

COMPLICATIONS

Beyond the abilities and features bestowed by ancestry and class, your hero might have something else that makes them... unusual. Perhaps an earth elemental lives in your body. Maybe your eldritch blade devastates enemies but feeds on your own vitality. A complication is an optional feature you can select to enrich your hero's backstory, with any complication providing you both a positive benefit and a negative drawback.

Because complications are optional, check with your Director before taking one. And even if you get to determine your hero's complication, remember that the Director ultimately determines how your complication affects the story. Your complication's drawback might play a big part in the campaign, whether you have a chance to remove it or whether you always have it looming over you, forcing you into hard decisions. Either option leads to great narratives, so embrace the control you give to the Director when you take a complication. The story will be richer for it!

Benefit and Drawback

Your complication gives your hero both a benefit and a drawback. Some of these benefits and drawbacks are mechanical, while others are narrative. The benefit and drawback of a complication makes your connection to the game deeper and more interesting and provides hooks to let the Director better draw your hero into the campaign's story.

Not all complication benefits and drawbacks carry equal weight, but each benefit is balanced by its drawback. If you have a powerful positive side to your complication, be prepared to have an equally influential bit of negative backstory as well.

Modifying the Story

In consultation with the Director, you can modify the narrative of a complication to better fit your vision of your character's backstory—or change it entirely. For instance, if you choose Infernal Contract as a complication, you might have your hero strike a deal with an archfey or an undead general instead of a devil.

Many of the details of each complication are purposefully left vague, so that you can connect the complication to the rest of your backstory. If your complication took place during an attack, accident, or other event, you decide the specific details of those events and any other creatures involved.

Choosing a Complication

You can choose your character's complication from any of the available options below. Or to maximize the sense of it being an unexpected part of your life, you can roll on the Complications table.

Complications are presented in alphabetical order.

Complications

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32	Following in the Footsteps	82	Sibling's Shield
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40	Guilty Conscience	90	Voice in Your Head
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42	Host Body	92	Vow of Honesty
43	Hunted	93	Waking Dreams
44	Hunter	94	War Dog Collar
45	Indebted	95	War of Assassins
46	Infernal Contract	96	Ward
47	Infernal Contract ... But, Like, Bad	97	Waterborn
48	Ivory Tower	98	Wodewalker
49	Lifebonded	99	Wrathful Spirit
50	Lightning Soul	100	Wrongly Imprisoned

Advanced Studies

You somehow obtained the notebook of a brilliant but eccentric member of your class. The knowledge held within those notes should help you unlock powerful new abilities—if you can ever figure out what the notes mean.

Benefit and Drawback: As a respite activity, you can study the notebook. Make a test using your highest characteristic score:

- ≤11 You summon a hostile demon of your level or lower who attacks you at the end of the respite. The demon acts first in the combat, regardless of the traits or abilities of you or any other creature involved.
- 12-16 You learn nothing and your time is wasted.
- 17+ You learn one bonus heroic ability from your class that you qualify for. You can use that ability until you finish your next respite.

Amnesia

You have no memory of your past before the ... incident. Hopefully, you'll regain your memory soon and find out what the incident was. In the meantime, you need friends so you won't be alone when your past catches up to you.

Benefit: You have a supernatural possession—a 1st-echelon trinket of your choice (see [Treasures](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)) that might have some connection with your former life.

Drawback: You take a bane on any test made to recall lore.

Animal Form

Due to a magical accident, your being has fused with that of a small, harmless animal. You turn into this animal when it's convenient—and sometimes when it's inconvenient as well.

Benefit: As a maneuver, you take the form of a specific animal of size 1T. You retain all your other statistics aside from your size, but you can't talk or use main actions, and the only maneuvers you can use are Escape Grab, Hide, and Stand Up. Based on the animal you can turn into, you might be able to burrow or fly, or to automatically climb or swim at full speed while moving. If your animal form doesn't provide such additional movement, you have a +2 bonus to speed.

Unless you use this benefit again, you return to your true form at the start of your next turn.

Drawback: At the start of any turn while you are winded, the Director can spend 1 Malice to force you to take your animal form. Once the Director has done so, they can't do so again until you have finished a respite.

Antihero

You used to be a villain. You're (mostly) reformed now, but in desperate moments, you sometimes draw on the rage and hatred that fueled your old life. In those moments, even your friends aren't sure whose side you're on. They don't need to worry, though. Once you leave evil behind, you can't go back. You've made too many enemies on the other side.

Benefit: You have 3 antihero tokens. Whenever you use an ability or other effect that costs your Heroic Resource, you can spend 1 antihero token in place of 1 Heroic Resource. Whenever you have fewer than 3 antihero tokens and you would earn a hero token for your party through your deeds, you instead regain 1 antihero token.

Drawback: While you have fewer than 3 antihero tokens, you exude a villainous aspect. You and each ally within 5 squares of you take a bane on any test made to interact with other creatures.

Artifact Bonded

A powerful artifact has bonded to you, though you don't know whether you're destined to wield the artifact or to destroy it. You're not powerful enough to use it at the moment, although you might be someday. For now, though, the artifact has no effect beyond getting you in trouble.

Benefit: Choose an artifact (see [Treasures](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)). The first time in an encounter that you are reduced to 0 Stamina against your will, the artifact appears on your person. It disappears at the end of your next turn, when you benefit from one of its properties, or when you have more than 0 Stamina, whichever comes first.

Drawback: Each time the artifact appears, you lose a Recovery. If you have no Recoveries remaining, you take 1d10 damage instead, which can't be reduced in any way.

Bereaved

The most important person to you—perhaps a family member, mentor, or lover—was killed. The only thing that keeps you going is the faint connection you have with this person's spirit, and the hope that one day you can tie up their unfinished business and let them rest.

Benefit: Whenever you don't know what to do, you can appeal to your loved one's spirit for help. You spend a hero token to let the Director determine the next thing you do, whether in or out of combat. The Director chooses the best course of action they can think of for you, even if it relies on information you don't have. If the Director can't think of a particularly good course of action for you to take, you don't spend the hero token.

Drawback: You have corruption weakness 5.

Betrothed

Your parents made a deal, and as part of that deal, you're supposed to marry someone—or something—you didn't choose. But no one is going to tell you what to do! They'll all be sorry to find that you've run away to become a mighty adventurer.

Benefit: You escaped with a dowry present—a 1st-echelon trinket of your choice (see [Treasures](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)).

Drawback: All those who learn of you running out on your commitment think less of you and spread nasty rumors about you. Your Renown can't ever be more than your level – 1.

Chaos Touched

You came into contact with a mote of pure chaos energy, or were subjected to a supernatural effect or object that fused chaos into your very being. Now you can sprout and retract your limbs in a way that horrifies unprepared onlookers.

Benefit: You gain an edge on the Escape Grab, Grab, and Knockback maneuvers. Additionally, you can hold an additional item even when your hands are full.

Drawback: While dying, you grow and retract uncoordinated limbs at random, imposing a bane on your power rolls.

Chosen One

Perhaps the stars marked you out at birth, or maybe your name appears in an ancient prophecy. In any case, a sinister cult has decided that you're important to their plans—though you don't particularly like the fate those plans have in store for you.

