

RIVALS

They take the jobs you were eyeing on the local town's job board. They sit at your favorite table in the tavern with the best drinks, food, and entertainment. You know their names, and they know yours. They're rivals—heroes just like you. Maybe even better.

Rivals are NPCs built around the mechanics of seven of the classes in *Draw Steel: Heroes*—the conduit, elementalist, fury, null, shadow, tactician, and talent (see [Chapter 5: Classes](#) in that book). Their stat blocks are streamlined and modular, meant to be easy to adjust on the fly with ancestral traits or signature abilities. Examples of each type of rival are presented at every tier, capturing their foray into renown as they inevitably cross, clash with, and impede the player characters' own heroic journey.

◆ Rival Stat Block List ◆

Echelon	Name	Level	Organization	Role	EV
1st	Rival Conduit	2	Elite	Support	16
1st	Rival Elementalist	2	Elite	Controller	16
1st	Rival Fury	2	Elite	Brute	16
1st	Rival Null	2	Elite	Harrier	16
1st	Rival Shadow	2	Elite	Ambusher	16
1st	Rival Tactician	2	Elite	Artillery	16
1st	Rival Talent	2	Elite	Hexer	16
2nd	Rival Conduit	5	Elite	Support	28
2nd	Rival Elementalist	5	Elite	Controller	28
2nd	Rival Fury	5	Elite	Brute	28
2nd	Rival Null	5	Elite	Harrier	28
2nd	Rival Shadow	5	Elite	Ambusher	28
2nd	Rival Tactician	5	Elite	Artillery	28
2nd	Rival Talent	5	Elite	Hexer	28
3rd	Rival Conduit	8	Elite	Support	40
3rd	Rival Elementalist	8	Elite	Controller	40
3rd	Rival Fury	8	Elite	Brute	40
3rd	Rival Null	8	Elite	Harrier	40
3rd	Rival Shadow	8	Elite	Ambusher	40
3rd	Rival Tactician	8	Elite	Artillery	40
3rd	Rival Talent	8	Elite	Hexer	40
4th	Rival Conduit	10	Elite	Support	48
4th	Rival Elementalist	10	Elite	Controller	48
4th	Rival Fury	10	Elite	Brute	48
4th	Rival Null	10	Elite	Harrier	48
4th	Rival Shadow	10	Elite	Ambusher	48
4th	Rival Tactician	10	Elite	Artillery	48
4th	Rival Talent	10	Elite	Hexer	48

Using Rivals in a Campaign

These grab-and-go adaptations of classes are meant to capture a class's fantasy without making Directors run a full hero character sheet. They also seamlessly work together, allowing Directors to build a party of NPC heroes or villains who can be rivals, enemies, or even allies. The next time the heroes need a bit of competition or need to quickly visit a local tavern, temple, or guild hall in search of capable adventurers to help with a quest, you won't be fumbling for a stat block. That's what rivals are for.

Rival Ancestries

You can adjust any rival stat block to more closely model a player character of a specific ancestry. Choose an ancestry from the Rival Ancestries table, then modify the stat block by adding the keyword, adjusting the size, adding the stability adjustment value, and giving them the ancestral trait.

Rival Abilities

Any rival can replace their signature ability with a signature ability a hero has access to. The fury, shadow, and tactician can select a signature ability from any kit (see [Chapter 6: Kits in Draw Steel: Heroes](#)), and other rivals can select a signature ability from their respective class. If you replace a rival's signature ability, the replacement ability deals extra damage equal to the rival's level and targets two creatures or objects if the original ability targets only one.

Rival Languages

Most rivals speak Caelian and two other languages.

Rival Malice

Level 1+ Malice Features

At the start of any rival's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

★ Work as One

3 Malice

Until the end of the round, each rival can impose a bane on a strike made against an adjacent rival as a free triggered action.

★ We Just Do It Better

3 Malice

Until the end of the round, whenever any rival makes a power roll against the target of their Rivalry trait, they roll a d3 and add it to the power roll.

■ Check Out Our Loot

5 Malice

One rival pulls out a magic consumable and hurls it, targeting a 5×1 line within 1 square of them or a 3 cube within 10 squares of them. Each enemy in the area makes an **Agility test**. The rival chooses a damage type and a condition for the outcome of the test from one of the following pairs: sonic damage and dazed, poison damage and weakened, or fire damage and frightened.

- ≤11 11 damage; the condition affects the target (save ends)
- 12-16 8 damage; the condition affects the target (EoT)
- 17+ 5 damage

★ Calling the Shots

7 Malice

Each rival regains 10 Stamina. Until the end of the round, whenever a rival uses an ability against an enemy, each other rival adjacent to that enemy can make a free strike against them.

★ Coordinated Takedown

10 Malice

Each rival moves up to their speed and uses a main action or maneuver that doesn't cost Malice.

