City of Mist

ORDINARY PEOPLE · LEGENDARY POWERS

PLAYER'S GUIDE

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CREDITS

Creator, Game Designer, Creative Director, and Writer: Amít Moshe

Editor and Game Design Consultant: Eran Aviram

Proofreading: T. R. Knight, Omer Shapira, Marshall Oppel

Lead Artist: Marcin Soboń

Lead Location Artist and Cartographer: Mariusz Szulc

Additional Artists: Monsters Pit, Ario Murti, Carlos Gomes Cabral

Lead Graphic Designer: Manuel Serra Sáez

Graphic Designers: Chema López Centenero, Juancho Capic

Contributors: Christopher Gunning (places of interest and locals, Barton), Bri (Isabella), Noble A. DraKoln (Kwaku), Yaniv Rozenblat (community & inspiration), Magnus Korberg (Ghostface art concept)

Playtesters: Almog Kapach, Anat Dagan, Ori Harish, Roe Portal, Guy Banay, Yonatan Shtorchan, Tuli Ebner, Erez Shiryon, James Graham, Alex Runswick, Kristian Mitchell-Dolby, Catherine Martin, Jessica Gao, Eli Levinger, Yiftach Govreen, Assaf Elron, Nurit Guthrie, Gideon Guthrie, Alon Elkin, Ada Elkin, Milana Finkel, Simon, Ran Etya, Ronit Arbel, Tammy Ninio, Ron Ginton, Ohad Reshef, Yuda Hocman, Moran Elbaz, Dima Vilenchik, Noam Roth, Gil Osterweil, Maty Kishinevsky, Yonni Mendes, Michal Mendes, Elik Kazav, Yael Rosen, Maayan Gutterman, Chen Sharon, Or Comay Brauner, Jonny Omer, Shachar Ganz, Yoni Heimann, Tamir Alush, Shoval Arad, Yoav Shlab, Maor Pomerants, Ortal Tal, Noam Avrahami, Erez Zvulun, Nadav Kunievsky, Natalie Goldshtein, Almog Yarom, Omer Raviv, Gur Arie Livni Alcasid, Aviv Or, Evyatar Amitay, Kristoffer Frølunde Jensen, Justin Lafontaine, Charles Cole, Lloyd Gian, John Lamb, Dima Vegner, Hagai M. Gumpert, Erez Regev, James Gantry.

The production of this game was made possible thanks to our Kickstarter backers (see the full list at the end of the book). Thank you all!

ISBN: 978-965-92587-4-1

Second edition, 2022

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CONTENT WARNING

This game contains mild language and some graphic representations of violence. It contains references to human actions the reader may find offensive or unpleasant, such as suicide, murder, or prostitution, as well as extensive references to criminal activity. The game does NOT contain any graphic representation or verbal description of sexual acts.

HOMAGE TO D. VINCENT BAKER AND *APOCALYPSE WORLD*

The rules of this game are partially based on the "Powered by the Apocalypse" game engine, presented in 2010 by D. Vincent Baker in his revolutionary game *Apocalypse World*. Vincent changed role-playing games forever by introducing a new way to play that emphasised a flowing conversation and a great story. Many great games that use this engine have since been published. We thank Vincent for his contribution to the world of role-playing games which also allowed the creation of *City of Mist*.

VOL 1 OF THE CORE BOOKS

This book contains information and rules for players portraying characters in a City of Mist game. For rules and guides for creating and running City of Mist games as a Master of Ceremonies (MC), as well as ready-to-play content, see the Master of Ceremonies' Toolkit.

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CITY OF MIST

A DETECTIVE ROLE-PLAYING GAME IN A CITY
OF ORDINARY PEOPLE AND LEGENDARY POWERS

PLAYER'S GUIDE

SON OF OAK GAME STUDIO

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To my parents, Shmuel and Ariella, for Logos
to my teachers and masters, for Mythos
to Mark, for all your help with this,
and to God, for creating
the best role-playing game of all.

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE CREATOR

Myths and legends have always been an integral part of human culture. Since the dawn of mankind, we have told stories to relate universal truths and to understand our world. Legends appeal to a deep place inside us, a part of us that understands not through analysis but through intuition. They convey a message, a teaching beyond mere knowledge. While they may seem simplistic, listening closer could reveal that they tell us the secrets of the universe: about the cosmos, the forces that operate within its theater, and our place in it. They awaken a sleeping quality in us, calling us to ponder, to feel, to ask questions.

But what happens when the timeless stuff of legends enters the sphere of our everyday lives? How can such sublime material, originating from the stars, find a body here on Earth, where everything eventually turns to dust? Can these two forces – the legendary and the ordinary – live in the same space, exist together in the same person? This is the question that lies at the heart of *City of Mist*.

At its best, role-playing is a magical experience. You and your friends tap into a wellspring of creativity, a collective intelligence that creates stories unbelievable in their intricacy and internal meaning. At times, the dice themselves seem to conspire to tell a great story. In the words of one of the playtesters of this game: "We create a masterpiece, which we are the only ones to ever see."

I wish you a very enjoyable and awakening journey of discovery with this game.

Amít

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THE BASICS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED

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The things you'll see on the streets, they don't always add up, y'know? Sometimes you're downtown, middle of the day, you raise your head and catch a strange reflection on the skyscraper: something like a crooked, dreary castle tower is jutting into the overcast sky above. Another day, you take out the trash at night and you see her across the street, looking at you, a kid dressed in bright colors with the head of an elephant. Or you're alone at the office, it's late, and you hear a voice, a familiar voice, calling to you. Someone you knew, and they've been dead for years. It's not Halloween. You're not on drugs. What are you going to do?

I'll tell you what: You're going to keep doing the same things you've always been doing. You keep walking. You dump the trash and come back inside, watch some TV. You keep working. It's in your head, right? You can't really be seeing this. There must be some logical explanation. But a tiny part of you is questioning. It's whispering: what's going on? Where am I? What is this? It feels like you're about to wake up from a dream, but this feeling stretches over weeks, months, and years.

You get used to it. You get used to it so much that you hardly ever remember this feeling is there. You go back to your life: you work, sleep, eat, you do whatever it is you do. See, you can't afford to really ask yourself what was that thing you saw. You can't, because deep down inside you know the truth. You know that if you go looking for answers, if you doubt the way things are, you will have no escape but to also doubt who you are. You'll have to ask the toughest question of all: who am I?

WELCOME TO CITY OF MIST

Here's the lowdown: City of Mist is a modern city where legends are real. It's not as if knights and monsters walk down Main Street donning shining armor or breathing fire, but rather that knights and monsters are reborn inside ordinary people, regular Joes and Janes. These people, known as Rifts, live out a modern version of their legends, called Mythoi, and sometimes can even make the shining armor real or breathe actual fire – but they still have their ordinary lives. On the occasions when they tap into their Mythos, a mysterious and mystical force hides their miraculous powers from those who have not awakened to the legend inside them: the sleepwalking residents of the City. It makes armor look like a flak vest and fire breathing like a party trick or a gas leak explosion, so no one ever knows about the Rifts except the Rifts. This mystical veil is the Mist. This is its City.

You are about to tell a story set in City of Mist, a story that most closely resembles a detective comic book or a TV series. You and your friends will each play one of the lead characters, a member of the crew that is at the center of your story – each except for one, who will take the role of the host, referee, and narrator: the **Master of Ceremonies**, or **MC**.

The MC's role is described in sidebars across this book and in the **MC Toolkit** book. The MC Toolkit also includes advice for creating and running cases, rules for Dangers, and a full-length case, *Gambling With Death*.

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PRONOUN USE

Throughout this book, wherever possible, the text refers directly to you, the reader. Mostly, this relates to you as a player; in some places, it relates to you as the character you are playing. A clarification is given where needed; elsewhere, the meaning can be understood from context.

Where the third person is required, this book refers to characters as 'she', players as 'he', and the MC as 'she' as well. This is an arbitrary division for the sake of readability and balance in the use of pronouns; characters, players, and MCs can be of any or no gender.

SETTING UP

The first thing you'll do is describe your characters and crew and create the setting for your series. Your characters are all Rifts. They have their ordinary lives, the legend growing inside them, and many, many questions, so they all *investigate* in some way, even if it's not their profession. You create your character by naming four **themes** that are central to his or her story. A theme can be an aspect of your character's ordinary life, like an occupation or a personality profile, or an aspect of the abilities related to her Mythos, like Cupid's ability to make people fall in love with each other. You then use questionnaires, called **themebooks,** to flesh out each theme and choose tags. **Tags** are short descriptions of specific abilities, qualities, resources, and objects your character possesses, such as *burly, sawed-off shotgun,* or *a prince's charm*. They not only describe your character but also power (or weaken) her actions in the game, as explained below.

During setup, you will also decide as a group what kind of a crew you'll all be a part of, what your common goals are, what are the questions you all want to solve, what your team's strong points and weaknesses are, and what the relationships between the crew members are. Your crew also gets a theme and tags.

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The details of setting up are described in **Chapter 2: Who Are You?** As an alternative to creating characters, you can use the pre-generated character playbooks and crew themes provided in the *City of Mist Starter Set.*

The MC helps the players build the lead characters by asking interesting questions, while at the same time thinking about the other characters and events she wants to stack up against the lead characters in the series. In the **MC Toolkit**, the chapter **Behind the Scenes** explains how to create your own series while chapter **This is MY City!** explains how to create challenges such as villains, dangerous locations, complicated non-player characters, shady operations, etc.

THE GAME

Think of every game session as an episode of your show or an issue of your comic book. You get together for a few hours, in person or online, and play out what happens to your fictional characters. If you're the MC, you pick up where you last left off, describing the beginning of the next scene in the story: where and when it takes place, the atmosphere, who's there and what they look like, what they say and do. Maybe you ask the players where their characters are and take it from there. You always end with the question "**What do you do?**", giving the stage to the players and their lead characters. If you're one of the players, you respond by saying what your character says, does, feels, or thinks during the scene. It can go something like this:

MC: You arrive at the crime scene in Detective Enkidu's car. It's raining softly, almost as if someone up there is weeping. You make your way to the center of the plaza where the police have already closed off the perimeter. A body covered by a tarp is lying at the center, colored by intermittent blue and red lights. Your buddy Johnny from forensics comes up, looking like a middle-aged drowned dog. He takes a drag off his "ciggy" and blows the smoke out slowly, not looking at you but saying: "It's the third girl this week, detective. You need to get on top of this or the chief will have your head." Then he notices Excalibur. "Hey, who's the dame?" What do you do?

Jerry (playing Detective Enkidu): I walk right past him and crouch next to the body, taking in the crime scene. I want to find a connection between this and the other girls.

Dani (playing Excalibur): I approach this dashing policeman and say, "Sorry, darling. The detective can be a brute at times. I'm Estella, enchanté." I want to chat him up and see what he discovered here.

You never know in advance how the story will evolve, not even as the MC, because (a) everyone can take actions that will shape future events; and (b) the outcomes of the characters' actions are determined by the rules and the dice – that's what's so fun about it, **you play to find out**.

Players can initiate scenes by deciding where their characters go next. For example, based on what they find out, Jerry and Dani may say Det. Enkidu and Excalibur go snooping around at a local night club where the victim worked or go after a suspect. You can also introduce elements of the characters' personal lives or legendary background. A new scene will begin which can involve action, investigation, drama, suspense – or a combination of all of the above. You will be both a co-creator and a part of the audience of this gripping urban tale and your role is to make it interesting and enjoyable for yourself and everyone at the table: by playing your character as a player, or by making the lead characters' lives interesting as the MC.

During the conversation, certain things you say about your character may trigger **the rules**. The rules help add thrill and suspense to the game by determining what happens when the lead characters attempt important actions. As you'll see, they can help take your story in unexpected directions.

PC AND NPC

The City of Mist game uses the conventional role-playing terms when referring to characters. The players' lead characters are sometimes referred to as the Player Characters or PCs, while all the other characters, played by the MC, are called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs.

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MOVES

The main way in which the rules kick in is called **moves**. Moves are phrased like conditions: *When you do A, then B happens*. There are different kinds of moves in the game but most often you will use the eight Core Moves: **Change the Game**, **Convince**, **Face Danger**, **Go Toe to Toe**, **Hit With All You've Got**, **Investigate**, **Sneak Around**, and **Take the Risk**.

For example:

TAKE THE RISK

When you **perform a daring, risky, or outright stupid feat**, roll+Power. On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

To invoke a move, describe an action that fits the condition in the first part of the move and name the move: "I'm going to drive right through that closing gate. I guess I'm **Taking the Risk**!"

If a player describes what their character does but doesn't name a move, for example "I'm searching the apartment for the murder weapon," the MC will ask them what move they are using, or suggest one: "Are you **Investigating**?"

If a player wants to activate a move but doesn't describe what happens in the story, for example "I'm gonna **Hit him With All I've Got**!" the MC will ask for the description: "Okay, but what do we see?" The player can answer "Oh, I feint a left jab and then hit him with a crushing right hook." or "I use my Mythos powers to get in touch with his emotional pain and then SQUEEZE!"

Once you invoke the move, simply follow the result as described. Some moves ask you to *roll plus something* (most often *roll+Power*) to determine the result. For these moves, you always roll **two six-sided dice (2d6)**, sum the results, and add whatever number *something* stands for (this is different for different moves). If the total is **6 or less,** it's a miss. If it's more than six, it's a hit: **7-9** is a weak hit and **10+** is a strong hit.

All the Core Moves ask you to *roll+Power*. **Power** is the number of tags your character has that can help her with the action she's taking – the more relevant tags you have, the higher your Power will be for this action and the better your chances are to get a hit. Some tags might reduce your Power, while conditions affecting your character can crank your Power up or down, depending on their description.

When a player invokes a move, it can go like this:

MC: Your suspect is not going to make it easy for you, detective. As you chase him to the edge of the roof, this dark slim figure in a black bodysuit leaps off the ledge, clears 20 feet of gap, and lands with a parkour roll on the concrete roof across, only to continue running unharmed. As you're running after him, you notice a few feathers floating ever so slowly to the ground, five stories below. It smells of something unearthly, but there's no time to wonder about that. What do you do?

Detective Enkidu (played by Jerry): I can't let that suspect get away! I'm going to jump right after him. That's **Taking the Risk**, right?

MC: Lemme see… it's daring, risky, and probably outright stupid. Sure.

Jerry (playing Detective Enkidu): I'm going to use my sheer brawn to clear some of the way and then grow thorny tentacles to pull myself to the far wall and climb up. I have two tags that can help me here: *beastily athletic* and *thorny tentacles*, so my Power is 2. **Jerry rolls two six-sided dice, gets 3 and 5, and adds them up.** I rolled 8, plus a Power of 2, for a total of 10. It's a 10+, so I do it!

MC: Nice! The suspect slows down a bit to look back and for a moment you can see his jaw drop as you scale the wall with your thorny extensions. Then he starts to run faster. What do you do?

Every move has different outcomes for 7-9 and 10+, included in its description. Unless otherwise stated, a miss indicates a dire complication or threat. When you roll a miss, the MC invokes one of the **MC Moves**, complicating things for the lead characters and increasing the challenge: they can

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get hurt, become exposed to a new danger, lose something or someone dear to them, etc.

Note that the MC never rolls the dice. The MC can, however, make the players roll to see how they handle whatever threat or complication she throws at them.

The rules for the players, including all the Core Moves, are explained in **Chapter 3: Working the Case**.

THE SOCIAL AGREEMENT

When you play *City of Mist*, you are simultaneously the co-author of the story and a part of the audience. When you get together as a group to play role-playing games or when you are joined by a new player, it's a good idea to talk about what kind of story you all want to tell. Different players have different preferences and may be in favor or against certain types of stories or content. For example, some players dislike stories where PCs have the option to work against each other (known as player vs. player or PvP) while other players enjoy them. Work out what's best for your group.

MYTHOS VS. LOGOS

As a player, your lead character has a personal story that evolves during play. Each of your character's themes is either a part of your **Logos**, your ordinary life, or your **Mythos**, the legend within you. Your character's themes are fluid: give them enough attention and they will flourish and evolve; neglect them, however, and you will lose them and replace them with new themes. Replacing a theme represents a moment of personal crisis for your character: the loss of a loved one, the failure of her powers, etc. However, it is also a moment of great personal growth and evolution – in a new direction. In the ashes of your character's old life, a new theme arises and new aspects (and tags!) come into her story. Furthermore, the more your character loses and gains themes, the more she starts growing beyond the struggle of Mythos and Logos, earning precious **Moments of Evolution**.

There's more. You always replace a Logos theme with a Mythos theme and vice versa so the balance of legendary and ordinary within you is constantly shifting. You need to watch it: if you lose your last Logos theme, your Mythos will take you over completely and you will become an **Avatar**, a willing instrument in the hands of your Mythos. If you lose your last Mythos theme, you'll forget your Mythos and become a **Sleeper** like the rest of the City residents. The trick is to walk the line… for as long as you can, at least.

Everything about Mythos, Logos, and the dramatic moments of your character's evolution is explained in **Chapter 4: Moments of Truth**.

TIME TO HIT THE STREETS

That's it – now you know the basics of *City of Mist*. Does that mean you are really ready for what's out there? Doubtful. You're just going to have to hit the streets and figure things out as you go along. Brace yourselves: these streets harbor more than just ordinary dangers. Ancient things crawl beneath the asphalt roads, in the electrical grid, and within everyone you meet. Can your characters answer their burning questions? Can they overcome other Rifts like them who may serve a different agenda? What will happen to them when the cameras start rolling?

Let's find out: when you're ready, turn the page over and start playing.

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WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

- **Chapter 1: The Lowdown** has the inside scoop on the life of a Rift and the process of awakening, and describes some of the main City districts.
- **Chapter 2: Who Are You?** is a guide to the Exposition Session, in which you create your series as a group. It includes the complete character creation system using themebooks (questionnaires), quick character creation with Character Tropes, a system of crew relationships reflected in Help & Hurt points, sample crew themes, and a crew themebook.
- **Chapter 3: Working the Case** is a comprehensive set of player rules, detailing the rules of the conversation, defining the use of tags and statuses as well as resources such as Clues and Juice, and expanding on all eight Core Moves and the four cinematic moves: Voiceover Monologue, Flashback, Montage, and Geek Out During Credits.
- **Chapter 4: Moments of Truth** describes the game's character and crew development system, including Mystery and Identity rules, Moments of Evolution, Nemeses, expanded Avatar and Sleeper ("Denying the Beyond") rules, and three extra theme types: Ally, Base of Operations, and Ride.

HIGHLIGHTED TEXT

Throughout this book, specific game elements are highlighted in different colors:

- **Tags** (first explained on page 74) are highlighted in *yellow* (or *purple* in dark pages).
- **Statuses** (first explained on page 218) are highlighted in *green*.
- **Spectrums** (first explained on page 120 of the MC Toolkit) are highlighted in *red*.

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THIS IS HOW IT STARTS.
THIS BIRD SUPPOSEDLY JUMPED OFF THE ROOF OF THE ROYAL PLAZA HOTEL IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT.
SOMEBODY HAS TO FIGURE OUT WHY, AND TONIGHT THAT SOMEBODY IS ME.
THE THING IS, THERE'S A LOT GOING ON IN THIS CITY YOU CAN'T SEE.
WHAT YOU DO SEE JUST HIDES THE TRUE STORY.

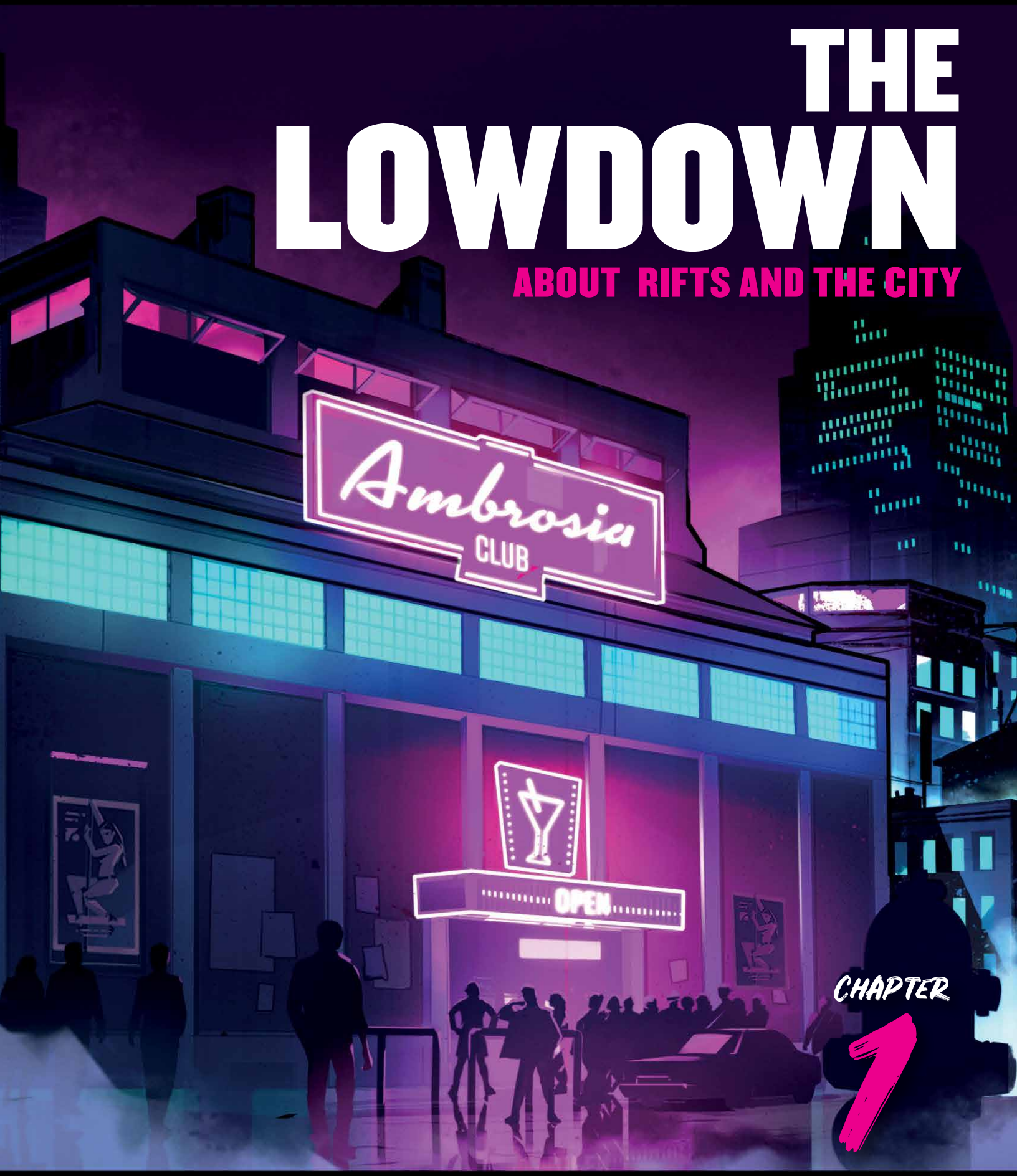
THE PEOPLE YOU'LL MEET, THEY'RE STILL JUST PETTY CROOKS, POWER-HUNGRY TYCOONS, DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES...
... ONLY THEY HAVE A GIFT. SOMETHING OF THE LEGENDARY LIVES INSIDE THEM AND THEY CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

BUT FOR SOME REASON, A REASON 14 YEARS ON THE JOB HAVEN'T HELPED ME UNCOVER,
NOBODY REMEMBERS WHAT THESE PEOPLE CAN DO...
...EXCEPT FOR OTHERS LIKE THEM. LIKE US.
ME, I'VE GOT THE OLDEST WRITTEN STORY INSIDE ME...
Detective
Name Farrah Enkidu
...SO I KNOW STORIES...
...AND I KNOW THIS WAS NO SUICIDE.
SEE, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT SHE WAS.
Ambrosia
CLUB
don't forget me!
WHAT MATTERS IS THAT SOMEONE GOT TO HER, AND THAT SOMEONE IS STILL OUT THERE, PUSHING THEIR SECRET AGENDA LIKE A STEAMROLLER OVER THE DEAD BODIES OF THE PEOPLE I SWORE TO PROTECT.

I JUST CAN'T LET IT BE.

THE LOWDOWN

ABOUT RIFTS AND THE CITY



CHAPTER 1

LIFE OF A LEGEND

This section will usher you into the life of living legends in the City, ordinary people who involuntarily become involved in an insidious clash of forces that has been taking place right under their noses.

When you play *City of Mist*, you play as your character: one of the lead characters as a player or the supporting characters and antagonists as the MC. But, you're not *just* roleplaying your character, right? You invoke the rules, roll dice, add numbers up.

You know some things your character doesn't know. Terms like Mythos, Rifts, and the Mist are game terms used by the players and the MC so you can understand each other and the rules, but your characters don't know them or use them this way. So, after you've read this and started playing, **don't use game terms when speaking as your character**. If your character is just starting to discover the City, she'll talk about these things in vague terms ("Do you know anyone else that is... like us?"); if she's a veteran, she may have made up her own catchwords for these mystical phenomena.

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YOUR AWAKENING

It starts as a nagging realization that there's something you've forgotten. At first, it's in the back of your mind, but as time passes it becomes clearer and clearer. It bothers you. You get this urge to break away from everything that's distracting you and try to listen, to focus. It's like a misplaced memory, something about yourself you can't remember. It's there, but your mind just can't grasp it; it slips through your mind's fingers like vapor. This is where most people give up and turn back to their lives. But not you. You stayed and listened.

When you finally remember this truth you have forgotten about yourself, words fail you because your waking mind is too constricted to accommodate what you take in. It's like a spark inside you, but at the same time it's an entire world. It has too many facets to be accurately described. It's something that has existed for an immeasurable length of time, vastly longer than you have; and yet, in a strange way, it's you: your very core, the root of your existence. The more you are in touch with it, the more you see that everything in your life, every action you've ever taken, every seemingly random event, it all emanated from *this*.

What is the nature of this force? Is it violent and ruthless? Is it as old as the roots of the mountains and the flow of rivers? Is it harmonious and benign, a force of healing? Is it mysterious and cunning? All of the above? Only you can know this.

Slowly, it will take shape: you'll remember faces, places, and distant times. Things that happened long ago – but did they? They don't seem as real as the life you have now, almost like they were faded pages in a storybook; but they *feel* more real than any moment you have ever lived. You'll remember yourself, different back then, playing a role in a clash of forces more ancient than you can possibly fathom: smiting down a terrible foe, stealing a forbidden item, suffering beyond imagination, loving without limits. For a brief moment, you'll remember your **Mythos**.

At the same time, charged with this new memory of yourself, your body will start buzzing. All over your skin, a tingling sensation spreads as you allow this force to enter every mote of your being. If you stay with it long enough, you will become its conduit. The visions you have seen will miraculously become a reality: perhaps a small tree will sprout from the palm of your hand, or your whole body will burn in cool bright blue flames. You have become a **Rift** in the gossamer veil of forgetfulness. You have remembered who you are. A new and yet very old voice inside you can finally say: "I am."

Awakening to what you truly are feels like breathing for the first time. Emotions gush in, along with a shocking realization and the thundering question: "How could I have forgotten myself?" You're awed by this force that has chosen you as its gateway into the world and at the same time you feel immense freedom, as if you yourself have been liberated and become limitless. In a way, you have.

This awakening can happen in a moment or it can stretch over decades. It can happen spontaneously or it can be brought about by events in your life, premeditated, accidental, or fateful. No one knows what this awakening *is*; you've asked everywhere. But you know others have had similar experiences.

Savor this moment, because it might not last long: **the Mist** is coming, to put you back to sleep.

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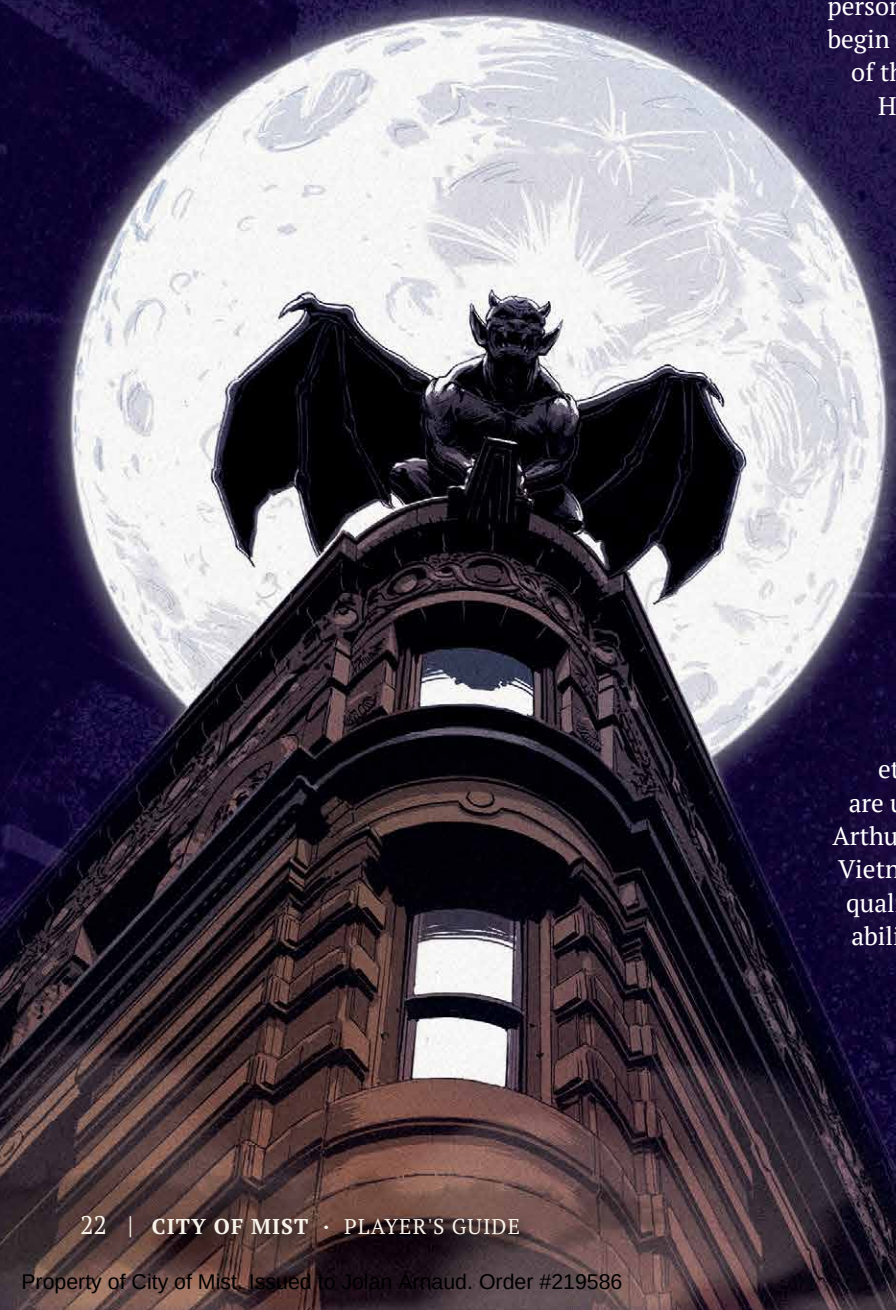
THE MYTHOI

Nobody knows what a Mythos is, exactly. In a way, a Mythos is just a story or an idea that is trying to become real: a legend about people, places, and miraculous powers and events. Maybe all the Mythoi exist in another dimension, swirling in an endless space of pure concepts. Or maybe they exist only in our minds, in a collective unconscious that is perpetuated by the telling of legends and fairytales. Perhaps these two possibilities are one and the same.

It's impossible to know what Mythoi are because Mythoi can never exist in their purest form – the moment they manifest through something or someone, they already become an impure variation of themselves because they mix with their 'host', the Rift through which they come to life. They can never be fully perceived.



The details of a Rift's awakening to their Mythos vary from one Rift to another. Mythoi often find an opportunity in moments of personal crisis or tremendous sacrifice, when a person feels their world is crumbling down around them. What's really breaking apart is their identity, opening a momentary gap in the Mist that a Mythos can exploit to enter the City. The crisis that opens one up to one's Mythos may be of any imaginable nature. It can be an actual life threatening situation or a person's internal drama. What caused the crisis to begin with? Is it chance, fate, or the machinations of the Mythos that would take advantage of it? Hard to tell. So you see, more questions.

Another question common to Rifts is "*why me?*". One could imagine a Mythos chooses the Rift it will materialize through, but who knows if Mythoi are even conscious? It's just as plausible that a Mythos spreads like a virus or an idea, attaching itself to the person who is most receptive to its story. Perhaps something in the Rift's ordinary life is reminiscent of the legend of that particular Mythos and so, by association, they become linked. For example, the Queen of Hearts could choose a powerful lady as her Rift.

Still, it's hard to put a finger on what exactly draws a specific Mythos to its Rift. Many Mythoi manifest in individuals of a different gender, social background, ethnic group, or religion than those they are usually associated with. For example, King Arthur might manifest through an eight year old Vietnamese beggar girl. Perhaps it's an inner quality that attracts a Mythos, a person's suitability to *become* its story.

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It's easy to think of Mythoi as invaders or interlopers, alien beings from beyond the Mist that, if given the opportunity, will overrun the city with their legends and tear it to pieces in a never-ending war of fantastical stories. That may be true, but it's not necessarily so. Mythoi are magic and horror, wonder and hope. It may be that Mythoi are the force that breathes life into the entire City, that governs and animates nature and urban landscape alike. Perhaps they're even gods or aspects of a single almighty divinity, and the Mist is the blind pulled over the eyes of the City's residents by some dark agency, for reasons unknown. If that is the case, then there is no 'getting rid' of the Mythoi – the City would cease to exist without them. As far as Rifts are concerned, their Mythos *is* who they are.