Benefit: You have 3 destiny points. Whenever you spend your Heroic Resource for your class, you can spend 1 or more destiny points instead. Each time you earn a Victory, you regain 1 destiny point.

Drawback: Whenever you spend 1 or more destiny points, you take 1d10 psychic damage that can't be reduced in any way, and the cult that seeks you becomes aware of your location.

Consuming Interest

Ever since you were a kid, you've been obsessed with a certain topic. During your travels, you spend your free time gleaning all the information you can on that obsession. You might not be the world's leading expert quite yet, but people should certainly trust your opinion on the topic.

Benefit: You have one skill of your choice from the lore skill group, and you can use the Study Lore project (see below) up to three times for that skill. Each time you use the project, you must use a different project source, and the project goal increases. (See Chapter 12: Downtime Projects.)

Drawback: You can't imagine ever being wrong on the topic of your obsession. Whenever you make a test to recall lore using your chosen skill, the Director makes the test in secret. Instead of informing you whether you're right or wrong, they provide you with correct information if you succeeded and false information if you failed.

STUDY LORE

Item Prerequisite: None

Project Source: A significant source of information on the topic of your obsession, such as a major library or a world-renowned sage

Project Roll Characteristic: Reason

Project Goal: 120, 150, 180

Each time you complete this project, your knowledge of your chosen field expands, and the bonus to tests provided by your chosen skill increases by 1.

Corrupted Mentor

Your mentor taught you everything and you trusted them completely—until they went rogue, betraying you or the organization you both belonged to. Their current whereabouts and activities are unknown, though disturbing rumors are heard from time to time. Even worse, as their former pupil, you're now under suspicion as well.

Benefit: You know the Corrupt Spirit maneuver, taught to you by your mentor. (In retrospect, that probably should have aroused your suspicion.)

Corrupt Spirit

You unlock the sinister secrets of pain.

Magic

Self

Maneuver

 Self

Effect: Until the end of your turn, whenever you use a damage-dealing heroic ability against a single target, you can weaken that target's life force. The ability deals extra corruption damage equal to your highest characteristic score.

Drawback: You have holy weakness 1. Each time you use Corrupt Spirit, your holy weakness increases by 1, to a maximum equal to your recovery value. Whenever you take holy damage, this weakness resets to 1.

Coward

Some call you a coward, just because you shriek and run when you encounter danger. Sure, you might not have the natural bravado of less-imaginative people. And sure, you're always imagining the many horrible ways you could die, but you're used to fear. When you run in terror, you run toward the enemy.

Benefit: While you are frightened, you can move toward the source of your fear.

Drawback: Whenever you make a saving throw to end the frightened condition, you roll a d10 twice and take the lower roll.

Crash Landed

You used to flit around the stars in your own ship. But an ugly run-in with a pirate (or a pirate hunter) has left you marooned on this backwater world. You're prepared to carve out a life here—at least until you can hitch a ride somewhere else.

Benefit: You have the Timescape skill (from the lore skill group). Additionally, you have a power pack that you can activate or deactivate as a maneuver. When you activate the power pack, choose an energy type from cold, fire, lightning, or sonic. Until you deactivate the power pack, your damage-dealing abilities deal that damage type.

Drawback: You take a bane on any test made to know about anything related to the world where you crash landed.

Cult Victim

Cultists captured you while raiding your home, then began an unholy ritual to turn your body into an undead spirit. Though the ritual failed, your body became infused with corrupted magic, turning you partially incorporeal.

Benefit: Once per turn, you can move through solid matter 1 square thick or less. If you end your turn inside solid matter, you are forced out into the space from which you entered it and you take 5 damage that can't be reduced in any way.

Drawback: You have corruption weakness 5.

Curse of Caution

When you were young, you did something reckless and unthinking that endangered a hag or cost them something dear. The hag cursed you to always take your time, forcing you to be cautious and thorough—even to your detriment. The curse has saved you from trouble a few times, but not being able to get away from trouble might be your downfall if you can't shake it.

Benefit: Until you've taken your turn in a combat round, any strike made against you takes a bane.

Drawback: You have a -1 penalty to speed.

Curse of Immortality

For as long as you can remember, you've never gotten older. You've simply adventured through one age after another. Still, your memory of past events—even those you were involved with—is a little hazy. Apparently, your memory isn't as long-lived as you are.

Benefit: You don't age. Additionally, whenever you would die, you instead enter a state of suspended animation indistinguishable from death. If your body isn't destroyed by dying or while you remain in this state, you come back to life after 12 hours and regain Stamina equal to your recovery value.

Drawback: You take a bane on any test made to recall lore.

Curse of Misfortune

You should have never pissed off that mage! Maybe they deserved your ire, or maybe you were just being a bully. But whatever the case, they cursed you before skipping town. Now, in moments of pressure that require great skill, you have a tendency to choke, falling and flailing in such a dramatic fashion that you take everyone else with you.

Benefit and Drawback: Whenever you make a test in combat and incur a consequence, you ignore that consequence. Instead, you and each ally adjacent to you fall prone.

Curse of Poverty

A soothsayer once predicted you would have a long life, even as they told you you'd never be rich. But you're determined to prove them wrong. You'll get rich or die trying!

Benefit and Drawback: Whenever you take a respite while your Wealth is higher than 1, some improbable event occurs that causes most of your money to vanish—including money you've hidden, loaned to others, or given away. Your Wealth is reduced to 1. For each point of Wealth you lose this way, your number of Recoveries increases by 1. Your Recoveries reset to their usual value the first time you take a respite with fewer Recoveries than your maximum.

Curse of Punishment

Through ignorance, fear, spite, or selfishness, you refused to help someone in need. To teach you a lesson, a deity offered you what seemed to be a blessing—extra power to help you heal yourself in times of need, but harsh consequences should your need become excessive. You took the deal, and now benefit from the blessing but also suffer from a curse.

Benefit: You have 1 additional Recovery.

Drawback: When you are out of Recoveries, you are dying, no matter what your current Stamina is.

Curse of Stone

As a child, you met a creature who turns people to stone, such as a medusa. You escaped half petrified, avoiding the fate of others who stand as statues now.

Benefit: You have a +1 bonus to stability. Additionally, you can use a free maneuver to cause your body, gear, and any items you hold to take on the appearance of stone, making you appear to be a mundane statue while you remain unmoving.

Drawback: You have sonic weakness 5. Additionally, while you are winded, you are dazed.

Cursed Weapon

When you were young, you found or were given a magic weapon. Since then, you've carried it always at your side, letting it inspire you to lead the life of a hero—even though the weapon is cursed.

Benefit: You have a leveled weapon of your choice (see [Treasures](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)).

Drawback: You have damage weakness 2.

Disgraced

You're a disgraced member of a powerful family or guild, having been turned out by your relatives or peers. Those you were once close to won't give you the time of day anymore, much less lend a helping hand, until you clear your name or clean up your act.

Benefit: You earn 1 Renown, and you have one skill of your choice from the interpersonal or intrigue skill group.

Drawback: Anyone who has heard of you and is influenced by your Renown treats you as infamous. Whenever you are part of a negotiation with an NPC who has an interest of 2 or lower, that NPC makes a plan to hurt you personally after the negotiation ends—and carries that plan out.