◆ Rival Ancestries ◆

Keyword	Size Adjustment	Stability Adjustment	Ancestral Trait
Devil	1M	0	Prehensile Tail: The rival can't be flanked.
Draconian (for the dragon knight)	1M	+1	Wings: The rival can fly. While flying, their stability is 0.
Dwarf	1M	+2	Great Fortitude: The rival can't be made weakened.
High Elf/Wode Elf	1M	0	Otherworldly Grace: At the start of each of their turns, the rival can choose one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. That effect instead ends at the end of their turn.
Hakaan	1L	+2	Forceful: When the rival force moves a creature or object, they can force move them an additional 2 squares.
Human	1M	+1	Determination: As a maneuver, the rival can end the frightened, slowed, or weakened condition on themselves.
Memonek	1M	-1 (minimum 0)	Nonstop: The rival can't be made slowed.
Orc	1M	+2	Glowing Recovery: Once per round, the rival can use a maneuver to regain Stamina equal to 5 times their level.
Polder	1S	0	Nimblestep: The rival ignores difficult terrain and can move at full speed while sneaking.
Revenant	1M	+1	Vengeance Mark: As a maneuver, the rival places a magic sigil on an enemy within 10 squares of them. The rival always knows the direction to that enemy while the sigil is active on them. As a main action, the rival can detonate the sigil, dealing damage to the target equal to the rival's free strike and sliding the target up to 2 squares.
Time Raider	1M	0	Four-Armed Martial Arts: Whenever the rival uses the Grab or Knockback maneuver, they can target one additional creature.

Rivals—1st Echelon

It's possible that these rivals gained a head start on their adventures and will pose a significant challenge to the heroes if they weren't expecting them.

Rival Conduit

Humanoid, Rival

Level 2 Elite Support

EV 16

1M Size	5 Speed	80 Stamina	1 Stability	5 Free Strike
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Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +1 **Agility 0** **Reason 0** **Intuition +2** **Presence 0**

✖ Thunder of Heavens 2d10 + 2

Magic, Melee, Ranged, Strike

Melee 1 or ranged 10

≤11 7 holy damage

12-16 10 holy damage

17+ 13 holy damage

Effect: The conduit or one ally within distance regains Stamina equal to half the damage dealt.

Signature Ability

Main action

⌚ Two creatures or objects

✖ Imbue with Might

Magic, Ranged

Ricaud 10

Effect: Each target gains an edge on their next strike.

2 Malice

Maneuver

⌚ Self and five allies

★ Stalwart Guardian

Strikes made against allies adjacent to the conduit take a bane.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the conduit chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the conduit and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Elementalist

Humanoid, Rival

Level 2 Elite Controller

EV 16

1M Size	5 Speed	60 Stamina	1 Stability	5 Free Strike
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Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 **Agility 0** **Reason +2** **Intuition +1** **Presence 0**

✖ The Writhing Green 2d10 + 2

Green, Magic, Ranged, Strike

Ricaud 10

≤11 7 damage; slide 1

12-16 10 damage; slide 2

17+ 13 damage; slide 3

Signature Ability

Main action

⌚ Two creatures or objects

✖ The Earth Devours 2d10 + 2

Area, Green, Magic, Ranged

Ricaud 3 cube within 10

≤11 3 damage

12-16 5 damage; restrained (EoT)

17+ 8 damage; restrained (save ends)

3 Malice

Main action

⌚ Each enemy in the area

Effect: The area is difficult terrain for enemies until the end of the encounter. Any enemy in the area has acid weakness 2.

✖ Jaws of the Void

Magic, Void

Ricaud Self

Triggered action

⌚ Self

Trigger: The elementalist takes damage.

Effect: The elementalist can teleport up to 2 squares. Each creature adjacent to the space they leave takes 2 corruption damage.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the elementalist chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the elementalist and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Fury

Humanoid, Rival

Level 2 Elite Brute
EV 16

1M Size	5 Speed	100 Stamina	3 Stability	5 Free Strike
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Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +2 **Agility +1** **Reason 0** **Intuition 0** **Presence 0**

Brutal Impact 2d10 + 2

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 7 damage; push 1
12-16 11 damage; push 2
17+ 14 damage; push 3

2 Malice: Each target who has **M < 1** is slowed (save ends).

Signature Ability

Main action

Two creatures or objects

Let's Tussle 2d10 + 2

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 8 damage; **M < 0** grabbed
12-16 13 damage; **M < 1** grabbed
17+ 16 damage; **M < 2** grabbed

Effect: The target must be the fury's size or smaller. While the target is grabbed this way, the fury gains an edge on strikes against them.

2 Malice

Main action

One creature

Overwhelm

Once per turn, when the fury force moves a creature or object, or shifts adjacent to a creature or object, they can make a free strike against that creature or object.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the fury chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the fury and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Customizing Rivals

Rival stat blocks fill out a typical party in terms of roles, but you can easily change them to represent a class that isn't presented here. For example, you can make a troubadour by using the elementalist as a starting point and making the following changes:

- Make Presence their highest characteristic.
- Replace their signature ability with the troubadour's Cutting Sarcasm ability (adjusting it to target two creatures and deal extra damage equal to the troubadour's level).
- Replace their second main action with Quick Rewrite.
- Replace their triggered action with Turnabout Is Fair Play.

You can also use the fury as a starting point for a censor by making the following changes:

- Reverse their Might and Agility scores.
- Replace their signature ability with the censor's Your Allies Cannot Save You ability (adjusting it to target two creatures and deal extra damage equal to the censor's level).
- Replace their second main action with Behold a Shield of Faith.
- Replace their trait with Lead By Example.