Then again, the Mythoi may not be external to the people of the City at all. They could be psychological forces secretly operating in the subconscious mind of every individual, passed on from one person to another through society, culture, and education until they find the right outlet in the form of a Rift. Any of these perspectives can be true, or all of them, or none.

There are only three things that can be said about the Mythoi for certain: they are a source of unimaginable power, they are mysterious beyond fathom, and they always want to tell their story, whispering it from beyond the veil of Mist we mortals cannot see.

BACK IN 'THE REAL WORLD'

When you come to, you realize where you are. The loud ruckus of the City is probably not too far away. Are you at home, sitting shocked on your greasy sofa, faintly illuminated by a TV screen tuned to a dead channel? Are you at work, peering at your reflection in the glass wall of your corner office, overlooking the sprawling City throbbing under dark clouds? Or perhaps you work at a diner, it's late, and the student who cleans the floors is staring at you with her mop still dripping as sparks fly all around you? Are you buried in the wreckage of a crashed car? What the hell just happened?

Your real life, **the life of an ordinary person living in a modern-day city**, comes crashing down on you in an instant. This realization rushes in like a tidal wave as you're reminded of who you actually are. The impact can be so powerful that you might forget some of the details of the awakening you've just experienced, perhaps even all of it. It all seems like a distant memory, a dream. But there's no time to get distracted by further thoughts, the real world is calling. Your motorbike is halfway submerged in solid asphalt. Your room is draped in a mantle of icicles. There are dead people lying around you, butchered by some horrible beast. Something unbelievable happened – but it happened to you, an ordinary person! How is this possible?

You try to recall the miracle that had just happened, this immense freedom, but something is blocking you. You feel like you're reaching through a thick and sticky spiderweb. All you are left with is the knowledge that something incredible happened, and the facts: your deformed arm, the police chasing you, this glowing light that follows you around. Now what do you do?

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Soon, you will discover that it wasn't all a dream – a part of that force you felt stayed with you. When you tap into it, it feels insignificant compared to what it felt like before, but it's real, it's happening before your eyes, like something out of a fairytale or a myth. Maybe you can move clouds by waving your arms, or mesmerize others with a glare, or perhaps you can call on an ancient weapon out of thin air. You can hardly believe it, but it's there, it's real.

Now the panic sets in. There is no place for this new discovery in your life! What about your loved ones, your clients, or your boss? How are they going to respond when they find out? What about everything you studied for or everything you earned? Will you have to give it all up? Or hide what you have become? You're the wrong person to carry this kind of burden. How is it all going to fit together?

One way or another, you have been irrevocably transformed. This thing is inside you now and its arrival spells change. You're afraid, afraid for everything you have right now, even if you never liked it to begin with. Your ordinary life seems familiar and safe compared to the force that now resides in you. You think about abandoning this force. If only you could, you would forget about it and carry on with your life. But you know that this being, this ever-unfolding story, has now taken root in you. Your story is now its story and, remembering how it felt to be totally fused with it, you come to an irreconcilable understanding: abandon it, and a part of you will die. Embrace it… and you'll lose yourself in it.

THE CALL OF YOUR MYTHOS

It doesn't matter who you are: having a Mythos inside you means having unanswered questions. Perhaps you're already a hard-boiled detective, a self-inquiring Zen monk, or a curious history buff, but you don't have to be an investigator by vocation to have questions.

Maybe you are a suburban housewife who has never really thought about ancient myths and legends before. Maybe you're a spoiled kid who has never been more than twenty feet away from a supervising adult. Or you could be a lonely elderly man who has no living relatives or friends. It doesn't matter. Now that the Mythos is alive inside you, you are constantly harrowed by countless questions: What am I? What is the nature of my powers? What is their source? Who else is like me? What should I do with this ability?

You don't always understand the questions echoing in your mind – they could be complete mumbo jumbo to you, like cryptic koans that are meant to lead you somewhere, though you have no idea how. Perhaps details of your inner story float into your waking mind: you see a face and feel compelled to discover who it is or set out in search of a symbol that you know is not real, but…

Other times the questions are very real. Your newfound powers have implications – ethical, scientific, theological, or social. You may be looking for a way to control your abilities or reverse their effects. Maybe you have questions about the circumstances of your awakening: why you lived when you should have died or whether it was all planned by someone or something.

You don't know in advance what your inner call will ask of you but it's there, egging you on, urging you to find out. You can try to drown it with stimulation, distraction, or medication but it's not going to work. It will always be there because you *want* it to be there. When you're ready to follow it, it will help you uncover what all these questions boil down to: the truth about who you are.

So, like it or not, you start asking questions. You start **investigating**. It could be that you ask your wife innocuous questions about that fateful night that "we'd all like to put behind us"; search police files or old newspapers for incidents that could be

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connected to yours; brave the social discomfort and approach the boy at the party who can get you in touch with the right people; or break into your professor's office to flick through a few pages of that old manuscript before getting caught and expelled. Whatever way you do it, you are out there, allowing the questions to lead you to the answers you so desperately crave. And the more you put your time and effort into discovering the truth, the more you will notice two things are happening: one, you start neglecting other aspects of your life, and two, you start realizing there's a whole lot more going on in this City than you've ever imagined.

THE VEIL OF THE MIST

Accidentally or intentionally, there will come a point when you reveal your special abilities to others and thereby inadvertently stumble upon the greatest hoax in the City. You will discover, much to your simultaneous relief and dismay, that **no one remembers anything regarding your powers**. To say no one is slightly inaccurate, as you'll eventually discover, but you will find that the vast majority of city dwellers simply ignore, excuse, or forget any legendary power that you manifest in their presence. Is it that they don't want to remember or that they cannot remember? This is a philosophical question you may never answer.

This force, responsible for the ignorance of millions of people, is the **Mist.** Even its name is shrouded, you will never discover it. No one can know its name; it cannot be spoken in reference to this force anywhere in the City. But you have likely come up with your own term for it: "the Hiding", "the Brain-wiper", or simply "this thing that makes people forget".

In many ways it is a mild, undetectable force. In other ways, its all-encompassing nature is terrifying, as your experiments will surely divulge. Whenever the legendary manifests in any way, the Mist ensures that no one knows about it or recognizes it for what it truly is. You begin to realize that you live in an entire City that is forever in the clutches of this force and that everyone you know and meet is entirely oblivious to what is going on around them. They are "**Sleepers"**, "groggies", "fogheads"; they are unable to see what you can see, no matter how concrete the facts you show them.

This realization alone can tear your psyche apart and indeed countless like you have lost their minds when the gravity of the situation struck them. You are living in a city of sleepwalkers, and that includes the people you love the most. A great chasm opens up between you and those closest to you, a chasm that you can only repress, never bridge. This may drive you to want to know more about the Mist. Even if you survive all this psychological stress, you will face unavoidable questions. "What about me? What am *I* not seeing? Is there something I too am blind to?" You start, in your own way, to study the Mist. If you continue asking questions, here's what you'll find out:

- **The Mist hides and distracts.** Just as one is about to witness the real-life manifestation of your Mythos, something will happen to make them look away or at the very least blur their impression. Fog will roll in, rain will lash at them, steam will blow out from the subway vents, the lights will flicker. Alternatively, their phone will ring just at the right moment, or someone will cry for help, or they will spot their favorite sports player walking down the street. Whatever form it takes, the Mist will make them miss the miraculous display altogether, or at the very least doubt what they saw: "I saw something, but I'm not sure exactly…" If you push them later, most people will respond with disbelief that it ever happened, or even *could* happen.

  As you'll discover, the Mist is not limited to people's minds. Its effects are more far-reaching than mind tricks. It can cause interference in electrical devices recording your legendary powers (and Sleepers would claim it's edited footage, anyway). More worryingly, it seems to be able to

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orchestrate events with disturbing synchronicity, for example, having your boyfriend arrive at the scene out of the blue just as you're about to witness the magical powers of a Rift you worked weeks to track down.

You see, the effects of the Mist are not limited to Sleepers. You too, as well as the other Rifts you'll meet, are subject to its distractions. The difference is that you remember; you know there is something hiding the truth from you. You know that what you didn't see in a moment of distraction is what really matters, and that if you had seen it, you'd remember it.

- **The Mist provides excuses and twists perceptions.** Sometimes, if you're lucky or unlucky enough, the Mist will fail momentarily and someone will get to see your legendary power in all its glory. At first, as the unadulterated reality sets in, they may be shocked, eyes glazing over. However, the Mist quickly sweeps up after you. Moments later, the glazed look in their eyes will vanish; if asked about it, they'll acknowledge everything that happened *except* its legendary nature. Sleepers will staunchly maintain that there is some mundane explanation to what happened: a freak electrical phenomenon, some kind of scam using movie special effects, whatever. You don't seriously expect them to believe it was *the* Big Bad Wolf you just wrestled with, do you?

  This normalizing effect also works on a much deeper level. You'll find that Sleepers subconsciously edit everything they see as it happens. Where you may see a two-headed troll, they will see horribly deformed and obese siamese twins; when obviously faced with the Queen of the Dead, they'll remember her as an obnoxious drag queen. The Mist makes it so that Sleepers just cannot *see*, not even what's right in front of them. Even you sometimes need an actual display of legendary powers before you can be sure someone else is a Rift. When thus revealed, the magnitude of the power of the Mist over the City's residents is truly alarming.

- **The Mist makes you forget.** This is possibly the scariest aspect of the Mist. When you experience this effect, you will suddenly grasp how fragile your mundane life is, how in one moment it can all be taken away from you. It seems there is only so much the Mist can cover up at once; sometimes, when it's stuck for a solution, the Mist will become aggressive and simply wipe out all memory of your Mythos manifestations from people's minds. For them, and sometimes 'them' are very large groups of people, it would be as if the event never happened. "I can't recall exactly what I did last Thursday. I guess I went to Eddie's, like every Thursday. I might have had one beer too many, though…"

  This effect also has a milder but equally impactful aspect, one which affects minds over time. People in the City don't dwell over mystical and supernatural shenanigans; they forget, they let go, they move on. Their own lives are much more compelling than something weird they can't understand. Which brings us to the last point.

- **The Mist exploits the things dearest to you.** Your own life is the Mist's strongest weapon, especially the things you love or hate. If you value your family, the Mist will use them to throw you off. If you like cars or hate rats, you'll see a flashy ride or a hairy critter crossing the road just as you're about to witness something important. And since almost everyone either loves or hates themselves, the Mist also employs aspects of your own personality and body against you: a passing thought about your future, an inexplicable bad feeling that never leaves you, or a sudden hunger for burritos – all of these can be carefully placed by the Mist at the exact moment something else is happening at the corner of your eye, something legendary, something that will provide answers.

  If that's the way it works on you, imagine how it works on Sleepers. Sleepers are obsessed with their own lives. They don't care what's happening around them. Sometimes you think it's like they wear helmets made of pure noise, constantly dealing with "Me, me, me!". Well, in a way, you're the same, but at least your eyes are open *some* of the time.

So while this mysterious force prevents others from seeing you as you are, it also makes it more difficult for you to find the answers you are looking for.

An important fact you will learn is that **the Mist does NOT change reality** (at least not abruptly

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enough for you to notice). While trying to get answers from a violent gang of cultists, for example, if you beat them up with your ancient bronze staff and you all end up getting arrested, they'll report "This freak came at me with some weird metal shaft!" If you do so by turning your arm into stone, they'll say, "That crazy son of a bitch hit me with a brick!" However, they will still be injured, for real, and forensics may be able to tell if they were hurt by bronze or stone. This is to say the consequences of your Mythos powers are very much real. Just because the Mist covers up all perception of the legendary aspects of your actions doesn't mean you will not be held responsible for them.

Only the legendary miracles and wonders are forgotten. Some of the ordinary residents of the City are quite sharp and focused: that police detective, that bohemian musician at the jazz club, that kid in the basketball court. They're not zombies or drones, they're just under a spell. They can tell you're up to something, even if they can't see it for what it is. And there is always the possibility that they too will awaken.

PAST KNOWLEDGE OF THE MIST

Naturally, not a lot of information about the Mist has been recorded and even less of it is circling around the accessible channels. If there were ever books, scriptures, or oral traditions that discussed the Mist specifically, they have long been forgotten or removed from public libraries and databases. Such a body of information, if it existed, would in all likelihood draw out the full power of the Mist, seeking to eliminate the threat to its secret existence. What that could mean to the person in possession of such knowledge is beyond your understanding.

But the Mist can't cover everything up. Sometimes it looks like it concentrates its efforts on the mainstream of society and abandons the sidelines to do as they will. Ancient texts and traditions do mention the existence of a force of obscurity and forgetfulness. Such texts are rarely heeded by anyone in the City, especially not Sleepers, who regard them as delirious rants of primitive people or a subject for vain academic research, which completely misses the message. To wit, ancient Vedic texts of Indian philosophy describe an illusory force that conceals the true nature of reality, called *Māyā*. In Kabbalistic writing, *Ester* is the barrier that veils the source of creation itself. Perhaps these ancient people know something about the Mist, but by now, no one really cares. No one but Rifts like you.

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OTHERS LIKE YOU

From the moment you become aware of the power the Mist holds over the City residents, you'll find that you've become somewhat resistant to its effects. Whether you like it or not, you realize that what you have inside you, this Mythos, has given you the opportunity to awaken, to shake off some of the obliviousness and forgetfulness that plague the unaware Sleepers. From this point on, you will look at the City in an entirely new and different way. Where once you saw the routine of city life, you may now see the living stories and legends who have been existing beside you all this time, hiding in plain sight.

Still, the Mist makes it so you can never be sure. As you walk down the street, you do a double take on the guy in the news stand, realizing that he's brandishing two bumps on his forehead and is playing with a ball of thread. When you go out for lunch, the goofy yet beautiful busgirl at Ursula's Fish & Seafood seems like she wants to tell you something, but no voice comes out. Some neurotic guy in the subway is holding on tightly to an old Arabian brass lamp full of sand, mumbling to himself "they can't control me, they can't control me...".

It may not be frequent, but every now and then you will bump into someone else like you, a Rift with a Mythos inside them. You will notice each other, because you both will have the strong impression that you're the only people around who are actually awake. You'll soon become convinced that others like you are also able to remember the miracles and horrors of your legendary powers. Their Mythos frees them from the grip of the Mist, just as yours does.

This city is full of living legends like you. They could be your valet, your surgeon, your neighborhood's loan shark, the plumber, the IRS woman, the kid next door, the homeless guy in the park. You could even discover one among your family and friends. Everyone could potentially be a walking Rift in the Mist, which is why you can't trust the Mist to always cover your tracks: someone is always watching, someone always remembers.

A meeting with another Rift can result in anything from a fast friendship to a world of mayhem and agony, or both – just like any meeting of two powerful forces. You have to use your instincts and wits to figure out what this person wants – and make no mistake, they all want something. You'll soon find out that being a Rift doesn't really say anything about a person. Whatever legend is inside them, Rifts still have their personalities, their baggage, their aspirations. Some will help you with your cause while others will sell you out for theirs, it's just the way the world works. The only difference is, when a Rift sells you out and you find yourself in the Lions' Den, you won't be facing metaphorical lions.

OTHER KINDS OF RIFTS

To become a Rift, you must have a specific yet elusive quality: a "soul", consciousness, attention, the ability to "listen". This quality is the birthright of human beings, even if most of them turn a blind eye to it so they can concentrate on their material lives. However, there are unique cases of Rifts opening within animals, objects, and even places. Perhaps a human Rift used Mythos powers to create them or the 'spirit' of a Mythos chose them for some reason. In game terms, these Rifts have special names: animal Rifts are called **Familiars**, object Rifts are **Relics**, and Rifts attached to a locale are called **Enclaves**.

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DEGREES OF AWARENESS

Not all Rifts are equally awakened. The more you give in to your Mythos, the greater your resistance to the Mist becomes and the greater the powers you are able to manifest. However, as your Mythos demands more and more of you, your personal life starts falling apart. Depending on how they see these two competing prospects, different Rifts adopt different stances regarding their Mythos.

The Touched: Some Rifts are only touched by a Mythos. Either they are at the beginning of their slow awakening or they have never really let their Mythos in or, more rarely, they have been down the rabbit hole and decided to diminish the part their Mythos plays in their lives. Touched still behave like Sleepers, for the most part. They're mostly absorbed in their lives with the exception of moments of awareness to something greater. These moments can give a Touched person a great deal of power but they also terrify them, as they're exposed to something vast that belittles their personal life. They are at the same time fascinated by their Mythos and scared of it, so they keep it at bay whether consciously or subconsciously. Being still in the grip of the Mist, some Touched (especially the newly-awakened) deny the existence of living legends in the City, even though by now they know it's true. Some Touched people lead a secret life where they can vent out and answer the call of their Mythos, but still maintain appearances in their normal lives.

There is a special kind of Touched individuals that you may have come across: those touched by another Rift's Mythos. Many heroes, witches, and monsters in legend had the power to influence or bewitch others, and these legends have been reincarnated in the City. When a Sleeper comes under the influence of a powerful Rift, they can gain some awareness as the power of that Rift's Mythos wards off the Mist. They may even be able to channel some of that Mythos' power. This is especially true for Sleepers who work for a Rift in their daily lives. Later, if the influence of the Mythos leaves that person, they may revert back to their obliviousness, or, sometimes, become awakened. There is really no telling in these things.

Borderliners: Some Rifts open up to their Mythos without sacrificing their ordinary lives. They live at the frontier of the struggle between awareness and everyday existence. While their connection with their Mythos is solid, it is still limited to vague feelings, weird sensations, or a strange "knowing". Their lives contain much of the personal and mundane, but within their personal story a great deal revolves around the presence of their Mythos. A Borderliner is a walking struggle between Mythos and Mist: when one becomes stronger and threatens to overshadow the other, a Borderliner will make sacrifices to keep the balance, even if she doesn't realize it until it happens.

Borderliners are the loose cannons of this City. Favoring their personal lives as much as the call of their Mythos, they don't always use their miraculous gifts in a way that promotes the story of their Mythos. On the other hand, they are powerful enough to really change things in the City. They are at the same time independent of their Mythos and dependent on it. In this way, they embody free choice more than any other Rift. (Not free will, though; they are still pawns of their Mythos and their lives. The difference is *they choose whose pawn to be* in any given moment).

Walking the line is not easy. Every Borderliner harbors a secret wish to let their Mythos consume them but is deterred by the personal sacrifices that must be made. At the same time, Borderliners wish to forget about their Mythos in favor of their mundane existence, their loved ones, their jobs, their problems, and their hobbies. There are those who actively maintain both aspects of their lives and walk the line for a long time, though this can become more and more exhausting with every sacrifice.

Legendaries: if your investigation lasts long enough, you will inevitably come across someone who has chosen (or was driven) not to hold back

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but instead to revel in their Mythos. These individuals become truly powerful, channeling the fantastical qualities of their Mythos without fear or doubt. Legendaries still have a persona and attachments they care about beyond the sheer agenda of their Mythos, but these are often kept secret or are sidelined because they in fact limit their Mythos. For a Legendary, the story that their Mythos is trying to tell is important above all else and their personal life is only holding them back from fulfilling it – but they are too attached to let it go completely.

Legendaries are a force of nature. Most of the powerful figures of the secret world behind the Mist are legendaries: dangerous mafiosos, mysterious art collectors, fast food chain magnates. Unlike Sleepers of the same vocation and status, who are mostly out for themselves, when a Legendary starts an operation, she is doing it at the behest of her Mythos for the purpose of its strange agenda.

Avatars: There are stories going around on the street about an individual so immensely powerful, that everything happening in the City is happening only because he or she allows it to. Can Rifts give themselves completely to their Mythos? If so, meeting one face-to-face would be a life-altering, identity-shattering experience; it would be the closest thing to meeting face-to-face with a Mythos, and you have only a vague idea of what that means. The chances of surviving something like that intact, whether physically or psychologically, are slim. What such a being would want from the City is beyond you.

WHAT'S IT LIKE FOR YOU?

As said, the terms given here for different types of Rifts are not used by your character. In your comic-book- or TV-like world, characters don't say to each other "Oh, I wish I could be a Legendary like you, but I'm just Touched." When the characters share their thoughts and feelings, it's often vague and partial.

Furthermore, one cannot tell just by looking at someone just how awakened they are, or what part their Mythos plays in their lives. These are things you will have to discover by investigating: getting to know the person, doing a background check on them, or tapping into your own Mythos for answers.

FAIRY GODMOTHERS IN DRAG AND DEVILS IN SUITS

In the old stories, the meeting of two people was never a coincidence – there was always a reason. For Sleepers living in the repetitive and bland world of the Mist, this may not be true – some meetings are purely the result of chance. But Rifts see a city that is almost dreamlike, where stories are always connected. In the magical world of the Mythoi, the meeting of two living legends could be a dramatic turning point for everyone involved. For this reason, Rifts in the City are strangely attracted to each other.

WHY ARE THEY AFTER YOU?

Rifts subconsciously see the world through the eyes of their Mythos. When they meet another Rift, their Mythos could either be indifferent or it could cast that Rift in a certain role in their story. When another Rift learns about *you*, they may subconsciously cast you as one of these symbolic aspects of *their* story:

- **the savior**, asking you to save them from others, who may be Rifts too, or from themselves;
- **the instrument**, trying to use you as a means to get what they want;
- **the prey**, seeking to consume you one way or another to satisfy the hunger of their Mythos;
- **the chosen one**, helping you fulfill what they think is your destiny;

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- **the enemy**, seeking to destroy you before you destroy them;
- **the companion**, offering to join forces and work towards a mutual goal;
- **the obstacle**, trying to overcome you in order to reach their goals;
- **the object of their love**, trying to win your heart and keep you close;
- and so on…

This story-like connection deeply affects how they treat you. It could be that the leprechaun that runs the laundromat chain in your neighborhood discovers that there is a new Rift in town, after you blow the lid on his scheme to steal all the small change people leave in their pockets under the protection of the Mist. First, he might offer you a deal and try to recruit you to his little operation. If you refuse or try to take over, he'll make you his sworn enemy. It could be that he's just a petty thief, but he's got some connections: when he discovers he can't take you out himself, he'll call on a bigger fish to come deal with you, say, the toll road troll. Whether you intended to or not, your name starts crossing lips around the City. The more it does, the greater the risk you will draw the attention of older, more powerful Rifts.

WHY ARE YOU AFTER THEM?

Answers, you are looking for answers. Whether you have questions about the Mist, or you want to find the man who killed your father, or decipher a dark prophecy inscribed in graffiti all over town, you're looking for information. Rifts exist behind the veil of the Mist, even if they are the most famous person in the City. They see more than Sleepers and they know more than Sleepers. Rifts also have mythical powers; whatever it is you wish for, they can probably get it for you sooner than Sleepers. For example, if you were looking for the fairest of them all and learned that a gentleman in the Old Quarter has the powers of the Mirror from *Snow White*, that would be a good reason to go see him.

Of course, your Mythos casts other Rifts in major roles just as any other. Perhaps you swore to bring down the blacksmith who made and proliferated the witch-bullets that killed your partner; maybe you fell for a beautiful nightingale only to discover she is, in fact, mechanical; or you see potential in the young motorcycle-mounted knight and think his powers will be put to better use in your service. Whoever you are, you have your own agenda; so does your Mythos.

CASES & CREWS

STRANGE CASES

How do you find other legends? Even as an awakened person, the Mist hides your fellow Rifts from you, leaving no trace in the minds of those who encounter them, erasing all evidence with its silky touch, in time even from the minds of the aware. But the Mist does not alter reality: where people disappear, where money is siphoned, where destruction strikes – questions will be asked. And where questions are asked without answers, you get a **strange case**.

Strange cases are the mark of Rift activity. From a juicy "Aliens barbequed my dog" to a dry yet visceral "unsolved murder", odd incidents and mysterious circumstances crop up often in the media, records, and culture. These cases are usually sidelined, simply because Sleepers have nothing more to do with them than read about them and be entertained or horrified. But they are reported and recorded, and while Sleepers make their excuses, they can still acknowledge that they don't really know what happened there.

This is where you come in. Sometimes, it's almost like you can sniff out the real strange cases from the slush: a small newspaper article captures your attention or you overhear folks at the bar talking about some "weird shit going down in the low levels of the refinery". Is it your Mythos whispering in your ear?

Other times, it's as though the strange cases come to you. A mother will come asking for help locating her missing child, saying "I heard you were good with this sort of thing." Or you'll be walking down a smoky alley downtown at night and see an eerie green glow around the corner. When the strange cases fall in your lap, you can sense that it's no coincidence. Even if there is

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no direct connection between the case and your questions, uncovering the truth of what really happened can lead you to someone or something that can shed some light on your own search. So buckle up – it's time to investigate.

WORKING WITH A CREW

An investigation, whether haphazard or well-thought-out, is a complex business. Some pieces of information you can only find by studying records; other details you might have to get from contacts or witnesses. Sometimes you have to be at the scene, and that could mean getting into places where you're not welcome. There are so many things that can go wrong, so much trouble you could get into. You need to be sharp, but at the same time tough, fast, clever, knowledgeable, charming...

You'll soon find that conducting an investigation all by yourself is inefficient at best and outright dangerous most of the time. With no one to watch your back or cover more ground, chances are you won't get very far. That's why you work with a **crew**.

A crew can be just you and another associate working nights together or it can be a formal group of investigators operating professionally. Maybe you start your own crew, putting together a team of worthy individuals you meet along the way. Otherwise, a group of Rifts with questions similar to yours may invite you to join them.

A crew always has a purpose. While each individual may have their reasons for working with the crew, everyone has to agree on the goal towards which the crew strives and the methods used to achieve it. When internal dynamics and differences between members put a strain on the crew's unity, it's the shared goal that keeps the crew going.

CULTURAL AND ETHNIC REFERENCES IN CITY OF MIST

This book and other *City of Mist* content make extensive use of cultural and ethnic references. First, because the myths and legends that will be incarnated in your characters come from various world cultures, past or present. Second, because modern-day cities are hotspots of cultural and ethnic diversity and *City of Mist* would not feel real if it were any different. While we attempted to introduce examples from as many cultures as possible, it's impossible to include every world culture in one book. I encourage you to take your own native cultures or cultures you are interested in and bring them into the game as characters and Mythoi.

YOUR LEGEND AWAITS

This is your life now, split down the middle between the ordinary and the legendary. On the one hand, you wake up in the morning and your everyday obligations and habits call to you. You have things to do, you need to go through the motions, you have yourself to be. Only now you feel like you're faking it, like the world of the Sleepers is a thin and fragile veneer over a City that is burning in the dark. Deep inside you, the galvanizing power of your Mythos is throbbing, screaming its questions. Wherever you go, you feel you are being watched by invisible eyes, the eyes of others like you. You live in a waking dream, knowing you can stumble into anything imaginable at any given moment, but you're still keeping up appearances. Both sides are constantly tugging at you, calling you to give up the other side and give yourself entirely to one. Some days you surrender to your Mythos and pay the price; other days, you seem to forget about it and concentrate on what's "real". It's a nerve-wracking way to live, but this is your life. All you know is that you and your crew are working on something, you're about to discover something. So when it's time and you get the call, you get up, grab what you need, fire up your Mythos, and start working the case.

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DISTRICTS OF THE CITY

The City is the backdrop for your story; its streets, alleyways, and rooftops are where you will uncover disturbing truths, unleash mighty powers in a fight for what matters to you the most, and make harsh sacrifices. There are many districts in the City, and each City is different, but in the following descriptions you will find some common tropes. Read about the districts to get the feel of the setting and to inspire your own locations and characters, maybe using them in your character's backstory.

DOWNTOWN

Downtown is where it's all happening. It's the beating heart of the City, pumping millions of souls in and out every day, locals and visitors of all walks of life who come here for business, pleasure, or both.

By day, downtown feels like a clockwork toy city: everything is buzzing with hurriedness and purpose, people trying to get things done. Neurotic interns run around with coffee trays, rushing to get back to their bosses in one of the top floors of a skyscraper before the start of an important meeting. Trucks unload goods in the back alleys of renowned designer stores, while at the front suited salesmen shower fake compliments at preposterously wealthy ladies with pampered poodles. Torrents of foreign tourists armed with cameras stream through the well-known monuments and attractions, such as the tallest building in the City or the City History Museum, where a hallmark piece of art is kept. So caught up in their activities, none of them are actually present; it's all about functionality, ticking the checkbox, moving on to the next task. Time seems to speed up when you're downtown and the people blur into streaks of muted colors. It's a city on amphetamines.

Downtown is a rainforest of billboards and neon signs. Visible all through the day, they become the only illumination after the sun sets. The hustle and

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bustle never quiets down; it only changes direction. In the neon-spiked darkness, downtown seeks release for all the tension it built up during the day. Cabarets, nightclubs, and trendy bars operate at full capacity right next to fancy restaurants, theaters, cinemas, and the opera houses. Diners, coffee shops, and food stands line the overcrowded plazas where live events take place, covered by all major media channels. There's entertainment for everyone here – according to what you can afford – including any sort of urban recreational activity. Private parties with expensive drugs and high-class prostitutes are commonplace, but the backstage of the City's most flamboyant district has even darker, stranger pursuits to offer.

THE BLUE-COLLAR RESIDENTIAL

Life is tough for the hard-working people of this neighborhood. They struggle daily to survive and make ends meet. They work hard and enjoy what little comforts they can get: a cold beer, a pack of smokes, new shoes, or a working fridge. Opportunities are not plentiful: the education system here is mediocre and the job market is flooded. The best most people in this neighborhood can hope for is to get through the month without sinking deeper into debt.

Sadly, this means this neighborhood breeds most petty criminals in the City and a good share of its organized crime. People here work hard all their lives; by now, they've either given up on their dreams or are desperate enough to leap at the promise of a golden opportunity even if it comes with great risks. Mobsters and loan sharks thrive on protection money and the high interest paid by individuals with no other choice. Teenagers are naturally drawn to the thug life, where they feel they can earn a measure of respect and a nice bit of money. Idealistic local politicians try helplessly to change things for the better while their corrupt counterparts (and sometimes alter-egos) make a cut on the backs of the neighborhood residents.

Most of this neighborhood is a warren of tall tenements and apartment blocks where visitors often get lost. Some streets and buildings look stenciled, except for the various businesses on the ground level: grocery stores, barber shops, fast food joints, pawn shops, laundromats. If you venture into the backyards and alleys, you may need a local to help you out of the labyrinth, decorated everywhere by laundry on clotheslines. Most of the day it's a pretty noisy and lively place: kids holler at each other and loud music is playing outside, mixing with the ruckus of traffic. At night, the streets grow silent and tense. Squad cars patrol the neighborhood, but there are too few to make a difference. It's up to the locals to take care of themselves: anything can come out at you from the dark.

DESCRIBING THE CITY IN YOUR GAME

City of Mist is a game of imagination. There's no need to prepare all the details of the City in advance – you'll make them up or look them up as the need for them arises. For example, when one of the lead characters is setting up a meeting with an informant, the player can just make up a street name and say "Meet me at my place. It's in 403 Lexington St.". You don't have to check in advance if your City has a Lexington St. or where it is. When you say it, it becomes real in your story. If the other players or the MC see things differently, talk it out. If you wish, you can note down new details as you add them to your City, for consistency.

The important parts of the City are the parts in which your characters' story takes place. The MC will know a few things about these specific locations because she will create them when she creates new cases (see Chapter 2: Behind the Scenes in the MC Toolkit) or read about them in published cases. Everything else in the City is described in broad strokes; it is there purely as backdrop, like fleeting sights seen when driving around the City.

THE OLD QUARTER

Centuries ago, maybe even millennia, migrating people first settled in the area that is now the City. They were met by indigenous tribes, as history tells us, or, if you want the romanticized version, by monsters, spirits, and gods. Their settlement thrived and evolved, growing greater in fortune

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and population as time went by. Eventually, it became this City you see before you; but it all started here, in the Old Quarter.

Old stone buildings and cobbled streets with wrought-iron street lamps make up this cramped district, giving it the appearance of a place out of time. Landmarks of the City's history are everywhere you look, from pompous historical estates with neatly-trimmed gardens to well-preserved townhouses where someone important once lived. As you venture deeper into the quarter, it becomes harder to navigate by car. Narrow alleyways lead to quaint crafts shops, boutique hotels, glorified bistros, and art galleries, then open up to small squares, decorated with antiquated but masterfully sculpted fountains. The Old Quarter is no less than enchanting; ironically enough, it has the air of something foreign, far from the modern City not by distance, but by time. Everyone you'll meet here has an interesting tale about the Quarter and you can almost breathe in the history that these stones have seen. If you are looking for something eccentric and unusual, you will find it here.

The Old Quarter is a treasure trove of antiques as well as of the arcane. From artifacts brought here long ago from faraway lands by pirates and mariners to parchments and maps recording the early days of the City and pacts of black magic, every attic or basement in this quarter is bursting with ancient knowledge to be uncovered. No wonder then that all the peculiar academics, bizarre street performers, and aspiring mystics end up here. At night, cat burglars wrestle with modern security measures to put their paws on priceless items, overlooking the ancient inscriptions they should really be worried about. Most of the population of the Old Quarter can trace their heritage to the indigenous people of the City, to its first settlers, or to both. The buildings are almost all owned by old-money families, who have kept the quarter clean from the commercial interests blowing from downtown. Here there is peace, tranquility, and unspeakable secrets buried beneath the ground. No one talks about these things; those blue-blooded people know how to suffer quietly. But more than one family here has been reputed to carry a genetic flaw in its bloodline, a curse, if you will. Then again, it could be simply the product of centuries of inbreeding.