Dragon Dreams

You sometimes have strange dreams of a raging inferno ... a gleaming pile of treasure ... of spreading your wings and taking flight. You haven't told anyone about these dreams, except for your one strange relative who seems to know more than they're letting on.

Benefit: Choose 2 ancestry points' worth of purchased dragon knight traits (see [Chapter 3: Ancestries](#)). You can use these traits whenever you have 5 or more Victories.

Drawback: Whenever you are reduced to 0 Stamina, you explode with heat and fire. You and each creature within 5 squares of you takes fire damage equal to twice your level. You can't reduce this damage for yourself in any way.

Elemental Inside

When an evil mage threatened someone you loved, you blocked that foe's summoning of an elemental creature by absorbing their magic with your body. You are now infused with the power of that elemental—who isn't at all happy about it.

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to Stamina at 1st level, then again at 4th, 7th, and 10th levels.

Drawback: While you are dying, your possessing elemental takes control of your body. The elemental yearns for destruction, causing you to attack the nearest creature you notice without regard for your desires or your body's safety. If you don't do your best to fulfill the elemental's rage, the Director can take temporary control of your hero.

Evanesceria

You have contracted a rare magical disease called evanesceria. From time to time, you're not quite yourself—or anyone else either. You simply ... vanish, then return later with no memory of your absence.

Benefit: At the start of any combat round, you can attempt to absent yourself from reality by rolling a d10. On a 6 or higher, you disappear, then reappear in the space you left or the nearest unoccupied space of your choice when you take your turn. You can't attempt to absent yourself again until you earn 1 or more Victories.

Drawback: Whenever you start a respite activity, roll 2d10. If you roll a 1 on either die, you inadvertently absent yourself from reality, reappearing at the end of the respite. You gain the benefits of taking a respite but don't perform the respite activity.

Exile

Whether you're a convicted criminal, a noble stripped of their title, or a person who made one too many enemies, you've been cast forth from your homeland, never to return. At least not until you're strong enough to set things right.

Benefit: You know one extant language of your choice (see *Languages in Orden* in Chapter 4: Background).

Drawback: If any NPC from your homeland recognizes you, whether in your homeland or elsewhere, they attempt to harm you at the Director's discretion.

Fallen Immortal

You used to be an immortal creature, dispensing justice and doing the bidding of the gods. Now, whether as punishment or reward, you have been ordered to set your true nature aside and become a mortal. Your remaining years will be short, but living alongside your fellow mortals gives your life new meaning.

Benefit: You have the Religion skill (from the lore skill group). Additionally, whenever you use an ability that deals untyped damage, that ability can deal holy damage instead.

Drawback: You will never fully gain a mortal's comfort with untruth. Any test you make to deceive another creature takes a bane.

Famous Relative

Sure, you're a promising young hero in your own right—but people always ask you about your famous relative. Will you equal or surpass your relative's accomplishments, or will you always live in their shadow?

Benefit: You have a piece of magic jewelry such as a signet ring. As a maneuver, you can use this item to summon your relative to your aid. Your relative starts with a Renown of 10 but otherwise has the same statistics you do. They make power rolls with an edge but don't gain the benefits of any of your treasures. Your relative does their best to help you out of the current perilous situation, disappearing when the situation is resolved or after 1 hour. Once you summon your relative, you can't do so again until you gain a level.

Drawback: You earn no Victories from combat encounters or other challenges for which your relative was present. Additionally, each time you summon your relative, the next time you gain Renown, your relative gains that Renown instead.

Feytouched

Your birth was attended by faeries. A friendly fairy blessed you, granting you strength so you could defend yourself. In response, an unfriendly fairy granted you a life filled with peril so that you might prove your strength.

Benefit and Drawback: At the start of each combat encounter, you can choose to gain 1 additional Heroic Resource. If you do so, the Director gains 3 Malice.

Fiery Ideal

A spirit beyond your comprehension instilled in you a special purpose, choosing you to be the guardian of a place, a cause, or a philosophy. The flame that now burns in your soul can sear your enemies—or you if you fall short of expectations.

Benefit: While you fight on behalf of your special purpose, whenever you obtain a tier 3 outcome with a damage-dealing ability, the ability deals extra fire damage equal to your highest characteristic score.

Drawback: Whenever the Director determines that you act against your purpose or fail to live up to the high standards associated with it, you take fire damage equal to $5 + \text{your level}$. This damage can't be reduced in any way.

Fire and Chaos

A great monster who breathed fire burned your home to the ground. While everything around you was consumed, you somehow stood strong amid the inferno, your body adapting to ignore the effects of the flames.

Benefit: You have fire immunity 5.

Drawback: You have cold weakness 5.

Following in the Footsteps

Your personal idol was a mighty hero, and you have modeled yourself after them. From studying the many heroic tales told of them, you hope to someday learn your idol's most famous battle technique.

Benefit: Choose a heroic ability for your class of a higher level than you currently are. When you take this ability in future, its Heroic Resource cost is permanently reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 1).

Drawback: In your quest for advanced techniques, you have neglected the basics. Choose a heroic ability you already know. That ability's Heroic Resource cost is permanently increased by 1.

Forbidden Romance

You are in love with someone powerful, but tragic circumstances mean you cannot be with them. Whether your lover is from a feuding family, betrothed to another, or has been driven from your side, you are fated to always be apart.

Benefit: You can secretly call on your betrothed for favors. Though they support you from afar, they might be constrained in how much aid they provide—and they can't openly reveal their connection with you.

Drawback: When your lover is in trouble, they might call on you for help. But if your relationship is discovered, the circumstances that keep you apart will be made worse.

Frostheart

At the edge of the world, you were lost in a winter storm and presumed dead. But an unknown fate or power kept you alive, bringing you back with frosty skin and pale eyes.

Benefit: You have cold immunity 5. Additionally, whenever you make a strike that deals untyped damage, that strike can deal cold damage instead.

Drawback: You have fire weakness 5.

Getting Too Old for This

You were once a renowned hero, but you've been living the last few years in blissful peace. Now you're coming out of retirement for one last hurrah. Your fighting skills might have atrophied to the point where you're no stronger than a wet-behind-the-ears novice adventurer, but you still remember some of your old tricks.

Benefit: On your turn, you can choose a heroic ability that you would be able to learn if you were one level higher. Provided you meet the ability's other prerequisites and can spend any required Heroic Resource, you can use the ability. Once you use this benefit, you can't do so again until you earn 2 or more Victories.

Drawback: While you are winded, you take a -2 penalty to speed.

Gnoll-Mauled

As a child, you survived a gnoll attack. But that attack left you with a jagged scar and the occasional fit of bloodlust.

Benefit: Whenever an ally within 5 squares is reduced to 0 Stamina, you can use a triggered action to move up to your speed and make a free strike.

Drawback: While you are dazed, if you start your turn adjacent to one or more creatures, you must use your main action to make a melee free strike against an adjacent creature.

Special: You can't take this complication if you can't be made dazed.

Greening

You once felt the call of a great tree in the middle of a forest, whose life force was being drained by a parasitic supernatural moss clinging to its roots. As you removed the moss, you felt as if you were being filled with green elemental energy. Sadly, the great tree withered before you could finish the job, but left behind a golden sapling you now carry with you, seeking the perfect place to plant it.

