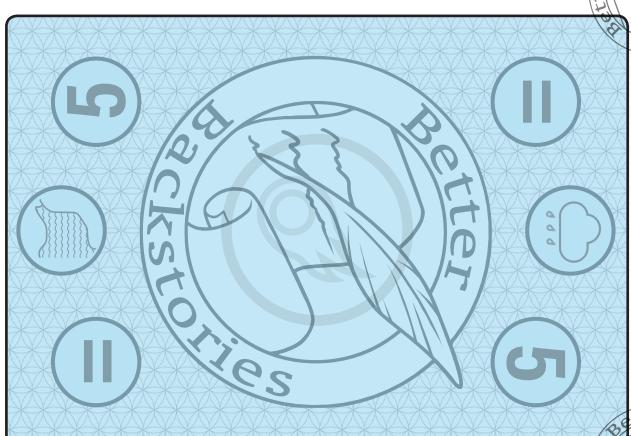
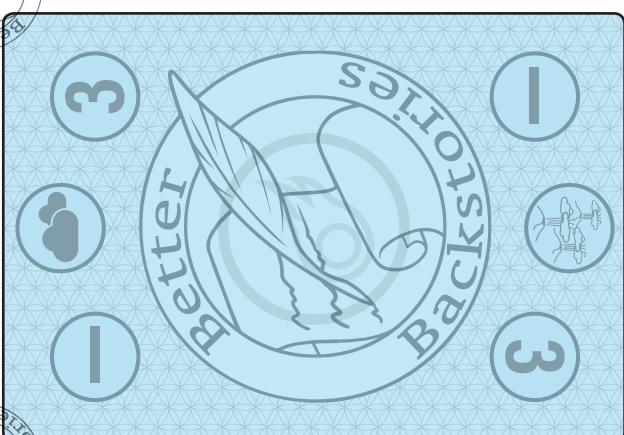
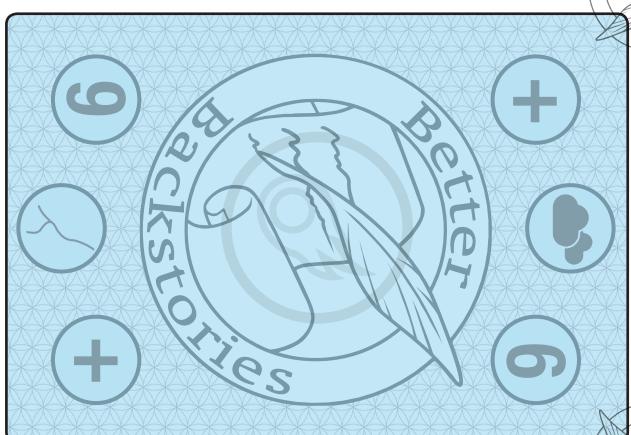
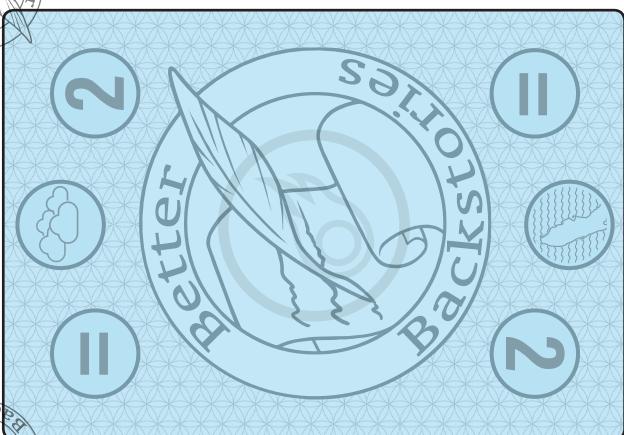
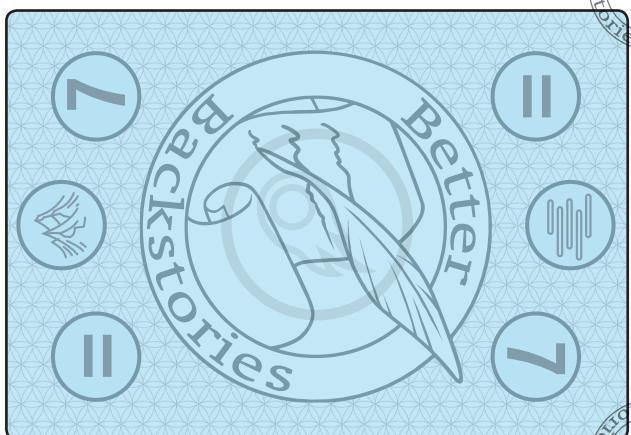
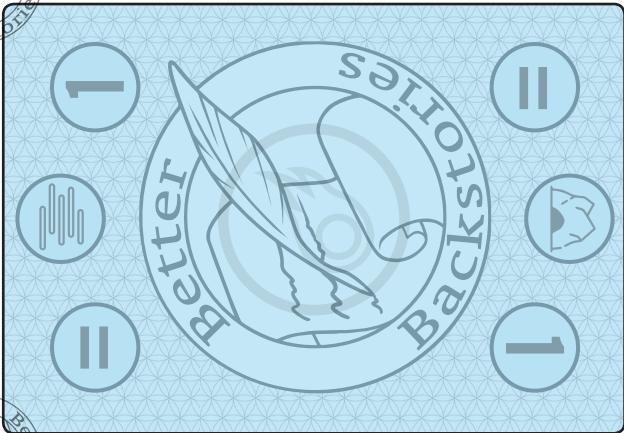
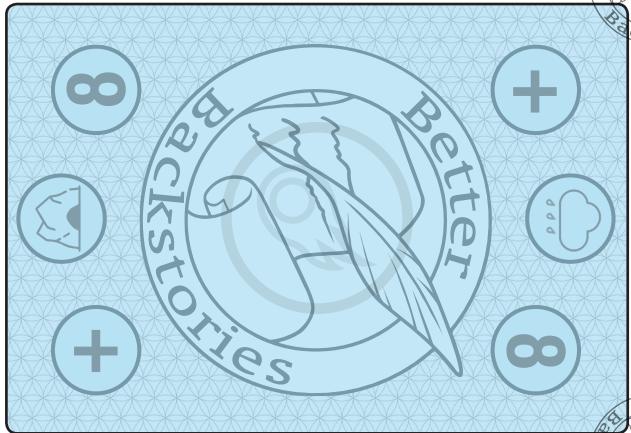
Bay