Rival Null

Humanoid, Rival

Level 2 Elite Harrier
EV 16

1M Size	7 Speed	80 Stamina	3 Stability	5 Free Strike
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Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 **Agility +2** **Reason +1** **Intuition +2** **Presence 0**

Nimble Step 2d10 + 2

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 7 damage; the null shifts up to 2 squares
12-16 10 damage; the null shifts up to 3 squares
17+ 13 damage; the null shifts up to 4 squares

Signature Ability

Main action

Two creatures or objects

Numb 2d10 + 2

Melee, Psionic, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 7 damage; **R < 0** slowed (EoT)
12-16 10 damage; **R < 1** slowed (EoT)
17+ 13 damage; **R < 2** dazed and slowed (EoT)

2 Malice

Maneuver

One creature or object

Inertial Shield

The first time each round that the null is targeted by a damage-dealing strike, they halve the damage.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the null chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the null and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Shadow

Humanoid, Rival

Level 2 Elite Ambusher
EV 16

1M Size	7 Speed	80 Stamina	1 Stability	5 Free Strike
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Immunity: —

Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 **Agility +2** **Reason 0** **Intuition 0** **Presence +1**

Swift Serration 2d10 + 2

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 7 damage
12-16 11 damage
17+ 14 damage; **A < 2** bleeding (save ends)

1 Malice: The shadow can teleport up to 5 squares, then can attempt to hide.

Signature Ability

Main action

Two creatures or objects

Poison the Blade

Self

Maneuver

Self

Effect: The shadow coats their weapon with poison. They gain an edge on their next strike, and any potency for that strike increases by 1.

Exploit Opening

The shadow deals an extra 5 damage to any bleeding target.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the shadow chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the shadow and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Tactician
Humanoid, RivalLevel 2 Elite Artillery
EV 16

1M Size 5 Speed 60 Stamina 2 Stability 5 Free Strike

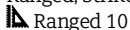
Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +2 Agility 0 Reason +1 Intuition 0 Presence 0

 Dual Targeting Shot 2d10 + 2

Ranged, Strike, Weapon



Ranged 10

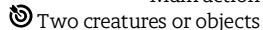
≤11 7 damage

12-16 11 damage

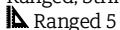
17+ 14 damage

Signature Ability

Main action

**2 Malice:** Two allies within distance can make a free strike against one of the targets. **I'll Cover You!** 2d10 + 2

Ranged, Strike, Weapon



Ranged 5

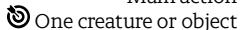
≤11 8 damage; M<0 weakened (save ends)

12-16 13 damage; M<1 weakened (save ends)

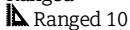
17+ 16 damage; M<2 weakened (save ends)

3 Malice

Main action

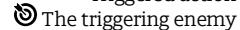
**Effect:** One ally adjacent to the target regains 5 Stamina.**! Overwatch**

Ranged



Ranged 10

Triggered action

**Trigger:** An enemy within distance willingly moves.**Effect:** At any point during the movement, the tactician makes a free strike against the target.**★ Rivalry**

At the start of an encounter, the tactician chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the tactician and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Talent
Humanoid, RivalLevel 2 Elite Hexer
EV 16

1M Size 5 Speed 60 Stamina 2 Stability 5 Free Strike

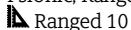
Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility 0 Reason +2 Intuition 0 Presence +1

 Reverberating Blast 2d10 + 2

Psionic, Ranged, Strike, Telekinesis



Two creatures or objects

≤11 7 psychic damage; M<0 prone

12-16 10 psychic damage; push 2; M<1 prone

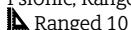
17+ 13 psychic damage; push 3; M<2 prone

Signature Ability

Main action

 **Muddle the Mind** 2d10 + 2

Psionic, Ranged, Telepathy



Ranged 10

≤11 R<0 slowed (save ends)

12-16 R<1 dazed (save ends)

17+ R<2 dazed and slowed (save ends)

2 Malice

Maneuver

**Precognitive Shift**

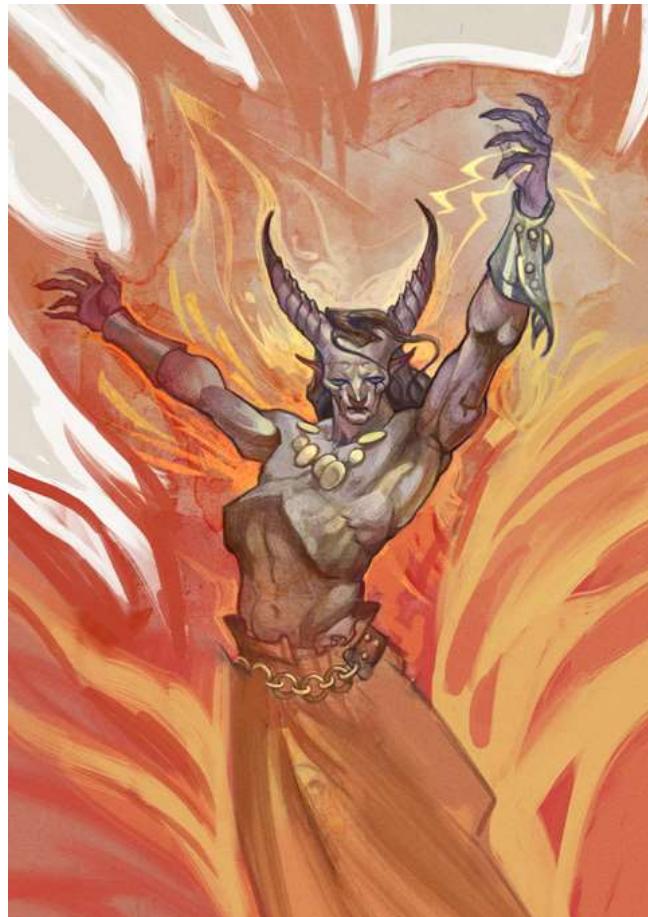
Psionic

**1 Malice**

Triggered action

**Trigger:** A creature deals damage to the talent.**Effect:** The talent halves the damage and shifts up to 2 squares.**★ Rivalry**

At the start of an encounter, the talent chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the talent and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rivals—2nd Echelon

The rivals have learned a few new tricks since they last encountered a hero. Rivalry is a two way street, however, and they'll be sorely disappointed if the heroes can't keep up.