Benefit: You have corruption immunity 5.

Drawback: You have fire weakness 5.

Grifter

You used to be a con artist, but those days are pretty much behind you. Being a hero is an even better racket. After all, if you're saving the world, who can be mad at you for stealing a few coins along the way?

Benefit: You have one skill of your choice from the intrigue skill group.

Drawback: Whenever you meet an NPC for the first time, the Director can decide that NPC was a victim of one of your previous cons and remembers you. If they do so, the party gains a hero token.

Grounded

Once when you were a child, your settlement was in danger and you called out to the earth for aid. That call was answered by a summoning of protective dirt-and-stone walls, and ever since then, you've felt the earth's presence as a friend and protector.

Benefit: You have the 1st-level Elementalist Specialization feature Motivate Earth (see [Chapter 5: Classes](#)). If you also gain this feature in any other way, the Motivate Earth ability becomes a ranged ability for you with a distance of ranged 5.

Drawback: You attract lightning. Whenever any creature within 2 squares of you takes lightning damage, you take 5 lightning damage that can't be reduced in any way.

Guilty Conscience

The world is in trouble—and it's partly your fault. Maybe you helped a villain rise to power or inadvertently released a demon from imprisonment. Now it's your mission to repair the damage you caused.

Benefit: You're determined to stay alive so you can set things right. When your Stamina reaches the negative of your winded value, you can use a free triggered action to spend a Recovery.

Drawback: Many people blame you for the evils you caused. They might be unfriendly or hostile to you—and you can understand their point of view. You take a bane on any test made to interact with those who know what you did, and on strikes made against such creatures.

Hawk Rider

You travel with a giant hawk who you stole from the Hawklords (see [Vasloria](#) in [Chapter 1: The Basics](#)). You might once have been a Hawklord yourself, or perhaps you escaped their captivity. Having a giant hawk companion comes with its share of inconveniences and dangers, but those are a small price to pay for the freedom of the open sky.

Benefit: As long as you are not in a building or other structure, you can spend 1 uninterrupted minute to summon your giant hawk (see the [Humans](#) entry in [Draw Steel: Monsters](#)), which acts as your mount. You can dismiss the hawk at any time (no action required). The hawk won't go inside buildings, dungeons, or other structures, and it won't accept anyone but you as a rider. If the hawk takes damage or dies, you can restore them to full Stamina as a respite activity.

Drawback: People aware of the origin of your mount are afraid to interact with you, since they worry the Hawklords will come after them by association. You take a bane on any test made to influence anyone who knows of the Hawklords and who has observed you with your giant hawk. Such people might also report you to the Hawklords, who come looking for you at the Director's discretion.

Host Body

"Do not be alarmed! We are not the humanoid we appear to be. We are an intelligent fungal collective, using this body as a host. No, we are doing nothing unsavory! This body was dead when we found it, and we merely gave it another chance at life. We are friendly. Please put down those torches!"

Benefit: You are a sapient fungus who inhabits a humanoid body. Your host body follows all the usual rules for a character and is considered to be alive. At any time while your host body is alive, or for 24 hours after it dies, you can use a main action to move to a dead humanoid within 10 squares of the body and use it as your new host body, provided the body belongs to a playable ancestry. When you do so, your original host body dies if it was alive. Your new host body gains all your statistics except size, ancestry traits, and other statistics related to your former host body's ancestry, which you instead gain from your new host body. When you inhabit a new host body, you start with 1 Stamina and can immediately spend a Recovery.

Drawback: You have fire weakness 5. Additionally, you take a bane on any test made to read a humanoid creature's emotions or body language.

Hunted

You have long stayed one step ahead of a pursuer—perhaps a bounty hunter determined to bring you to justice, a revenant, or an assassin intent on your death. Someday, you'll be strong enough to face your pursuer. But for now, you live your life on the run.

Benefit: You have one skill of your choice from the intrigue skill group. Additionally, whenever one or more creatures are pursuing you, you can lay low as a respite activity. When you do so, anyone pursuing you loses track of your and your party's location and must start their search again.

Drawback: Each time you earn Renown, your pursuer learns your location. Unless you lay low or move to a new location, you'll be visited by agents of the pursuer within 1d10 days. If you linger after that, your pursuer finds you.

Hunter

You are hunting someone or something—perhaps a wanted criminal, a person who wronged you, or a dangerous monster or beast. You won't rest until you face off against your quarry!

Benefit: Choose one skill from the following:

- ◆ Interrogate (from the interpersonal skill group)
- ◆ Alertness, Eavesdrop, Search, or Track (from the intrigue skill group)
- ◆ Criminal Underworld, Rumors, or Society (from the lore skill group)

You have that skill, and you gain an edge on tests made to find or learn clues about your quarry.

Drawback: You are so obsessed with finding your quarry that you take a bane on any test made to track other creatures.

Indebted

A deal you made went south, or you got involved with the wrong people. Now you owe a debt or a ransom that would bankrupt a minor noble. To pay it off, you'll need to take some dangerous risks.

Benefit: You're good with money—because you've had to be. Whenever you earn Wealth, you earn 1 more than usual.

Drawback: Your starting Wealth is -5. While your Wealth is lower than 1, you can purchase items as if you had 1 Wealth, but you're frequently visited by threatening creditors, and shopkeepers often lock their doors when they see you coming.

Infernal Contract

You made a deal (perhaps unknowingly) with an archdevil that has tied you to that fiend's service. When you first learned of this deal, you were taken to the Seven Cities of Hell, where some of the timescape's best minds taught you the ways of battle. The archdevil allows you to use these gifts as you will ... until they require a favor from you.

Benefit: Whenever you are present for a battle in which both sides have creatures who aren't surprised, your side determines who goes first if the d10 roll is a 4 or higher (see [Combat Round](#) in [Chapter 10: Combat](#)).

Drawback: The archdevil occasionally asks you to defeat enemies on their behalf. If you refuse, your fiendish patron sends devils after you and those you care about.

Infernal Contract ... But, Like, Bad

You made a deal with a devil. Not a very good deal, because it wasn't a very good devil. It's too late for regrets, though, because your soul is forfeit unless you find a loophole or can convince the devil to void the deal.

Benefit: Choose one of the following benefits:

- ◆ You earn 2 Renown.
- ◆ Your Wealth increases by 2.
- ◆ You gain a +3 bonus to Stamina.

Drawback: Your body bears a fiendish mark. Any creature who understands religion and notes the mark can tell that your soul belongs to Hell, imposing a bane on any test you make to interact with those creatures (unless they're into that). Additionally, when you die, your soul goes to Hell and you can't be restored to life.

Ivory Tower

You studied in an academy or other educational institution. Your training was thorough and your reading list was wide-ranging. But when you left school, you discovered there were serious gaps in your education. Maybe some of those books were a little out of date.

Benefit: You have three skills of your choice, and you know one dead language of your choice (see [Languages in Orden](#) in [Chapter 4: Background](#)).

Drawback: The Director chooses one of the skills you have from this complication. You lose that skill and can't ever learn it again. Additionally, you take a bane on any test to which that skill would apply.

Lifebonded

In a sinister ritual, your soul has been bound to that of another creature. This might be a companion, a creature you are beholden to, or an enemy. When they die, you die—making you the perfect bodyguard.