THE INDUSTRIAL ZONE

Every day and throughout the night, the Industrial Zone continues its mechanical march. It chugs down copious amounts of raw materials alongside a steady stream of blue-collar workers from the nearby residential districts. Its many workshops and factories, each louder than the other, churn and grind and fuse parts together, and then regurgitate them over to another facility for the next step of the production line. Its tall chimneys and winding pipelines spew out fumes, smoke, and waste, while congested roads slowly push out tired employees and draw in fresh ones. Out of all this ruckus comes an endless variety of products, some mass produced, some crafted with care, some for the zone's own use, others packaged and shipped all over town. When you think about it, the whole district is just one big machine.

Once you get used to the noise and pollution, however, the finer details emerge. The district's area is divided between hundreds of businesses and facilities. In the light industry zone one can find small workshops and garages run by tattooed burly men in wife-beaters and rough ladies in overalls, offering quick repairs and custom adjustments to your wheels and machinery. In the commercial zone, massive hardware outlets sell construction supplies while in their old-fashioned shops, fisheyed craftsmen work on delicate clockwork or electronics devices behind a magnifying glass. Derelict factories with saw-tooth roofs and filthy skylights house outdated production lines that operate with a skeleton crew, waiting for the inevitable modernization. Rows of storage units and warehouses seem to go on forever. Behind them, vast corporate production complexes and government-funded refineries stretch over miles, some covering an area greater than all the smaller zones put together and housing only god-knows-what.

The nights here reveal a well-known fact: the Industrial Zone is the City's no-man's-land. Though police and environmental compliance inspectors scout the district around the clock, they are regularly understaffed compared to its sheer size, their operations stinted due to lack of public interest (except for a few cheap housing projects for employees working shifts, the district has no registered residents). The underground scene is thriving, with

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anything from delirious raves to violent pit fights available to the thrill-seeking visitor. Strange gangs and secretive brotherhoods set up their makeshift headquarters around burn barrels in abandoned hangars, spraying their SMGs into the night sky and howling like wolves. Above all that mayhem, the wind blows silently amid silos and cooling towers studded with bright red aircraft warning lights. From way up there, one could easily see that it's not the noisy parts of the Industrial Zone the police should be worrying about – it's the quiet ones.

NOTHING BEYOND THE CITY

One of the premises of *City of Mist* is that **the lead characters never leave the City**. Whether other people actually leave the City is another open-ended question; everyone seems to think that coming and going is something normal that happens all the time. Tourists, business people, and strange country folk show up and disappear regularly. The City residents behave as though they are a part of something greater, like a country or a world, but whenever it actually comes down to acknowledging it, the story veers off conveniently.

The game is focused on the City. The farther the lead characters move away from that focus, whether physically or in a conversation with a City resident, Rift or Sleeper, the fuzzier things get, like the faded edge of an old photo. Where exactly did Johnny go? Not sure, he's out of town. Where did you say this truck came from? Somewhere out of town, I reckon. Where are we now? Oh, we're just a few miles out of town.

Why don't people ever talk about the greater world out there? Are people in this City just so in love (or obsessed) with it that they don't consider anything else worthwhile? Or is it another aspect of the Mist, possibly the strongest of them all? *You* may want to know the answer to these questions but your characters don't; they too are completely focused on the City.

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"THERE'S A LOT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF, DETECTIVE ENKIDU."
IT'S RIGHT OVER THERE.
GRRRRRR
"THERE'S MORE TO LIVING IN THIS CITY THAN YOU MIGHT THINK."
"EVERYTHING YOU THINK MAKES YOU WHO YOU ARE..."
"... YOUR JOB, YOUR HOME..."
"...YOUR LOVED ONES... "
MAN ... IT'S JUST A KID.
DOG CATCHER
" THESE ARE ALL JUST MASKS. "
LET'S BRING HER IN.
"... A GREATER STORY."
"WITHIN EVERY PERSON IN THIS CITY, WITHIN YOU, THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CANNOT BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND...."
"A LEGEND."

AAAA

I'M HERE TO FIND OUT.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR STORY

WHO ARE YOU?

CHAPTER 2

In *City of Mist*, you take the role of an ordinary modern-day individual in whom an ancient myth, a legend, or a story has awakened. In your day-to-day life, you could be anyone: a young doctor struggling to save lives in the ER, a drug addict stealing to get another fix, a concerned parent bent on keeping the family together, or a professional hitman killing for money and sport. But you're not just that, you are more: an angel in disguise, a volcano god whose blood is constantly burning, a gentle soul who can unexpectedly turn into a monster, or the unwilling bearer of the fabled sword which will reunite the kingdom.

Who are you really? What do you truly want? What can you achieve with the powers your Mythos grants? How do your ordinary abilities and resources limit or further your goals? What does your Mythos want from you and what do you want for yourself? Why do you work with others like you and what are you all hoping to achieve? It's time to answer all these questions.

This chapter explains how to put together the details you'll need to know about your characters' lives, histories, and abilities, as well as the environment they operate in, in order to begin your story in *City of Mist*.

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THE EXPOSITION SESSION

In *City of Mist,* the initial details of your story are created collaboratively with everyone in the group. While each player creates the details of their own character, going through character and crew creation together allows you to compound your creativity and tweak the story so it piques the interest of everyone at the table. You can brainstorm ideas for your character and for the crew with your fellow players and MC, and work out the details of your characters' relationships. The MC and the other players can ask you key questions about your character and help you flesh her out.

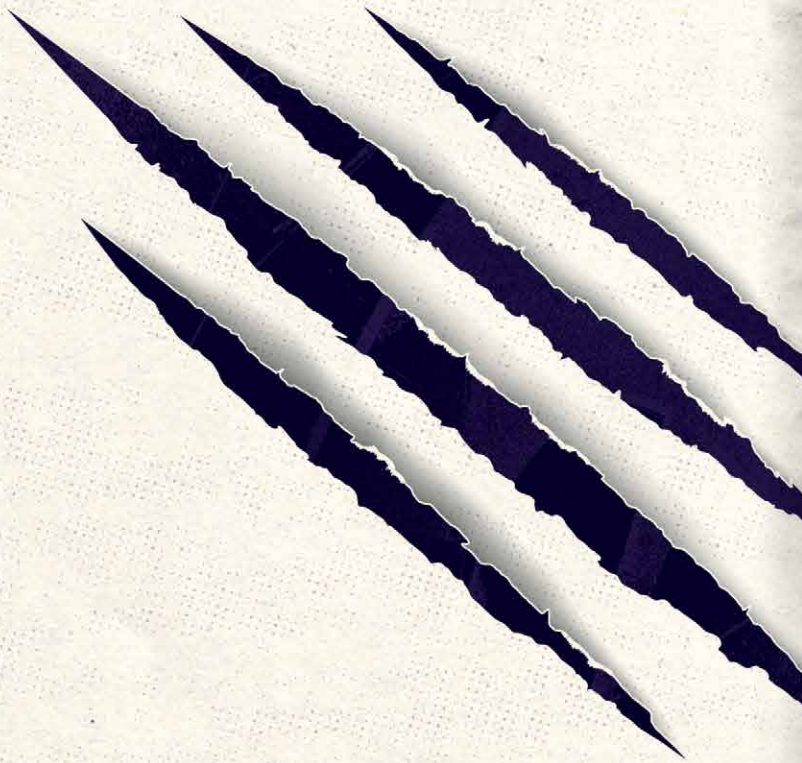
The first session of a game series or campaign is called the **Exposition Session** (or Session Zero). It is dedicated to defining the nature of your story, creating the lead characters and crew, and collecting some interesting facts and features you can use later on in your story. It's a good time to also work out the social agreement (see page 13) as well as the technical details of your sessions such as the schedule, location, and snacks (very important!). The Exposition Session can also include a taste of the action: a brief sample in which you play out a day in your characters' lives. This gives new players the chance to try out the basic rules of the game.

Before the Exposition Session, the MC should read this chapter to familiarize herself with the process and spend some time planning the session, possibly picking out some suggestions and jotting down a few ideas to get the discussion going. These ideas may or may not be selected by the group, but can nonetheless be useful inspiration or fallback in case the players are not quite sure where to start.

THE STEPS

During the Exposition Session, the MC takes the role of the host, directing the conversation. Go through the following steps one by one:

- **Establish the series concept**
  Decide on the nature of the story you are about to tell in *City of Mist*: what type of crew you are, what brought you together, and what kind of investigations will be at the center of your story. You continue to flesh out the concept and rework it throughout the Exposition Session.
- **Create your characters**
  Players come up with their individual character concepts and use themebooks to create their themes, power tags, weakness tags, the personal Mysteries their Mythos is urging them to explore, and the Identities that define their mundane life.
- **Finalize the crew**
  The players create the crew theme and define the relationships between the characters.
- **Play "A Day In The Life"**
  Play a short improvised gameplay depicting each character's life situation, daily routine, and everyday challenges. This helps fill out the missing parts and get a handle on the basic rules.



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THE EXPOSITION SESSION

1. SERIES CONCEPT ..... PAGE 46

Your characters already know each other and they work together (for whatever reason). Decide together:

? WHO ARE YOU, AS A CREW?

- Casual detectives
- Company men
- Conspiracy busters
- Dabblers in the Mist
- Survivors of an event
- A gang
- Investigative Masked Vigilantes
- Modern gods
- An order
- Professionals / Rifts-for-hire

? WHAT IS YOUR CITY OF MIST LIKE?

- True Noir (1930s), Neon Noir (80s), modern-day
- Generic comic-book city, exiting city, tapestry of realities
- Mystical Mist, realistic Mist

2. CHARACTER CREATION..... PAGE 54

See outline in the next page >>>

3. CREW CREATION ..... PAGE 144

The crew theme represents your shared resources, beliefs, and weaknesses.

- Choose a ready-to-play crew theme starting on page 149; or
- Create it together using the **crew themebook**, choosing 3 power tags, 1 weakness tag, and a Mystery or an Identity.

Crew Relationships define your initial number of **Help & Hurt points** with each crewmate.

- Each player writes down the names of all the other crew members.
- Go around the table, taking turns.
- On your turn, choose at random one Crew Relationship option from one of your themebooks and read it out loud.
- Choose whether to use this option and with which crewmate. If the crewmate accepts, you work out the details of your relationship.
- You gain one Help point and/or one Hurt point, as stated in the option you chose. Your crewmate does not gain points on your turn.
- Continue taking turns until you have enough details.

4. A DAY IN THE LIFE ..... PAGE 156

Play a short and casual session to tie everything together and complete missing details.

The MC starts by picking out a time of the day and asking:

? WHERE ARE YOUR CHARACTERS AND WHAT ARE THEY DOING ON THIS NORMAL DAY IN THEIR LIVES?

You all answer.

Ask and answer as many interesting questions as you can about:

- Your characters and their lives
- Your crew and what you do together
- Your City
- Any potential cases you are working on

Avoid tying loose ends.

Finally, play a few scenes to familiarize yourselves with the rules (given in Chapter 3).

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CHARACTER CREATION

1. CREATE A CONCEPT ..... PAGE 60

Choose your MYTHOS, the legend awakened within your character. It can be a person, being, item, or location from any story, mythology, legend, folklore, fairytale, literary work, urban legend, religious tale, concept, or real-world event.

Choose your LOGOS, your character's everyday persona and life. It can be any modern-day walk of life. Develop your concept by speculating about:

? WHY DID THIS MYTHOS MANIFEST THROUGH YOUR CHARACTER?

? WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER'S SECRET PAIN?

2. CHOOSE THEMES..... PAGE 64

Your character has four themes, with at least one Mythos theme and at least one Logos themes. **Mythos themes** represent legendary powers. **Logos themes** represent mundane abilities, qualities, resources, and allies.

Choose your initial level of awareness:

- **Legendary:** 3 Mythos themes, 1 Logos theme
- **Borderliner:** 2 Mythos themes, 2 Logos themes
- **Touched:** 1 Mythos theme, 3 Logos themes

Choose Mythos themes:

- Adaptation (versatility) (page 82)
- Bastion (defense) (page 86)
- Divination (information) (page 90)
- Expression (offense or ability to alter reality) (page 94)
- Mobility (movement) (page 98)
- Relic (powerful item) (page 102)
- Subversion (stealth or deceit) (page 106)

Choose Logos themes:

- Defining Event (in your past) (page 110)
- Defining Relationship (page 114)
- Mission (page 118)
- Personality (page 122)
- Possessions (page 126)
- Routine (page 130)
- Training (page 134)

Use **Character Tropes** starting on page 70 for quick ideas for your themes.

3. CHOOSE THEME DETAILS ..... PAGE 74

Use the **Themebooks** starting on page 82 to create each theme's tags and its Mystery or Identity.

TAGS..... PAGE 74

Tags are short and specific descriptions, usually 1-3 words long, describing a discrete quality, ability, object, resource, ally, situation, or thing in the game.

Tag questions in the themebooks help you create tags. When you answer a tag question, your answer becomes your tag. You cannot answer the same tag question twice.

POWER TAGS power your moves. They always describe something useful (ask yourself: what actions would this power tag boost?).

> **Each theme starts with 3 power tags.** You must answer the first power tag question in the Themebook. Then answer two more of your choice.
>
> **You can have only one broad power tag.** A broad power tag is one that would be useful in many different situations.

WEAKNESS TAGS depower your moves but earn you Attention. They always describe something limiting (ask yourself: what actions would this weakness tag impede?).

> **Each theme starts with 1 weakness tag.** You can answer any weakness tag question.

Extra tags: In one theme of your choice, you may add one additional power tag and one additional weakness tag.

MYSTERIES AND IDENTITIES ..... PAGE 79

Mysteries and Identities drive your character to take action.

Every Mythos theme has a **Mystery**, a question for which your character is seeking answers.

Every Logos theme has an **Identity**, a statement in which your character strongly believes.

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THE SERIES CONCEPT

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There are countless stories you can tell in *City of Mist*. Maybe you are all members of the police force, working day and night to solve the City's strange cases and protect at least some of the residents from things that go bump in the night. Maybe you are mercenaries, selling your extraordinary abilities and expertise to the highest bidder, until a job goes wrong and shit starts hitting the fan. Or perhaps you are all victims of the same villainous Rift, brought together in an attempt to capture your mutual enemy and possibly enact revenge upon him or her.

***City of Mist* assumes that your characters already know each other** and that they work together (for whatever reason). At the beginning of the Exposition Session, when you set out to create your story, the first question the MC presents to the group is:

? WHO ARE YOU, AS A CREW?

The answer defines the focus of your series. If you decide to be a group of outcasts and rejects living in the forsaken and derelict parts of town and surviving against oddities and monstrosities at the edge of the Mist, then this is what your series will be about, for the most part. You won't be *regularly* hired by high-flying officials to silence their political opposition, not because it's impossible (this could actually be the subject of an interesting case or story arc) but because this is not the focus of your game. On the other hand, if you are a team of hitmen, assassinating political targets may be your bread-and-butter activity.

Brainstorm some ideas and discuss them. Ask each other questions about each idea to develop it. You can choose one of the following as your story concept and elaborate on it.

CASUAL DETECTIVES

Investigating doesn't have to be a full-time job. I mean, you have your work, your family, your hobbies. Every now and then a peculiar story just seems to fall into your lap, just as you're about to have your lunch break, so you spend some time looking into it and hopefully help someone out. Sure, sometimes things get messy right when you have to pick up the kids or walk your dog, and the weirdest stuff seems to happen just when your mother-in-law is visiting. But somehow, everything turns up okay. It's all fun and games, right? Until somebody loses a dead body…

Series focus: everyday life

Characters: prosaic or mundane jobs, stay-at-home parents, kids

Possible cases: investigating neighborhood drama and foiling the small-time schemes of local Rifts while juggling the characters' everyday life

COMPANY MEN

A fishy insurance claim in the suburbs. A medical case that just doesn't make sense. A tax audit where the numbers don't add up. It's your department's job to investigate these cases for your company and bring the (right) truth to light. You're the best at what you do, probably because you can see things other people can't. It's no wonder then that the strange cases just seem to pile up on your desk. You grab your blazer or handbag, keys to the company car, and head over to check out the scene. Nobody has to know if you're asking a few extra questions, personal questions. You help the company and the company is only looking for results. That is, until they tell you to drop a case that you have a special interest in.

Series focus: an all-powerful organization

Characters: white-collar professionals, resourceful secretaries, undercover agents, terminated employees, failed experiments and rejects

Possible cases: obtaining evidence without the company's knowledge, going back to cold cases to find a lead, identifying and recruiting allies within or outside the organization, exposing deep-rooted Mythos involvement in the company

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CONSPIRACY BUSTERS

It's an ugly lifestyle, but if you can stomach living in the back of a van, sipping cold coffee and chewing on dry donuts, you're more than likely to catch sight of some strange things happening in the City, things the media will never report. There seems to be a connection between the world behind the Mist and high-ranking government officials, filthy rich tycoons, and power-hungry oligarchs. You're just sitting there with your camera, under the bridge, on the docks, at the parking garage at night, waiting to snap that shot which will prove it all. Maybe you're crazy, but your heart tells you that the truth is out there. Watch out for yourself and don't be naive; the people you're after certainly aren't. They will do whatever it takes to cover up their involvement. If you try to blow the lid, you'd better be prepared for some serious heat.

Series focus: government-level conspiracies

Characters: journalists, tech experts, alien believers, inadvertently involved down-to-earth City residents

Possible cases: stakeouts gone wrong, finding new ways to spy on targets, confronting Rifts and other goons sent to get rid of you, breaking into a top-secret facility, finding someone who will run the story (and keeping them alive)

DABBLERS IN THE MIST

Strange cases are not confined to modern times. Living legends have always walked the streets of this City and have left a plethora of evidence for you to find. If you search the City's museums, old buildings, ruins, and forgotten tunnel systems you will come up with ancient artifacts, crumbling manuscripts, and cryptic riddles that will lead your crew to the answers you seek. Perhaps your crew includes a two-bit mystic looking for the real deal or a religious zealot seeking redemption. Maybe you have on board an eager academic, a greedy smuggler, or simply someone curious about the story behind their Mythos. But beware: there are things buried in the Mist that are better left untouched. Beneath the city streets, dark cults and lunatic priests may be calling upon forces far beyond your grasp. You dabble at your own peril.

Series focus: the occult

Characters: mystics and mediums, people of the cloth, new-age hippies, archaeologists

Possible cases: following a trail of riddles and prophecies in ancient manuscripts and artifacts, investigating supernatural occurrences, dealing with rich and ill-intending collectors or mystics, delving into ancient places in search for answers, facing the spiritual forces that threaten to take over the City

THE EVENT

After it happened, you were never the same again. Sleepless nights, working overtime, and indulging in all kinds of distractions didn't work for any of you. Flashbacks still haunt you of that day, blurry memories. You couldn't leave it behind. You wanted

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to know, to understand, to find a solution or a way out, so you decided to get to the bottom of it. Soon enough you discovered that you're not the only one. There are others like you, others who have been there too, and they too are looking for answers. Together, you have a better chance at finding out what the hell happened there and put an end to this. Permanently.

Series focus: a traumatic or life-altering event shared by everyone on the crew

Characters: a mixed group of people from all walks of life

Possible cases: locating other people who were involved, overcoming Rifts who set out to hide the evidence or rogue Rifts related to the event, discovering the Rift or mythical operation behind the event and fighting to bring them down

THE GANG

You're more than just investigation partners: you're friends. Whether you are high-school friends, university chums, elderly home roommates, or just hanging out together, you've known each other for a while and possibly even helped each other go through your awakenings. It seems whenever you hang out together, strange things start happening around you, things that are connected to your own personal questions. Can you help those around you restore the peace while solving the mysteries of your own Mythoi? You may not have fancy headquarters, a great deal of resources, or the slightest clue what you are doing, but hey - you have each other!

Series focus: the relationships within the crew

Characters: students, teachers, or other City residents who are friends, classmates, roommates, or family members

Possible cases: investigating bizarre incidents within your social circle (e.g., school, apartment block) that at first seem insignificant, tackling others within your social circle who use their Mythos powers immorally or against you, discovering that one or all of you are of special interest to some big players in the City – and dealing with it

"MASKED VIGILANTE" INVESTIGATIONS

There's too much crime in this city and your goddamn conscience won't let you just turn your head the other way. Someone has to make things right, but the police are bogged down with bureaucracy and corruption, helpless in the face of organized crime and street gangs. Somewhere in the pit of your stomach, you all know that crime is thriving because it's getting help, help that ordinary law enforcement can neither perceive nor overcome. So it's up to you to hit the streets and do the dirty work. Whether you are beat cops, police detectives, lawless vigilantes, private eyes, concerned citizens or anything in between, you've all gathered for one reason: to fight crime and protect the residents of your City. But what happens when you have to break the law to do so?

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Series focus: crime

Characters: hard-boiled detectives and private eyes, vigilantes, police, related office staff

Possible cases: tracking and busting delinquent Rifts, fighting police corruption, working through the ranks to uncover a large-scale Mythos-powered crime organization

MODERN GODS

You're not mortals anymore; you haven't been for a while now. Inside you, the ancient gods of a forgotten pantheon have awakened and grown. All or most of you have embraced your Mythos as your true identity, and perhaps you even mock those among you who have allowed themselves to get mixed up in mortal life enough to forget their divinity. But secretly you each know it is not so simple to let go of your old false selves. Mortal life has its allure and it is calling each and every one of you to relinquish your power for the wonder of living in the moment. And as if that isn't enough, there may be other pantheons operating in your turf, waiting for your power to fail. How will you prevail?

Series focus: gods, their divinity, and their domains

Characters: gods of war, beauty, wisdom, sea, sky, fertility, underworld, storm, fire, etc.

Possible cases: running a personal life while taking action to fortify or expand your domain(s): cutting a deal with another god, directly attacking other gods or their personal lives, hiring Rifts to do your dirty work, plotting to affect hosts of Sleepers, joining forces to survive a danger which threatens all gods

THE ORDER

For centuries, your order has been tasked with a secret mission. It was founded long ago, by those who have identified the workings of the forces beyond the Mist. Are you protecting the unaware Sleepers from shadowy marauding Rifts? Do you hunt monsters, undead, demons, and their likes? Or will you discover you've been used as an instrument to achieve a much darker objective? All you know is that your life belongs to the order. Perhaps you were recruited after your awakening, or maybe you were a member even before. Is the order somehow responsible for your awakening? You wouldn't put it beyond them; maybe you'd even understand. For those sworn into the order, anything is justified in the name of the cause.

Series focus: the battle between light and dark

Characters: monster hunters, bounty hunters, veterans, history buffs, weapon experts, martial artists

Possible cases: carrying out missions for the order, hunting down an enemy of the order, dealing with a traitor within the order, digging into the past of the organization, becoming renegades and survive attacks by the order, facing the ultimate mythical enemy of the order

THE PROS

There's always a need for professionals who can get a job done. A team of Rifts can accomplish great things and there are plenty of wealthy movers-and-shakers willing to pay you to do their dirty work. Are you a group of ex-military warfare experts? Or an assortment of con artists capable of pulling off the most elaborate heists? Perhaps cat burglars and safe crackers? Whatever it is you do, someone will pay for it: you can get rich or die trying. And there's more: when you get involved in this line of work, you invariably get to know people who know people and who can lead you to what you're looking for. But always remember – one wrong turn and your powerful employer will be coming after you.

Series focus: operations and heists

Characters: (ex- or para-) military, smooth operators, expert thieves and burglars, masterminds, demolition experts

Possible cases: procuring special gear needed for a job, gathering intel on a target, overcoming Rift-powered opposition or competition while trying to achieve mission objective (assassination, abduction, burglary, fraud, extraction, etc.), helping a team member on a personal mission, secretly trying to uncover the identity of your employer

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YOUR CITY

Another aspect of the story to consider is the City itself. Different stories may be set in different versions of the City of Mist. While one may be set in modern times, with access to all the latest technological advancements (or even more sophisticated technology), another may be set in a classic early 20th century film noir setting, with phones connected by operators and art-deco buildings. One may be based on an existing city while another is a strange hodge-podge of cities from around the globe.

The second question the MC presents to the group is:

? WHAT IS OUR CITY OF MIST LIKE?

This question can be answered at the most minimal level in order to complete the series concept, or it could even be left for the MC to decide. Answering it lets everyone at table know the nature of the setting and therefore what kind of characters to create, as well as what details could fit the story better. For example, it would be impossible (or at least irrelevant) to be a computer expert in a 1930s setting, while a mobster in modern times is unlikely to wield a tommy gun.

Use the following options to help better define the style, era, and location of your story.

TRUE NOIR

Your story is film noir in its purest form. Gents in raincoats and fedoras and dames in glittery evening gowns foxtrot and exchange gunfire in a strictly black-and-white City. Art deco is all the rage in interior design. The police are corrupt and the City is forever in the clutches of organized crime. The technology in a true noir setting usually does not exceed that of the 1930s, so you don't see any computers or mobile phones.

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NEON NOIR

Your story is a variation on film noir, still with a strong retro flavor, harkening back to the 80s. With bleached mullets and denim jackets or colorful suits with shoulder-pads, your crew is almost too pretty to be anti-heroic. Slick red cars with gullwing doors leave a cool phosphorous trail as they go by, and everything is lit up by the glow of neon. Confidential information is stored on tape cassettes and floppy disks, and phones have keypads.

THE DREARY PRESENT

Your story is a noir-inspired detective story set nowadays. All the challenges of the world as you know it are included: an overcrowded city, growing social alienation to the point of mass psychosis, unchecked consumerism. The ghost dimension of the Internet is superimposed on all aspects of life (although it may not be a focus of your series). People live in an almost impenetrable bubble of distraction, giving the Mist a whole new interpretation.

GENERIC COMIC-BOOK METROPOLIS

Your story is set in a city that looks and acts like most cities in comic books. Usually modeled after a major American city (and specifically New York), your City copies the style and locations typical to its inspiration but nonetheless does not have the specific landmarks of any city in particular. Instead it has fictional, often generic establishments: the Royal Plaza Hotel, Municipal Institution for the Criminally Insane, or 'The City Herald' newspaper.

EXISTING CITY

Your story is set in a city that is a copy of an existing city, whether as it is today or as it was in the past. This relates to all or almost all features of the real-world city such as landmarks, municipal services, language, and cultural trends. Of course, being a City of Mist it is hard to tell if the City in your story is actually the real City or a figment of the Mist. Furthermore, with modern cities being so globally connected, you should keep in mind that it's virtually impossible to leave the City, at least for the lead characters.

TAPESTRY OF REALITIES

Your story is set in a city than isn't really a single well-defined place but a patchwork of cities from different places and different times, all bent and molded together into an amalgamated metropolis that epitomizes cities: the City of Cities. Sleepers of course have no reason to suspect this make-up and even Rifts may be completely accepting of this meta-city assuming they have always lived here. Perhaps the reason for this is that the Mist connects all cities, like the all-pervasive Ether. This option allows you to use elements from different cities in your story without worrying about consistency.

REALISTIC MIST

In your story, the Mist is not a mystical force but a social phenomenon. There is no metaphysical juju preventing people from seeing the truth: they just don't want to see it. Clearly, Sleepers know that there are living legends in the City, but they refuse to acknowledge it or discuss it, sometimes even at the price of their lives. Have they been brainwashed or are they just afraid? Is it a form of McCarthyism enacted by the authorities, or a widespread psychological response to the unknown? Either way, this conspiracy of silence has the same manifestation as the mystical Mist, except it's just in people's heads.

ADDING DETAILS TO THE CITY

During the Exposition Session, going into further details in describing the City is entirely optional and should focus on details that arise from the crew and character creation. For example, when creating a fugitive Rift, one player might raise the question whether the police have a special unit for dealing with 'strange cases'. This should be decided with the rest of the group or the group can agree to leave this to the MC.

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It's generally recommended to leave all other details about the City to be added during the game, or for the MC to think up during prep. You can skim the list of city aspects given in the MC Toolkit book (page 15) to see if there are any other important questions about the City that should be answered at this point.

SERIES CONCEPT EXAMPLE: LAKESIDE DRIVE

Jerry, Megan, Lamar, and Alice the MC have met up for their Exposition Session. After discussing a few options, they chose to go with a crew that resolves around a major event (The Event).

In their series, a catastrophe has destroyed a massive area in the neighborhood their characters lived in. But something strange happened thereafter; the Mist started covering up the event very quickly and very aggressively. The expansive crater left by the event filled up with water and became a small lake, or pond, around which the City has built a park. The neighborhood was aptly renamed after the new road around it, Lakeside Drive. The thing is, no one remembers any of this. The entire City thinks the pond has always been at the heart of Lakeside Drive.

The debris and remains of buildings at the bottom of the pond now seem like old archaeological ruins to Sleepers, who believe they have been there for centuries. Most alarmingly, people who have lost their loved ones believe completely different things about the circumstances of their disappearance: one person died in war overseas, another upped and left his wife and kids, a third fell in with the wrong crowd.

The lead characters, being Rifts, remember the incident and are dumbfounded at the blatant forgetfulness and blindness that struck their neighborhood. They are adamant to get to the bottom of this, even if they are just regular Janes and Joes who are facing something much greater than they understand. Having known each other previously and upon discovering that they all remember the catastrophe, they decide to investigate together.

To top it all off, the pond, situated at the heart of what's left of their neighborhood, has become a dark and eerie place. Its deep green water turned turbid and there are urban legends about strange cratures skulking on its shores. Few ever go there after dark; few but our protagonists, of course.

The group would like a slight touch of retro on this series, so they decide to go for a neon-noir story inspired by the 80s and set in a generic comic-book metropolis.

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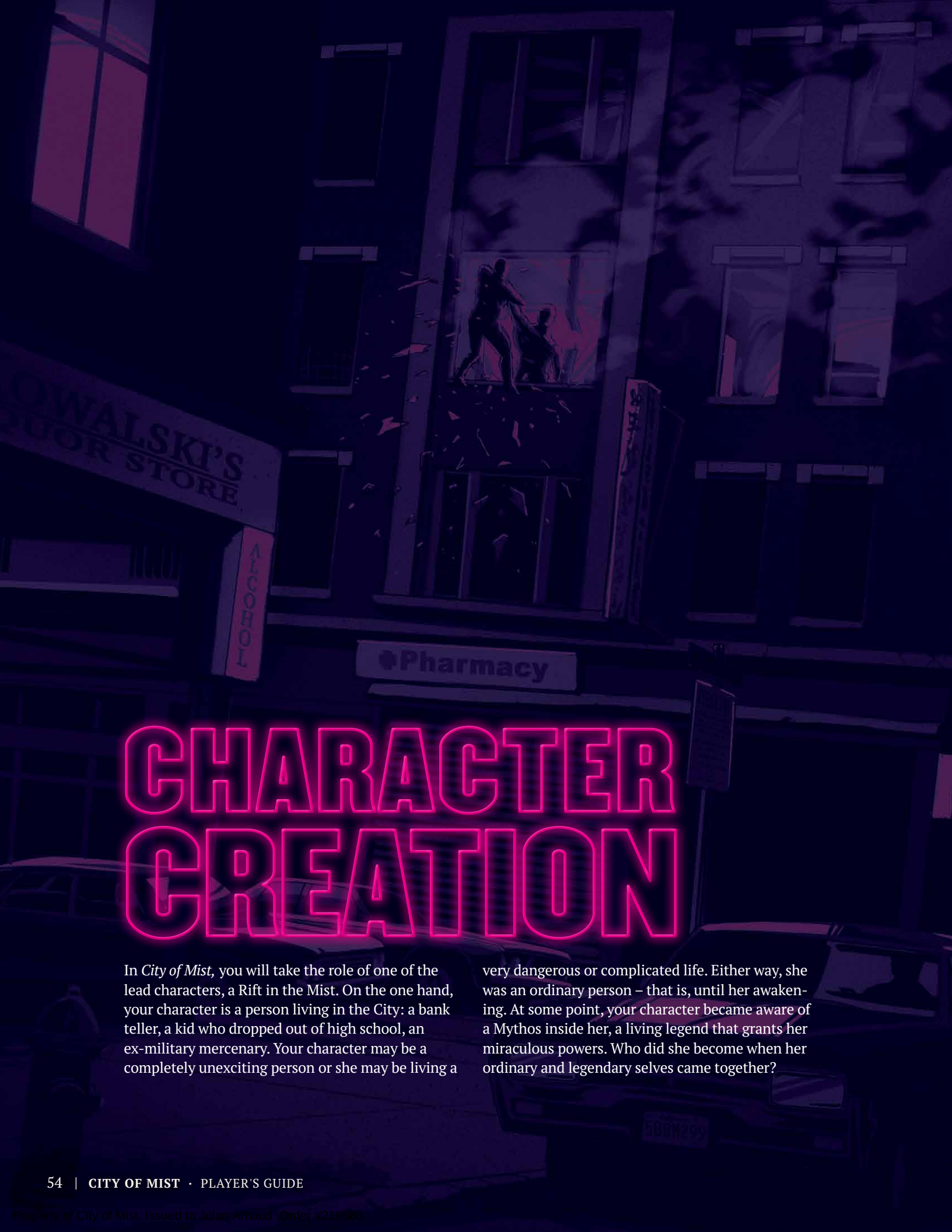

CHARACTER CREATION

In *City of Mist,* you will take the role of one of the lead characters, a Rift in the Mist. On the one hand, your character is a person living in the City: a bank teller, a kid who dropped out of high school, an ex-military mercenary. Your character may be a completely unexciting person or she may be living a very dangerous or complicated life. Either way, she was an ordinary person – that is, until her awakening. At some point, your character became aware of a Mythos inside her, a living legend that grants her miraculous powers. Who did she become when her ordinary and legendary selves came together?