Geysers

Peninsula

Caves

You grew up with many safe and/or holistic tendencies. You either believe in or openly debunk the power of things like crystals, aura massage, astrology and/or aromatherapy.





## HAUNTED

A dark event has cast a shadow on your life.

1. Performed dark deeds
2. Touched by a ghost
3. Perpetual scowl
4. Related to a dark wizard
5. Fear of the unknown
6. Witnessed dark forces
7. Survived an exorcism
8. Afraid of things with faces or simulacrum
9. Attracts ghosts or demons
10. Learned forbidden knowledge



Deep Snow  
Cliffs

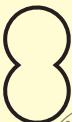
## PROPHETRY

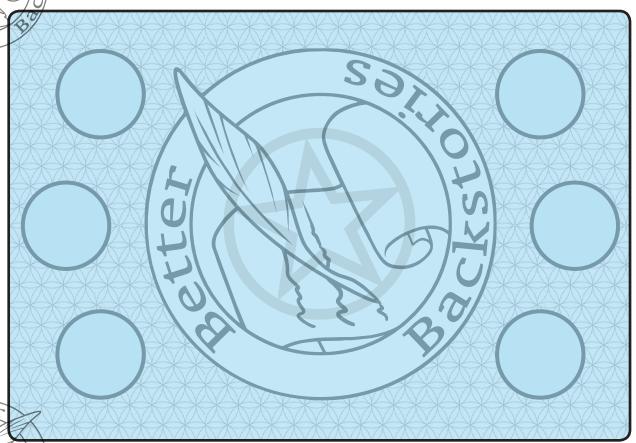
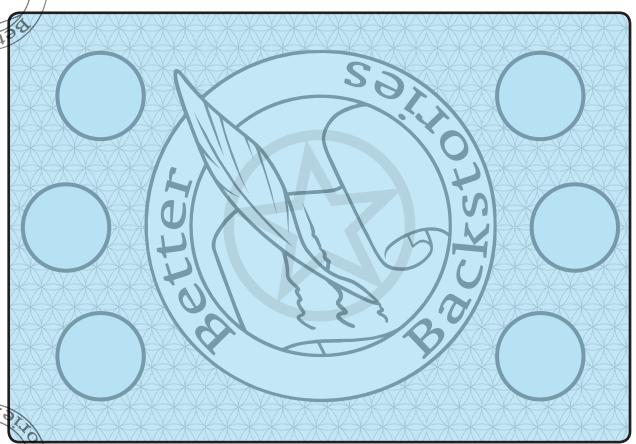
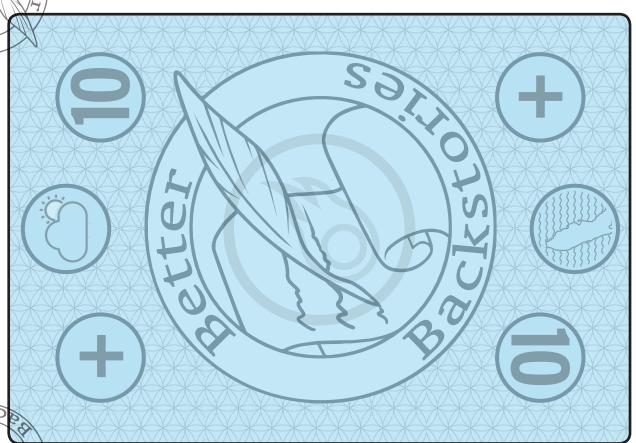
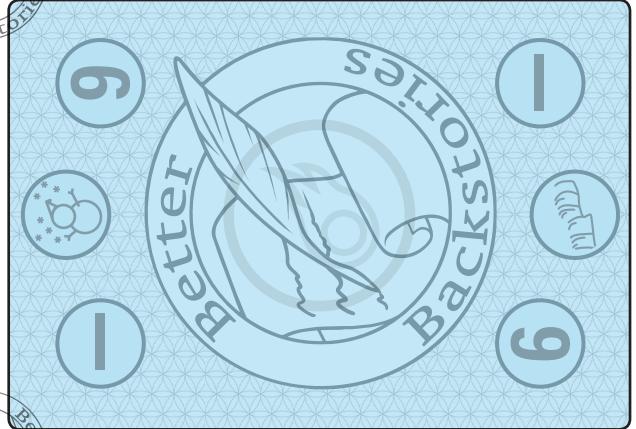
You've had a vision or some view of the future.

1. Saw your own death
2. Ghosts
3. An unfamiliar item
4. Whispering voices
5. A grand triumph
6. An unknown face
7. Demons and/or angels
8. A recurring dream
9. Something with animals
10. A mysterious location



Party Cloudy  
Peninsula





"I'm good at reading historic details... I'm exceptional at being people (don't worry about it)." –Foxglove  
from Backer David Martin

"There is no way back when you're dead." –Sister  
from Backer Sarah Baddeley

"I'm skilled in several things. I know arcane type knowledge... Technology always seems to malfunction around you. From scissors to mainframes, the darn things just don't work right."

"I'm good at reading historic details... I'm exceptional at being people (don't worry about it)." –Foxglove  
from Backer David Martin

## TECHNOCRAT ?



Grassland  
Mudslide

Sunny  
Canyon

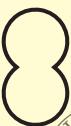
You believe problems can be solved with technology. Perhaps we could even achieve utopia through science.

## MODERN



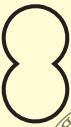
Heavy Rain  
Jungle

You are always focused on progress. Bigger, better, stronger, faster is the way to go.



Hail  
Swamp

Languages and codes come easy to you. This may also be a form of pattern recognition.