Benefit: Choose another creature who doesn't have the Lifebonded complication. When you die, your body disappears until that creature finishes a respite or earns 1 or more Victories. You then appear next to the creature, fully healed.

Drawback: If the creature you're bound to dies, you die as well, no matter what other traits or features you have.

Lightning Soul

You were caught in a storm and struck by lightning—but something saved you from death. Perhaps it was a gods-given miracle, a latent psionic gift, or the magic of a helpful elementalist, but you absorbed the lightning into your body. It's always there now, simmering under the surface.

Benefit: Whenever you regain Stamina in combat, you gain 1 surge. Whenever you spend a surge to deal extra damage, you can make that extra damage into lightning damage.

Drawback: Whenever you are wet, you have damage weakness 5.

Loner

You've always been a lone wolf. With no one else to lean on, you've picked up a million survival tricks. Which made it all the more surprising when you joined your current adventuring group and found the family you'd never known you needed.

Benefit: When you finish a respite, choose a skill you don't have. You have that skill until the end of your next respite.

Drawback: Now that you finally have people who care about you, you won't let anyone take them away! Whenever a creature reduces one of your allies to 0 Stamina, you are taunted by that creature until your ally's Stamina is higher than 0, another creature makes you taunted, or the end of the encounter.

Lost in Time

In a long-ago age, a cataclysm overtook your city. You weren't killed, but some arcane accident caused you to be suspended in time until now. Alone, you must navigate the world around you with a head full of outdated memories—and a few ancient secrets.

Benefit: Choose a damage type from acid, cold, corruption, fire, holy, lightning, poison, psychic, or sonic. Whenever you use a signature ability, you can have it deal your chosen damage type instead of its usual damage.

Drawback: You automatically fail any test made to recall information from the period during which you were suspended in time.

Lost Your Head

A bredbeddle stole your head! Usually, being beheaded by one of those magical giants is fatal (see [Draw Steel: Monsters](#)), but your latent psionic ability allows you to survive despite your decapitation.

Benefit: You have the following ability.

Share Head

 You don't have a head, but you can psionically borrow another.

Psionic, Ranged

 Ranged 10

Maneuver

 One willing creature

Effect: You can see, hear, and smell as if you were in the target's space. Additionally, you can borrow their mouth to speak when you wish to do so, speaking in your own voice. This effect ends when you use Share Head on a different target, when the target moves more than 10 squares away from you, or when the target is no longer willing to share their head with you.

Drawback: Having no head, you can't see, hear, smell, taste, or verbalize except by using the Share Head ability. Additionally, you can't wear gear that requires a head, such as a helmet or hat.

Lucky

You've always had a lucky streak. When you leave things in the hands of fate, you succeed more than you fail. But luck is fickle—and when you don't trust it, it deserts you.

Benefit: When you spend a hero token to succeed on a saving throw or to reroll a test, roll a d10. On a 6 or higher, you gain the benefit but don't spend the hero token.

Drawback: Whenever you obtain a tier 1 outcome on a test and don't spend a hero token to reroll, you take a bane on the next test you make.

Master Chef

Before you were a hero, you were a chef—and when you retire, you have big plans for your next restaurant or inn. In the meantime, you're on the lookout for rare ingredients that only a wandering adventurer can find. After all, it's food that makes the world go round.

Benefit: You have the Cooking skill (from the crafting skill group). Additionally, whenever you finish a respite or wake up after a night's sleep, you can spend 1 uninterrupted hour to prepare an excellent meal for up to ten creatures, provided you have ingredients and cooking tools. Once over the next 24 hours, each creature who eats the meal can gain the benefit of spending a Recovery without spending a Recovery.

Drawback: The first time each day you eat food you didn't prepare, you lose 2 Recoveries.

Meddling Butler

You're not sure what you did to deserve it, but for some reason, your family saddled you with an old, trusted, and extremely irritating family servant. They're supremely competent, of course, but they sometimes seem to forget who's in charge.

Benefit: You have a retainer, in addition to any followers you acquire through Renown or other means. As usual, you can have only one retainer in your service at a time. (See [Renown](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#) and [Retainers](#) in [Draw Steel: Monsters](#)).

Drawback: Outside of combat, your retainer is under the Director's control. The retainer sometimes acts without orders—always with your best interests at heart, but often in embarrassing or inconvenient ways.

Medium

You can perceive ghosts and spirits that others don't sense. These supernatural entities constantly whisper unsettling secrets in your mind—when they're not trying to kill you.

Benefit and Drawback: Incorporeal undead within 10 squares of you can communicate telepathically with you. Additionally, you have the Contact Spirits ability.

Contact Spirits

The restless dead speak to you.

Magic

 Self

Main action

 Self

Power Roll + Intuition or Presence:

-  You take corruption damage equal to 5 + your level.
-  The spirit of anyone you know of who has died speaks to you, provided they are on the same world as you. You learn how they died and can ask them one question, which they can answer truthfully or untruthfully. The spirit knows everything they knew in life, and is aware of events that took place in their immediate surroundings since their death.

 As tier 2, but you can ask three questions.

Effect: If any sapient creatures have died nearby within the last 24 hours, you have a double bane on the power roll for this ability if any of those creatures were hostile to you, or a double edge if any of them were friendly to you. When you use this ability, you can't do so again until you earn 1 or more Victories.

Medusa Blood

Your mother and father never saw eye to eye. You know this because your father is still alive and your mother is a medusa. This made your childhood difficult, and now it's making your adulthood complicated as well.

Benefit: You have the following ability.

Stone Eyes

Your looks don't kill—they petrify.

Magic, Ranged, Strike

 Ranged 10

Main action

 One creature

Power Roll + Might or Presence:

-  2 damage; **M <WEAK**, slowed (save ends)
-  4 damage; **M <AVERAGE**, slowed (save ends)
-  6 damage; **M <STRONG**, slowed (save ends)

Effect: This ability has no effect on a creature who can't see you or who purposefully avoids looking at your eyes. A creature reduced to 0 Stamina by this ability is turned to inanimate stone.

Drawback: Out of combat, you use your Stone Eyes ability on anyone who meets your gaze, whether you intend to or not. Your companions know not to make eye contact, but strangers are likely to trigger the ability unless you cover your eyes.

Misunderstood

Your appearance marks you as part of a group that is universally feared. You might be a gentle soul, but you're not often given a chance to prove it. It's no wonder you usually wear a hood.

Benefit and Drawback: When you reveal your appearance to creatures who don't know you personally, you gain an edge on any test involving those creatures where the Brag or Intimidate skill could be applied, but you take a bane on any test where the Flirt, Lead, or Persuade skill could be applied.

Mundane

You're hopelessly nonmagical. When you try to use magic abilities, or even when they're used on you, they never work right. Even magic devices seem to fizzle in your presence.

Benefit: You have immunity to corruption, holy, and psychic damage equal to your level.

Drawback: Whenever you carry more than three magic treasures, you take a bane on power rolls.

Outlaw

You might be a common bandit or an idealistic freedom fighter, but in any event, the authorities don't approve of your actions. You've managed to stay one step ahead of the law so far, but until your name is cleared, you've got to keep a low profile.

Benefit: You earn 1 Renown.