Rival Conduit

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Support
EV 28

1M Size 5 Speed 140 Stamina 1 Stability 6 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +2 Agility 0 Reason 0 Intuition +3 Presence +1

☒ Raging Tempest 2d10 + 3

Magic, Melee, Ranged, Strike

↳ Melee 1 or ranged 10

⟨ 11 ⟩ 9 holy damage; vertical slide 1

⟨ 12-16 ⟩ 14 holy damage; vertical slide 2

⟨ 17+ ⟩ 17 holy damage; vertical slide 3

Effect: The conduit or one ally within distance regains Stamina equal to half the damage dealt.

Signature Ability

Main action

↳ Two creatures or objects

☒ Imbue with Power

Magic, Ranged

↳ Ranged 10

Effect: Each target has a double edge on their next strike.

3 Malice

Maneuver

↳ Self and five allies

★ Stalwart Guardian

Strikes made against allies adjacent to the conduit take a bane.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the conduit chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the conduit and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Elementalist

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Controller

EV 28

1M Size 5 Speed 120 Stamina 1 Stability 6 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility +2 Reason +3 Intuition +2 Presence 0

☒ The Thriving Wilds 2d10 + 3

Green, Magic, Ranged, Strike

↳ Ranged 10

⟨ 11 ⟩ 9 damage; slide 1; M<1 3 acid damage

⟨ 12-16 ⟩ 14 damage; slide 2; M<2 5 acid damage

⟨ 17+ ⟩ 17 damage; slide 3; M<3 7 acid damage

Signature Ability

Main action

↳ Two creatures or objects

☒ The Depths Hunger 2d10 + 3

Area, Green, Magic, Ranged

↳ 4 cube within 10

⟨ 11 ⟩ 5 damage

⟨ 12-16 ⟩ 9 damage; restrained (EoT)

⟨ 17+ ⟩ 11 damage; restrained (save ends)

4 Malice

Main action

↳ Each enemy in the area

Effect: The area is difficult terrain for enemies until the end of the encounter. Any enemy in the area has acid weakness 3.

☒ Fissures of Darkness

Magic, Void

↳ Self

Triggered action

↳ Self

Trigger: The elementalist takes damage.

Effect: The elementalist can teleport up to 3 squares. Each creature adjacent to the space they leave takes 3 corruption damage.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the elementalist chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the elementalist and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Fury

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Brute
EV 28

1M Size 5 Speed 160 Stamina 3 Stability 7 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +3 **Agility** +2 **Reason** 0 **Intuition** 0 **Presence** +1

Thunderous Slam 2d10 + 3

Melee, Strike, Weapon



10 damage; push 2
15 damage; push 3
18 damage; push 4

2 Malice: Each target who has **M<2** is slowed (save ends).

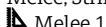
Signature Ability

Main action



Roughed Up 2d10 + 3

Melee, Strike, Weapon

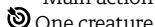


11 damage; **M<1** grabbed
16 damage; **M<2** grabbed
21 damage; **M<3** grabbed

Effect: The target must be the fury's size or smaller. While the target is grabbed this way, the fury and their allies gain an edge on strikes against them.

3 Malice

Main action



Overpower

Once per turn, when the fury force moves a creature or object, or shifts adjacent to a creature or object, they can use a signature ability against that creature or object.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the fury chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the fury and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Null

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Harrier

EV 28

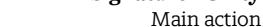
1M Size 7 Speed 140 Stamina 3 Stability 6 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might 0 **Agility** +3 **Reason** +2 **Intuition** +3 **Presence** 0

Agile Stride 2d10 + 3

Melee, Strike, Weapon



9 damage; the null shifts up to 3 squares; **A<1** 6 damage
14 damage; the null shifts up to 4 squares; **A<2** 8 damage
17 damage; the null shifts up to 5 squares; **A<3** 11 damage

Deaden 2d10 + 3

Melee, Psionic, Strike, Weapon



9 damage; **R<1** dazed (EoT)
14 damage; **R<2** dazed (save ends)
17 damage; **R<3** dazed and restrained (save ends)

Inertial Shield

The first time each round that the null is targeted by a damage-dealing strike, they halve the damage.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the null chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the null and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Shadow

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Ambusher

EV 28

1M Size 7 Speed 140 Stamina 1 Stability 7 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might 0 **Agility** +3 **Reason** +1 **Intuition** 0 **Presence** +2

Ambuscade 2d10 + 3

Melee, Strike, Weapon



10 damage
15 damage; **A<2** bleeding (save ends)
18 damage; **A<3** bleeding (save ends)

1 Malice: The shadow can teleport up to 6 squares, then can attempt to hide.

Poison the Blade



Maneuver



Effect: The shadow coats their weapon with poison. They gain an edge on their next strike, and any potency for that strike increases by 1.