## DEVICE



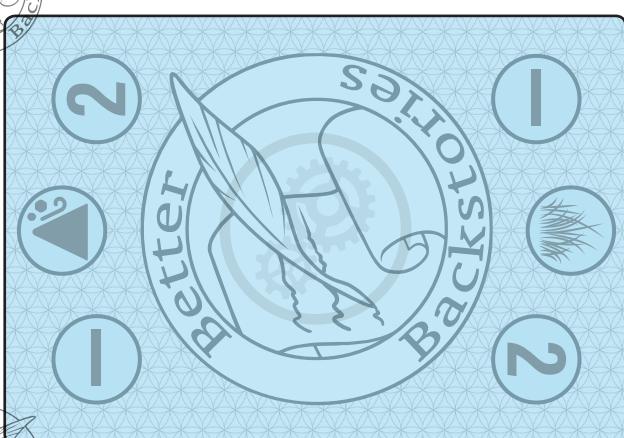
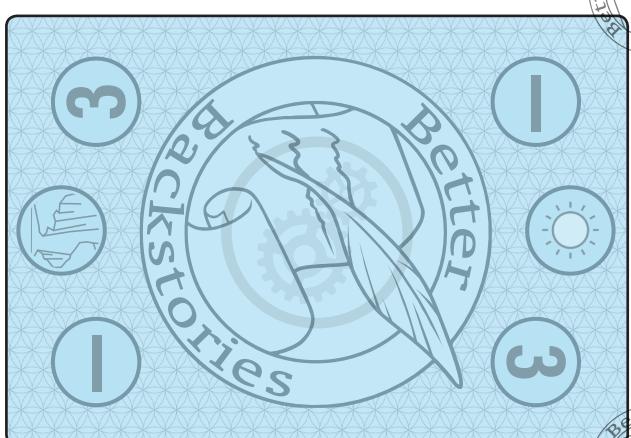
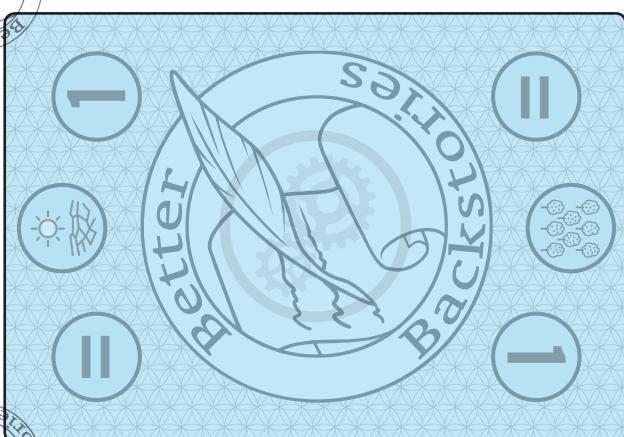
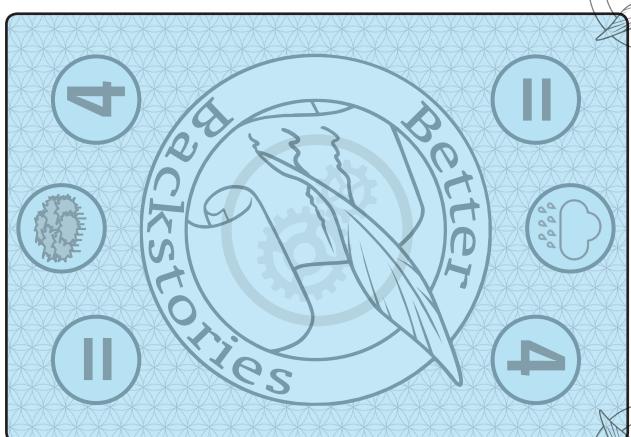