Drawback: Law enforcement officials and bounty hunters who recognize you attempt to arrest you.

Pirate

You have a piratical past (and maybe a piratical present and future as well). Though you're not well-known ashore, other pirates have a way of recognizing their own.

Benefit: When interacting with pirates or pirate hunters, you treat your Renown as 2 higher than usual. Additionally, you hold a piece of a pirate map, with a handful of other pirates in different locations holding the other pieces. With all the pieces, you'd know the location of a fabulous pirate treasure.

Drawback: The pirates holding the other pieces of the map would very much like to get their hands on your piece, and have no qualms about killing you to get it. Furthermore, the pirate treasure is said to be cursed or haunted.

Preacher

When you were young, you almost died in an accident or attack, but a vision of a god or saint showed you the way to save yourself and others you loved. That event drove you into the church and gave you a strong belief in a particular religion or cause—and you can't wait to tell other people all about it.

Benefit: As a respite activity, you can attempt to convert members of a community to your cause. Make a Presence test with a difficulty determined by the Director based on the community's receptiveness to your ideas. On a success, you convert one NPC into a follower (see [Renown](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)), which you gain in addition to any followers acquired through Renown or other means. The Director determines the type of follower. Once you have converted an NPC into a follower this way, you can't use this benefit again until you gain a level.

Drawback: If you fail in your conversion attempt, one of your existing followers of the Director's choice (whether gained through this complication or your Renown or other means) leaves you, their faith in you shaken. If you have no followers, your Renown is reduced by 1. If you need to reduce your Renown and it's already 0, you gain no benefits from the respite during which you make the conversion attempt.

Primordial Sickness

You once contracted a terrible illness for which no one could find a cure. You sought out a primordial swamp said to be either cursed or miraculously salubrious. It turned out to be both, keeping your illness at bay while corrupting your body with its unnatural energy.

Benefit: You have corruption immunity 5 and poison immunity 5.

Drawback: Your number of Recoveries is permanently reduced by 1.

Prisoner of the Synlirii

You were captured by the psionic beings known as voiceless talkers (see [Draw Steel: Monsters](#)). You escaped them, but you can't escape a feeling that's lingered since then in the back of your mind—the feeling of being watched.

Benefit: You can telepathically communicate with any creature within 10 squares of you if they share a language with you and you know of each other. A creature you communicate with this way can respond telepathically if they choose.

Drawback: Any voiceless talker within 1 mile knows your location, and can overhear and understand your telepathic conversations.

Promising Apprentice

You were apprenticed to learn a crafting trade. Your mentor said you had a special gift and might well become a master of your craft someday. But before your training was complete, your mentor was killed.

Benefit: You have one skill of your choice from the crafting skill group. Additionally, choose one of your skills from the crafting group. You gain an edge on any test that uses that skill.

Drawback: Whoever killed your mentor cursed you. You take a bane on any test that doesn't use one of your skills.

Psychic Eruption

In times of stress, you get headaches. Psionic energy builds up in your mind until you feel as though your head might explode. And if you're not careful, it actually does explode, radiating psychic waves that harm friends and enemies alike.

Benefit: You have the following heroic ability.

Psychic Blast (Special Heroic Resource Cost)

Psionic energy bursts from your body in an iridescent shimmer.

 Area, Psionic

 3 burst

Main action

 Each creature in the area

Effect: Using this ability costs all your Heroic Resource.

Power Roll + Your Highest Characteristic Score:

 11 1 psychic damage for each Heroic Resource you spend, to a maximum equal to your level

 12-16 1 psychic damage for each Heroic Resource you spend, to a maximum equal to your level + your highest characteristic

 17+ 1 psychic damage for each Heroic Resource you spend

Drawback: Whenever you become bleeding, frightened, or weakened, you must use Psychic Blast as a free triggered action.

Raised by Beasts

You were orphaned or lost in the wild, and a friendly animal pack (perhaps apes, bears, or wolves) took you in. Returning to so-called civilization was a shock, but you're now determined to learn all you can about your own kind.

Benefit: You have the Handle Animals skill (from the interpersonal skill group). Additionally, choose a type of animal related to the animals who helped you, such as wolf. You gain an edge on tests that use the Handle Animals skill when interacting with animals of this type. You can also communicate with animals of this type as if you shared a language, and animals of this type aren't initially hostile to you unless they're supernaturally compelled to be.

Drawback: You don't have a culture (see [Culture](#) in [Chapter 4: Background](#)), though you can speak Caelian.

Refugee

A hostile army—perhaps the forces of Ajax, the Iron Saint—conquered your homeland. Your family escaped, but you can't return home until your oppressors are defeated once and for all.

Benefit: When your family fled your homeland, they left their most valuable asset behind. Work with the Director to determine whether this asset is a trinket or leveled treasure, several points of Wealth, the project source to create a treasure, or the like. This asset is in the hands of the invaders but can be won back as the Director determines.

Drawback: The faction that invaded your homeland wants you captured or dead. Any of their agents or sympathizers attempt to harm you if they recognize you, as the Director determines.

Rival

Whatever your accomplishments, you'll forever measure yourself against a former companion who always seemed to stay one step ahead of you.

Benefit: Choose one of your skills. That skill grants a +3 bonus to tests instead of +2.

Drawback: Your rival has similar statistics to yours, but always had one skill they excelled at, as determined by the Director. Intimidated by their prowess, you take a bane on tests using that skill.

Rogue Talent

You are the only survivor of a cataclysmic psionic event—an experiment gone wrong, a voiceless talker attack, or some naturally occurring phenomenon of a far-off part of the timescape. It left you with a psionic talent, but also made you vulnerable to telepathic attacks.

Benefit: You have the following ability, which you can use as a ranged free strike.

Telekinetic Grasp

 You reach out with your mind to move a creature or object.

Psionic, Ranged, Strike

 Ranged 10

Maneuver

 One creature or object

Power Roll + Might, Intuition, or Presence:

 ≤11 Push or pull 1

 12-16 Push or pull 2

 17+ Push or pull 3

Drawback: You have psychic weakness 5.

Runaway

To your embarrassment, no sinister omens attended your birth and your closet contains no skeletons. You're just an ordinary person raised in a hardworking family. You're expected to carry on the family business—but who can settle down to a boring job when adventure calls! That's why you ran away.

Benefit: You have one skill of your choice from the crafting skill group.

Drawback: Members of your extended family are looking for you, intending to drag you home—and you've never been able to stand up to them.

Searching for a Cure

Your homeland has been corrupted by some terrible curse or plague, and you're the only one who escaped it. The members of your family still exist, but in changed forms—perhaps as vampire spawn, zombies, or living statues. People tell you the situation is hopeless, but you're determined to find a cure that can undo your loved ones' suffering.

Benefit: Choose a type of monster connected to your homeland's plight, such as a vampire, ghost, or medusa. You have a +1 bonus to saving throws related to that monster's abilities, and you treat your characteristic scores as 1 higher than usual for the purpose of resisting potencies related to those abilities.

Drawback: You have started to succumb to the curse or plague, and will suffer the fate of your family if you don't find a cure soon. Work with the Director to determine the timeline of your transformation, which should be something that could happen during the campaign!