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This section contains everything you need to create rich and interesting *City of Mist* characters from start to finish. Depending on how much time you'd like to invest, you can opt for the full character creation process or quickly draft a character without getting into all the nitty-gritty details. You can also pick up a pre-generated character from the *City of Mist Starter Set*.

WORDS OVER NUMBERS

In *City of Mist*, characters, objects, places, and qualities are described using only words. Unlike many other role-playing games, there are no numerical values describing how fast, strong, or charming your character is. Instead, you simply note in words the qualities and things you wish to have. For example, you note that your character is strong, or better yet, the ways in which she is strong: maybe she's good at lifting but not at punching or hurling, or vice versa. (The only exception to this is the number used to describe the severity of a Status, as explained in Chapter 3: Working the Case).

CREATING A RIFT

Every *City of Mist* character is made out of **four major aspects,** called **themes**, that describe either her legendary powers or her ordinary life. Themes that describe a character's legendary powers are called **Mythos** themes; themes that describe her ordinary life are called **Logos** themes.

Each theme includes:

- **Power tags**, short descriptive items that describe specific **useful** things in your character. Power tags are used to boost your actions. For example, the power tags *old revolver* or *accurate shot* can boost your action when you try to shoot a pistol.
- **Weakness tags**, short descriptive items that describe specific **limiting** things in your character. Weakness tags limit your actions but are used to improve a theme, granting Attention points. For example, the weakness tags *afraid of guns* or *weapon jam* can impede your action when you try to shoot a pistol.
- A **Mystery** or an **Identity**, a question or a statement that motivates your character to act. Mysteries are questions your character wants to answer, such as *Who is behind the downfall of my family's empire?* Identities are statements that define your character, such as *I will not let the truth escape me again*!

Note that all of the components of your characters are descriptions; however, they are descriptions of different kinds and they are used for different purposes in the game. In some of the game rules, there's significance to the number of components you have of a certain type. For example, the Core Moves ask you to count the number of power tags and weakness tags you have that fit your action. Other moves ask you to count the number of Mythos or Logos themes your character has.

To create your character, follow these steps:

- Step 1: Think of a concept for your character.
- Step 2: Choose four themes.
- Step 3: Use the themebooks to choose theme components.

The following sections provide guidelines on each step of character creation.

QUICK CHARACTER CREATION

Player characters in *City of Mist* are rather simple: they are made of a total of 16 or 18 tags and 4 questions or statements. Once you are familiar with the character creation process described below (such as the theme types and limitations on tag selection), you can quickly draft new characters in a few moments. A starting character in *City of Mist* has four themes of different types, each with 3 power tags, 1 weakness tag, and a Mystery or an Identity (depending on the theme type). You can choose to have an additional power tag in one of your themes, but you must also then take an additional weakness tag in the same theme. Write down your themes' title, tags, Mysteries, and Identities on your theme cards, and you are ready to play.

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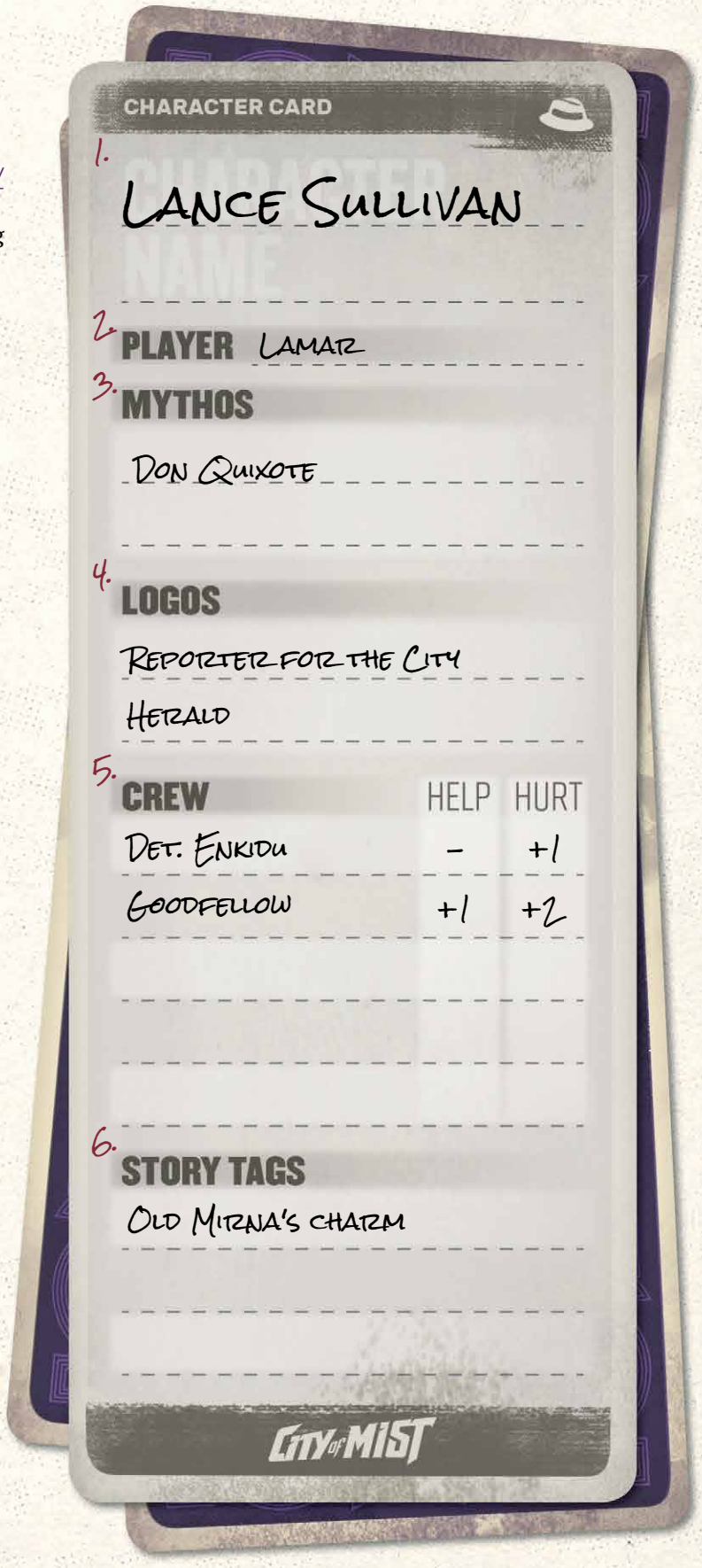
CHARACTER AND THEME CARDS

To keep track of your character, use the *City of Mist Character and Theme Cards* or the Character Sheet, which is also divided into cards (you can find a copy of the character sheet at **cityofmist.co/download** or make copies of the sheet at the back of this book). This book assumes that you are using cards to track your character's details.

Every character has a single character card:

CHARACTER CARD FRONT

1. **Character name**
   Your character's name, alias, or codename
2. **Player name**
   Your name
3. **Mythos**
   The name or description of the legend within your character
4. **Logos**
   A description of your character's mundane persona
5. **Crew**
   A list of your crew members and the Hurt and Help points you have for each
6. **Story Tags**
   A space for other permanent tags you might acquire during the game



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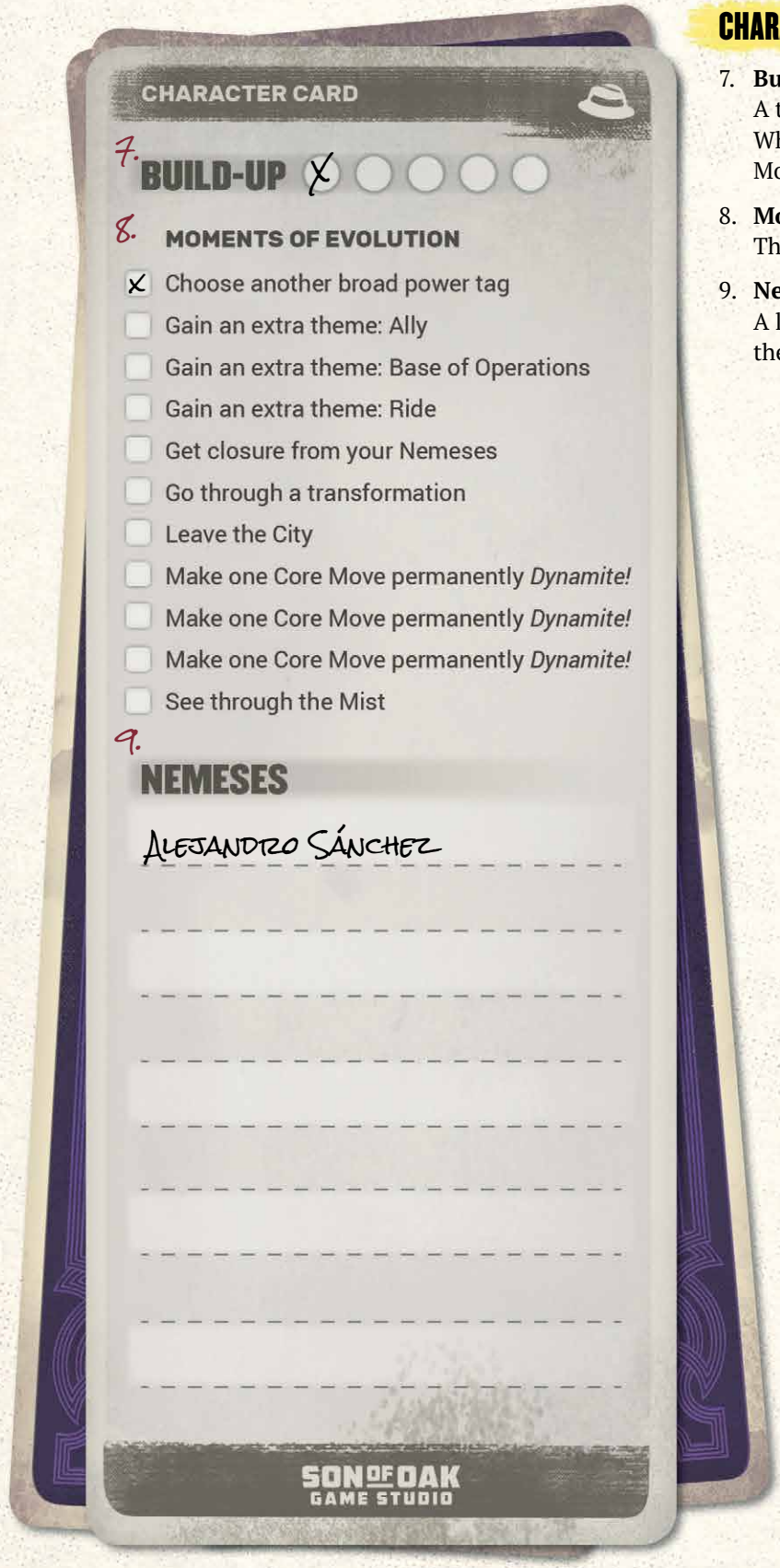

CHARACTER CARD BACK

7. **Build-Up**
   A track of your overall character growth. When it's full, you reset it and choose a Moment of Evolution
8. **Moments of Evolution**
   The list of Moments of Evolution to choose from
9. **Nemeses**
   A list of the Nemeses you gained by replacing themes

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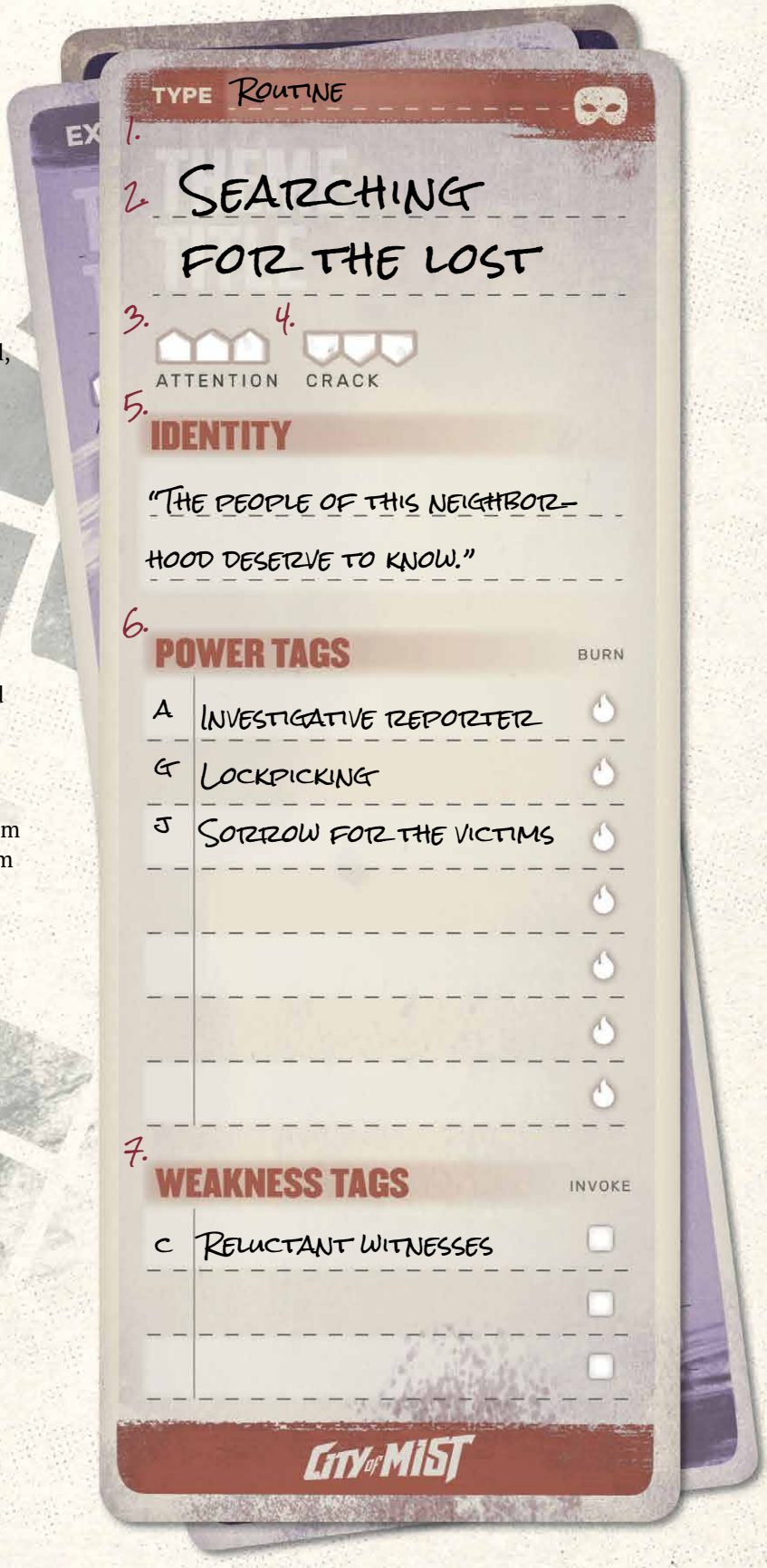
Every character has four theme cards:

THEME CARD FRONT

1. **Type**
   A theme's type, which defines its nature, chosen out of the 14 theme types
2. **Title**
   A descriptive name for the theme
3. **Attention**
   A track for the theme's growth. When it's full, you reset it and choose an improvement.
4. **Fade or Crack**
   A track for the theme's deterioration. When it's full, you replace the theme.
5. **Mystery or Identity**
   A question or a statement that drives your character
6. **Power tags**
   Seven slots for power tags, the letters of the questions that were used to create them, and their 'burn' status
7. **Weakness tags**
   Three slots for weakness tags and the letters of the questions that were used to create them (also, a checkbox to mark if you invoked them this session, see optional rule on page 207)



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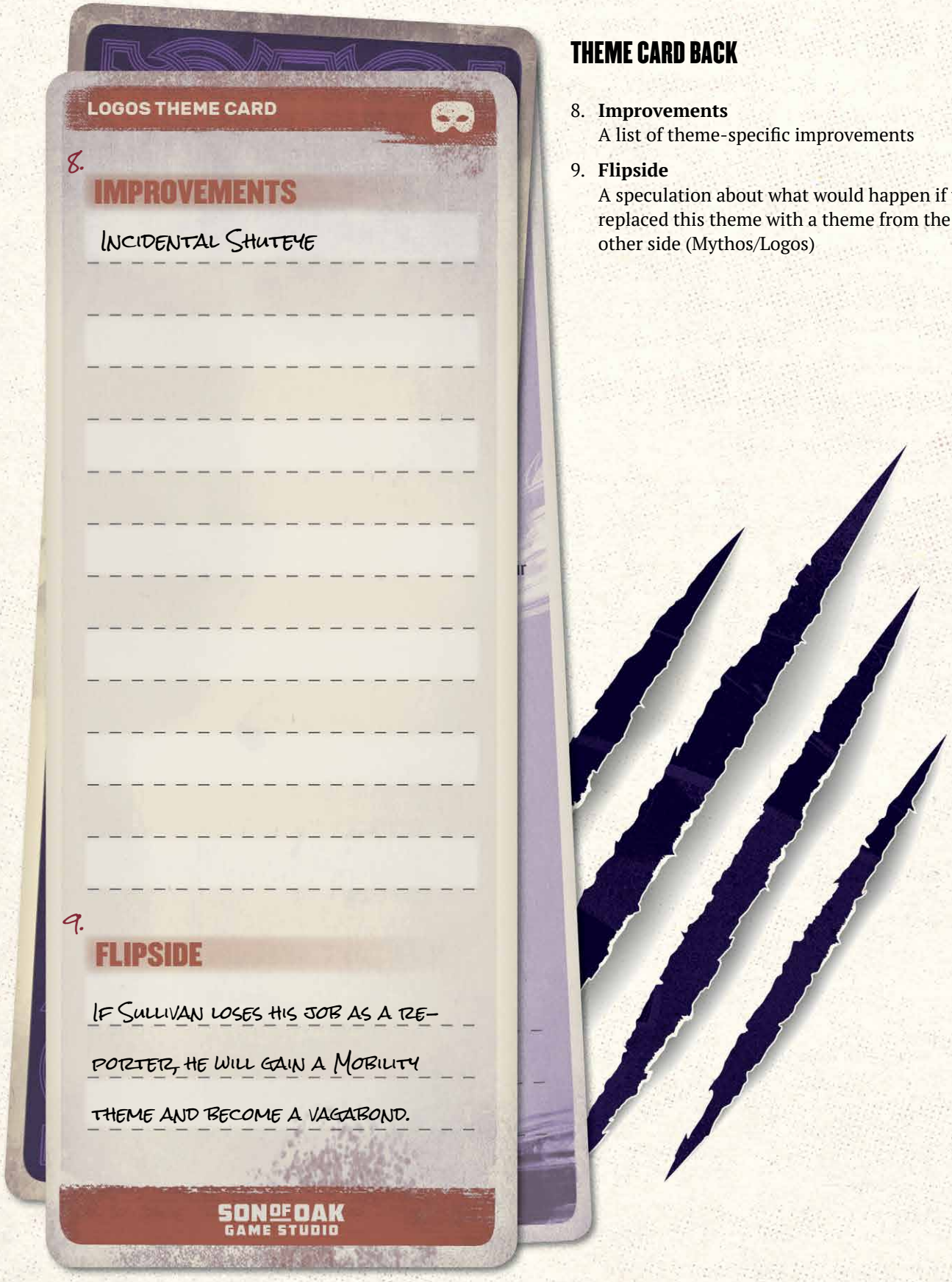

THEME CARD BACK

8. **Improvements**
   A list of theme-specific improvements
9. **Flipside**
   A speculation about what would happen if you replaced this theme with a theme from the other side (Mythos/Logos)

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STEP 1: CHARACTER CONCEPT

Your *City of Mist* character is built around an inner conflict between the legendary and the ordinary, her **Mythos** and her **Logos**. At the same time, your character can combine her Mythos and Logos aspects to achieve her goals. To create a solid *City of Mist* character concept, answer the following questions for your character:

? WHICH LEGEND HAS TAKEN ROOT IN ME?

The answer to this question is your **Mythos** concept.

? WHO AM I IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE CITY?

The answer to this question is your **Logos** concept.

Once you established your Mythos and Logos concepts, write them in brief on your character card.

MYTHOS

Your character's Mythos is the legend growing inside her. It is most often an element of an existing real world story, such as:

- **a human character** whether they possess supernatural powers or not
- **a supernatural being**, such as a god or a fairy
- **a legendary creature or monster**
- **an anthropomorphic animal** (like the puss in *Puss in Boots*)
- **a magical item** or an object of great significance
- **a magical location**

The story from which you draw your Mythos can be:

- **a mythology,** such as the Egyptian, Celtic, Aztec, or any other
- **legend or folklore**, such as Arthurian legend or West African Ashanti folklore
- **a fairy tale**, such as the Grimm brother's fairy tales or *The Little Mermaid*
- **a folk story**, such as the tales of the lumberjack Paul Bunyan
- **a ghost story**, such as Bloody Mary
- **a famous literary work**, such as *Peter Pan*, *Frankenstein*, or *The Wind in the Willows*
- **an urban legend**, like the Sewer Gators or the Hook
- **a religious tale**, such as the stories about saints in Christianity, Sufi masters in Islam, or bodhisattvas in Buddhism
- **a real world occurrence** that has received legend status, such as Jack the Ripper

Your character's supernatural powers, abilities, and items are derived from her Mythos. If the legendary character or object in your Mythos was resistant to fire or could climb a wall like a spider, your modern-day Rift may have similar powers. However, your Mythos may not necessarily have obvious supernatural powers. Even subtle qualities, such as remarkable beauty and grace or the ability to understand the workings of any device, can become legendary attributes that are amplified in your modern-day character.

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Note that your character is not identical to her Mythos. Instead, you decide how to interpret the Mythos and how it is expressed in your character. Some features of the Mythos may not be manifested in you. For example, you could have the Mythos of Robin Hood but not be an excellent bowman. Other features may be only visible to characters who are able to see your Mythos. For example, if your Mythos is a troll, Sleepers may see you as burly and a little on the crooked side, while Rifts who know you and have seen your powers at work could start noticing your stony skin and moss-strewn hair, and perhaps see you as a monstrous troll when you use your Mythos powers at maximum power.

You can choose how certain aspects of your Mythos manifest in you and even give them a spin. For example, if your character has the Mythos of Snow White, who ate a poisoned apple, you could decide that her Mythos makes her vulnerable to poison or, just as well, that having been poisoned, she is now more resistant to poison or even able to poison others.

Most importantly, the fate of your Mythos in legend will not necessarily be your character's fate. Jack from Jack And The Beanstalk eventually escaped his pursuers, but this may not be true about his modern-day version. While the destiny of a Mythos in the mythical account may be sealed, a Rift is a new and independent individual who may or may not come to the same end.

THE NATURE OF A MYTHOS

Your Mythos is largely unknown or unfathomable to your character – it is a part of herself that she can never fully understand, something growing inside her that is at once different from her but also the same. A Mythos is often shrouded in darkness, mystery, or confusion, not necessarily because it is evil (although it may be), but because it is miraculous and unpredictable. It can manifest and evolve in any number of ways, surprising even you, the Rift who is channeling it. Furthermore, a Mythos is forever veiled by the Mist, even within the psyche of your character. It is, in a way, a thundering open question, the mystery that lies at the heart of your character's existence. It is calling your character to step out of her ordinary self and explore. Inevitably, and whether or not your character consciously knows this, its agenda is to help you open up more and more to its mystery, letting go of your ordinary life for the ultimate existence it offers.

MYTHOS IS...

The unknown: questions, doubts, dark places, subconscious, the void, a search for a higher or deeper truth, intuition, clues, visions, symbolism, loss of touch with daily life, and specifically the **mystery** in your character's existence:

- questions your character has about herself and her place in the world
- things your character senses or feels but are vague and impalpable
- symbolism that fascinates her
- a wish to be more than what she is
- what pulls your character to the edge

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LOGOS

Your character's Logos is her everyday persona, her ordinary life. Where Mythos represents the mystery in your character's existence, Logos represents what your character definitely knows about herself, who she really is – or at least who she believes she is. This includes her occupation, relationships, interests, habits, and background.

The ordinary aspects of your character can be just as interesting as her legendary aspects. Your character can be a very mundane person, with a regular nine-to-five job and a normal family and circle of friends, but what does that really mean? Every job requires certain skills and confers certain benefits that can become handy or interesting during the game. No family is like another, and a normal relationship is often fraught with challenges and complicated feelings. So even though your character's Logos represents her ordinary side, it actually tells us the interesting things about her: who she loves, what's special about her as a person, where she fails, and what her secret pain is. Logos makes your character more real by giving her texture and depth.

This does not necessarily mean that your Logos concept should be lukewarm and unexciting. Even in our real 'ordinary' world there is so much diversity, so many different walks of life, it's dazzling. Your character's Logos could portray her as a depressed forklift operator, a dry and arrogant tax auditor, or a happy-go-lucky university student. But it could also be that you are a bookie, a bounty hunter, a backpacker, a martial arts expert, a Hollywood actress, a drag queen, a drug lord, a serial killer, a nature reserve ranger, etc. Logos, therefore, has its color as well.

The real difference between Mythos and Logos lies in two points. First, your Logos is always decidedly unmagical. It can stretch the limits of what is accepted as ordinary (for example, a meditation which somewhat accelerates healing could perhaps still fall under the Logos of a Zen monk), but ultimately it covers only things that can be easily explained by the scientific and technological understanding of lay people in the City. In that regard, any extraordinary genius or hyper-advanced technology that you possess falls under your Mythos themes.

Second, your Logos is who you believe and know you are. Where your Mythos present you with questions, your Logos offers you answers. It is what you rely on in life, the fundamental understanding of what you should be doing every morning when you open your eyes. Even if your Logos concept is that you are a bitter alcoholic who does nothing but complain about her miserable life, then at least that much is clear to you, that part of your life is stable and constant and makes you feel sane. It's also what the Mist most utilizes to distract you from your real questions but, in a way, you are thankful for that. When things get too deep, intense, or outright deranged with your Mythos, you embrace the safety of your Logos, knowing that whatever happens, at least you have this, at least you know who you are. However, as you'll see in the game, what you believe staunchly to be your stable identity may be more fragile than you know.

LOGOS IS...

The known: answers, convictions, decisions, definitions, values, attachments, habits, clarity, safety, stability, and specifically your character's **identity**:

- what your character knows about herself
- how your character defines herself
- what's important to your character
- what your character appreciates, values, or loves
- what makes your character feel safe in an unpredictable world

Here are two questions that can help you come up with your Logos concept:

? WHY DID MY MYTHOS MANIFEST THROUGH ME?

While no generalization applies to all Mythoi, they often seem to choose Rifts with backgrounds that resonate with their legend. Therefore, some of the elements in your Logos concept could echo qualities of your Mythos. For example, if your Mythos is a monarch or a member of the nobility, like the Queen of Sheba, it may have chosen you as

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a Rift because you are a wealthy person, a political leader, or an influential celebrity. However, Mythoi can also manifest through unlikely candidates. The aforementioned queen could just as well come to life in a socially-rejected teenager from the slums. A closer inspection of the Rift's life story may reveal other, unexpected similarities to her Mythoi (such as strong character), but sometimes the relation between Mythos and Logos remains obscure.

? WHAT IS MY SECRET PAIN?

To exist is to experience an endless variety of sensations, but human beings seem to always emphasize one above all others: pain. In the noir genre, characters often carry an emotional burden: perhaps something in their past is haunting them, maybe they see a bleak image of the present, or they could be afraid of the future. Some characters are aware of their pain while others have covered it up with layers of defense mechanisms, but mostly, noir characters don't talk about their pain. They avoid it, succumb to it, drown it in all sorts of manners, but they rarely confront it, and if they do, they do so alone.

Establishing your character's secret pain can give her depth and help you better understand her motives. You can describe her pain as a statement or a mantra that she repeats in her head (perhaps unconsciously) but rarely reveals to others, such as:

- **I have to be perfect or I'll be condemned for my mistakes.**
- **Unless I make myself useful to others, I'm worth nothing.**
- **I only feel I exist when I have success, fame, and the adoration of others.**
- **I am defective, broken beyond repair.**
- **People are overbearing, I must keep my distance.**
- **You can't trust anyone or anything. Trust only leads to complacency.**
- **I would rather lose myself in distraction than have to deal with my life.**
- **You either kill or get killed; that is the law of the jungle.**
- **Please don't be upset with me, I'll do anything!**

At your option, you can use your secret pain statement as one of your Identities when you create your individual themes in Step 3.

LANCE SULLIVAN, REPORTER FOR THE CITY HERALD (DON QUIXOTE)

Lamar is building a character based on the Mythos of Don Quixote, the delusional Spanish nobleman who decided to become a knight and fought windmills along with his rather saner helper, Sancho Panza. Thinking of his Mythos, Lamar decides that his character will be able to conjure a spectral suit of armor and a lance right out of his imagination.

Moving over to the character's Logos, Lamar decides that his character will be a reporter in his 40s who oscillates between bouts of romanticism and bitter disillusionment (he's not quite manic-depressive, but he's not too far). When he's in the zone, Lance wholeheartedly believes there is more going on in the City than meets the eye. When the investigation hits a dead end, he is prone to moodiness and melancholy. Followed around by his skeptical and reluctant photographer, Alejandro Sánchez (a snoring Sleeper), he often digs into the stories of victims of the pond incident (based on Lamar's group series concept, Lakeside Drive, see page 53), trying to trace down those who vanished unexpectedly. Only unlike his Mythos in the Don Quixote legend, the windmills in Sullivan's mind are often very real, just obscured by the Mist so that Sánchez can't see them.

Lance is trying to prove that what he sees is real, that he is not insane. His entire life and sense of worth is hinged upon his investigation into the pond incident. His secret pain can thus be phrased as: **I'm a poor excuse for a man; chasing windmills gives my life meaning**.

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STEP 2: CHOOSING THEMES

A **theme** is a major aspect of your character. It describes a central, important, or dominant part of the character's life that you want her story to revolve around. This is in part determined by what is important to the character, but also by what you would like to bring to the forefront during the game.

Each character is made out of four themes; each theme is associated with either Mythos or Logos. A character begins the game with at least one Mythos theme and at least one Logos theme. The balance of Mythos and Logos themes in a Rift determines how awake she is:

- a Rift with one Mythos theme and three Logos themes is **Touched**. For the Touched, ordinary life plays a bigger role than their Mythos, which they only tap into when absolutely necessary. Touched always run the risk of losing contact with their Mythos and becoming **Sleepers** again.
- a Rift with two Mythos themes and two Logos themes is a **Borderliner**. Borderliners are walking the line between becoming a glorious exemplar of their legend and maintaining their ordinary identity.
- a Rift with three Mythos themes and one Logos theme is a **Legendary**. Legendaries have almost entirely opened up to the Mythos in them, becoming more powerful and to some extent taking less interest in mundane life. Nevertheless, they are still dependent on one last thing that makes them human. Losing it would all but end their humanity and make them a willing vessel of their Mythos: an **Avatar**.

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Choose four themes for your character from the list of theme types below. Choose at least one Mythos theme and at least one Logos theme. To make your character richer and more interesting, it is recommended not to repeat theme types. Different player characters can choose the same theme type.

Take a theme card for each one of your themes. Write down the theme type at the top.

AIRTIME

In movie and TV jargon, "airtime" is the total time someone or something is seen on screen and therefore an indication of how much attention it receives. For example, a character who only shows up once throughout the series is said to receive little airtime. Similarly, in *City of Mist*, **airtime** refers to the amount of attention a certain character, aspect, or detail receives in the game: how often it comes up in your story and what significance it holds.

Your character's themes and tags are not supposed to cover all aspects and details of your character, just the ones that most matter to you. By picking specific themes, and specific tags within those themes, you are essentially saying "these are the things that I'd like to see receiving the most airtime during the game."

PLAYING THE AWAKENING

A game of *City of Mist* usually revolves around characters who are already Rifts, and have been Rifts for at least a short while; at the very least, the lead characters are Touched and have managed to muster some control over one aspect of their Mythos powers. As an alternative, you can create characters that are in the early stages of a gradual awakening, characters who are just now starting to discover their powers. Playing an awakening character in a crew of fully-fledged Rifts can give your character a different angle and role among the lead characters. Playing an entire crew of newly-awakened Rifts could be a series concept in and of itself.

To create an **awakening character**, choose three Logos themes and one Mythos theme, just as you would when creating a Touched character. However, your Mythos theme starts as a **nascent theme**, a theme with just one power tag instead of three. This tag represents the only manifestation of Mythos powers that the character has experienced so far, or the first she will experience during the game.

Remember that awakening characters don't know much of what is said about the Mist in Chapter 1: The Lowdown. If you are playing an awakening character, it's very likely that your character is still a total noob when it comes to the life of a Rift. Your character may also have no clue about the nature of her Mythos as it is just starting to emerge. You can choose to leave your Mythos completely unknown and choose your nascent Mythos theme and power tag only when it reveals itself for the first time in the story.