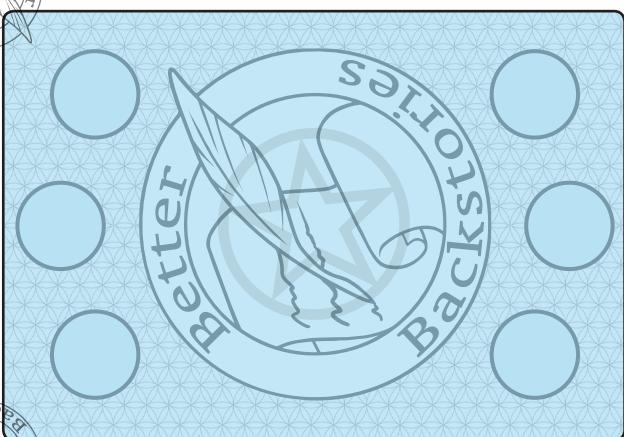
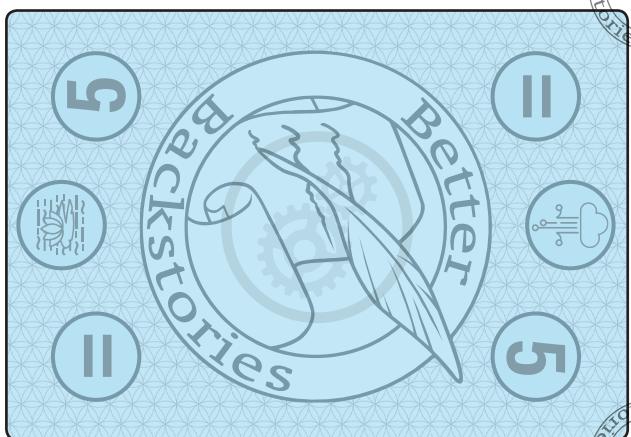
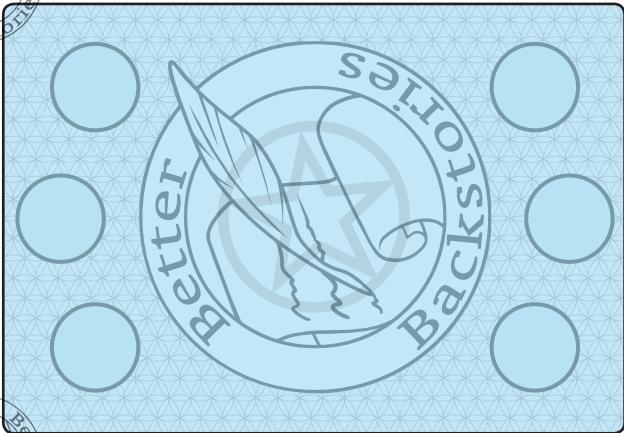
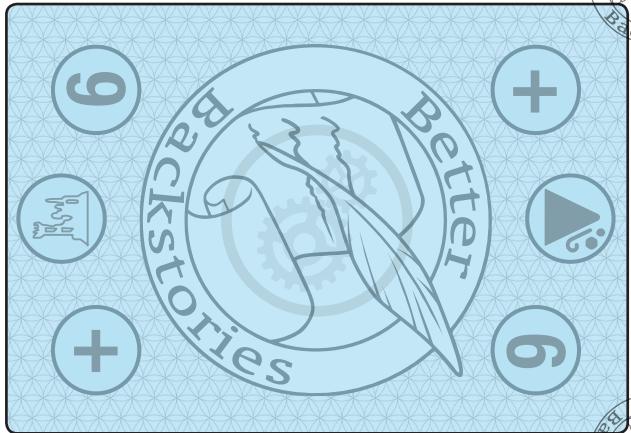
You acquired an advanced item with curious effects.