Secret Identity

You're secretly important—but it's not safe for your true identity to be known. Perhaps you're the witness to a crime or a member of a royal family on the run from a usurper. Until you are no longer at risk of being hunted, you'll maintain the guise of an ordinary adventurer.

Benefit: You have a skill of your choice from the intrigue skill group. Additionally, you can resume your true identity temporarily. While in your true identity, your Renown and Wealth are treated as 2 higher than usual, and you might gain other benefits in consultation with the Director.

Drawback: Each time you resume your true identity while you are still hunted, you have a 20 percent cumulative chance each day that your enemies will find you. This chance resets if you resume your secret identity for 1 day.

Secret Twin

You have an identical twin—either a sibling or someone who looks so much like you that no one would ever know the difference. Your secret twin had a life you coveted, or perhaps had obligations that couldn't go unfulfilled. So when they went missing, you stepped in and started living their life. Most folks are none the wiser.

Benefit: You have a 1st-echelon trinket of your choice. This was a signature treasure of your twin, and has their name or sigil written, sewn, or emblazoned on it somewhere.

Drawback: Your twin disappeared because someone wanted them dead. Whenever you finish a respite, roll a d10. On a 1 or 2, the Director can decide that your past catches up with you in the near future in some way—an assassin seeking your twin, someone who knows your real identity and threatens to reveal it, and so forth.

Self-Taught

While your peers were learning their trades in fancy schools, you honed your capabilities on the mean streets with nothing but your own instinct as a guide. What you lost in polish and tactical acumen, you now make up for in raw power.

Benefit and Drawback: At the start of each of your turns during combat, you can forgo gaining your Heroic Resource until the start of your next turn. If you do, your strikes gain a damage bonus equal to your highest characteristic score until the start of your next turn.

Sewer Folk

Impoverished or on the run, you spent your formative years living in the sewers of a major city. There, you learned lessons that have served you well, although the miasma of the sewers did permanent damage to your health.

Benefit: You can automatically climb or swim (your choice) at full speed while moving, and you never get lost while underground. Additionally, while in a city with sewers, you and your companions can move from place to place without being detected, as the Director determines.

Drawback: You have poison weakness 5.

Shadow Born

You were born in the dusk land ruled by the Queen of Shadows, and its darkness has seeped into your bones. (See [The Myriad Worlds of the Timescape](#) in Chapter 1: The Basics.)

Benefit: Whenever you start your turn with concealment, you gain 1 surge.

Drawback: You have holy weakness 5.

Shared Spirit

A supernatural spirit occupies your body, with each of you controlling your body by turns. You and the spirit share the same short-term goals and work equally well with your companions, though you might have different personalities, mannerisms, and long-term goals.

Benefit and Drawback: At the start of each day, roll a d6. On a 1–4, you control your body. On a 5–6, the spirit does. Alternatively, if you and the spirit are on good terms, you can choose each day who is in control. Choose three of your skills. You can use those skills only while you are in control of your body. Then choose three new skills, which you have and can use only while your spirit is in control.

Shattered Legacy

You're the heir to a powerful supernatural treasure that has been in your family for generations. One problem, though: that treasure is broken. Some ancestor of yours sundered it while saving the world. Or maybe they tripped and smashed it on a rock. Either way, it's your job to fix it.

Benefit: You know one language of your choice. Additionally, you have one leveled treasure of your choice (see [Treasures](#) in Chapter 13: Rewards).

Drawback: The chosen leveled treasure is broken and completely inoperative. Repairing the treasure requires that you complete the Craft Treasure project for it. The project goal is half of what it would cost to create such an item, and you already have the project source you need. You must seek out any item prerequisite.

Shipwrecked

You are the sole survivor of a shipwreck that left you stranded on a remote and inhospitable island for years. Your struggle to survive there granted you insight into the natural world but distanced you from who you once were.

Benefit: You have two skills of your choice from the exploration skill group.

Drawback: You have forgotten one language you know of your choice.

Sibling's Shield

You were tasked with delivering a ceremonial shield to your older sibling, a celebrated warrior, for their years of service. When you arrived at their homestead, you found them dead on their doorstep with their own sword lodged in their back. To find out who did this to them—and why—you decided to step into their shoes. It will take a while to match up to your sibling's legacy, though.

Benefit: While you wear your sibling's shield on your back, you can't be flanked.

Drawback: Visions of your dead sibling haunt you at night. Whenever you take a respite, make an Intuition test that can't make use of any skill. On a tier 1 or tier 2 outcome, you regain 1 fewer Recoveries than usual when you finish the respite.

Silent Sentinel

You were trained by a group of spies, who psionically infused silence into your every step and enhanced your ability to hear distant whispers. But your enhanced hearing has some nasty side effects.

Benefit: You have the Eavesdrop and Sneak skills from the intrigue skill group, plus one skill of your choice from the lore skill group. Additionally, you can telepathically communicate with any creature provided they share a language with you and you can observe each other. A creature you communicate with this way can respond telepathically if they choose.

Drawback: You have sonic weakness 5. Additionally, whenever you take sonic damage, you are dazed until the end of your next turn.

Slight Case of Lycanthropy

Maybe you were bitten as a child, or maybe it's a family curse. Either way, you have a malady that is best not discussed in public, lest torches and pitchforks make an appearance.

Benefit: Whenever you make a non-minion creature winded or kill a non-minion creature, you gain 1 surge.

Drawback: At the start of each of your turns, if you have five or more surges—or one or more surges while in moonlight—you lose all your surges and become a wolfish hybrid until the end of your turn. While in that form, you have your usual statistics, but you must make a melee free strike against the nearest creature if you can. You can shift up to your speed toward that creature if necessary. If allies and enemies are equally near, you target an ally.

Special: You can't take this complication if you are a fury with the stormwright primordial aspect.

Stolen Face

An evil fairy cursed you, leaving you with a blank visage instead of a face. Although you're able to imitate other peoples' features, you'd like to have your own back.

Benefit: You can spend 5 uninterrupted minutes to rearrange your face to resemble the face of another creature of your ancestry who you've observed before. You have a double edge on tests made to impersonate that creature or to disguise your identity. You are unable to change your hair or other nonfacial features.

Drawback: Whenever you take damage, your face becomes blank, with no eyes, nose, mouth, or ears. This doesn't affect your senses or your ability to speak. Your face doesn't return until you use the benefit of this complication to restore it.

Strange Inheritance

Your siblings each inherited money or land, but you received a strange, seemingly useless trinket—along with the advice that maybe you weren't cut out for an ordinary, peaceful life.

Benefit: You have a somewhat inoperative 2nd-echelon trinket of the Director's choice (see [Treasures](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#)). This trinket functions only while the total of your level plus your Victories is 5 or higher. You don't learn what the trinket's powers are until the first time it becomes operative.

Drawback: With no other inheritance, you accumulated debts. The first time your Wealth exceeds 1, you lose 1 Wealth.

Stripped of Rank

You were trained as an officer, but you no longer serve. Whether you fled from a battle, were dishonorably discharged, or defected from an evil army, you make your own way in the world now—though your military training will never truly leave you.

Benefit: You have the following ability.

Issue Order

"Move or die, folks."

Ranged

Ranged 10

Main action

One ally

Effect: The target can use a triggered action to take a main action, a maneuver, or a move action.