Exploit Opening

The shadow deals an extra 7 damage to any bleeding target.

Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the shadow chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the shadow and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Tactician

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Artillery

EV 28

1M Size **5** Speed **120** Stamina **2** Stability **7** Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +3 Agility 0 Reason +2 Intuition 0 Presence +1

Mark Targets 2d10 + 3
Ranged, Strike, Weapon

Signature Ability

Main action

Ranged 10

Two creatures or objects

≤11 10 damage
12-16 15 damage
17+ 18 damage

3 Malice: Two allies within distance can use a signature ability against the same target.

Preserve and Protect 2d10 + 3

3 Malice

Ranged, Strike, Weapon

Ranged 5

Main action

One creature or object

≤11 11 damage; **M<1** weakened (save ends)
12-16 16 damage; **M<2** weakened (save ends)
17+ 21 damage; **M<3** weakened (save ends)

Effect: One ally adjacent to the target regains 7 Stamina.

! Take the Opening

Ranged

Ranged 10

Triggered action

The triggering enemy

Trigger: An enemy within distance willingly moves.

Effect: At any point during the movement, the tactician and one ally within distance can each make a free strike against the target.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the tactician chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the tactician and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Talent

Humanoid, Rival

Level 5 Elite Hexer

EV 28

1M Size **5** Speed **120** Stamina **2** Stability **6** Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility 0 Reason +3 Intuition 0 Presence +1

Overwhelming Rend 2d10 + 3

Signature Ability

Main action

Ranged 10

Two creatures or objects

≤11 9 psychic damage; push 2; **M<1** prone
12-16 14 psychic damage; push 3; **M<2** prone
17+ 17 psychic damage; push 4; **M<3** prone

Disarrange Thoughts 2d10 + 3

2 Malice

Maneuver

Psionic, Ranged, Telepathy

Ranged 10

One creature or object

≤11 6 psychic damage; **R<1** dazed (save ends)
12-16 6 psychic damage; **R<2** dazed (save ends)
17+ 6 psychic damage; **R<3** dazed and slowed (save ends)

! Precognitive Shift

1 Malice

Triggered action

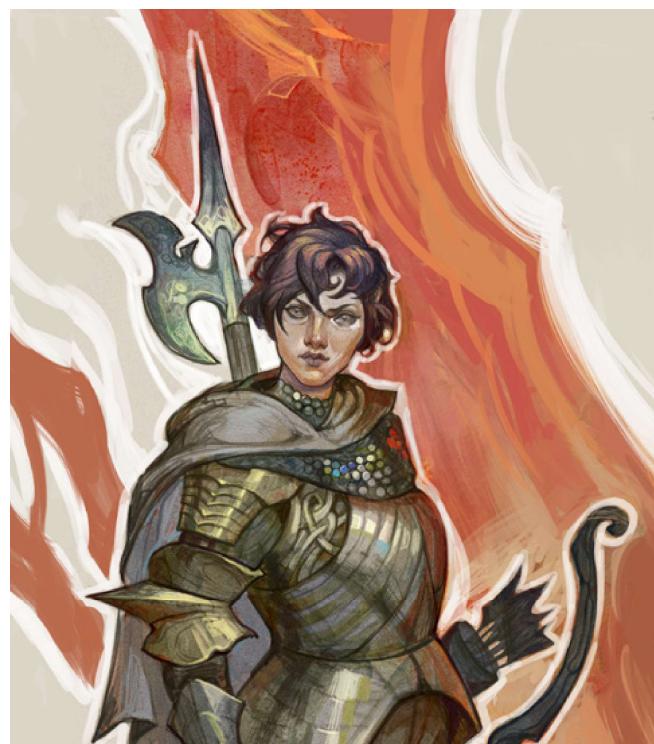
Self

Trigger: A creature deals damage to the talent.

Effect: The talent halves the damage and shifts up to 2 squares.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the talent chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the talent and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



The Black Iron Pact

A secret society created to overthrow Capital's political and cultural structure, the Black Iron Pact draws its name from Ajax's sobriquet, the Iron Saint. Iron is a metal with deep symbolism to the tyrannical saint.

The five most powerful members of the pact—the High Command—formally lead the society and serve as its strike team. The identity and whereabouts of the Black Iron Pact's original founder are closely guarded secrets, known only to Ajax and the High Command.

The pact's true numbers also remain a mystery, and many citizens work for them unknowingly. Such subterfuge ensures the pact's agents can't be traced back to the High Command.

Goals

The Black Iron Pact's primary goal is the conquest of Capital and the installation of Ajax as its ruler and god. The pact's agents are true believers of Ajax's gospel, which seeks change through force and violence. Their evil belief is that humans are the true owners of this world, and as such, only humans can join the Black Iron Pact, though the society employs nonhuman pawns when risk of capture or death is high.

Running the Black Iron Pact

The Black Iron Pact is an example of a 5th-level rival party. You can use the following statblocks, modifying each rival with the human ancestry.