As an aside, note that not all Rifts awaken gradually. While playing awakening characters can be interesting, the fact that some Rifts awaken slowly does not preclude the possibility of other Rifts gaining immense Mythos powers immediately upon their awakening. You can play a character that has just been awakened and still use the rules for Touched, Borderliners, and Legendaries.

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MYTHOS THEME TYPES

Mythos theme types represent aspects of your Mythos powers and the different ways you can use them to affect the world:

The **ADAPTATION** theme type (page 82) represents powers that can change according to the situation or powers with many different uses such as sorcery, shapeshifting, or gadgeteering.

The **BASTION** theme type (page 86) represents powers that allow you to survive harsh conditions and protect yourself and others from harm, such as a body made of stone, invulnerability, or magical protection.

The **DIVINATION** theme type (page 90) represents powers that allow you to know or learn things beyond normal perception, such as special senses, the power to read minds, or the power to communicate with the dead.

The **EXPRESSION** theme type (page 94) represents powers that you can project or unleash to affect or influence the world, such as a warrior's rage, blasts of ice, a healing touch, or mind control.

The **MOBILITY** theme type (page 98) represents powers that allow you to move easily, fast, and unobstructed, such as the power to fly, to turn your body into water, or to miraculously escape confinement.

The **RELIC** theme type (page 102) represents an object in your possession that channels the powers of your Mythos such as a magic ring, a flying broom, or a diabolic mask.

The **SUBVERSION** theme type (page 106) represents powers that allow you to act discreetly and hide your intentions and deeds such as trickery and illusions, invisibility, and the power to beguile others.

CHOOSING MYTHOS THEMES TYPES FOR YOUR POWERS

Your Mythos powers should stem from your Mythos concept, the legend you chose for you character. For each set of powers or abilities that come from your Mythos, ask yourself this:

? WHAT IS THE MAIN USE OF THIS POWER SET ?

If it is to protect, choose Bastion; to sense or access information, choose Divination; to attack, influence, or shape the world, choose Expression; to move, choose Mobility; and to act deceptively or secretly, choose Subversion. For powers that change based on the situation, choose Adaptation. Choose Relic if the focus of the theme is the fact the powers come from an object.

If your power set is mixed, choose the most important power in the set and answer the question based on that. Don't worry about the theme type limiting your power set; each themebook offers options that touch on other types of themes. For example, you can use your Divination powers defensively or use your Mobility powers to ram opponents.

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LOGOS THEME TYPES

Logos theme types represent aspects of your ordinary life:

The **DEFINING EVENT** theme type (page 110) represents a pivotal moment or period in your life that has changed you irrevocably, such as a near-fatal accident, an earth-shaking revelation, or time spent at an orphanage.

The **DEFINING RELATIONSHIP** theme type (page 114) represents a relationship with a person, a group, or an organization that is at the center of your life, such as your mother, your mentor, your gang, or the cult you belong to.

The **MISSION** theme type (page 118) represents a goal you have set for yourself and that you strive to achieve, such as finding a cure to a disease, avenging your brother, or bringing a killer to justice.

The **PERSONALITY** theme type (page 122) represents your character, temperament, or personal style, such as being charming, hard-boiled, flamboyant, or paranoid.

The **POSSESSIONS** theme type (page 126) represents anything important you have in your possession, such as your fortune and assets, your old car, or an arsenal of firearms.

The **ROUTINE** theme type (page 130) represents your main everyday activities such as a job, caretaking duties, going to school, doing research, or just bumming around.

The **TRAINING** theme type (page 134) represents the expertise you have acquired in a given field, such as medical training, martial arts, or cooking.

CHOOSING BETWEEN LOGOS THEMES TYPES

Your character's personal story most likely contains the elements of all the Logos theme types. She almost certainly has a personality that's worth mentioning, a daily routine, several key relationships, possessions, and a backstory including training and a defining moment or two. Maybe she even has a mission. How then to choose which parts of your character should become themes?

The question that should guide you in choosing Logos themes is:

? WHAT SHOULD GET MORE FOCUS DURING THE GAME?

For example, if you are deliberating between a theme about your character's wife (Defining Relationship) and a theme about your efforts to find a cure to her mental illness (Mission), think which you would prefer to play more often: scenes in which your character's wife participates or scenes where you are seen searching for a cure.

Similarly, if you work as a medical doctor and you can't choose between your medical training (Training) and your actual work at the City Central Hospital (Routine), try to establish which you would prefer to play more often: scenes in and out of the hospital where you mostly show your medical expertise or scenes about the daily events at the hospital.

Choosing one over the other doesn't change your character's story; he is still married and working on a cure; she is still a trained MD and works at the hospital, even if you didn't take both themes. But making one of these aspects into a theme means it will come into play and be the focus of the game more often.

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DEMI-GODS AND STREET CLEANERS: ABSOLUTE POWER LEVEL VS. NARRATIVE POWER LEVEL

Depending on the balance of Mythos and Logos in their themes, the characters in your crew could range anywhere between a simple **Touched** street cleaner who is only beginning to open up to his Mythos powers and an almighty demigod **Legendary** who boasts various mythical powers, with little to hold him down. At a first glance, this may seem like a potential imbalance among the lead characters and their abilities.

That may have been true if the *City of Mist* rules revolved around absolute power measurements. From that perspective, the demigod is far more powerful than the Touched street cleaner and could therefore achieve much more. However, the *City of Mist* rules deal with **narrative power**, the power to influence the story.

Think of stories where heroes incredibly weaker than the challenges they face still manage to prevail and reach their goal. The heroes often don't have the sheer power of their opponents but they have other qualities or abilities that allow them to prevail over adversity. Those qualities receive the same airtime as the incredible powers they are pitted against. While they seem to be weaker in absolute terms, they in fact have the same power to change the course of the story.

In *City of Mist*, **power tags** are the currency of narrative power because they improve your chances to succeed in making moves that influence the story. Mythos and Logos themes have the same number of power tags (three, to start with) and therefore all the lead characters at the beginning of the game-have the same number of power tags and the same narrative power, regardless of whether they are Touched, Borderliners, or Legendaries.

While the descriptions of their power tags may vary, the so-called demigods and street cleaners player characters in *City of Mist* are not all that different: they have the same capacity to steer the course of the game. Some do so with a green poisonous ray they shoot out of their glowing third eye while others use their reliable broom and a heart of gold, but their narrative power is equal.

THE GAME EFFECTS OF YOUR THEMES

The subject of a theme, represented by its title, has no game effect (i.e., it does not affect the rules during play). However, the subject of a theme serves as a framework for the power tags, weakness tags, Mystery or Identity, and other features included in it. Furthermore, the type of the theme affects the character's Mythos and Logos balance, as well as the type of improvements available to her, since different themes types offer different improvement options.

LOSING AND GAINING THEMES

The themes that make up your character can change dramatically during your *City of Mist* series. Whenever you choose to take an action that conflicts with one of your themes, you gradually erode that theme's stability. This erosion is represented by the Fade or Crack tracks on each theme. When the track is full, you replace the theme and everything in it. You permanently discard the theme card for that theme; you then pick a new theme card and fill it out using a themebook.

You always replace a Mythos theme with a new Logos theme and vice versa, so whenever you replace a theme you also change the balance of Mythos and Logos in your character, inevitably driving yourself closer to one of the two poles. If your Logos ever fully overcomes your Mythos, you become a Sleeper again; if your Mythos ever overcomes your Logos, you become an Avatar. The game does not stop there for your character; there are special rules that kick in when you go over the edge in each direction.

Moreover, these rattling changes in your character's life help her grow in a deeper way. The more themes you replace, the closer you bring your character to an explosive Moment of Evolution, gaining a dramatic insight, story development, or improvement.

Read more about replacing themes and character development in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

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LANCE SULLIVAN, REPORTER FOR THE CITY HERALD (DON QUIXOTE)

Lamar is choosing themes for his character. He decides that Sullivan will be a Touched character, because the reporter is more concerned with his ordinary life and investigation than with the supernatural power that has awoken within him. Now, he needs to pick one Mythos theme and three Logos themes.

Lamar starts with the Logos themes, since he already has a solid idea about them. The main point about Sullivan is that he's a reporter who spends most of his time investigating, so Lamar chooses **Routine.** Then there is his photographer and partner, Ale Sánchez, who plays a major role in his life and often saves him from trouble, so Lamar chooses **Defining Relationship.** For his third and last Logos theme, Lamar deliberates between Personality and Possessions. He ends up choosing **Possessions** because he feels it can reflect Sullivan's personality better: things like a worn-out brown leather jacket, a beat-up old Mustang, etc.

Sullivan's Mythos is Don Quixote, the valiant knightly protector of a special damsel in distress (even if the distress she's in is rather imaginary). After some consideration, Lamar decides that since Don Quixote is a protector, **Bastion** would be the best fit.

Lance Sullivan's themes types are therefore:

- **Routine (Logos)**
  investigative reporter
- **Defining Relationship (Logos)**
  Sánchez
- **Possessions (Logos)**
  retro car and gear
- **Bastion (Mythos)**
  knightly protector

Lamar takes the four respective theme cards and writes down the theme type and tentative title on each card.

CHARACTER TROPES (PRE-MADE BUILDS)

Character tropes are pre-generated sets (or builds) of themes based on commonly-used character types. Each trope describes a character typical to myths and legends (for Mythos tropes) or modern detective stories (for Logos tropes) and offers three theme types typical to this character. You can use these tropes to help you quickly pick out your character's four themes.

To create your character using tropes, choose a Mythos trope and a Logos trope. Then decide whether you are Touched, a Borderliner, or a Legendary. From your Mythos trope, choose the first theme type if you are Touched, the first two if you are a Borderliner, and all three if you are a Legendary. From your Logos trope, choose the first theme type if you are a Legendary, choose the first two theme types if you are a Borderliner, or all three if you are Touched. Once you have your four themes, you may need to add some details to customize your character.

CHARACTER TROPES EXAMPLE

Megan wants to quickly create a new character for herself. She goes over the character tropes and picks out *Mischievous Fairy/Spirit* for Mythos and *Retired Citizen* for Logos. She's going to play a knavish elderly man who is secretly pulling pranks on the tenants in his building. She calls him Goodfellow, after the mischievous sprite. She decides this character is a Legendary, so she takes all three Mythos themes and only the first Logos theme.

If Goodfellow was a Touched character, she would take just the first Mythos theme and all the Logos themes.

If Goodfellow was a Borderliner, she would take the two first themes from both her Mythos and her Logos tropes.

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MYTHOS CHARACTER TROPES

A MAGIC SWORD

Relic
(Magic sword)
+
Divination
(Reveal destiny)
+
Bastion
(Protective powers)

ASSASSIN OR NINJA

Mobility
(Undetectable infiltration)
+
Expression
(Lethal attacks)
+
Subversion
(Smoke and mirros)

BEAST OR MONSTER

Bastion
(Durability)
+
Expression
(Strength, claws, horns)
+
Divination
(Acute senses)

COMMONER THIEF

Relic
(Stolen item)
+
Mobility
(Swiftness)
+
Subversion
(Fabled thievery)

CREATURE OF DARKNESS

Expression
(Devour souls)
+
Subversion
(Manipulate shadows)
+
Bastion
(Undead or feels no pain)

ELEMENTAL CREATURE

Mobility
(Traveling through element)
+
Expression
(Projecting element)
+
Adaptation
(Manipulating element)

FERTILITY GOD/DESS

Expression (Life force)
+
Adaptation
(Many forms and shapes)
+
Relic
(Life giving vessel e.g. chalice, cauldron)

GHOST

Bastion
(Incorporeal)
+
Mobility
(Walk through walls)
+
Divination
(Voices of the dead)

GOD/DESS OF KNOWLEDGE

Divination
(Access all knowledge)
+
Expression
(Give or take knowledge)
+
Bastion
(Protect knowledge)

GOD/DESS OF UNDERWORLD

Bastion
(Undying)
+
Adaptivity
(Necromancy)
+
Expression
(Rot, decay, reviving)

GOOD FAIRY / SPIRIT

Bastion
(Magical protection)
+
Expression
(Healing magic)
+
Adaptation
(Fairy magic)

HUNTSMAN / WOODSMAN

Divination
(Tracking)
+
Expression
(Fabled archery)
+
Subversion
(Stealth)

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KING OR QUEEN

Expression
(Leadership or dominion)
+
Adaptation
(Limitless wealth)
+
Bastion
(Castle and guard)

KNIGHT OR WARRIOR

Expression
(Remarkable fighting)
+
Bastion
(Armor, shield, or defense)
+
Relic
(Legendary weapon)

MISCHIEVOUS FAIRY / SPIRIT

Subversion
(Magical pranks)
+
Relic
(Cherished magical asset)
+
Expression
(Furious state)

MUSICIAN

Relic
(Musiical instrument)
+
Expression
(Musical effects)
+
Subversion
(Cunning)

NATURE SPIRIT / GOD

Adaptation
(Plant and animal life)
+
Expression
(Plant growth)
+
Mobility
(Transport between trees)

PRINCE / PRINCESS

Expression
(Charm & beauty)
+
Subversion
(Acting in secrecy)
+
Mobility
(Loyal steed)

PROPHET OR SEER

Divination
(Divine knowledge)
+
Expression
(Words of truth)
+
Relic
(Sacred item)

SCOUNDREL OR PEDDLAR

Subversion
(Deception)
+
Relic
(Magical item)
+
Adaptation
(Steal others' traits)

SUN GOD/DESS

Expression
(Light)
+
Bastion
(Invulnerability)
+
Mobility
(Chariot)

SWASHBUCKLER

Mobility
(Athletic stunts)
+
Relic
(Rapier)
+
Subversion
(Beguiling words)

TRICKSTER GOD/DESS

Subversion
(Trickery and illusions)
+
Divination
(Watch victims from afar)
+
Adaptation
(Witchcraft)

WIZARD / WARLOCK / WITCH

Adaptation
(Sorcery)
+
Divination
(Scrying)
+
Subversion
(Disguise)

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LOGOS CHARACTER TROPES

ALCOHOLIC / ADDICT

Possession
(Booze or drugs)
+
Defining Event
(that made him/her drink)
+
Defining Relationship
(who hasn't given up)

ATTORNEY AT LAW

Routine
(Legal advisor)
+
Personality
(Shrewd and manipulative)
+
Mission
(Bring justice to the City)

BEAT OFFICER

Training
(Police training)
+
Defining relationship
(Partner)
+
Mission
(Clean up the streets)

BLUE-COLLAR WORKER

Routine
(Job)
+
Mission
(Save enough money to...)
+
Possessions
(Tools of the trade)

BOUNTY HUNTER

Possessions
(Weaponry & gear)
+
Training
(Combat and infiltration)
+
Defining Event
(A dark past)

CAT BURGLAR

Training
(Burglary)
+
Possessions
(Special gear)
+
Routine
(Scouting a target)

CELEBRITY OR PERFORMER

Personality
(Glamorous)
+
Training
(Performing arts)
+
Defining Relationship
(Fans)

CLASSIC DETECTIVE

Routine
(Detective work)
+
Personality
(Hard-boiled)
+
Defining Relationship
(Family or love interest)

CRIME LORD

Routine
(Criminal operation)
+
Mission
(Eliminate competition)
+
Personality
(Tough as nails)

CULT MEMBER

Defining Relationship
(Guru and cult)
+
Training
(Knowledge of the occult)
+
Personality
(Deceptive or innocent)

DOCTOR

Training
(Medical training)
+
Defining Event
(Saving a life)
+
Routine
(Work at the hospital)

DRAB ACADEMIC

Training
(Academic field)
+
Personality
(Objective observer)
+
Possessions
(Laboratory or library)

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DRUG DEALER

Possessions
(Drugs)
+
Personality
(Big dreams)
+
Defining Relationship
(Bodyguard)

FILTHY RICH SCUMBAG

Possession
(Wealth)
+
Defining Relationship
(Business partners)
+
Personality
(Egotistical scumbag)

GETAWAY DRIVER

Possession
(Fast car)
+
Training
(City driving)
+
Personality
(Ice cool)

HOMELESS HOBO

Defining Event
(that made him homeless)
+
Routine
(Living on the streets)
+
Possessions
(Shopping cart)

JOCK

Training
(Athletics)
+
Routine
(Practice, competitions, etc.)
+
Defining Relationship
(Team, coach, girl/boyfriend)

JOURNALIST

Routine
(Investigative journalism)
+
Personality
(Bold and dauntless)
+
Mission
(Win a Pulitzer)

LOCAL POLITICIAN

Defining Relationship
(Constituency)
+
Defining Event
(Past allegations)
+
Mission
(Political agenda)

MASKED VIGILANTE

Mission
(Bring down a crimelord)
+
Training
(Martial arts)
+
Defining Event
(that started vigilante life)

MOBSTER OR GANGSTER

Routine
(Life of violence)
+
Possessions
(Brass knuckles and revolver)
+
Defining Relationship
(The big boss)

RETIRED CITIZEN

Defining Event
(Heyday adventure)
+
Personality
(Suspicious)
+
Training
(Former occupation)

SCHOOL BOY/GIRL

Routine
(Attending school)
+
Defining Relationship
(Best friend)
+
Possessions
(Stuff kids pick up)

STREETWALKER

Routine
(Working the streets)
+
Defining Relationship
(Concerned friend or relative)
+
Defining Event
(Something witnessed)

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STEP 3: THEMEBOOKS

Themebooks are questionnaires that help you put together the details of each of your character's themes, including power tags, weakness tags, a Mystery or an Identity, and a title. Themebooks also offer some ideas on how to describe your character's relationships with the other crew members. Finally, they list the **theme improvements**: additional improvements that are unique to each specific theme type. There are 14 themebooks, one for each of the 14 theme types described in the previous step.

Having established your character's themes, go through each respective themebook and follow the instructions to complete each theme's details, noting them down on your theme cards. Before you do so, however, read the guidelines below on how to choose each component of your theme.

THE CONCEPT SECTION

Just like creating your series and character, creating a theme starts with a concept. Each themebook opens with a few questions to help you clarify the concept for the theme you are creating. This section is optional and has no bearing on the game; it's there to help you hone your idea of the theme before you begin answering tag questions (see below). Answers to questions in the concept section do not translate into game elements and are not tracked on your character and theme cards.

WHAT ARE TAGS?

Tags are short and specific descriptions, usually 1-3 words long (but sometimes longer) of a discrete quality, ability, object, situation, or thing in the game. Most tags in the game belong to the lead characters' themes (read more about other tags under Game Resources on page 204).

Tags have a dual role: they both describe your character and influence her actions. If your character has the tags *top physical shape*, *can breathe underwater*, and *combat knife*, it means she is in great shape, has no problems breathing underwater, and always carries or has access to a combat knife. It also means that when she attempts an action related to these descriptions, she is more likely to succeed.

The common way to use tags is to include them in a move. For example, you may be trying to survive falling off a moving subway train, using the fact you are at *top physical shape* to boost your **Face Danger** move.

AGREEING ON INTERPRETATION

While the players are creating their characters, themes, and tags, the MC continues with her role of asking interesting questions and making suggestions. In addition, the MC should go over the tags, Mysteries, and Identities created by the players and verify two things: first, that they follow the guidelines in this section; and second, that she understands the player's interpretation of these elements.

Different people have different ways of expressing ideas, so players will describe their character's tags, Mysteries, and Identities in a variety of ways. The MC should encourage this and avoid limiting the players' creativity. Within reason, the MC should put less emphasis on literal wording and instead try to understand what a player is trying to express with his tags, questions, and statements. Use the questions in this section to help the player fine-tune these descriptors.

Once the player and the MC agree on the interpretation of a theme component, this interpretation cannot be changed unless both the MC and the player agree to it, so that the game can run smoothly. This does not mean tags and other descriptors can't be used creatively, but rather that a clear and mutual understanding of the tags serves as a good baseline for the game.

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However, remember that tags are also descriptions. For example, the MC can say that one of the NPCs, a police officer, notices your character's top physical shape. Perhaps he is searching for a suspect who matches your description or maybe he is impressed by your character's physique or training regime. This can propel the story forward and give it flavor, even if it doesn't have any specific effect on the rules of the game. Read more about how to use tags in Chapter 3: Working the Case.

TAG QUESTIONS

Each themebook includes **power tag questions** and **weakness tag questions**. When you select a question and answer it, the answer becomes a tag in your theme.

For example, if you answer the **power tag question**:

? WHAT PARTICULAR TRAIT OF YOUR DEFENSE MAKES IT USEFUL?

with the answer "it's bulletproof", then *bulletproof* becomes a power tag in that theme.

Similarly, if you answer the **weakness tag question**:

? WHO OR WHAT IS HAUNTING YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

with the answer "the Big Bad Wolf", then *the Big Bad Wolf* becomes a weakness tag in that theme.

Each theme starts with three power tags, so in each themebook you answer three power tag questions. **You must select and answer the first power tag question of each themebook**, because it represents the core tag of the themebook. Then select two more power tag questions to answer. Write down your three power tags on the theme card. Note the letter of the question that generated each power tag next to the tag on the card, for future reference.

Each theme starts with one weakness tag, so in each themebook you answer one weakness tag question. Write down your weakness tag on the theme's card. Note the letter of the question that generated the weakness tag next to the tag on the card, for future reference.

NASCENT THEMES

A nascent theme is a theme that has recently emerged in your character's life. Most commonly, you receive a nascent theme when you replace a theme: one element in your life is lost and in its wake a new element presents itself. Since this new element has not yet developed, the theme that represents it is not a full-blown theme with three power tags. Instead, nascent themes have just one power tag. Another use for nascent themes is when playing awakening characters, in which case your single Mythos theme is a nascent theme with a single power tag (see page 65).

All other elements of a nascent theme are identical to those of a regular theme: it is either a Mythos theme or a Logos theme, it has a type, a single weakness tag, and a Mystery or an Identity.

When you replace a theme with a new nascent theme, choose a theme type, find its themebook, and create the theme as normal. However, you choose only one power tag for that theme, not three, so you always answer only the first power tag question in the themebook.

Just like any other theme, a nascent theme can grow and gain additional power tags as improvements. However, nascent themes grow faster than regular themes. Read more about nascent themes and their development in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

ANSWER JUST ONCE

The tag questions leave you with a lot of room for creativity. To keep your character diverse and balanced, **you should not answer the same power tag or weakness tag question more than once**. This applies both during character creation and when you gain new tags as improvements later on. When you answer a tag question, give just one answer.

ADDITIONAL TAGS

At your option, in one of your four themes, you may choose an additional power tag question to answer (and therefore gain a fourth power tag).

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If you do, you must also choose an additional weakness tag question to answer in the same theme (and therefore gain a second weakness tag). This option is only available during character creation.

CHOOSING POWER TAGS

Power tags are the fundamental currency of *City of Mist*. Whenever you take action in the game using one of the Core Moves, each power tag that you have and that is relevant to your action adds one point of Power to your move. This both improves your chances of succeeding and increases the effectiveness of your action. For example, if you try to **Convince** a bureaucrat to let you look at confidential archive files and you have the power tags *convincing* and *cut through red tape*, they add two points of Power to your roll.

Power tags can be anything, but they are always something useful to your character. Being blind, for example, usually serves as a limitation and impedes actions. Therefore, *blind* is not a suitable description for a power tag. If being blind has helped your character develop *heightened senses* or *sympathy to the suffering of others*, these can be power tags in and of themselves.

When the MC wants to help a player clarify or fine-tune a power tag, she can ask:

? WHAT ACTIONS WOULD THIS POWER TAG BOOST?

Answering this question helps define what exactly is helpful in a power tag and how the player is expecting to use it during the game. Sometimes answering this question may also bring the player to rethink and rephrase his tag.

Examples of power tags:

- **Useful qualities**: *cunning negotiator*, *mesmerizing beauty*, *7-feet tall*
- **Abilities:** *acute sense of smell, danger sense, hypnotism*
- **Powers:** *breath of fire, invulnerability, speak with the dead*
- **Skills**: *forensics, rock-climbing, excellent chef*
- **Special maneuvers**: *mean right hook, whirlwind katana attack, flirty glances*
- **Useful personality traits:** *charming, indomitable, empathetic*
- **Training:** *master swordsman, bomb defusing, acrobat*
- **Knowledge:** *ancient history, knows every street, banking & investment*
- **Background and occupation:** *rocket scientist, crime scene investigator, private eye*
- **Privileges**: *federal security clearance, ex-celebrity, access to the church, cushy bank account*
- **Allies and contacts**: *inquisitive boyfriend, underworld contacts, helpful fox spirits*
- **Gear or special items:** *standard issue pistol, a magic ring of invisibility, Bow of Artemis*
- **Qualities of your powers:** *penetrates magical wards, spray fire, stronger at night*
- **Apt catchphrases:** *the more the merrier, fortune favors the bold, Murdocks always get up*

BROAD VS. SPECIFIC TAGS

Power tags can contribute to the Power of your moves in a variety of ways and situations, depending on how you interpret them.

The best tags are **specific**: they represent a positive or useful element that can help your character in a limited field, a well-defined situation, or a unique manner. Specific tags give your character more color and inspire you to use them creatively.

Consider the types of scenes your character can take part in: crime scene investigation, social interaction, car chase, fist fight, etc. Most specific tags are useful only in specific circumstances, like a social gathering or when taking a physical hit, or in a limited set of circumstances. The examples in the list above are of specific tags.

Broad tags are tags which are useful in a wide spectrum of situations. A tag is considered broad if it's useful in a variety of different scene types. For example, the tag *cunning* can be interpreted as being useful when getting a witness to talk, when deceiving a city official, and perhaps when feigning a blow in a fight.

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While broad tags are useful for the character, they tend to be less colorful and inspire less creative solutions. They can also potentially give the character an unfair advantage. Therefore, **your character can have only one broad tag**.

Tags that are useful in all or most situations, or tags that are useful in any type of scene, are **too broad**. For example, the tag *lucky* can be used in almost any situation. Players cannot choose tags that are too broad, unless the MC approves it. The MC may do so in case the tag encourages interesting descriptions. For example, an MC may feel that while *mysterious reality bending* can be used in almost any situation, the player's descriptions when using this tag will contribute to the story. If this is the case, the tag is considered to be broad and therefore takes up the single broad tag allocation available for the character.

Alternatively, the MC may ask the player to make a tag less broad in one of the two ways described below. Doing so downgrades a "too broad" tag to a broad tag and a broad tag to a specific tag.

The first and simpler way is to add words to the tag to make it more specific, e.g., *cunning* → *cunning negotiator*.

The other way is to agree in advance that using the tag requires a **Change the Game** move, a Core Move that is used to create new tags (explained in Chapter 3: Working the Case). For example, when using a *spellbook* tag to smite her opponent down with a dark and deadly curse, the player cannot add the *spellbook* tag directly to her **Hit With All You've Got** move. Instead, she must first make a **Change the Game** move (presumably to find the right spell) with the *spellbook* tag to create the temporary tag *dark curse* and use it to power her **Hit With All You've Got** move. The move **Change the Game** represents the character's attempt to adapt her powers to her current needs – an attempt which may get her into trouble or even fail horribly. If she does succeed, the *spellbook* tag is not used again, in the following move (in this case **Hit With All You've Got**). Later, the same character might try to find a love potion spell; to do so, the player should make the **Change the Game** move again, this time creating a *love potion* temporary tag to use in whatever follow-up move is most relevant.

This way, the tag must always be adapted to different situations in a way that receives its own airtime, holds the risk of failure, and takes time and effort on the character's part (just how much is up to the MC).

Other examples of too broad tags that can be downgraded this way include *strategic mastermind* (who can generate temporary tags like *battleground superiority* or *one step ahead of you*) or *the bag that has everything*. When the MC and the player agree that these too broad tags require a **Change The Game** move to generate specific effects, these tags can be considered broad.

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CATCHPHRASE TAGS

Catchphrase tags can help you describe an attitude or disposition that characterizes your character or her abilities. They add color to your story by encouraging you to use your tags in certain situations, with a certain intention, or in a certain spirit that match the look and feel you envision for your character.

Catchphrase tags can be invoked when you make a move in the spirit of the catchphrase. For example, *all life is one* could be used when you act in harmony with all living creatures. If you backstab an opponent in order to promote yourself, *survival of the fittest* may be appropriate.

Catchphrases have various interpretations and could easily become broad or even too broad tags. The MC should limit the invocation of such tags to their specific circumstances. For example, *knowledge over power* could be invoked when you choose to learn more about a situation by **Investigating** rather than to charge in and **Hit with All You've Got**, but only when such a choice is eminent. It should not be invoked for all your **Investigate** moves simply because you seek knowledge.

CHOOSING WEAKNESS TAGS

Weakness tags add interesting complications to the game while driving your character's growth and development. Whenever you take action in the game using one of the Core Moves, each weakness tag you have that is relevant to your action removes one point of Power from your action. This both reduces your chances of succeeding and weakens the effectiveness of your action. For example, if you try to **Take the Risk** and drive your truck through a police roadblock, having the weakness tags *flat tire* and *chicken*, will reduce your Power for this action by one for each weakness tag activated.

While your weaknesses often get in your way, they also help you grow. When one of your weakness tags is activated by you or anyone else at the table, you gain a point of Attention on the theme it belongs to. When you accumulate three points of Attention on a given theme, you can choose an improvement for that theme, such as a new power tag or a theme-specific improvement. To achieve a good balance between short-term success and long-term character growth, make sure you choose weakness tags that are not too specific or too broad, such as those in the examples below.

Weakness tags can be anything, but they are always something that gets in the way of your character's actions. Possessing (and controlling) *the strength of ten men* is often useful, so this would not be an appropriate weakness tag. If your character is *compelled to help others*, it may get her in trouble but it does not impede her actions – it spurs her into action. Therefore, this would not be a good description to use as a weakness tag (but it might be a good Identity; see below).

When the MC wants to help a player clarify or fine-tune a weakness tag, she can ask:

? WHAT ACTIONS WOULD THIS WEAKNESS TAG IMPEDE?

Answering this question helps define what exactly is limiting in a weakness tag and how the player expects to use it during the game. As with power tags, answering this question may also bring the player to rethink and rephrase his tag.

Examples of weakness tags:

- **Impeding qualities**: *lazy bastard, sticks out like a sore thumb, aggravating smirk*
- **Limitations:** *sore joints, poor hearing, slow on the uptake*
- **Power weaknesses:** *must touch the ground, uncontrollable, easy to detect*
- **Power side-effects:** *monstrous, darkened heart, glows brightly*
- **Flaws in methods**: *exposed after mean right hook, sloppy technique, can be traced*
- **Impeding personality traits:** *nervous, suspicious-looking, wallflower, overly regimented*
- **Obsessions and compulsions:** *pain killer addic-*

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tion, freezes when sees Kaito, cleanliness freak

- **Lack of knowledge:** *never been outside, outdated intel, can't read*
- **Background:** *snobby rich kid, broken home, stuck-up academic*
- **Denied privileges**: *convicted felon, known vigilante, black market heat*
- **Rivals and dependents**: *"the competition", the relentless detective Enkidu, family man*
- **Gear or item weaknesses:** *choppy reception, bloodstained blade, only works with a kiss*
- **Apt catchphrases:** *when it rains it pours, the devil is in the details, off with her head!*

QUESTIONS VS. STATEMENTS

A character's Mythos represents the mysterious and unknowable forces within her, forces that necessarily drive her to question her current position in life and in the world. Therefore, a Mythos theme revolves around **a question** that the characters seeks to answer – a Mystery.

A character's Logos stands for her persona, the ordinary person she is or at least believes she is: everything that is stable in her life and in her psyche. Therefore, a Logos theme is built around **a statement** to which the character must adhere – an Identity.

WHAT ARE MYSTERIES AND IDENTITIES?

Mysteries and Identities are questions and statements that drive your character to take action. While Mysteries are questions for which your character seeks answers, Identities are statements that define her. Both Mysteries and Identities are also game elements that affect your character's development during the game. Neglecting your Mysteries leads you to mark Fade and eventually to replace your Mythos themes. Acting in contradiction to your Identities leads you to mark Crack and eventually to replace your Logos themes. Replacing a theme constitutes a dramatic change in your character: you receive a new theme instead of the one you discarded and possibly an additional major improvement, a Moment of Evolution.

For this reason, Mysteries and Identities are central to your character's story.

When you establish your Mystery or Identity, write it on the theme's card in the respective space. Each themebook has examples and ideas for creating its theme's Mystery or Identity. You may only choose one Mystery or Identity for each theme.

CHOOSING MYSTERIES

A Mystery is a question that your character is seeking answers for. During the game, your character will be driven to investigate the City in order to find the answers to her Mysteries. Only Mythos themes have Mysteries; they represent your Mythos' pull towards the unknown, the mysterious, and the hidden.

While a Mystery may come from your Mythos, it is at the same time an honest, deep, or burning question that your character is personally invested in and will go to great lengths to answer. It could be:

- **a question about your nature, existence, or powers,** such as "Am I still human?"
- **a philosophical or unfathomable question,** such as "Where do our memories go when we die?"
- **a question from your Mythos**, such as "Who is the White Rabbit?"
- **a question from your ordinary life**, such as "What is my sister running away from?"
- **a moral question**, such as "What am I willing to sacrifice for the truth?"

A Mystery is always a real question that the character cares about, never a rhetorical one, a cynical one (such as "Who do you think you are?"), or an insignificant one ("What should I wear today?").

The MC can help players think of interesting Mysteries by asking them:

? WHAT DOES YOUR MYTHOS WANT YOU TO FIND OUT?

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For Borderliners and Legendaries, who have more than one Mythos theme and therefore more than one Mystery, each Mystery can cover a different aspect of the Mythos or the character's life.