1. Curious puzzle
2. Gives strange cravings
3. Appeared mysteriously
4. Unidentified power source
5. Changes shape or form
6. Made of a odd material
7. Covered in unknown runes
8. Behaves strangely at certain times
9. Seems to be part of something bigger
10. Created by a relative

"Oh! Hi!" he said, waving crazily. "Let's go to the BLUE BOX!"  
–Looney Old Wizard What's His Name Again?  
from Backer JD "Firefly"

"Information wants to be free... But it'll cost you." –Caitlin O'Brien  
from Backer Chris Rubenstahl

"Sometimes, I think maybe I'll talk my way out of the situation, and then I think maybe it's better to just hammer out the situation." –Imater Fellhammer  
from Backer James Pippinen





## REPLACEMENT?

You have some sort of body modification.

Mostly Cloudy  
Orchard

1. Arm
2. Eye
3. Head
4. Looks real
5. Transplant
6. Full body
7. Finger
8. Chest
9. Ear
10. Leg

## IMPACT

An otherworldly event has touched your life.

Fog  
Sea

1. Meteorite sighting or landing
2. Saw unexplained lights in the sky
3. Abducted in your sleep
4. Unexplained physical damage
5. Dreams of spaceflight
6. Affinity for the stars
7. Missing time
8. Visited by something alien
9. Connected to a conspiracy theory
10. Realized you are a sleeper agent

## APPLIED

You are familiar with a hard science.