Lord Erasmus Deseo: Rival Tactician

Canon Athenodorus: Rival Conduit

Cloak: Rival Shadow

Lady Avalla Deseo: Rival Elementalist

Qar, Master of Jackals: Rival Null

Additionally, many members of the pact—notably senior member Erasmus and his wife Avalla—openly sneer at the idea of guilds (essentially scorning everyone in the middle class), and they object to anyone but a human man holding public office, owning any assets, or even learning to read.



Rivals—3rd Echelon

Rivals at the 3rd echelon have been through quite a few adventures the heroes might not know anything about. Even if they've clashed with the heroes a few times in the past, there's something *different* about the rivals now.

Rival Conduit

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Support
EV 40

1M Size 5 Speed 200 Stamina 1 Stability 8 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +3 Agility 0 Reason +1 Intuition +4 Presence +2

✗ Celestial Furor 2d10 + 4

Magic, Melee, Ranged, Strike
Ranged 1 or ranged 10

12 holy damage; vertical slide 2
17 holy damage; vertical slide 3
21 holy damage; vertical slide 4

Effect: The conduit or one ally within distance regains Stamina equal to half the damage dealt.

Signature Ability

Main action

Two creatures or objects

✗ Imbue with Power

Magic, Ranged
Ranged 10

3 Malice

Maneuver
Self and five allies

Effect: Each target has a double edge on their next strike.

★ Unwavering Defender

Damage dealt to any ally adjacent to the conduit is halved.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the conduit chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the conduit and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Elementalist

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Controller

EV 40

1M Size 5 Speed 180 Stamina 1 Stability 8 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility +2 Reason +4 Intuition +3 Presence 0

✗ Verdant Rains 2d10 + 4

Green, Magic, Ranged, Strike

Ranged 10

12 damage; slide 2; M<2 4 acid damage
17 damage; slide 3; M<3 6 acid damage
21 damage; slide 4; M<4 8 acid damage

Effect: One ally within distance ends one condition on themself.

Signature Ability

Main action

Two creatures or objects

■ The Chasm Engulfs 2d10 + 4

Area, Green, Magic, Ranged

5 cube within 10

6 damage
10 damage; restrained (EoT)
14 damage; restrained (save ends)

Effect: The area is difficult terrain for enemies until the end of the encounter. Any enemy in the area has acid weakness 5.

4 Malice

Main action

Each enemy in the area

■ Maw of the Abyss

Magic, Void

Self

Triggered action

Self

Trigger: The elementalist takes damage.

Effect: The elementalist can teleport up to 4 squares. Each creature adjacent to the space they leave or appear in takes 4 corruption damage.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the elementalist chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the elementalist and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Fury

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Brute
EV 40

1M Size 5 Speed 220 Stamina 3 Stability 9 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +4 **Agility +3** **Reason 0** **Intuition +1** **Presence +2**

▀ Bonebreaker 2d10 + 4

Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 1

≤11 13 damage; push 3
12-16 18 damage; push 4
17+ 22 damage; push 5

3 Malice: Each target who has **M<3** is bleeding and slowed (save ends).

Signature Ability

Main action

◎ Two creatures or objects

▀ Steelfist 2d10 + 4

Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 1

≤11 15 damage; **M<3** grabbed
12-16 21 damage; **M<4** grabbed
17+ 26 damage; **M<5** grabbed

Effect: The target must be the fury's size or smaller. While the target is grabbed this way, the fury and their allies have a double edge on strikes against them.

3 Malice

Main action

◎ One creature

★ Rout

Once per turn, when the fury force moves a creature or object, or shifts adjacent to a creature or object, they can use a signature ability that gains an edge against that creature or object.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the fury chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the fury and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Null

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Harrier
EV 40

1M Size 7 Speed 200 Stamina 3 Stability 8 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +2 **Agility +4** **Reason +3** **Intuition +4** **Presence 0**

▀ Inertial Flow 2d10 + 4

Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 1

≤11 12 damage; the null shifts up to 3 squares; **A<2** 8 damage
12-16 17 damage; the null shifts up to 4 squares; **A<3** 13 damage
17+ 21 damage; the null shifts up to 5 squares; **A<4** 17 damage

▀ Stun 2d10 + 4

Melee, Psionic, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 12 damage; **R<2** dazed (save ends)
12-16 17 damage; **R<3** dazed (save ends)
17+ 21 damage; **R<4** dazed and restrained (save ends)

3 Malice

Maneuver

◎ One creature or object

★ Force Dampener

The first time each round that the null is targeted by a strike, it takes a bane and the null halves any damage from it.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the null chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the null and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Shadow

Level 8 Elite Ambusher
EV 40

1M Size 7 Speed 200 Stamina 1 Stability 9 Free Strike

Immunity: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 **Agility +4** **Reason +2** **Intuition 0** **Presence +3**

▀ Assail and Serrate 2d10 + 4

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 13 damage; **A<2** bleeding (save ends)
12-16 18 damage; **A<3** bleeding (save ends)
17+ 22 damage; **A<4** bleeding and weakened (save ends)

1 Malice: The shadow can teleport up to 7 squares, then can attempt to hide.

▀ Poison the Blade

Maneuver

◎ Self

Effect: The shadow coats their weapon with poison. They have a double edge on their next strike, and any potency for that strike increases by 2.