Remember that during the game, foregoing the search for answers to your Mystery for too long will make your Mythos fade away and force your character to replace the Mythos theme to which this Mystery belongs. The powers described in that theme then become lost, unavailable, or less important; they will receive little to no airtime from now on. **Each Mystery should therefore be directly or indirectly related to the powers of the theme** so that abandoning the search for answers can somehow be tied to abandoning the associated powers.

OPEN-ENDED MYSTERIES

It is preferable to start a Mystery with the question words *who, what, where, why, when,* or *how* because they make for open-ended questions to which the answer is complex and engaging. Questions to which the answer is Yes or No may end up being anti-climactic.

For example, the Mystery "Can I be stronger than I am now?" may only be answered by "Yes" or "No" (or "It depends.", but is it really an answer?). The Mystery "**How** can I become stronger than I am now?" can have a variety of answers that can inspire a more entertaining story, for example "By embracing your own power." "By drinking the blood of a Chimera." "By bringing the ghosts of your past to rest."

CHOOSING IDENTITIES

An Identity is a statement that your character strongly believes in. During the game, your character will be driven to take action in accordance with her Identities. Only Logos themes have Identities; they represent your character's ordinary persona: who she thinks she is, what she knows about herself, and what she believes in.

Your character's Identities are the center of gravity of her ordinary life. They represent her deepest beliefs or most dominant convictions, those around which everything else revolves and before which all other aspects of life bow. An Identity could be:

- **a conviction about yourself or your life**, such as "I don't need anyone else!"
- **a promise, oath, or commitment**, such as "I will find the cure, whatever the cost."
- **a preconception or prejudice**, such as "Rich people can't be trusted."
- **a restriction, limitation, or red line**, such as "If you don't have the money, I can't help you."
- **a greater wish, hope, or dream**, such as "I want to be the very best, like no one ever was!"
- **a strong feeling or emotional baggage,** such as "I've been betrayed too many times."
- **a belief about the world in general,** such as "Everything is better when you put on a smile."

An Identity is always an earnest and sincere statement that the character takes seriously (even if the players and MC are entertained by it). Your character does not have to be vehement about what she believes, only that internally, in her head, this statement is very strong.

An Identity should always be directly or indirectly about the character and how she believes she must act or not act. It is never an unrelated sentence such as "The grass is green," unless that has a specific meaning for the character which the player can explain.

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Note that Identities do not necessarily have to revolve around mundane things; your character can have an Identity about fighting the supernatural monsters in her neighborhood. However, such an Identity should be associated with a Logos theme that represents this activity, for example Monster Hunter (Routine).

The MC can help players think of interesting Identities by asking them:

? WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK OR FEEL ABOUT THIS ASPECT OF HER LIFE, OR BECAUSE OF IT ?

If you defined your character's **secret pain** at the concept phase, you can work it into one or more of your Identities.

Remember that during the game, acting in contradiction to your Identity too many times will make your Identity crack, until eventually your character will replace the Logos theme to which this Identity belongs. Everything described in that theme will then become lost, unavailable, or less important; it will receive little to no airtime from now on. **Each Identity should therefore be directly or indirectly related to what is described in the theme** so that breaking this Identity by acting against it can somehow be tied to losing the abilities, qualities, knowledge, relationships, or possessions associated with the theme.

CREW RELATIONSHIPS AND THEME IMPROVEMENTS

The Crew Relationships and Theme Improvements sections of your themebooks are not used during character creation. The Crew Relationships section is used when you finalize the crew in the next stage of the Exposition Session while the Theme Improvements section is used during play when your character gains an improvement. Theme improvements refer to various player rules and expand on them. These rules are explained in Chapter 3: Working the Case and Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

ADAPTATION

A RANGE OF MAGIC SPELLS · ADAPTING TO HARSH ENVIRONMENTS · SHAPESHIFTING OR POWER COPYING · A MYSTERIOUS, UNPREDICTABLE FORCE · ELEMENTAL MANIPULATION

Mortal life is in a constant state of flux and change: nothing is permanent, everything is ephemeral. Different challenges require entirely different means to overcome. Some Mythoi grant their Rifts the power to adapt to circumstance. Do they consciously do this to improve the Rift's chances of telling their story? Or is it simply the case because their story is a story of resourcefulness and limitless possibilities to begin with? It is impossible to know.

The aboriginal Mythos of Dreamtime could allow its Rift to tap into the dimension underlying creation and bend reality. Merlin the sorcerer could whip out a spell to tackle any situation. A shaman could shapeshift into animals and monsters. A doppelganger could mimic the powers of other Rifts it touches. And Pinocchio's father, Geppetto, could build toys and puppets that come to life.

Adaption themes gravitate towards broad tags by nature and so often take up the single broad tag allowed for your character (see Broad vs. Specific Tags, page 76). However, if the variety of effects granted by this theme is rather narrow, such as the doppelganger, who can only copy existing powers, the MC may rule that a tag still qualifies as specific.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, did your Mythos possess many different powers? Was she able to shape a substance, element, form, or concept to respond to various challenges? What was the unifying element in all of the manifestations of her powers?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? HOW DOES YOUR MYTHOS ADAPT TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

- It has a range/collection/set of _____.
- It can control and/or shape _____.
- It changes based on _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT MYTHOS POWER ALLOWS YOU TO RESPOND DIFFERENTLY TO EVERY SITUATION?

cast a magic spell, lord of the tempests, shapeshifting, steal other people's powers, puppeteer & toymaker, necromancer

B WHAT NARROW GROUP OF EFFECTS WITHIN YOUR MYTHOS' DOMAIN HAVE YOU MASTERED?

transportation spells, create bad weather, beasts of the forest, steal protective powers, "My toys can speak!", zombie army

C WHAT SPECIFIC MANIFESTATION OF YOUR MYTHOS IS YOUR FAVORITE?

a sleeping curse, smite down with lightning, the True Shape of the Lion, leave them powerless, exploding wind-up toy, rotting touch

D WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES ENHANCE YOUR ABILITY TO ADAPT?

easier with a spellbook, under the open sky, ritual of the wild, prolonged contact with victim, cluttered workshop, dead of the night

E WHAT SITUATIONS DO YOU HAVE A QUICK SOLUTION FOR OR ARE ACCUSTOMED TO?

cushion a fall with feathers, scale a barrier on a gust of wind, grow gills, make it look like the original, "I'll figure out this device in a jiffy...", summon the ghost of an enemy's loved one

F WHAT DO YOUR POWERS NATURALLY PROTECT YOU FROM?

counterspell, impervious to all weather, sniff out other shapeshifters, "You cannot steal from the thief!", disable machinery, banish the dead

G WHAT ATTITUDE OR EMOTION LIES AT THE CORE OF YOUR ADAPTIVE POWERS?

knowledge over power, wrath of the seas and heavens, all life is one, survival of the fittest, necessity is the mother of invention, nostalgia

H WHAT SPECIFIC CLASS OF THINGS OR BEINGS CAN YOU PRODUCE OR SUMMON?

imps and fairies, conjure rain elementals, horns and fangs, decoys of myself, build child-sized puppets, animate dead bodies

I WHAT STRATEGY OR COMBINATION OF EFFECTS DO YOU EMPLOY IN BATTLE?

deflect & dazzle, electrocute wet targets, shapeshift limbs out of harm's way, hit someone with their own power, deploy contraptions from hiding, overrun the living

J HOW CAN YOU ENHANCE OR WEAKEN OTHERS WITH YOUR POWERS?

enchant a weapon, conjure heavy fog, mass shapeshift, grant someone the powers of another, annoying bells and whistles, suck out their life-force

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT ARE YOUR POWERS OF ADAPTIVITY DEPENDENT ON?

only works with a magic wand, needs moisture in the air, must maintain a connection with nature, must gain the victim's trust, missing parts, dead too long

B WHAT RESULTS ARE HARDER FOR YOUR MYTHOS TO ACHIEVE?

dark magic is forbidden, struggles to calm weather, afraid of shapeshifting into aggressive animals, can't hold more than one power at a time, puppets don't really look real, hard to control the swarm

C WHAT HINDERS YOUR MYTHOS OR LIMITS ITS POSSIBILITIES?

susceptible to areas of thick Mist, blocked by shelter, instinctively drawn to native forms of current location, flammable toys, hallowed grounds

D WHAT BAD HABITS DID YOU PICK UP DUE TO YOUR ADAPTIVE POWERS?

obsessed with other sorcerers, easily infuriated, animalistic behavior, lost sense of self-worth, constantly fidgeting with parts, no regard for the living

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Merlin) Where is the Holy Grail now?
- (Doppelganger) What is the ultimate power I could steal?
- (Geppetto) Who or what can breathe life into my toys?

You can try exploring the following options:

- Philosophical questions about the nature or source of your powers
- Seeking something that is greater than your powers
- Fears of losing touch with your original nature

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Merlin) Wizard & Guide
- (Doppelganger) Other People's Powers
- (Geppetto) A Love for Toymaking

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them once challenged you to push the boundaries and flexibility of your adaptive powers at a critical moment. What happened? Take a Help point on them.
- You think one of them is a one-trick-pony, approaching every situation with the same solutions over and over again. In fact, this has hurt

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your crew before. Under what circumstances? Take a Hurt point on them.

- One of them is blown away by the vastness and diversity of your abilities. Ask them how it makes them feel. If it fascinates them, take a Help point on them. If it confuses them and they're weirded out, take a Hurt point on them.

ADAPTATION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

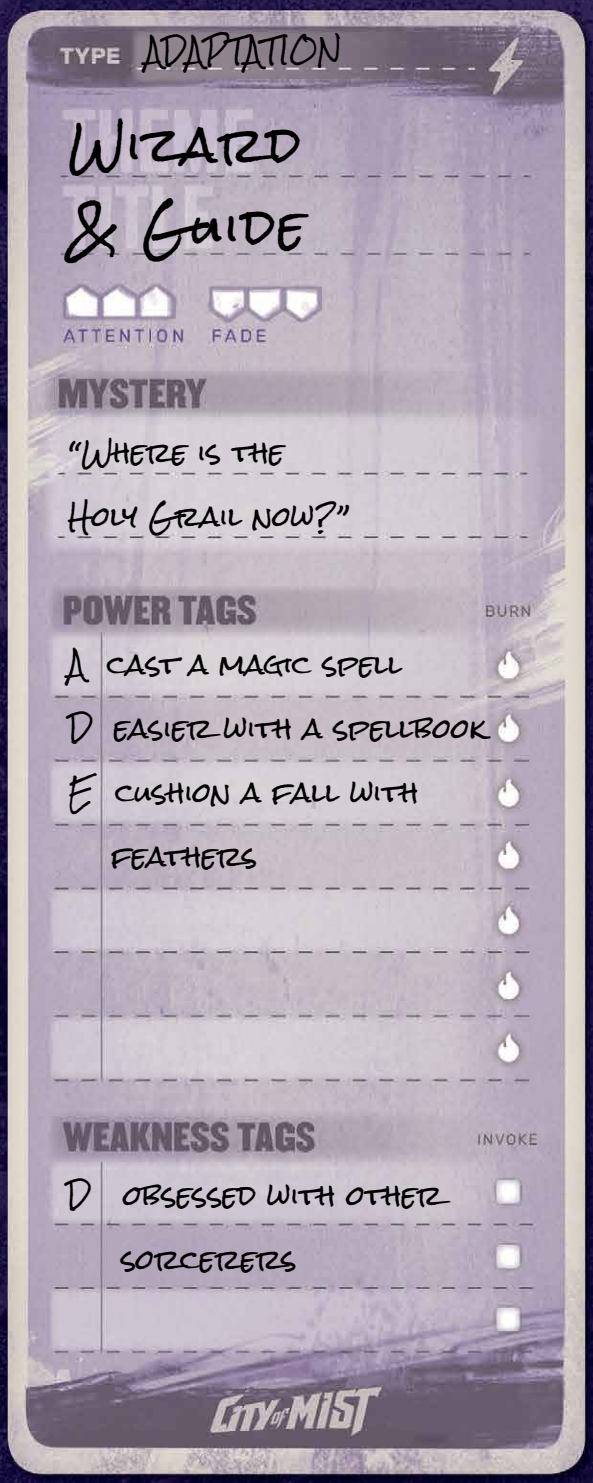
☐ **Game Changer**
When you **Change the Game** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Tap Into The Source**
Once per session, you get a free batch of 2 Juice with a method that relates to this theme and to the circumstances of the current scene. You cannot add this batch to another batch.

☐ **I Have Just The Thing**
When you spend a Clue to ask the MC or one of the other players "*What would be most useful to me in this situation?*", they answer as usual. If you then have any remaining Clues in the same batch, you can convert them to Juice, one for one, and use it to come up with the thing you need most. This Juice has the same method as the Clues it came from.

☐ **Creative Stroke**
When you use tags from this theme in a creative way, choose one of the most affected characters and ask whoever is playing it (the MC or another player) whether they saw it coming. They must answer honestly. If they didn't, take a temporary status *creative-stroke-1* (or similar).

☐ **Specialization**
You've learned to master a specific type of manifestation. Choose a power tag question from any of the other Mythos themebooks except Relic and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

BASTION

CONJURE AN ARMOR OR A SHIELD · INVULNERABILITY · MAGICAL PROTECTION · IMMUNITY TO VARIOUS KINDS OF HARM · AN UNBREAKABLE BODY, WILL, OR SOUL · BEING UNTOUCHABLE BY THE LAW

Becoming manifested in reality comes with its share of trouble. A Mythos that manages to find a Rift will often want to make sure that the Rift stays open, or in other words, remains alive and intact. After all, a Rift is a Mythos' foothold in reality, one which should be fortified against attacks, whether from Sleepers, other Rifts, or the Mist itself.

Rifts with a Bastion theme are not only granted such powers to simply stay alive but also to protect the agenda of their Mythos. Whether they do so by securing people, places, or objectives depends on their legend. The Rift of a Knight could conjure a spectral suit of armor and a shield; the Rift of Talos, the Bronzen construct, could be resistant to injury, while a Rift channeling a Poltergeist might be immune to all physical harm.

This is not to say all Bastion themes should provide physical protection. Some Mythoi bestow powers of mental, spiritual, magical, and even social protection.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, was your Mythos responsible for protecting something? Was she able to withstand punishment or endure great toils? Was she a unique being or creature with superhuman durability? What exactly were her powers?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? HOW DOES YOUR MYTHOS PROTECT ITS AGENDA?

- It makes me impervious to _____.
- It allows me to ward off _____ with _____.
- It renders _____ ineffective by _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT QUALITY OR ABILITY GRANTED BY YOUR MYTHOS MOST OFTEN PROTECTS YOU?

grow bone armor, can't die – already dead, ghost – no physical body, radiates authority, regrow organs, dragon scales

B WHAT MEANS DO YOU HAVE OF EXTENDING PROTECTION TO OTHERS?

a great golden shield, summon ghostly guardians, ward off darkness

C WHAT PARTICULAR TRAIT OF YOUR DEFENSE MAKES IT USEFUL?

impressive, reflective surface, both astral and physical, unbreakable, change skin texture and color, absorbs life force

D AGAINST WHAT TYPE OF ATTACK OR INFLUENCE IS YOUR DEFENSE ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE?

does not breathe, impervious to mortal weapons, maze-like mind, eternal youth

E HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR DEFENSE ACTIVELY?

a body made of fire → flames lash out, a great golden shield → throw shield, always held in high esteem → biting retort

F WHAT SECONDARY DEFENSIVE EFFECT DOES YOUR DEFENSE HAVE?

dragon scales → resistant to fire, grow bone armor → harden internal organs, invulnerability → harm only makes me stronger

G WHAT OTHER EFFECT OR QUALITY, NOT NECESSARILY DEFENSIVE, CAME WITH YOUR DEFENSE?

godlike invulnerability → inhuman strength, made of clay → melt into the earth, dragon scales → fire breath, ghost – no physical body → possess others' bodies

H WHO OR WHAT WERE YOUR POWERS MEANT TO PROTECT?

protector of the weak, guardian of Shangri La, Dulcinea (of Don Quixote)

I WHEN IN A CLINCH, HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR DEFENSE TO CHANGE THE ODDS IN YOUR FAVOUR?

grow bone armor → grow roots, cloak of protection → glide through the air, beauty that cannot be tarnished → inspire change of heart

J WHAT TACTICS DO YOU EMPLOY WHEN YOU USE YOUR DEFENSE?

hunker down, provide cover for others, furious rage, stampede, scare tactics, embrace the enemy

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NEW POWERS VS. SECONDARY ASPECTS OF THE SAME POWER

When you choose your power tags you are actually choosing how much focus you want each detail in your character to receive during the game. You are also choosing how much Power you will be able to muster from actions related to your power tags.

When you choose different power effects for each tag, you divide the airtime and the Power between them. For example, if you choose *dragon scales* and *flying*, you will be both armored and mobile, but you will have a single tag for protecting yourself and a single tag for flying feats. Therefore, each such move will be rolled with a Power of 1 (for one power tag).

When you choose secondary aspects of the same power, they can add up. For example, if you choose *dragon scales* and *resistant to fire*, it may seem like a waste because *dragon scales* presumably already protects you from fire. However, it would mean that when defending from harm that involves fire, such as a gas tank explosion, you will have both tags to use in your **Face Danger** move, giving you a Power of 2.

When choosing your power tags, remember this: unrelated tags give you greater versatility at the cost of Power; related tags stack up to give you greater Power in certain situations, at the cost of versatility.

WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A HOW DO YOUR DEFENSIVE POWERS AFFECT YOUR APPEARANCE?

monstrous, corpse-like visage, shining armor is easy to spot, bronzen

B WHAT ARE THE UNWANTED IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR DEFENSE?

cumbersome, ghost – cannot touch the world, blindspot, wears off quickly

C TO WHAT ATTACKS IS YOUR DEFENSE SUSCEPTIBLE?

"I can't protect them all!", holy water, bludgeoning, mystical weapons

D WHAT PERSONALITY TRAIT DERIVED FROM YOUR DEFENSE GETS YOU INTO TROUBLE?

foolhardy, paranoid, cannot feel emotions, savior mentality, ravenous

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Talos) "Why do I feel like I'm different?"
- (Poltergeist) "Who killed me and why?"
- (Fairy Godmother) "What is the dark force rising in the City?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- Wondering who or what you were meant to protect
- Questions about the threats you are meant to stop
- A dark desire to find out what could be your undoing

Write your Mystery on your theme.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

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TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Talos) Bronzen Construct
- (Poltergeist) Untouchable
- (Fairy Godmother) Protector of the Light

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- You once protected something very dear to one of them, possibly even from them. If they were grateful, take a Help point on them. If they were not, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them makes you feel weak and vulnerable or one of them actually has the capacity to break through your defenses. Take a Hurt point on them.
- You feel as if one of them is the one you are meant to protect. Take a Help point on them.

BASTION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

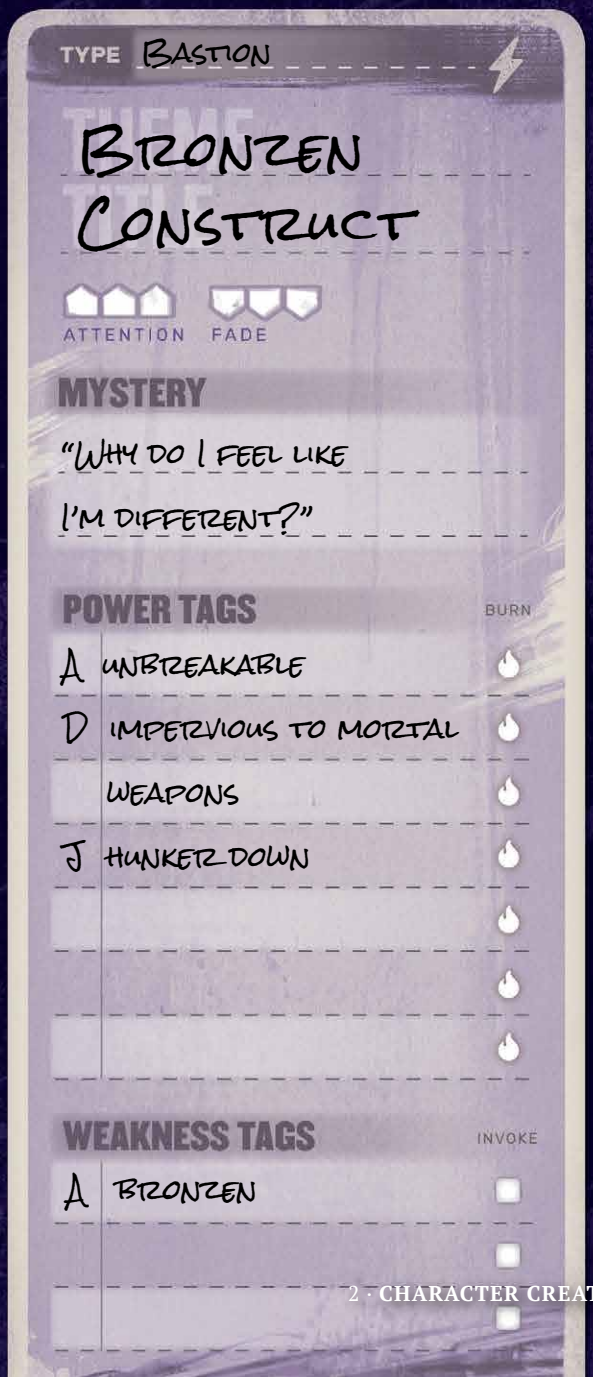
☐ **Unbreakable**
When you **Face Danger** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Got your Back**
When you burn a tag in this theme for a hit in order to **Face a Danger** affecting you and your allies, allies who can benefit from your protection don't roll **Face Danger** but use your result instead.

☐ **Sacrifice**
When you get a hit on **Face Danger**, you can always choose to extend the outcome to one person or object around you that you can protect, at the cost of exposing yourself. On a 10+, they take no status and you take the status with -1 tier. On 7-9, they take the status with -1 tier and you take the full status. If the move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you can choose to fully protect both of you (instead of one of the other 12+ options).

☐ **Sorry, was that your gun?**
When your **Face Danger** move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you can choose the following option instead of the other options: you absorb the harmful effect or disable its source, granting either you or your opponent an appropriate temporary tier-2 status of your choice.

☐ **Redirected Hostility**
When your **Face Danger** move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, if you choose to reflect the status you were given, you can redirect it to any target, not just your attacker.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

DIVINATION

CLAIRVOYANCE · SPECIAL SENSES · FORTUNE TELLING · A MYSTICAL SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE · MAGICALLY FINDING A PERSON, AN OBJECT, OR INFORMATION · PSYCHOMETRY · COMMUNICATING WITH OTHER REALMS OR BEINGS

To be in the world, a Mythos must know the world. It must be aware of things near and far, know of things that were or things that are yet to come. It must understand the nature of its environment, or it will be outsmarted, vanquished, and cast into non-existence once more. In order to stay ahead of the game, Mythoi grant their Rifts the ability to sense the world and grasp it beyond what their mortal cognition would allow. A modern-day witch could peer into a boiling pot of instant-soup and see what her adversaries are up to. The Rift of Baron Samedi could speak with the dead and learn what they know. The spirit of Wenchang Wang, the Chinese Godly King of Flourishing Language and Culture, could allow its Rift to assimilate written text with but a touch. And the horrible Wendigo naturally develops acute senses with which it hunts its prey. Whatever form they take, Divination powers allow Rifts to gather useful information.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, was your Mythos able to know or sense things beyond what was humanly possible? Was she in touch with a special source of information? Could she communicate with otherworldly beings? How so?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? HOW DOES YOUR MYTHOS LEARN ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND IT?

- It enhances my senses, such as _____.
- It allows me to communicate with _____.
- It allows me to tap into new sources of information such as _____.
- It gathers information from _____ by _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT ALLOWS YOU TO UNCANNILY KNOW THINGS YOU WOULDN'T NORMALLY KNOW?

flashes of what was here before, a wolf's instincts, instant book reading, premonitions, torment poor souls, read minds

B WHAT OTHER TYPE OF KNOWLEDGE CAN YOU ACCESS WITH YOUR POWERS?

flashes of other parts of the City, sniff out intruders, psychometry, sense a person's guilt

C WHAT SUBJECT IS THE EASIEST FOR YOU TO LEARN ABOUT?

perfect spatial sense, knows all about hunters, whispers of ancient history, expose hidden secrets, secrets taken to the grave

D WHAT ITEMS OR SUBSTANCES SERVE AS A CONDUIT FOR YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

consciousness expanding pills, book of shadows, in vino veritas, mirrors, the blood reveals all

E WHAT QUALITY OF YOUR DIVINATION MAKES IT ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE?

undetectable, covers the entire City, I can smell it as well, the stronger the emotion – the more I see.

F WHAT ADVANTAGE DOES YOUR DIVINATION GIVE YOU IN A FIGHT?

predict a foe's next move, sense minute earth tremors, a marksman's eye

G IN WHAT WAYS HAVE YOUR NORMAL SENSES BEEN ENHANCED BY YOUR MYTHOS?

see in complete darkness, can hear a pin drop, gut feeling when being deceived

H WHAT CREATIVE WAYS OF USING YOUR DIVINATION HAVE YOU DEVELOPED?

shoot around corners, "I can tell you like me…", ouija board scam, blind driving

I HOW CAN YOU AFFECT OTHERS WITH YOUR POWER?

put someone in a time-loop, deafening roar, suck up all the light, terrorize with a glimpse of one's death

J WHAT NEW FRONTIER OF KNOWLEDGE LIES AT THE EDGE OF YOUR DIVINATION?

flashes of beyond, visceral sense of danger, sisterhood of all women, secrets only the Void knows

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR DIVINATION OVERWHELMS YOU?

disturbing flashes of coming horror, sensory overload, haunted, the pain of knowing.

B WHAT CAN HINDER OR BLOCK YOUR DIVINATION?

cannot penetrate fog, blind in sterile environment, "Thou shall not pass my sigils!", "The hearth protects them..."

C WHAT IS BEYOND THE REACH OF YOUR DIVINATION?

too long ago, the future is fickle, one little boy, only as far as the eye can see

D WHAT MUST YOU HAVE IN ORDER TO USE YOUR DIVINATION?

a pouch full of beads and bones, must touch skin, I need more time

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Witch) "Where can I find the Book of Shadows?"
- (Baron Samedi) "Do the dead deserve another chance?"
- (Wenchang Wang) "How can I battle ignorance?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- Burning questions about something your Divination can't pierce
- Investigation of something only you were able to uncover
- Concerns about the beings or sources your powers consult

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Witch) Hubble Bubble
- (Baron Samedi) The Dead Don't Lie
- (Wenchang Wang) Master of The Written Word

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- You used your powers to learn a shocking secret about one of them, without their knowledge. If it made you feel closer to them, take a Help point on them. If you were disgusted or horrified, or if you plan to use it against them, take a Hurt point on them.
- You used your powers to reveal a weakness of one of them. Ask them what it is. If you're going to protect them, take a Help point on them. If you're going to exploit it, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them came to you for advice regarding their Mythos and you decided to help them (why?). Since then, they take your advice very seriously. Take a Help point on them.

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DIVINATION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

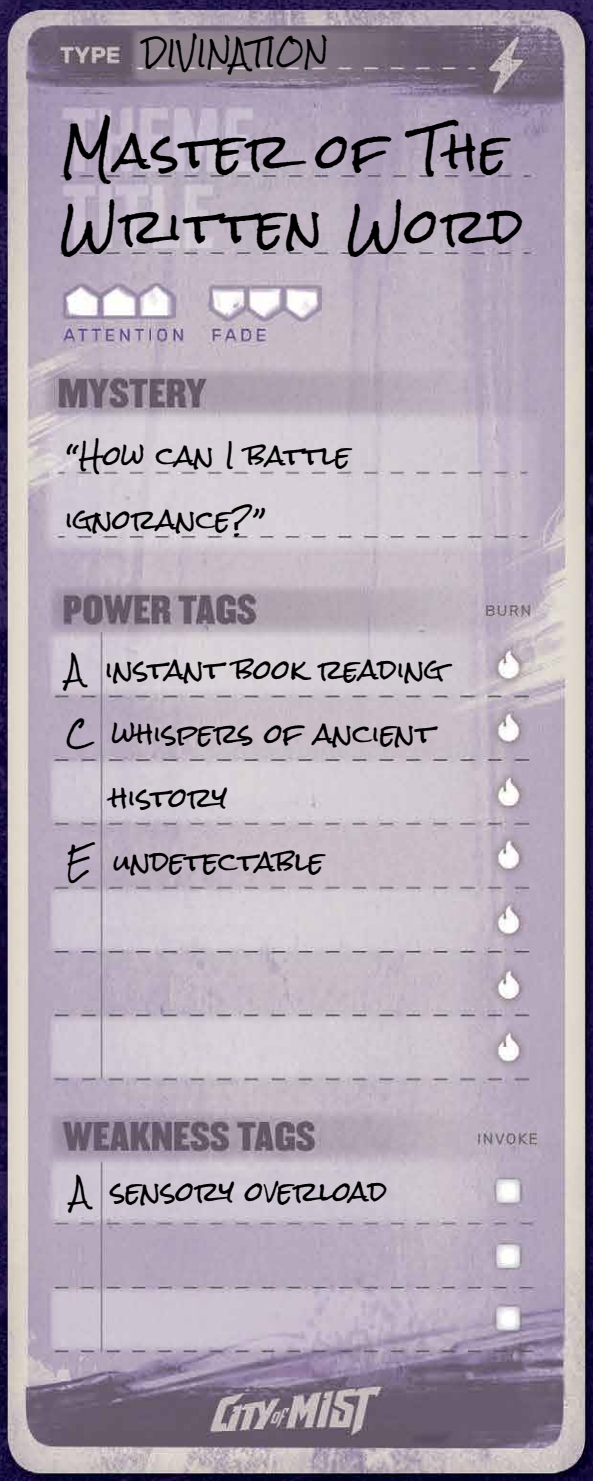
☐ **Open Book**
When you **Investigate** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Ahead of the Game**
Once per scene, you get one free Clue.

☐ **Seasoned Investigator**
Whenever you **Investigate** with power tags from this theme and score 7-9, choose one of the MC's options in the **Investigate** move. The MC can't choose this option this time.

☐ **Prophetic**
When you use a Clue to ask the MC "*What's going to happen next?*", the MC can't give you just a hint and must instead give you a straight answer. If you use the MC's answer to your advantage on your next move, you gain an appropriate temporary tier-1 status.

☐ **A Fighting Chance**
You're more than just a bucket of knowledge or a hub of heightened awareness. When push comes to shove, you can fend for yourself. Choose a power tag question from the Expression or Bastion themebooks and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

EXPRESSION

ELEMENTAL OR PHYSICAL PROJECTION (E.G., FIRE, ARROWS, THOUGHTS) · LEGENDARY STRENGTH · SUPERIOR WARRIOR PROWESS · OVERPOWERING PRESENCE · HEALING POWERS

An Expression theme represents the ways in which your Mythos wants to directly influence the world and the powers it gives you to do so. Most commonly, these powers either project outwards as matter, energy, or magical effects, or alter you in a way that would help you leave your mark on the world around you. Maybe the Mythos of Pestilence, the Horseman of the Apocalypse, allows you to infect anyone you touch, or even an entire room, with a horrible disease; or the Mythos of Paul Bunyan grants you inhuman strength, the ability to turn into a giant, and the power to summon a formidable axe to match. You could lash out with blizzards of freezing cold as the Snow Queen or play soothing, hypnotic melodies as the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

An Expression theme is about changing the world overtly and directly. What exactly is expressed is entirely up to your Mythos.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, was your Mythos responsible for a major change in the world around her? Was she able to control an element or even create it out of thin air? Was she a great warrior or somehow able to influence others? How did she do that?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT CHANGE DOES YOUR MYTHOS WISH TO EFFECT IN THE WORLD?

- It wants to turn all _____ into _____.
- It wants to fight _____.
- It wants everyone to become _____.
- It wants to spread _____.
- It wants to control or shape _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON WAY YOU USE YOUR MYTHOS TO AFFECT THE WORLD?

burning whips, bless with good fortune, turn solid matter into liquid, psychic blasts of pain, uncanny charisma, ultimate fighter

B WHAT USEFUL REVERSE EFFECT CAN YOU EXERT?

take away good fortune, turn liquids into solids, quench fire, cure diseases

C WHAT USEFUL QUALITY DOES YOUR MAIN EFFECT HAVE?

intense heat, bigger explosions, airborne spores, irresistible, armor-piercing, soothing presence, indomitable

D WHAT CONDITIONS OR SITUATIONS ENHANCE YOUR MYTHOS' EXPRESSION?

better in damp conditions, the more the merrier, feeds off fear, back-to-back fighting.