Flood  
Canyon

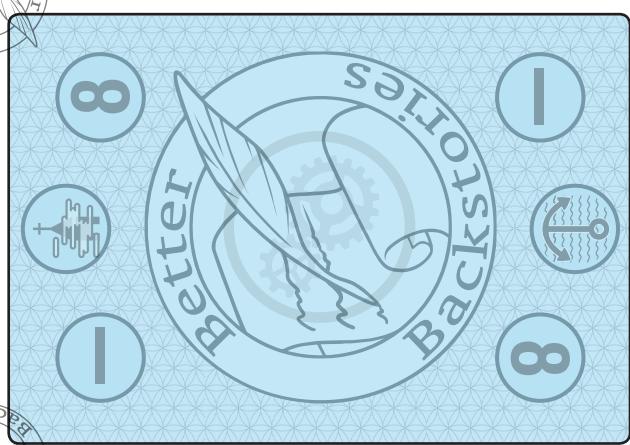
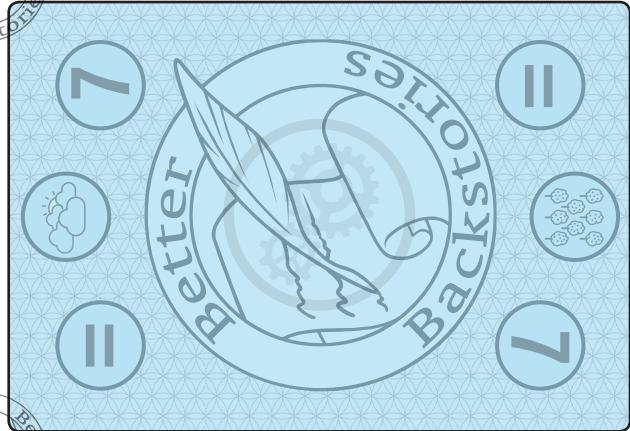
1. Chemistry
2. Meteorology
3. Physics
4. Aerodynamics
5. Electro-magnetism
6. Sociology
7. Mathematics
8. Mechanical Engineering
9. Astronomy
10. Biology or Genetics

## EDUCATION

You were provided specialized teaching.

Sleet  
Swamp

1. Tutored
2. Apprenticeship
3. Military academy
4. Parent was a teacher
5. School of hard knocks
6. Home-schooled
7. Entertainers college
8. Earned a scholarship
9. Work-study program
10. Boarding school



It is recommended that you print on heavy weight paper or cardstock. Cut along the solid, pink lines carefully with scissors or Xacto blade. Score along the dashed, pink lines lightly with the edge of the scissors or blade. Carefully fold all dashed lines at 90 degrees. Glue, tape or staple the marked panel to form the box. Fold all other flaps inside, to close the top and bottom of the box.

SCORE/FOLD

CUT

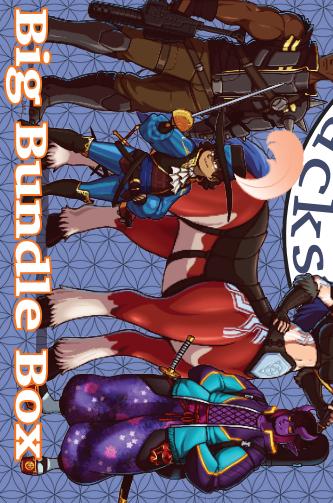
# Better Backstories

## Big Bundle Box

Better  
Backstories

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Big Bundle Box



# Better Backstories

Big Bundle Box

## Better Backstories

Drama is based on meaningful connections. I like Skywalker's story becomes so much deeper when it is revealed that Darth Vader is his father. Citizen Kane becomes more dramatic when we learn what Rosebud really means. Imagine how our character's adventure would be if the big bad at the end turned out to be their long lost sister?

Welcome to Better Backstories, a life history generator for adding depth to your fictional characters. With the flip of a few cards, your Half-Orc Fighter gains a family heirloom and a fear of open spaces. This system is genre neutral and works for role-playing games, creative writing, or even song writing. The cards can also be used to generate random weather patterns and map features.



Illustrations by Blazbaros

Better Backstories  
Big Bundle Box

GLUE, TAPE OR STAPLE