★ Exploit Weakness

The shadow deals an extra 9 damage to any target affected by a condition.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the shadow chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the shadow and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Tactician

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Artillery

EV 40

1M Size **5** Speed **180** Stamina **2** Stability **9** Free Strike

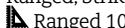
Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

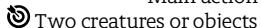
Might +4 Agility +1 Reason +3 Intuition 0 Presence +2

 Command From the Back 2d10 + 4

Ranged, Strike, Weapon

**Signature Ability**

Main action

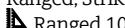


≤11 13 damage
12-16 18 damage; A<3 prone
17+ 22 damage; A<4 prone

4 Malice: Two allies within distance move up to their speed and can use a signature ability.

 Safeguard 2d10 + 4

Ranged, Strike, Weapon

**3 Malice**

Main action

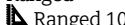


≤11 15 damage; M<2 weakened (save ends)
12-16 21 damage; M<3 weakened (save ends)
17+ 26 damage; M<4 weakened (save ends)

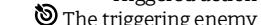
Effect: Two allies adjacent to the target each regain 7 Stamina.

 Quickshot

Ranged



Triggered action



Trigger: An enemy within distance willingly moves.

Effect: At any point during the movement, the tactician uses a signature ability against the target.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the tactician chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the tactician and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Talent

Humanoid, Rival

Level 8 Elite Hexer

EV 40

1M Size **5** Speed **180** Stamina **2** Stability **8** Free Strike

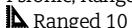
Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

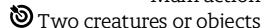
Might 0 Agility 0 Reason +4 Intuition 0 Presence +1

 Control Synapses 2d10 + 4

Psionic, Ranged, Strike, Telekinesis

**Signature Ability**

Main action

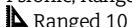


≤11 12 psychic damage
12-16 17 psychic damage
17+ 21 psychic damage

3 Malice: Each target shifts up to their speed and can make a free strike against one creature of the talent's choice. The target can't be moved in a way that would harm them.

 Disorientate 2d10 + 4

Psionic, Ranged, Telepathy

**2 Malice**

Maneuver



≤11 8 psychic damage; R<2 dazed (save ends)
12-16 8 psychic damage; R<3 dazed and slowed (save ends)
17+ 8 psychic damage; R<4 dazed and slowed (save ends)

 Mind Requital

Psionic

**2 Malice**

Triggered action



Trigger: A creature deals damage to the talent.

Effect: The talent halves the damage and shifts up to 2 squares. The triggering creature takes psychic damage equal to half the damage dealt.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the talent chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the talent and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rivals—4th Echelon

This is what peak performance looks like. Few bands of monsters can put up a fight with the heroes like the rivals can. Even if they somehow lose, the rivals will always find a way back to the heroes for a rematch.

Rival Conduit

Humanoid, Rival

Level 10 Elite Support

EV 48

1M Size 5 Speed 240 Stamina 1 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Might +4 Agility +1 Reason +1 Intuition +5 Presence +3

☒ Sunder the Very Skies 2d10 +5

Magic, Melee, Ranged, Strike
 Melee 1 or ranged 10

≤11 15 damage; vertical slide 3; M<3 5 lightning damage
12-16 20 damage; vertical slide 4; M<4 7 lightning damage
17+ 24 damage; vertical slide 5; M<5 9 lightning damage

Effect: The conduit or one ally within distance regains Stamina equal to half the damage dealt.

2 Malice: Two additional allies within distance regain the same amount of Stamina.

Signature Ability

Main action

☒ Two creatures or objects

☒ Empyrean Boon

Magic, Ranged
 Ranged 10

5 Malice

Maneuver

☒ Self and five allies

Effect: Each target has a double edge on their next strike, and that strike deals an extra 10 holy damage. Additionally, they can vertical slide each creature targeted by the strike up to 2 squares.

★ Unwavering Defender

Damage dealt to any ally adjacent to the conduit is halved.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the conduit chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the conduit and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Elementalist

Humanoid, Rival

Level 10 Elite Controller

EV 48

1M Size	5 Speed	220 Stamina	1 Stability	10 Free Strike
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Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +1 Agility +3 Reason +5 Intuition +4 Presence +1

☒ Viridescent Storm 2d10 +5

Green, Magic, Ranged, Strike

☒ Ranged 10

≤11 15 damage; slide 3; M<3 5 acid damage
12-16 20 damage; slide 4; M<4 7 acid damage
17+ 24 damage; slide 5; M<5 9 acid damage

Effect: One ally within distance ends all conditions on themself.

Signature Ability

Main action

☒ Two creatures or objects

☒ The World Consumes

Area, Green, Magic, Ranged

☒ 3 cube within 10

5 Malice

Main action

☒ Each enemy in the area

Effect: The area becomes overgrown with caustic vines until the end of the encounter. While in the area, any enemy has acid weakness 5 and is slowed. Any enemy who ends their turn in the area and has M<4 is restrained (save ends).

☒ Breach of Nihilism

Magic, Void

☒ Self

Triggered action

☒ Self

Trigger: The elementalist takes damage.

Effect: The elementalist can teleport up to 5 squares. Each creature adjacent to the space they leave or appear in takes 5 corruption damage.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the elementalist chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the elementalist and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Fury

Humanoid, Rival

Level 10 Elite Brute
EV 48

1M Size 5 Speed 260 Stamina 3 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +5 Agility +4 Reason 0 Intuition +2 Presence +3

�名 Seismic Crush 2d10 + 5
Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 1
≤11 15 damage; push 4
12-16 21 damage; push 5
17+ 25 damage; push 6

2 Malice: Each target who has **M<4** is bleeding and slowed (save ends).

Signature Ability

Main action

◎ Two creatures or objects

�名 Death Grip 2d10 + 5
Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 1

≤11 17 damage; **M<3** grabbed
12-16 24 damage; **M<4** grabbed
17+ 30 damage; **M<5** grabbed

Effect: The target must be the fury's size or smaller. While the target is grabbed this way, the fury and their allies have a double edge on strikes against them.