E AGAINST WHAT TARGETS ARE YOUR EXPRESSION POWERS MORE EFFECTIVE?

reduce buildings to rubbles, good for abducting children, easily manipulates metals, "you can run but you can't hide"

F WHAT SPECIAL VARIANTS OR SPECIFIC USES OF YOUR MYTHOS' MAIN FORM OF EXPRESSION HAVE YOU MASTERED?

burning whips → bright flare, blow freezing cold → encase someone in ice, celestial martial arts → falling star roundhouse kick, infect with disease → latent infection, plant growth → poisonous biting plants

G WHAT ADDITIONAL EXPRESSION, NOT NECESSARILY RELATED TO THE MAIN ONE, DOES YOUR MYTHOS HAVE?

super strength → summon lightning weapon, (play hypnotic tune → deafening blast, burning whips → underwater propulsion

H WHAT TRICK SHOTS OR SPECIAL MANEUVERS CAN YOU DO WITH YOUR EXPRESSION POWERS?

bounce arrows off walls, selectively hit targets in an area, affect through walls

I WHAT ATTITUDE DO YOU ADOPT WHEN EXPRESSING YOUR MYTHOS?

firebrand, ruthless, icy demeanor, terrifying, trustworthy appearance

J HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR POWER TO SHIELD YOURSELF, ESPECIALLY FROM SIMILAR EFFECTS?

plasma barrier, absorb electricity, impenetrable mind, parry

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT SITUATIONS OR CONDITIONS WEAKEN OR SUPPRESS YOUR MYTHOS' EXPRESSION?

weaker in dry conditions, cannot operate in the light of day, only effective against a single opponent

B WHAT TARGETS ARE IMMUNE OR RESISTANT TO YOUR MYTHOS' EXPRESSION?

does not work on gods or spirits, cannot shape organic matter, weaker against loved ones

C WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LOSE CONTROL OVER YOUR MYTHOS' EXPRESSION?

uncontrolled firestorm, can't tell allies from foes, entangled in plants

D WHAT ARE THE REPERCUSSIONS OF BRINGING YOUR MYTHOS INTO THE WORLD?

icicles everywhere, signature markings on victims, over-zealous thralls, people find me repulsive

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Pestilence) "How can I control my desire to consume all?"
- (Snow Queen) "Is there any warmth left in my heart?"
- (Pied Piper of Hamelin) "Where should I lead my followers?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- Doubts about your power's effect on the world and how to best use it
- Fears about what wielding such powers might do to you
- Questions about the identity of your sworn enemies or how to fight them

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Pestilence) Touch of Decay
- (Snow Queen) A Frozen Heart
- (Pied Piper of Hamelin) Play Them Like A Flute

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them once witnessed you expressing your Mythos at full power. Ask them what they thought about it. If it scared them, take a Hurt point on them. If they appreciated it, take a Help point on them.
- You feel like one of them wants you to hold back and refrain from expressing your Mythos. Ask them what is their reason. Take a Hurt point on them.
- To your Mythos, one of them seems like the modern-day version of a character in its legend. If they were your foe in the legend, take a Hurt

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point on them. If they were your ally or loved one, or if you were their rescuer, take a Help point on them.

EXPRESSION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

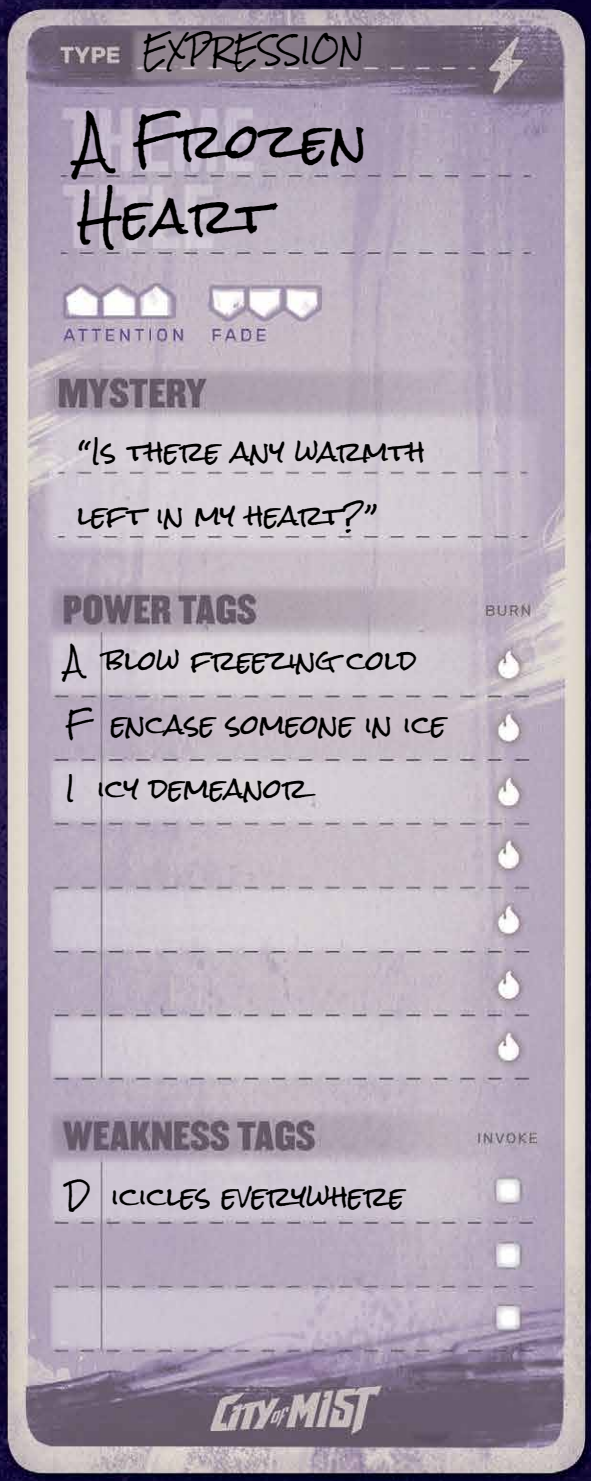
☐ **On Fire**
When you **Hit With All You've Got** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Ruptured Rift**
When you burn a tag for a hit in this theme, you can mark Crack on one of your Logos themes instead of marking that tag as burnt.

☐ **Mythos Mastery**
When you **Hit With All You've Got**, you always get to control the collateral damage.

☐ **Contain the Surge**
When you make the move **Stop. Holding. Back.** with your Mythos' Expression powers, if you roll 6 or less, treat it as 7-9 instead.

☐ **Ripples**
You can either sense something related to your Mythos' expression or prevent others from sensing something by means of your expression. Choose a power tag question from the Divination or Subversion themebooks and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

MOBILITY

NIMBLE, GRACEFUL, OR DEXTEROUS MOVEMENT · SUPERNATURAL SPEED · FLIGHT · TRAVELLING AS A CLOUD, A DROP OF WATER, OR A RAY OF LIGHT · RIDING ON MYTHICAL CREATURES · MAGICAL TRANSPORTATION

Taking shape and form in the material world has the immediate effect of limiting one to a single point in space and time, a state both alien and undesirable to any Mythos. The Mythoi therefore bestow upon their Rifts the ability to travel from one place to another wondrously, whether through physical movement or magical transportation. This is essential for the Mythos' wish to spread its influence across the City. Mobility powers may also allow a Rift not only to transport themselves and others from one place to another but also to move unobstructed and overcome obstacles.

The modern-day incarnation of Tlaloc, the Aztec rain god, could appear out of water anywhere in the City, or even turn himself and others into water. The legendary Arabian Roc could fly over great distances easily carrying a burden as heavy as a bull. And the Rift of the Monkey King might have gained some of the freedom of action possessed by her Mythos, who could not be restrained by any ordinary or divine means, bar the palm of the Buddha himself. The Rift of Jack could grow beanstalks that took him above the clouds and Rapunzel could use her long flaxen hair to help others reach her.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, did your Mythos travel from one place to another in a miraculous way? Did she possess the power to transport or move others? Did she display the ability to avoid or escape confinement?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? HOW DOES YOUR MYTHOS MOVE YOU OR OTHERS?

- It can run / jump / swim / fly / tunnel / glide / catapult / jet / etc. at great speeds or to a great distance.
- It can transport itself / others by means of _____.
- It can propel itself with _____.
- It easily overcomes obstacles such as _____ by _____.
-

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question

A WHAT IS YOUR MYTHOS' MOST USEFUL FORM OF MOVEMENT?

super-speed, uncanny parkour artist, emerge out of bodies of water, enormous wings, grow giant beanstalks

B HOW DO YOU GO INTO OVERDRIVE?

tear space-time apart, merge with a large mass of water, fury of the roc, unrestrained growth

C WHAT ALLOWS YOU TO AVOID RESTRAINTS OR CONFINEMENT?

act just before it happens, makeshift katana, turn into water, powerful beak and talons, lock-picking vines

D WHAT SECONDARY MODE OF MOVEMENT HAVE YOU LEARNED TO USE?

short-range teleportation, move in the shadows, skim the water, claw through barriers, roots can tunnel into the earth

E WHAT STYLE OR TECHNIQUE OF MOVEMENT HAVE YOU MASTERED?

good catcher, nimble as a fox, flow down narrow spaces, deadly swoop, beanstalk acrobatics

F WHAT SPECIFIC HARMFUL EFFECTS DOES YOUR MOBILITY ALLOW YOU TO AVOID?

dodge bullets, block martial art strike, expel blood toxins, thick plumage, beanstalk breaks the fall

G HOW DO YOU USE YOUR MOBILITY TO GAIN ADVANTAGE IN A FIGHT?

surprise from behind, katana whirlwind attack, flashflood, wing bash, catapult around stem

H WHAT ALLOWS YOU TO MOVE OTHERS?

bestow superspeed, secret ninja shortcuts, turn others into water, the strength to carry a bull, bridges out of vines

I HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR POWERS TO RESTRAIN OTHERS' MOVEMENT?

put someone into a time-loop, darts with numbing ointment, engulf in a waterspout, pin down with giant foot, coiling vines

J WHAT SPECIAL RESOURCE DOES YOUR MOBILITY GIVE YOU ACCESS TO?

out-of-time pocket dimension, hidden vantage point, communicate through water, a convocation of loyal eagles, a window left open

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IMPEDES YOU OR SLOWS YOU DOWN?

temporal distortions, slippery foothold, strong water currents, bad weather, concrete pavement

B WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TOO FAST, TOO FAR, ETC.?

space-time overload, overlooked details, uncontrolled liquidation, exhausted by dogfighting, vertigo

C WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU'RE CAUGHT?

claustrophobia, fragile, susceptible to evaporation, aggressive behaviour, criminal record

D WHAT RESIDUAL EVIDENCE DOES YOUR MOVEMENT LEAVE ON YOU, ON OTHERS, OR IN THE ENVIRONMENT?

flickers in and out of time, neighborhood sightings, clothes always wet, leaves a trail of feathers, persecution complex

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Tlaloc) "Who can I trust to protect the Fifth Sun?
- (Roc) "Where have they hidden my egg?"
- (Jack and the Beanstalk) "What is up there?"

You can try exploring the following Adaptation-related options:

- Questions about things that are hidden or inaccessible in the City
- Wondering how far, how fast, or how deep you can travel
- Seeking a way to outrun or outmaneuver a threat

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Tlaloc) Wherever there is water, there I am
- (Roc) Feathered Fury
- (Jack and the Beanstalk) Magic Beans

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- Whether out of love, greed, power-trip, or concern, one of them is trying to slow you down, constrict your movement or freedom of action, or tie you down. Why? And how do they do so? Take a Hurt point on them.
- You took one of them on a "magic carpet ride", a trip they will never forget. What happened there? Ask them if it made them feel closer to you. If so, take a Help point on them. If they kept their distance since, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them once pushed you to go as fast or as far as you can. What were the circumstances? If it ended well, take a Help point on them. If it ended badly, take a Hurt point on them.

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MOBILITY THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

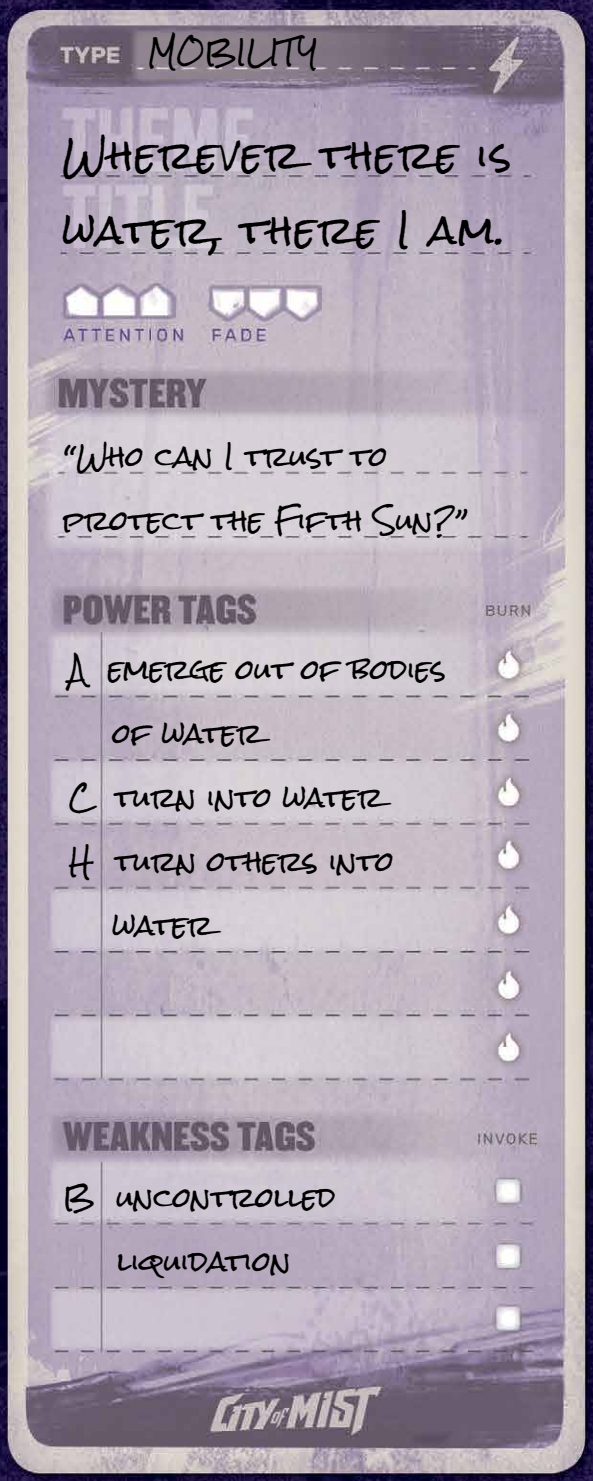
☐ **Nine Lives**
When you **Take the Risk** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Do Try to Keep Up**
Once per session, when you or someone rolls 6 or less and the MC makes a move, you can make a single (additional) move before the MC's move takes place. You move is considered to precede the MC's move and can affect or even nullify it (*e.g.*, by reducing its tier, granting you a status, or simply changing the circumstances).

☐ **Ain't No Mountain High Enough**
Once per session, you can have your character show up or already be at a scene anywhere in the City (including cutscenes). Alternately, you can ask the MC to start a scene anywhere in the City, with your character present.

☐ **Hit the Brakes**
You can stop just before things get messy. Once per scene, when you score a 7-9 on **Take the Risk**, after hearing the MC's hard bargain or ugly choice, you can choose to forego the success of your feat and walk away unharmed.

☐ **Rev Up**
Once per session, if you can ready yourself for an action involving your mobility powers, you can choose to take an appropriate tier-2 status.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

RELIC

A MAGICAL WEAPON · A MAGICAL PIECE OF ARMOR OR CLOTHING · A GIFT FROM ANOTHER REALM · A BAG FULL OF WONDERS · MUNDANE EQUIPMENT IMBUED WITH LEGEND · A BLESSED OR WITCHED ITEM

Myths and legends are full of magical items and objects. The mojo, wanga, or gri-gri bag of African traditions could hold powerful prayers or spells. Neptune's trident gave its bearer command over the seas and over water. A hagoromo, the feathered garment worn by the Japanese celestial beings called Tennin, allowed them to fly. The Seal of Solomon was said to have the power to command demons. The Irish Fair Folk, the Tuatha Dé Danan, had four magical treasures they cherished: a cauldron, a spear, a sword, and a sacred stone.

People are not the only Rifts in the City. Sometimes, a Mythos manifests through an item, called a Relic. The item could be a special one, such as a necklace passed down from generation to generation, or a seemingly mundane object, like a baseball bat. Due to the power of the Mist, a Relic almost always seems like a modern-day object while its powers are inactive.

When you have a single Relic theme, you are not the Rift through which the Mythos enters the City – your item is. Relics have a certain degree

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of awareness; even if they cannot speak or move on their own, they can sometimes activate their powers at opportune moments and steer their destiny towards someone special – a bearer. Most Relics choose a bearer and cannot then be activated by anyone else, so while the Relic is the Rift between the two of you, you still technically possess the power.

RELICS OF MYTHOI THAT ARE NOT ITEMS

Most often, Relics channel the Mythoi of legendary items, so an object is incarnated in an object. This is simply the associative nature of Mythoi. However, in some rare cases, a modern-day item can channel the Mythos of a legendary person or creature, too. For example, a pistol could channel the Mythos of the Dragon or a antique spyglass could be the Rift for the Mythos of pirate Long John Silver (*Treasure Island*). Presumably, human Rifts could channel the Mythos of legendary items too; however, they would not be considered Relics.

CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, is there an item of great power? Is it more interesting to you than the people who wield it? What powers did this item have?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? FOR WHAT PURPOSE WAS YOUR MYTHOS MADE?

- It's a receptacle used to hold _____.
- It's a device that can _____.
- It's a weapon forged to _____.
- It's a _____ made to protect _____ from _____.
- It was an insignificant object, until it was _____.
- It was a set of items which together _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below.

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MAIN USEFUL FEATURE OR PART OF YOUR RELIC?

can turn into any weapon, a fetish for voodoo spells, grants control over sea and water, flying feathered robe, enslaver of demons, Spear of Lugh

B NAME ANOTHER WAY IN WHICH YOU USE THE SAME FEATURE.

slice through opposition, a spell to ward off evil spirits, create a spring of water, aerial mastery, summon Asmodeus, precise hurling

C WHAT ESSENTIAL USEFUL QUALITY LIES AT THE CORE OF YOUR RELIC?

destructive physical force, protection from unnatural harm, wrathful, feather-light, wisdom of heaven, strive for the welfare of my clan

D WHAT COSMETIC ATTRIBUTES DOES YOUR RELIC POSSESS?

inconspicuous in bracelet form, creepy decorations, a weapon worthy of a God, colorful plumage, signet of kings, disappears when a mortal holds it

E WHAT OTHER FEATURE, PART, OR ITEM DOES YOUR RELIC INCLUDE?

indestructible, a spell for luck in gambling, rock-shattering prongs, shapeshift into a bird, summon Naamah, Cauldron of the Dagda

F WHAT IS REVEALED TO YOU THROUGH THE USE OF YOUR RELIC?

rings in the presence of wrongdoing, reveal enchantments, clairvoyance through water, recognize spiritual beings for what they are, see one's demons, sense who is the ruler of this place

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G WHAT OR WHO WAS YOUR RELIC DESIGNED TO AFFECT MOST?

ignores armor, doubly potent against aggressors, mold the fate of mortals, enchanting attraction, "You shall obey, demon.", hungers for Fomorian blood

H WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR RELIC?

ancient swordsmanship, crafting new spells, speak with aquatic life, play the biwa (lute), demonology, perseverance

I WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR RELIC GOES INTO OVERDRIVE?

bigger explosions, blessing of prosperity, a storm is brewing, turn ethereal, army of demons, the Cauldron revives the mortally wounded

J WHAT ASPECT OR ELEMENT OF YOUR RELIC ARE YOU ONLY BEGINNING TO UNLOCK?

transform into armor, a prayer of hope, ride the waves, the lotus of enlightenment, summon Baal, Sword of Nuada

WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MOST TROUBLESOME SHORTCOMING OF YOUR RELIC?

leaves signature markings on victims, only as strong as I am pure, requires a nearby body of water, easily slips off, I always hear demons, cumbersome

B WHAT CAN INTERFERE WITH THE POWERS OF YOUR RELIC?

hermetic wizardry, lost on the faithless, the Olympian gods, mortal love – the earthly tether, rampant demons are harder to control, asleep in times of peace

C WHAT CAN DAMAGE OR DESTROY YOUR RELIC?

Lady of the Lake and the folk of Avalon, bad juju, the heat of a forge, too easily torn, infernal incantations, dissention in my clan

D WHAT HAS CHANGED IN YOU FOR THE WORSE BECAUSE OF YOUR RELIC?

bloodthirsty, eccentric mumbling, condescending prick, distant and aloof, demonic rage, obese

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life. For example:

- (Mojo bag) "What did that witch doctor do to my unborn child?"
- (Hagoromo) "Where can I find the one who seeks enlightenment?"
- (Solomon's Seal) "What are the Shedim planning behind my back?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- Questions about the predetermined destiny of your Relic
- Fears of losing yourself to your Relic or becoming too reliant on it
- Seeking the maker of the Relic

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

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TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Mojo bag) Bag of Many Blessings
- (Hagoromo) Kimono of Celestial Beauty
- (Solomon's Seal) Kiss My Ring, Demon

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- Once, in a moment of crisis, one of them tried to borrow your Relic. What happened next? If you didn't like that, take a Hurt point on them. If you thought they did right by your Relic, take a Help point on them.
- One of them has more knowledge about your Relic than you do. Ask them whether they're sharing it with you. If so, take a Help point on them. If not, take a Hurt point on them.
- To your Mythos, one of them seems like the modern-day version of the character who was supposed to own this Relic, the character who steals it, or the character whom this Relic was meant to destroy or save. Take a Help or Hurt point on them accordingly.

RELIC THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

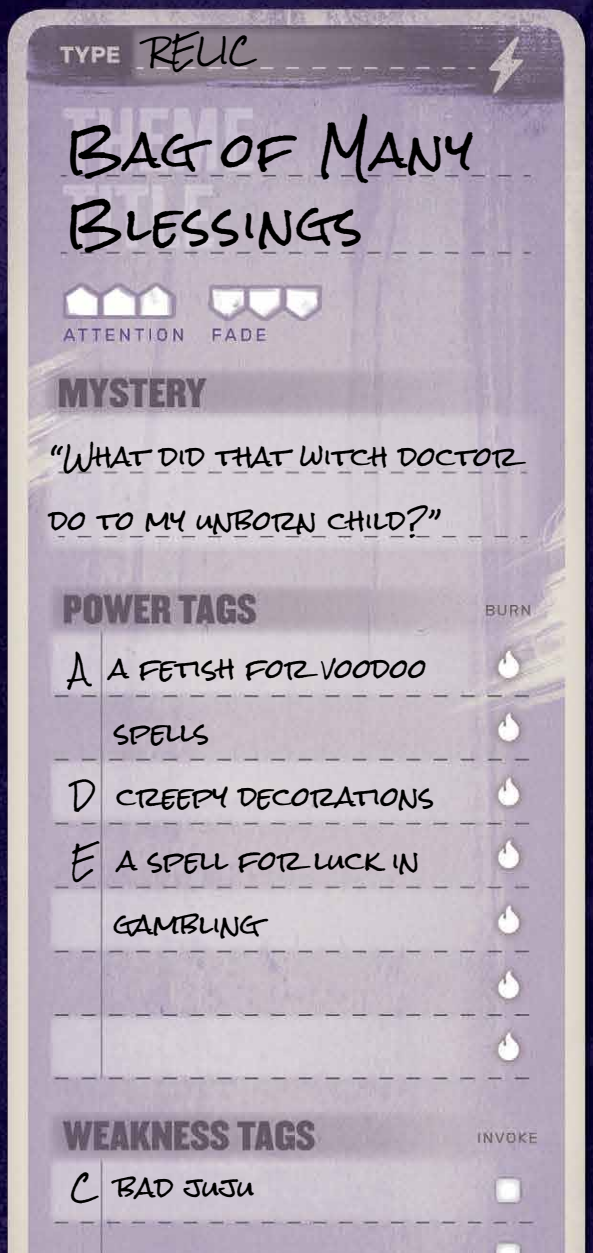
☐ **Eternal Bond**
Mark a power tag from this theme as burnt to immediately retrieve your Relic from anywhere in the City. Mark Fade to immediately remove all statuses from your Relic (including tier-6 statuses). This can reform your Relic in case it was destroyed or broken.

☐ **Made For This**
Choose a Core Move that best represents the actions you most often use your Relic for. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Ultimate Unlock**
You tap into the deepest place of power within your Relic – and unleash it. When you **Stop. Holding. Back.** you can choose to forego the roll and gain an automatic 10+ by marking an additional Fade on this theme. If your sacrifice is Significant or No Return, you mark Fade twice instead of once (in No Return, you also burn this theme's tags). If your sacrifice is Ultimate, you replace this theme.

☐ **Transference**
Some of the power of your Relic rubbed off on you. Choose a power tag question from any of the other Mythos themebooks and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **The Mythos Within**
Choose a Mythos themebook that best represents the powers of your Relic. Choose a theme improvement from that themebook.



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MYTHOS THEMEBOOK

SUBVERSION

INVISIBILITY · TRICKERY AND ILLUSIONS · THIEVERY AND STEALTH · HYPNOTISM AND SUBTLE MANIPULATION · HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT · SECRECY AND COUNTER-DETECTION

Not all Mythoi blast the world directly with their legendary tale. In a city haunted by the Mist, Mythoi have learned that gifting their Rifts with the ability to act secretly can help them secure a deeper and more lasting influence. Other Mythoi are simply subversive in nature, legends and stories of forces operating in the shadows, whether benign or insidious. Their powers are those of deception, secrecy, illusion, and trickery.

The Rift of the Puss in Boots could have the power to strangely make others think she is someone of importance; Siegfried of the Song of the Nibelungs could conjure a cloak of invisibility; the trickster god Loki could fashion life-like illusions with his thoughts; the Scottish Shifty Lad could steal anything from anyone; the Devil's Advocate could seduce and corrupt even the purest of souls; while a Changeling could rob your identity.

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CONCEPT

Think about your Mythos. In the legend, did your Mythos operate secretly or deceptively? Was she able to move and act undetected? Did she use her powers to undermine authority or erode stability of either people or organizations? How so?

Based on the legend, think about the answer to the question below:

? HOW DOES YOUR MYTHOS HIDE ITS ACTIVITY IN THE WORLD?

- It can mask or veil _____.
- It can secretly tamper with _____.
- It employs cunning _____.
- It's difficult or impossible to detect by _____.

Next, think of a few details from your legend that you can use to flesh out this concept. Use them to inspire your answers to the tag questions below

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE PRINCIPLE ABILITY YOU USE TO MASK OR HIDE YOUR ACTIONS?

illusory appearance, a false air of importance, cloak of invisibility, miraculously sneak in and out of anywhere, corrupt those who hold power, take another person's identity

B HOW DO YOU USE YOUR POWER TO DISTRACT OTHERS?

induce hypnotic trance, beguiling boots & garb, echo of my voice, bewitched absent-mindedness, mistaken for an angel, memory wipe

C WHAT USEFUL QUALITY DOES YOUR MAIN EFFECT HAVE?

make hypnotic suggestion, produce fake gold, threatening whispers, "let's bet on it", demonic seduction, appear like one's close confidant

D WHAT DO YOU DO BEST UNDER THE COVER OF SECRECY?

waltz in unregarded, sway them to shower me with gifts, smite with the strength of twelve men, impossible thievery, weaken one's faith, silent kill

E WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO FALL PREY TO YOUR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY?

stronger against simple-minded people, the rich will be poor, "You are blinded by your pride", the king will never catch me, corrupt the purest souls, just an unpretentious Joe or Jane

F HOW DOES OPERATING SECRETLY ALLOW YOU TO LEARN NEW INFORMATION?

mind reading, intuit every detail of one's wealth, see the invisible, sense one's darkest desires, steal their memories

G WHO ARE YOU IN LEAGUE WITH?

summon fox helpers, the pizza parlor owner's youngest son, Alberich's biker gang, the Master Thief, Lucifer himself, unwitting loved ones

H WHAT IS UNLIKELY TO AFFECT YOU THANKS TO YOUR POWERS?

laws of Man don't apply to me, "Oh please… you don't expect me to fall for that?", protected from scrying, can't steal from a thief, divine immunity, masked true identity

I WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES OR CONDITIONS IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO ACT UNDETECTED?

intoxicated delirium, hungry for blood, harder to see in the dark, vanish in the crowd, infernal courtroom superiority

J WHAT OTHER TANGENTIAL SUBVERSIVE POWER HAVE YOU DEVELOPED?

creep without a sound, control the wearer of the boots, seduce powerful women, make a lock open, siphon one's vitality, momentarily shift into Faerie

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT COULD EXPOSE YOU?

elaborate trickery is easier to expose, exaggerations don't check out, they can see my footsteps..., wise advice, revealed by the holy light of heaven, cold iron

B WHAT IS REVEALED WHEN YOU ARE EXPOSED?

just a kid, empty pockets, the shameful deeds of the past, caught in the act, victims always have hope for redemption, an ugly goblin

C WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU HIDING FROM?

reality sucks, the pizza parlor owner's youngest son, "I'm nothing without the cloak", police magnet, Lilith herself, the Gatekeepers

D WHAT DISADVANTAGEOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL TENDENCIES HAVE YOU DEVELOPED IN THE SHADOWS OR BEHIND YOUR MASK?

(don't) play with mortals, greediness killed the cat, superiority complex, must tease and taunt my victims, grows fond of my protege, fake personality

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

MYSTERY

Choose a Mystery for this theme: a question that your Mythos wants you to explore, investigate, or discover the answer to. It could be related to your powers, to your legend, or to your mundane life.

For example:

- (Puss in Boots) "Just how rich can I make my client?"
- (The Devil's advocate) "Can I ever find redemption?"
- (Changeling) "Who are my real parents?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- Seeking clarity about what is real and what is illusory
- Searching for new ways to subversively advance your Mythos' agenda
- Moral doubts about using your powers to deceive others

Write your Mystery on your theme card.

Let the MC know what kind of clues your character might find interesting. The MC will provide opportunities for you to find answers to your Mystery. Ignoring these opportunities means you have lost interest in what your Mythos has in store for you.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Puss in Boots) Purrrfect Salesman
- (The Devil's advocate) Illegal Advice
- (Changeling) Switchback Persona

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them saw something that incriminated you or revealed what you truly are. What was it and under what circumstances? If you have since made them your confidant, take a Help point on them. Otherwise, take a Hurt point on them.
- You share a secret with one of them, something that the other crew members don't know. Take a Help point on them, but if this crewmate ever blows the lid on your secret, take a Hurt point on them too.

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- One of them makes you feel exposed. You find their powers, abilities, or personality invasive. Take a Hurt point on them.

SUBVERSION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

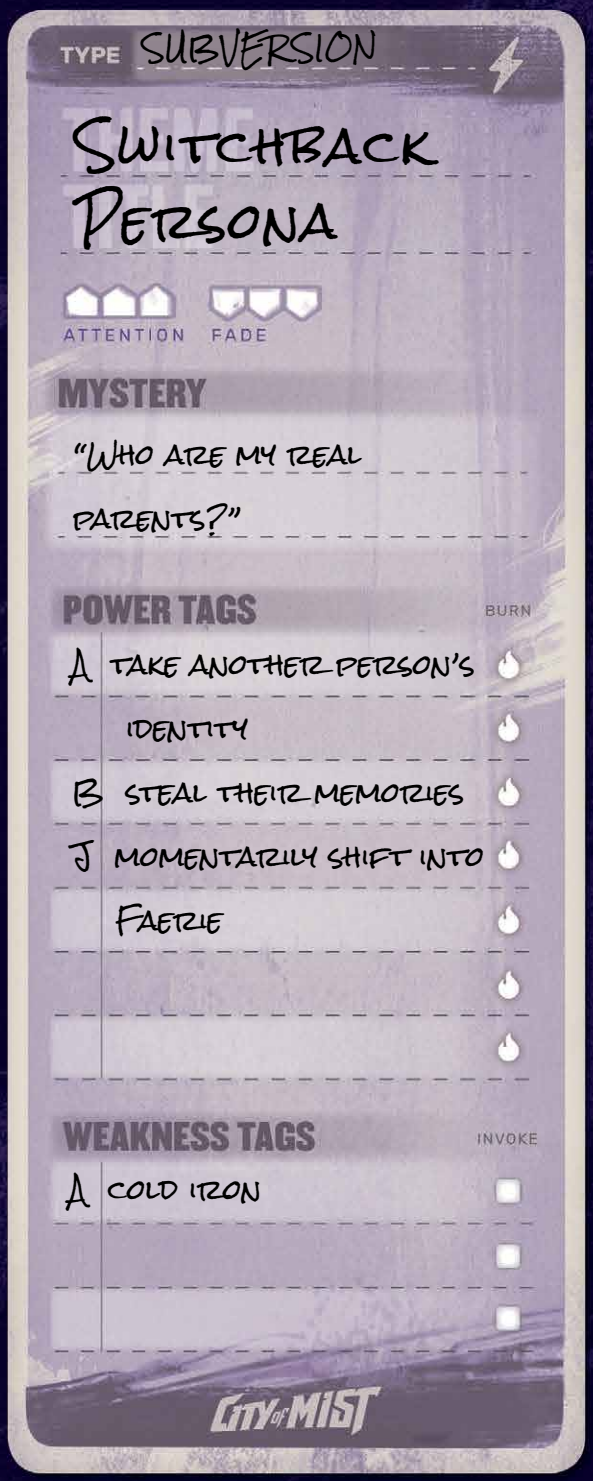
☐ **Cloak & Dagger**
When you **Sneak Around** with power tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Under The Wings Of Darkness**
When you **Sneak Around** with power tags from this theme, on a 10+, you can use your powers to hide or mask the actions of another character in the scene.

☐ **Stalker**
When you **Sneak Around** with power tags from this theme and get a hit, you also get 1 Clue. When you **Investigate** with power tags from this theme, on 7-9, the MC or the target player cannot choose to ask you a question back.

☐ **Oblivious**
Choose one existing NPC or PC. When you **Convince** them or **Sneak Around** them using tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!* If that character dies or leaves the story, you can choose a new target.