Special: If you have the Strike Now tactician ability, the target can use a free triggered action instead of a triggered action to gain the benefit of this ability.

Drawback: Rather than attracting followers at 3, 6, 9, and 12 Renown, you can attract followers only when your Renown reaches 4, 8, 12, and 16. See [Renown](#) in [Chapter 13: Rewards](#).

Thrill Seeker

You live for danger. Whether in battle or mundane peril, you can transcend your usual limits—and once you've tasted that excitement, you want more.

Benefit: Each time your party reaches 2, 4, and 6 Victories, you earn the party a hero token.

Drawback: At the start of a new game session, the party doesn't earn a hero token for your character.

Vampire Scion

A vampire has bitten you. You're not undead—or not yet, anyway—but your connection with your vampire progenitor fills you with urges you fight to control.

Benefit: Whenever you make a melee free strike against an adjacent creature, you can do so by biting that creature. If you obtain a tier 3 outcome on the free strike, you gain temporary Stamina equal to the damage dealt. If not lost beforehand, this temporary Stamina lasts until the end of your next respite.

Drawback: While you have temporary Stamina from this complication, you grow visible fangs, you take a bane on Presence tests made to interact with humanoids, and your vampire progenitor can sense your location.

Voice in Your Head

You occasionally hear a voice in your head, giving you orders or offering advice. You don't know who the voice is or why it comes to you, but when you've followed the advice, it's usually proved to be sound.

Benefit: The Director tells you when you hear the voice. The voice seems to be aware of your surroundings, and its advice is usually vague but helpful. Someday its motivations might be different from your own, but for now, the voice seems keen on making sure you survive.

Drawback: Eventually, the voice reveals it wants something from you that you might not want to provide. If the voice is displeased with you, it can interrupt your rest during a respite, causing you to regain 2 fewer Recoveries than usual.

Vow of Duty

You have sworn an oath to an organization. That organization is your rock, and as long as your faith in it remains unshaken, you are immovable.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to stability.

Drawback: If you are ever forced to disobey your organization's orders, your stability becomes 0 until your doubts are resolved or you find a new organization to pledge yourself to.

Vow of Honesty

You were brought up to a strict standard of behavior. You cannot tell a lie.

Benefit: If a creature is of a lower level than you, you automatically know when they are lying, though you don't necessarily know the actual truth behind their lie. Additionally, you have a double edge on any test made to persuade a creature of some specific fact.

Drawback: When you lie, your honor is stained and you lose this complication's benefit. Additionally, you take a bane on any test that uses a skill from the interpersonal skill group. You can lose the bane and regain this complication's benefit only by doing penance, such as gaining the forgiveness of the creature you lied to.

Waking Dreams

You broke a magic amulet, immersing your mind in weird energy that granted you the power of premonition. However, you struggle to control this new gift. Whenever you take a respite, make a Reason test to determine whether you gain this complication's benefit or drawback.

Benefit: With a tier 2 outcome, you experience a vision of an event currently happening in your world. The vision lasts for only a few seconds, but the information you glean is helpful to you. With a tier 3 outcome, the vision lasts for 1 minute or more.

Drawback: With a tier 1 outcome, you receive a painful vision that is fractal and inscrutable. When you finish the respite, you lose 1 Recovery.

War Dog Collar

You wear a loyalty collar from one of Ajax's war dogs (see *Draw Steel: Monsters*). You've managed to rig the collar so it explodes outward while keeping you safe.

Benefit: Even if you are a war dog yourself, other war dogs can't use their Posthumous Promotion ability on you while you wear your collar. Additionally, you have the following ability.

Posthumous Retirement

 You make your modified collar explode.

Area, Magic

 1 burst

Maneuver

 Each enemy in the area

Effect: Your loyalty collar detonates, dealing fire damage equal to 5 plus your level to each target. Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you spend 1 uninterrupted minute out of combat resetting the collar.

Drawback: Each time you use your Posthumous Retirement ability, the Director can spend 3 Malice to make your collar malfunction and deal its damage to you in addition to the usual targets.

War of Assassins

Being in the wrong place at the wrong time saw you caught in the middle of a conflict between two warring assassins' guilds. Whether by choice or by accident, you wound up helping one faction at the expense of the other.

Benefit: Having gained the favor of the faction you helped, you can call on its members three times for favors. If a favor is reasonable and within the faction's power to grant, its members do it, no questions asked.

Drawback: The faction you wronged hates you, and its members would love to see you pay for your transgression.

Ward

Your childhood sweetheart was royalty, and the two of you stayed close throughout the years. When your former sweetheart died, you swore an oath to dedicate your life to become a role model for their child, advising them in the ways of being a benevolent monarch.

Benefit: You know how to talk to monarchs, aristocrats, and other wealthy leaders. When you engage with any such NPC during a negotiation, their patience increases by 1 (to a maximum of 5).

Drawback: Your royal ward can be a burden. Whenever you take a respite, roll a d10. On a 1, your ward contacts you and requires your help during the respite, requiring you to spend your time helping them instead of undertaking a respite activity.

Waterborn

You nearly lost your life at sea, but then you heard the voice. Someone—or something—in the water called out to you, telling you to swim. The ocean was suddenly no longer your doom but your parent, granting you a fragment of its power. But for what purpose, you can't be sure.

Benefit: You can automatically swim at full speed while moving, and you can breathe underwater. Additionally, you have the following ability.

Rogue Wave

 You summon a wave of water to batter your foe.

Magic, Ranged, Strike

 Ranged 10

Main action

 One creature or object

Power Roll + Your Highest Characteristic Score:

 2 damage; push or pull 1

 5 damage; push or pull 2

 7 damage; push or pull 3

Effect: You can forgo dealing damage with this ability.

Drawback: You have lightning weakness 5. Additionally, the ocean or a creature it sends to seek you can assign you a quest. If you don't do the ocean's bidding, it might temporarily deny you this complication's benefits—including being able to breathe underwater—at an inconvenient time.

Wodewalker

You were dying in the wode, collapsing while starving and wounded. When you woke, you discovered that a group of green elementalists had saved your life by infusing the regenerative bark of a tree to your body.

Benefit: Your recovery value increases by an amount equal to your highest characteristic score.

Drawback: You have fire weakness 5.

Wrathful Spirit

You're quick to anger, never letting an insult go without slinging one right back. In combat, you fight as if possessed by a literal spirit of wrath. No matter the tactical circumstances, when someone injures you, you feel compelled to answer blood with blood.

Benefit: While you are taunted by a creature, you gain an edge on strikes against that creature. Additionally, you can spend 1 Heroic Resource to have a double edge instead.

Drawback: In combat, whenever a creature makes a strike against you and you are not taunted, you are taunted by that creature until the end of your next turn. Additionally, whether in casual conversation or if you are involved in a negotiation, whenever a creature insults you, you must either spend a Recovery or be compelled to reply with an insult.

Wrongly Imprisoned

You spent many years imprisoned for a crime you didn't commit. During your long hours of solitary confinement, you honed your skills and recited the names of those who framed you. Someday, you will have your revenge.

Benefit: You have two skills of your choice, neither of which can be from the interpersonal skill group.

Drawback: Your health suffered in prison. Whenever you are winded, you are stricken with a hacking cough that makes it impossible for you to hide or sneak.