4 Malice

Main action

◎ One creature

★ Devastate

Once per turn, when the fury force moves a creature or object, or shifts adjacent to a creature or object, they can use a signature ability against that creature or object that has a double edge.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the fury chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the fury and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.



Rival Null

Humanoid, Rival

Level 10 Elite Harrier
EV 48

1M Size 7 Speed 240 Stamina 3 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +3 Agility +5 Reason +4 Intuition +5 Presence 0

�名 Kinetic Danse 2d10 + 5
Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

≤11 15 damage; the null shifts up to 4 squares; **A<3** 10 damage
12-16 20 damage; the null shifts up to 5 squares; **A<4** 15 damage
17+ 24 damage; the null shifts up to 6 squares; **A<5** 19 damage

余名 Incapacitate 2d10 + 5

5 Malice

Maneuver

Melee, Psionic, Strike, Weapon

Melee 1

◎ Two creatures or objects

≤11 13 damage; **R<3** dazed and restrained (save ends)
12-16 17 damage; **R<4** dazed and restrained (save ends)
17+ 20 damage; **R<5** dazed and restrained (save ends)

★ Energy Conservation

The first time each round that the null is targeted by a strike, it takes a bane and the null halves the damage from it. The creature making the strike takes 10 damage.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the null chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the null and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Shadow

Humanoid, Rival

Level 10 Elite Ambusher

EV 48

1M Size 7 Speed 240 Stamina 1 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility +5 Reason +3 Intuition +2 Presence +4

余名 A Hush of Ash 2d10 + 5

Signature Ability

Main action

◎ Two creatures or objects

≤11 15 damage; **A<3** bleeding (save ends)
12-16 21 damage; **A<4** bleeding (save ends)
17+ 25 damage; **A<5** bleeding (save ends)

1 Malice: The shadow can teleport up to 10 squares, then can attempt to hide.

● Envenomed Steel

Maneuver

◎ Self

Effect: The shadow coats their weapon with poison. They have a double edge on their next strike, any potency for that strike increases by 2, and if the target has **M<4** they are weakened (save ends).

★ Exploit Weakness

The shadow deals an extra 10 damage to any target affected by a condition.

★ Rivalry

At the start of an encounter, the shadow chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the shadow and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Tactician
Humanoid, RivalLevel 10 Elite Artillery
EV 48

1M Size 5 Speed 220 Stamina 2 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might +5 Agility +2 Reason +4 Intuition 0 Presence +3

 Forward Assault 2d10 + 5Ranged, Strike, Weapon
 Ranged 10

<11 15 damage
12-16 21 damage; **A<4** prone and can't stand (EoT)
17+ 25 damage; prone; **A<5** can't stand (EoT)

Signature Ability

Main action

 Two creatures or objects**5 Malice:** Two allies within distance move up to their speed and can use a signature ability that has a double edge. **Guardian From Afar** 2d10 + 5Area, Ranged, Weapon
 3 cube within 10

<11 10 damage; **M<3** weakened (save ends)
12-16 16 damage; **M<4** weakened (save ends)
17+ 20 damage; **M<5** weakened (save ends)

3 Malice

Main action

 One creature in the area**Effect:** Each ally in the area regains 10 Stamina. **Battlefield Control**Ranged
 Ranged 10

Triggered action

 The triggering enemy**Trigger:** An enemy within distance willingly moves.**Effect:** At any point during the movement, the tactician and one ally within distance can use a signature ability against the target. **Rivalry**

At the start of an encounter, the tactician chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the tactician and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

Rival Talent
Humanoid, RivalLevel 10 Elite Hexer
EV 48

1M Size 5 Speed 220 Stamina 2 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: —

Weakness: —

Might 0 Agility 0 Reason +5 Intuition 0 Presence +1

 Override 2d10 + 5Psionic, Ranged, Strike, Telekinesis
 Ranged 10

<11 15 psychic damage
12-16 20 psychic damage
17+ 24 psychic damage

Signature Ability

Main action

 Two creatures or objects**4 Malice:** Each target moves up to their speed and can make a free strike against one creature of the talent's choice. The target's movement can provoke opportunity attacks, but they can't otherwise be moved in a way that would harm them. **Steal Time** 2d10 + 5

Chronopathy, Psionic, Ranged

 Ranged 10

<11 **R<3** slowed (save ends)
12-16 **R<4** restrained (save ends)
17+ **R<5** restrained (save ends)

3 Malice

Maneuver

 One creature or object**Effect:** One ally within distance can use an additional main action on their next turn. **Psionic Retribution**

Psionic

 see below**2 Malice**

Triggered action

 Self**Trigger:** A creature deals damage to the talent.**Effect:** The talent halves the damage and shifts up to 2 squares. The triggering creature takes psychic damage equal to half the damage dealt and is pushed up to 5 squares. **Rivalry**

At the start of an encounter, the talent chooses one creature within their line of effect. Both the talent and the creature can add a d3 roll to power rolls they make against each other.