☐ **Go for the Jugular**
You have a knack for catching people off guard. If your powers can reasonably affect your target, you always have the clear shot or opening required to make a **Hit With All You've Got** move (you don't need to make another move to get it).



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

DEFINING EVENT

A THUNDERING REALIZATION · LOSS OF A LOVED ONE, VALUED POSSESSION, OR SOCIAL STANDING · AN ACCIDENT · RISE TO GREATNESS · 15 MINUTES OF FAME · ENLIGHTENMENT

Life throws you curveballs you can't anticipate, dramatic events that shape you irrevocably. For better or worse, the person you used to be before this event either ceased to exist or was abandoned in favor of a new version of you, one that was forged in that fateful moment or period. Perhaps it was an accident, a crime you were involved in, a revelation, a chance meeting that influenced you, a great victory, a time of trials, etc.

The Defining Event theme focuses on the residual influence of a specific event or time in your character's life. Having a Defining Event theme means you still define yourself through that moment or time in your life. If the follow-up of that event is just as central to your story as the memory of what happened and how it shaped you, you should pick another appropriate theme (either in addition to or instead of the Defining Event theme). For example, if you swore to do something following a tragic event, perhaps a Mission theme is in order; if you gained Mythos powers, you should represent them using one of the Mythos theme types.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life, particularly her past. Where does she come from? What did she do? What time in her life influenced and shaped her the most?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU THAT CHANGED YOUR LIFE FOREVER?

- When I was [age], _____.
- One day, _____.
- There was a time in my life when _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: When did this happen? Who was involved? What happened in the aftermath of this life-altering event?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT KIND OF STRONG EMOTION DID YOUR DEFINING EVENT LEAVE YOU WITH?

filled with rage, *a sense of unity with all life*, *driven to mete out justice*, *ambition*

B WHAT PART OF YOUR OLD SELF, WHILE DEEPLY CHANGED, STILL SERVES YOU?

ex-celebrity, *youthful curiosity*, *inherited fortune*, *love of the local community*

C WHAT MUNDANE BUT USEFUL OBJECT DID YOU OBTAIN DURING YOUR DEFINING EVENT, THAT HAS BEEN WITH YOU EVER SINCE?

Helix Labs access card, *a rusty sword*, *a picture of my enemy*, *fancy clothes*

D WHAT AUTHORITY WAS VESTED IN YOU DURING YOUR DEFINING EVENT OR AFTER IT?

leader of a secret order of knights, *the chosen one*, *head of a corporation*, *City mayor*

E WHO DID YOU BOND OR CONNECT WITH IN THE AFTERMATH OF YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

media connections, *a majestic eagle*, *a trusted butler*, *a secret sponsor*, *a gang of lowlifes and rejects*

F WHAT SKILL OR MUNDANE ABILITY DID YOU PICK UP DURING OR DUE TO YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

meditation, *swordsmanship*, *light sleep*, *lying shamelessly*, *wilderness survival*

G WHAT KNOWLEDGE DID YOU GAIN ACCESS TO THANKS TO YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

manual of medical conditions, *a sacred prayer*, *the underworld*, *City finances*

H WHAT APPROACH TO LIFE DID YOU ADOPT FOLLOWING YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

"can't be too safe", *humility*, *always prepared*, *power-hungry*, *survival of the fittest*

I WHAT PHYSICAL CHANGE OR IMPROVEMENT STEMMED FROM YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

acute sense of smell, *great reflexes*, *sprinter*, *fake smile*

J HOW DO PEOPLE TREAT YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

secret admirer, *commands reverence*, *fearsome*, *no one dares to refuse me*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT EMOTIONAL SCAR OR BAGGAGE DID YOUR DEFINING EVENT LEAVE YOU WITH?

emotional, *craves guidance*, *vengeful*, *hollow inside*, *angry at ex-partner*

B FOLLOWING YOUR DEFINING EVENT, WHAT RESPONSIBILITY OR SOCIAL BURDENS DO YOU HAVE TO SHOULDER?

rejected as a freak, *oath of solitude*, *pretends to be a playboy*, *angry voters*, *a never-ending to-do list*

C WHO OR WHAT IS HAUNTING YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

Helix Labs investigators, *agents of the rival faction*, *nightmares and flashbacks*, *enamored secretary*

D WHAT IS NOW BROKEN WITHIN YOU, PHYSICALLY OR MENTALLY, DUE TO YOUR DEFINING EVENT?

light sensitivity, *training injury*, *over-exhaustion*, *asthma attack*, *twisted psyche*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your defining event. For example:

- (Unwillingly killed loved one) "I will never forgive myself."
- (Mountain-top experience) "Peace within and without is the path to enlightenment."
- (Big heist) "One last job, they said. Never again."

You can try exploring the following options:

- A world view that you adopted following your defining event
- Something you promised to yourself or someone else following your defining event
- How you perceive yourself in light of your defining event

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means the impact of this event on your life is waning. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates the event or its impact on your life. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Unwillingly killed loved one) Never Say His Name
- (Mountain-top experience) Path of Tranquility
- (Big heist) The Museum Job

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them was present in your defining event. What was their part in it? Take a Help or Hurt point on them or accordingly.
- One of them is trying to help you (or make you) get over your defining event and move on. If you appreciate it, take a Help point on them. If you resent it, take a Hurt point on them.
- In the aftermath of your defining event, one of them was there to help you pick up your life without judging or asking questions. Take a Help point on them.

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DEFINING EVENT THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

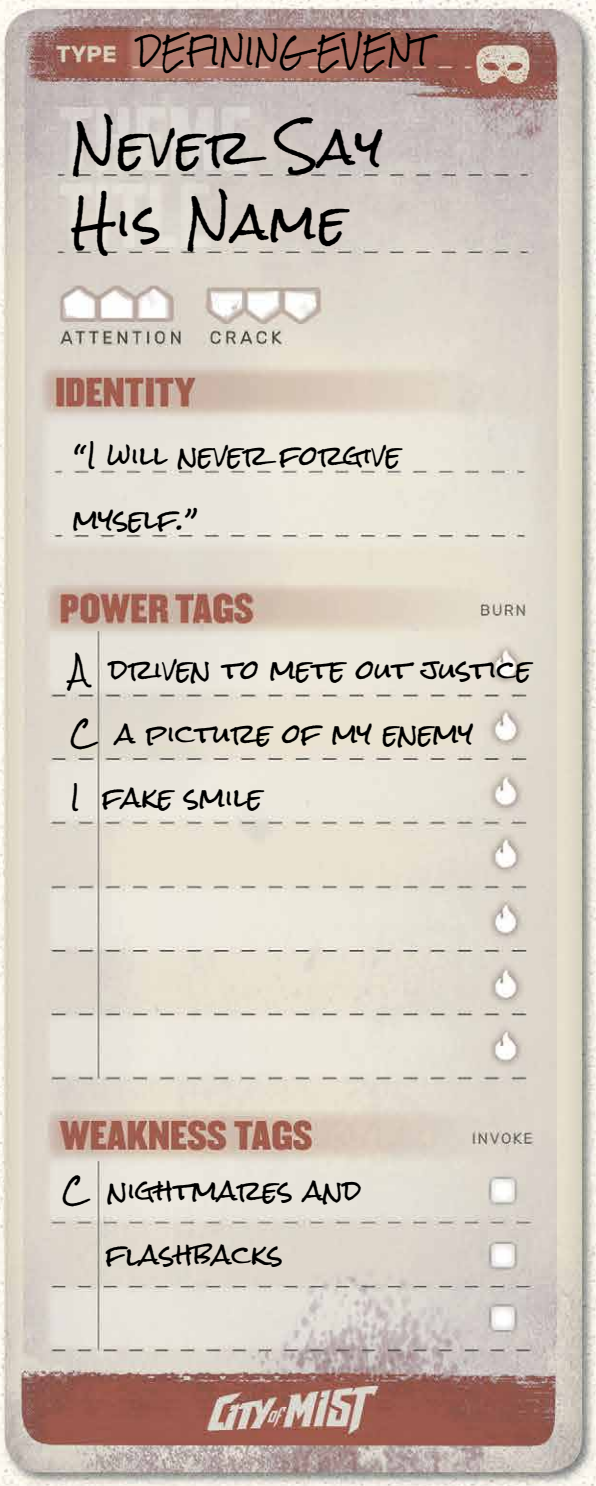
☐ **Touchy Subject**
Whenever someone else mentions your defining event in a way that irks or offends you, you can choose to go into an emotional state and take an appropriate tier-2 status of your choice for the rest of the scene or until you calm down, whichever comes sooner. When it's over, the MC will give you an ongoing tier-1 status to reflect the aftermath of your behavior.

☐ **Take It To The Grave**
When other PCs get a Clue on you, or when the MC asks you a question to which you must reply with a straight answer or a solid lead, they can't ask you about your defining event.

☐ **Echoes From The Past**
Choose and answer a power tag question from the Training, Routine, or Defining Relationship themebooks that reflects something of who you were before, something that now re-emerges. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **Over It**
Whenever the MC or another player invokes one of this theme's weakness tags, you can say "I'm over it" and count the tag as a power tag instead. Mark Crack.

☐ **Getting Good at This**
You've become comfortable with who you are now. Choose a Core Move that best reflects the way you use this theme's tags. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP

A LOVE INTEREST · SOMEONE DEPENDENT ON YOU · A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND · A TEACHER OR MENTOR · A TEAM, GANG, OR OTHER AFFILIATION · A PARTNER OR A SIDEKICK · A NEMESIS

Being alive is being connected to others. Everyone has someone who has shaped their lives – for better or for worse: a parent, a friend, a lover, a mentor, etc. Even relationships with those who have done you wrong could be a part of who you are. For the most part, however, relationships are complicated: there is the good and the bad, the push and the pull, what you give and what you get.

A defining relationship isn't just any important relationship: it's at the center of your life (along with your other themes). It makes you who you are or takes up a lot of your time. Perhaps you have a crazy lover who's into guns and knives and always gets you into trouble. If you are the Rift of the Mythos of Lucifer, maybe you and your father have a complicated relationship ever since he kicked you out of the house. Your partner in crime could be the only person you trust. Or your grandchild brings you joy that makes life worth living.

Relationships are not restricted to individuals; you can have a relationship with a group. This can include family and social relationships as well as more formal affiliations. You could be the religious leader of an underprivileged community that is counting on you for strength. Maybe you are a member of a secret club or cult, whose other

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members provide you with resources but demand results. And of course there is always the possibility that you are a part of a normal dysfunctional family, like so many in the City.

If the object of your defining relationship is a character who exists in the series regardless of your relationship, the MC has control over the character. You can use your tags normally when they are relevant, e.g. to call on them, to receive help from them, to influence them, etc. If the object of your defining relationship features mostly in your character's story, they become your secondary character (see Secondary Characters, page 236).

CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. Which individual or group means the world to her, plays a major role in her life, or has the most influence on her? With whom does she feel she belongs?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHO PLAYS THE BIGGEST ROLE IN YOUR LIFE?

- My (grand)parent / sibling / spouse / (grand)child / lover / best friend / mentor or guru / neighbor / partner / employer / etc.
- My family / friends / social circle / community / company / gang / teammates / etc.
- The club / cult / association / movement / etc. I belong to.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: How close are you to them? Do they know about your Mythical powers? Are they Rifts themselves? What does your Mythos feel about them?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHY IS THIS RELATIONSHIP SO IMPORTANT TO YOU?

a cushy bank account, *true love*, *she keeps me on edge*, *I always have a home to go to*, *a partner in crime*, *a sense of belonging*, *a network of spies*

B NAME A USEFUL QUALITY OR SKILL THEY HAVE AND THAT THEY CAN USE TO HELP YOU.

business acumen, *clever boy*, *dirty infighting*, *love can heal anything*, *con artist*, *many hands make light work*, *secretive operation*

C WHAT WERE YOU FORCED TO LEARN BECAUSE OF THIS RELATIONSHIP?

certified accountant, *better excuses*, *never be caught off guard*, *hide my true feelings*, *demolitions*, *police procedures and how to avoid them*, *ancient languages*

D BEING AROUND THEM HAS MADE YOU...

wealthier than ever before, *popular*, *suave and attractive*, *angry at the world*, *good team player*, *determined*, *a good liar*

E WHEN YOU CALL FOR HELP, WHO WILL AID YOU? (THE ANSWER CAN BE YOUR RELATIONSHIP)

family 'friends' in high places, *my best friend*, *HER*, *an angel in a black limo*, *Ari Schmidt*, *Maria the flower girl*, *the White Rose*

F WHAT GIFT, HEIRLOOM, TOOL, ETC. DID THEY GIVE YOU?

access to family assets, *a picture of us*, *a serrated combat knife*, *an old compass*, *fake ID*, *a prayer book*, *a cyanide pill*

G TO DEAL WITH THEM, YOU NEED TO BE...

my own person, *daring*, *tougher than before*, *free of confinement*, *familiar with every scam in the book*, *compassionate*, *willing to go all the way*

H NAME AN ACTIVITY THAT YOU SHARE.

arguing, *(gossiping about) high-school rumors*, *pub crawling*, *chessboard war*, *breaking & entering*, *giving a sermon*, *planning machinations*

I WHAT HELPS YOU PROTECT THEM?

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a battery of lawyers, *face always hidden*, *I'd do anything for her*, *self-control*, *handheld radio*, *crimeworld connections*, *personality-switching techniques*

J WHERE DO YOU SPEND TIME TOGETHER?

the mansion, *football field bleachers*, *my motorcycle*, *Museum of the Arts*, *Ambrosia nightclub*, *the cathedral*, *the private gentlemen's club*

WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A HOW CAN THEY BE HURT OR IMPEDED?

financial trouble, *cutting insults*, *always gets into trouble*, *sickly old man*, *forgets to watch his back*, *easily tempted*, *brought to light*

B WHAT NEGATIVE EFFECT DO THEY HAVE ON YOU?

"the old wo/man will find out", *freezes when sees Kaito*, *something to prove*, *haunted by shame*, *taking too many risks*, *vengeful towards those who hurt the community*, *always being watched*

C WHO OR WHAT ELSE IS VYING FOR THEIR ATTENTION OR TIME?

my successful brother-in-law, *the most beautiful girl in school*, *her ex*, *Gabriel*, *drinking problems*, *everyday preoccupations*, *federal agents*

D UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD THEY BE UNABLE TO HELP YOU?

a disgrace to the family, *"You're a freak!"*, *lost interest*, *fallen angel*, *running from the police*, *fear of being excommunicated*, *suspected of treason*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your defining Relationship. For example:

- (Crazy lover) "Nothing will ever stand in the way of our love!"
- (Partner in crime) "This will never work without Izzy. "
- (Congregation) "I won't let my flock be mistreated or misled."

You can try exploring the following options:

- A statement about what you would sacrifice for the object of your defining relationship
- A belief about how much you need the object of your defining relationship
- A wish you have for that person or group

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means you are losing interest in your relationship or that the other party is. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your relationship and its place in your life. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Crazy lover) My Naughty Girlfriend
- (Partner in crime) Izzy Malone, Easy Money
- (Congregation) Deliver Us From Evil

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

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- One of them has openly or subtly challenged your relationship, trying to influence either you, the other party, or both to end it. Why? What do they get out of it? Take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them once helped you save your relationship or the object of your relationship. What were the circumstances? How did they help? Take a Help point on them.
- One of them is your ex (former lover, partner, mentor, employer, etc.) or otherwise preceded your current relationship (biological parent, member of a group you were previously affiliated with). Ask them whether they give their blessing to your new relationship. If they do, take a Help point on them. If they don't, take a Hurt point on them.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

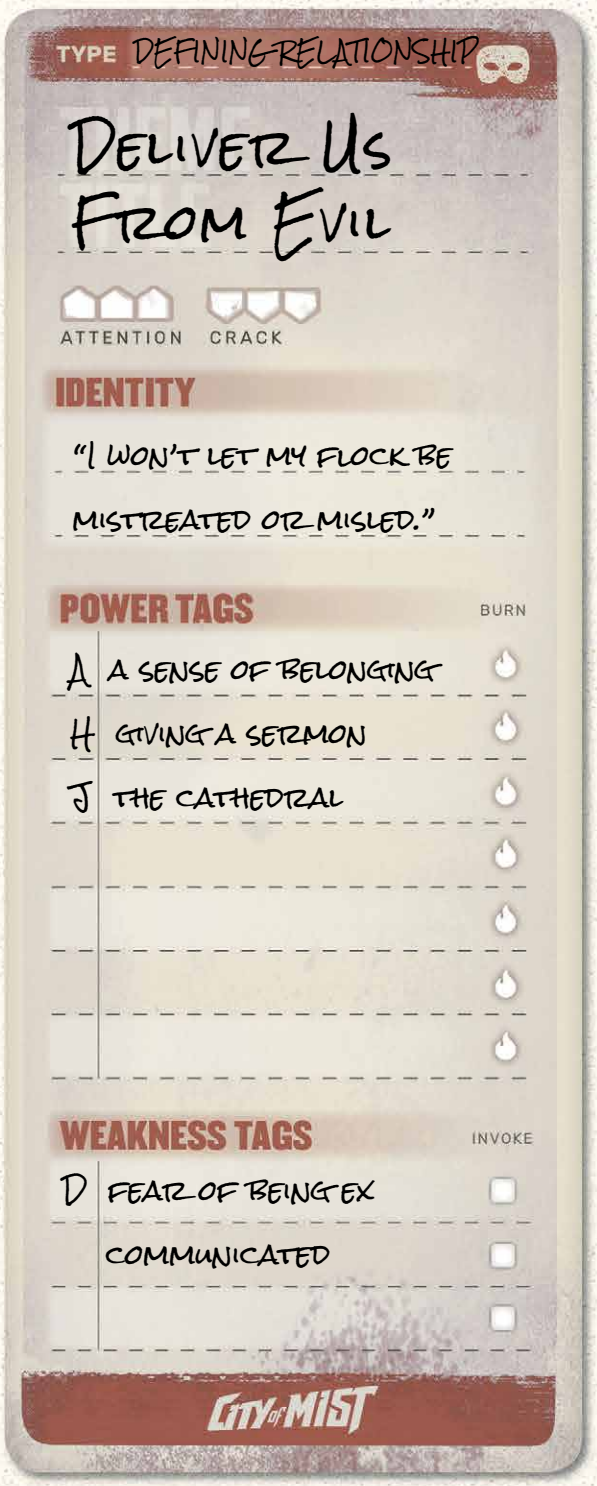
☐ **Forever**
When you have downtime and you choose to give this theme attention, you can choose to remove one Crack from this theme instead of receiving Attention.

☐ **Protect At All Costs**
When you get a hit on **Face Danger**, you can always choose to extend the outcome to the object of your defining relationship (in addition to yourself), if it even remotely makes sense.

☐ **Shared Experiences**
Choose a power tag question from the Defining Event or Personality themebooks that reflects a transformation you went through because of your relationship and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **Back-to-Back**
Once per session, when you make a move with the object of your defining relationship at your side, you can trade a miss result for a 7-9.

☐ **Who's the Boss**
Choose two Core Moves that best reflect your attitude towards the object of your defining relationship. When you make those moves against them, they're *Dynamite!*



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

MISSION

PHILANTHROPY OR GOOD-DOING · REVENGE · A SWORN OATH OR AN UNBREAKABLE PROMISE · A JOB THAT MUST GET DONE · AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE · A SOCIAL OR POLITICAL CAUSE · A PERSONAL GOAL · AN ONGOING SEARCH · AN OBSESSION

It's one thing to believe something should be done; it's quite another to try and make it happen. Passion, necessity, hatred, and even destiny could all be the motives for which you have decided to undertake a great task. It may be a social or moral duty that you feel must actively be pursued, such as fighting crime or poverty. It could be a personal matter, such as the search for something stolen from you or a vendetta against someone who hurt you. It could even be a challenge you decided to take on. You could be pursuing this goal for your own benefit, for someone else's sake, for your neighborhood, for the City, or even for all of humanity.

Despite being a Logos theme, your Mission is not limited to the ordinary aspect of your life. You are a Rift, and within you the legendary becomes ordinary and vice versa. Maybe the Evil Queen poisoned your mother and you seek a cure; perhaps you vowed to bring down the Rift of Hades; or, as part of your Mythos as Anansi the Spider, you must capture the proverbial python, leopard, and hornets. The tags you gain from this theme can still only be of a mundane and ordinary nature as they are not Mythos powers; they are aspects gained through the pursuit of your mission.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. What goal is she always thinking about? What has she dedicated her life to?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

- I must / I swore to _____.
- Following _____, I decided I will never stop _____.
- This City needs _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: When and under what circumstances did you decide to undertake your mission? Who else is involved? Who gave you the mission? Who is the mission for?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT DO YOU NEED MOST IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT YOUR MISSION?

brawl, *seasoned negotiator*, *tracking*, *map of the subway system*, *sawed-off shotgun*

B WHAT WERE YOU FORCED TO LEARN WHILE ON YOUR MISSION?

dodge, *throw a punch*, *bypass electric locks*, *quick reload*, *Arthur's tactics*

C WHO IS HELPING YOU ON YOUR MISSION?

contacts in every neighborhood, *an unknown informer*, *a beautiful cartographer*, *gang of petty crooks*

D WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO YOU HAVE ABOUT THE TARGET OR GOAL OF YOUR MISSION?

Anatoly's underground operation, *urban tales and legends*, *social welfare*, *common passwords*

E WHAT SORT OF TACTICS OR METHODS DO YOU EMPLOY TO REACH YOUR GOAL?

snooping around, *disguise*, *interrogation*, *lies lies lies*, *all out attack*, *"an eye for an eye"*, *smoke 'em out*

F PURSUING YOUR MISSION HAS MADE YOU...

athletic, *a widely supported public figure*, *alert*, *lots of money*, *aware of every tiny movement around me*, *passionate about art*

G WHAT IS THE ROOT OF YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE TASK AT HAND?

faith in the church, *good citizen*, *sheer determination*, *I hate my boss*, *true love*

H WHAT USEFUL POSITION OR STATUS DID YOU HAVE TO EARN FOR THE MISSION TO SUCCEED?

street cred, *owner of local pawnshop*, *rooftop vantage point*, *working as the Queen's cleaning lady*, *warmonger*

I WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT MIGHT HELP YOU WITH YOUR MISSION?

safe house, *a key to the lost chest*, *the recipe to an amazing sandwich*, *a red sports car*, *the mayor's phone number*

J WHAT PART OF YOUR PLAN TO REALIZE YOUR GOAL HAVE YOU HONED THE MOST?

ready for the kill, *puzzle cracker*, *getaway car*, *a wooden stake*, *police connections*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OR BURDENS OF PURSUING THE MISSION?

known vigilante, *nervous*, *impossible schedule*, *domestic problems*, *a cureless disease*, *consumed by hatred*, *fugitive*

B WHAT ARE THE WEAK POINTS OR WILDCARDS IN YOUR PLAN?

unreliable allies, *they know I'm coming*, *little brother*, *Arthur's cunning*, *the Queen's mirror*

C WHICH APPROACH OR PSYCHOLOGICAL DISPOSITION WILL GET IN THE WAY OF YOUR ENDEAVORS?

too eager, *bouts of despair*, *cocky*, *"money is not an object"*, *gullible*

D WHY HAVE YOU NOT SUCCEEDED SO FAR?

overpowering competition, *the status-quo*, *Morgana*, *"I don't know where to start"*, *can't do this alone*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your mission. For example:

- (Philanthropist) "The citizens of this city deserve better than this!"
- (Vendetta) "She'll pay for what she did to my family."
- (Aspirations) "Get rich or die trying."

You can try exploring the following options:

- A strong conviction that drives you forward on your mission
- The reason for which you undertook the mission
- Hatred or disdain to anyone or anything who might stand in your way

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means you are losing interest in your mission or losing the drive to continue. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your goal or what it says about you. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Philanthropist) Heart of Gold
- (Vendetta) Lilith Must Die
- (Aspirations) Hungry For More

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them is of great importance to your cause. If they play an instrumental role in your plans to achieve your goal, take a Help point on them. If they are a potential threat to your cause, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them has aided you in your efforts and earned your earnest gratitude and respect. Take a Help point on them.
- One of them thinks your mission is doomed to fail or must never be allowed to succeed (they don't have to tell you which). Ask them if they show it or hide it. If they show it, take a Hurt point on them. If they hide it, take a Help point on them.

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MISSION THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

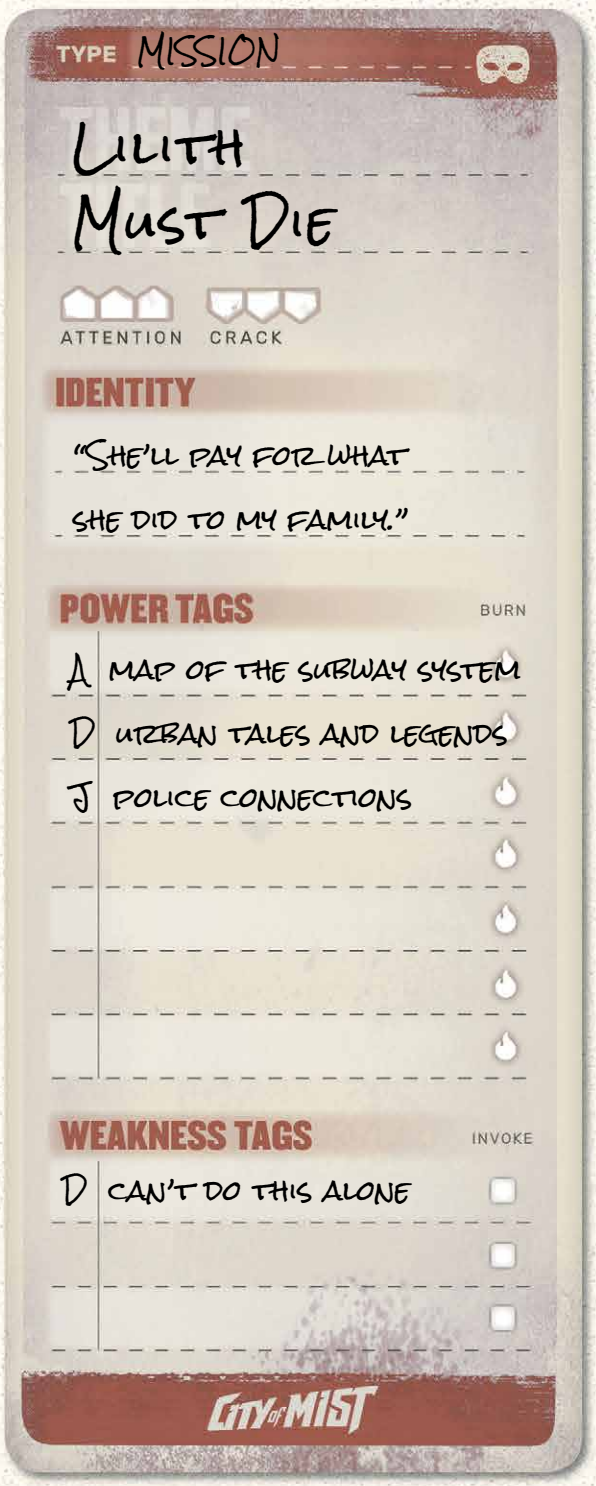
☐ **Gung Ho**
Tell everyone at the table what is the next objective or milestone on your mission. You take a *gung-ho-1* status which applies to all actions you take to achieve that objective. If this status is removed, you regain it on your next **Montage (Downtime)** move. When you complete the objective, remove the status and mark Crack. You can then announce a new objective or milestone. You can only have one Gung Ho objective and status at a time.

☐ **Follow me!**
When you try to **Convince** someone to join your cause, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Can't Be Too Ready**
Choose a power tag question from the Training or Possessions themebooks that reflects something you acquired in order to complete your mission and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **When Hell Freezes Over**
When you sacrifice something you truly want in order to abide by your Mission's Identity, you not only mark Attention on the theme (as usual) but also remove one crack from it, if any.

☐ **Getting Good At This**
Choose a Core Move that best represents your most common course of action on your mission. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

PERSONALITY

CHARACTER TRAITS AND QUIRKS · TEMPERAMENT · PERSONAL STYLE · HABITS · SOCIAL SKILLS · LIFESTYLE · ATTITUDE · AN ONGOING ACT · MENTAL STABILITY OR LACK THEREOF

There is more to life than the things taking place around you. Who you are, how you experience things, and what goes on in your mind and heart can have a far greater impact on your life than any other single detail in it. Your personality can save you even when you have nothing else to show for, or it could be your undoing.

Perhaps you are a persevering, salt-of-the-earth reporter, who stays positive and carries on exposing the truth despite pressing finances and threats from upstairs. Maybe you're a deranged professor whose inventive mind cracked under a barrage of incredible scientific insights. You could be a smooth talking charmer who slyly talks his way up the social ladder or a teenager too shy to allow herself to be seen.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. How does she behave? What kind of personality traits does she display? Is she playing a role for the world to see? What does she think or feel about herself?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT ARE YOU LIKE?

- I am often _____.
- I want others to _____.
- Other people find me _____.
- I think / feel that, as far as people go, I am _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: How does your personality affect others around you? What made you develop this personality (life events, parenting, genetics, choice)?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT LIES AT THE CORE OF YOUR PERSONALITY?

Truly wants to do good, *tough as nails*, *self-reliant*, *my own type of eccentric*, *limitless creativity*, *opportunist*, *I wish I could just disappear*

B WHAT IS THE FIRST THING PEOPLE NOTICE ABOUT YOU?

handsome, *glamorous*, *rugged*, *hipster look*, *bottle-bottom glasses*, *people see what they want to see*, *easily overlooked*

C WHAT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS DO YOU HAVE THANKS TO YOUR PERSONALITY?

charming, *bullshit detector*, *good judge of character*, *sarcastic remarks*, *creep people out*, *talk anyone into anything*, *never spills the beans*

D WHEN YOU WANT, YOU CAN ALSO COME ACROSS AS...

threatening, *seductive*, *authoritative*, *intelligent*, *pitiful*, *appear as a professional*, *dangerous*

E WHAT SPECIAL SKILL OR STATUS DID YOU PURSUE BECAUSE OF YOUR PERSONALITY?

celebrity, *sowing rumors*, *DIY repairs*, *perfect pitch*, *devise a deranged plan*, *press pass*, *no criminal record*

F WHAT ASPECT OF YOUR PERSONALITY KEEPS YOU SAFE OR HELPS YOU RESIST INFLUENCE?

incorruptible, *emotionally impervious*, *common sense*, *free thinker*, *cautious*, *talk my way out of anything*, *"You wouldn't hurt a child, would you?"*

G WHAT QUALITY OR ITEM BEST EXPRESSES YOUR PERSONAL STYLE OR ENHANCES IT?

cornfed, *jewelry baby!*, *underarm holster*, *fashionable carry-all bag*, *lab coat*, *designer suits*, *hidden kitchen cleaver*

H WHAT USEFUL HABIT OR ROUTINE HAVE YOU CULTIVATED THANKS TO YOUR PERSONALITY?

pick-up lines, *sniff out a social disaster*, *light sleeper*, *all the dance moves*, *stink bombs formula*, *sales pitch*, *people-watching*

I WHAT TYPICALLY INTERESTS YOU?

city current affairs, *shopping*, *reported conspiracies*, *city nightlife*, *recent scientific breakthroughs*, *local big players*, *psychology*

J HOW DO YOU STRIVE TO IMPROVE YOURSELF?

push myself, *be kind to others*, *lead from the front*, *I'll try anything once*, *try to appear sane*, *get rich quick schemes*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LET YOURSELF GO TOO FAR?

clingy attention seeker, *bitter*, *distrustful*, *tries too hard*, *overexcited and unintelligible*, *self-promoting*, *people think I'm a freak*

B WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE OR CONDITIONS MAKE YOUR PERSONALITY LESS EFFECTIVE?

hostile crowd, *hyenas in evening gowns*, *soft spot for children*, *wasted on the common people*, *psychiatric drugs*, *bad angle*, *small spaces*

C WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR APPEARANCE, STYLE, OR PHYSIQUE CAN GET IN THE WAY?

memorable face, *sore joints*, *harsh frown*, *tangled headphones cable*, *unkempt mass of hair*, *poor man's shoes*, *delicate*

D WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE PUSHED TO THE CORNER?

fit of rage, *mental breakdown*, *petrified*, *drama queen*, *analysis paralysis*, *speechless*, *trauma re-enactment*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your personality. For example:

- (Deranged professor) "Sorry the professor is not in right now. Can I take a message?"
- (Manipulator) "If you want to get ahead, always say what they want to hear."
- (Quiet and discreet) "I'm not here!

You can try exploring the following options:

- A typical quote that encapsulates your personality
- How you would like others to see you or treat you
- What you think about yourself

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means your personality is changing and that you do not rely on the same attitude as before. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your personality and style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Deranged professor) A Few Sandwiches Short Of A Picnic
- (Manipulator) Smooth Operator
- (Quiet and discreet) Wallflower

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them dislikes something about your behavior and is repeatedly making comments about it or trying to get you to change. Ask them what do they dislike and what would it take for them to be happy with you. Whatever they say, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them accepts you the way you are, maybe even likes your personality. Take a Help point on them.
- The personality of one of them seems to be the exact opposite of yours (even if they don't have a theme for it). If it makes it easier for your personality to shine or for you to be yourself, take a Help point on them. If it comes into conflict with your personality, take a Hurt point on them.

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PERSONALITY THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

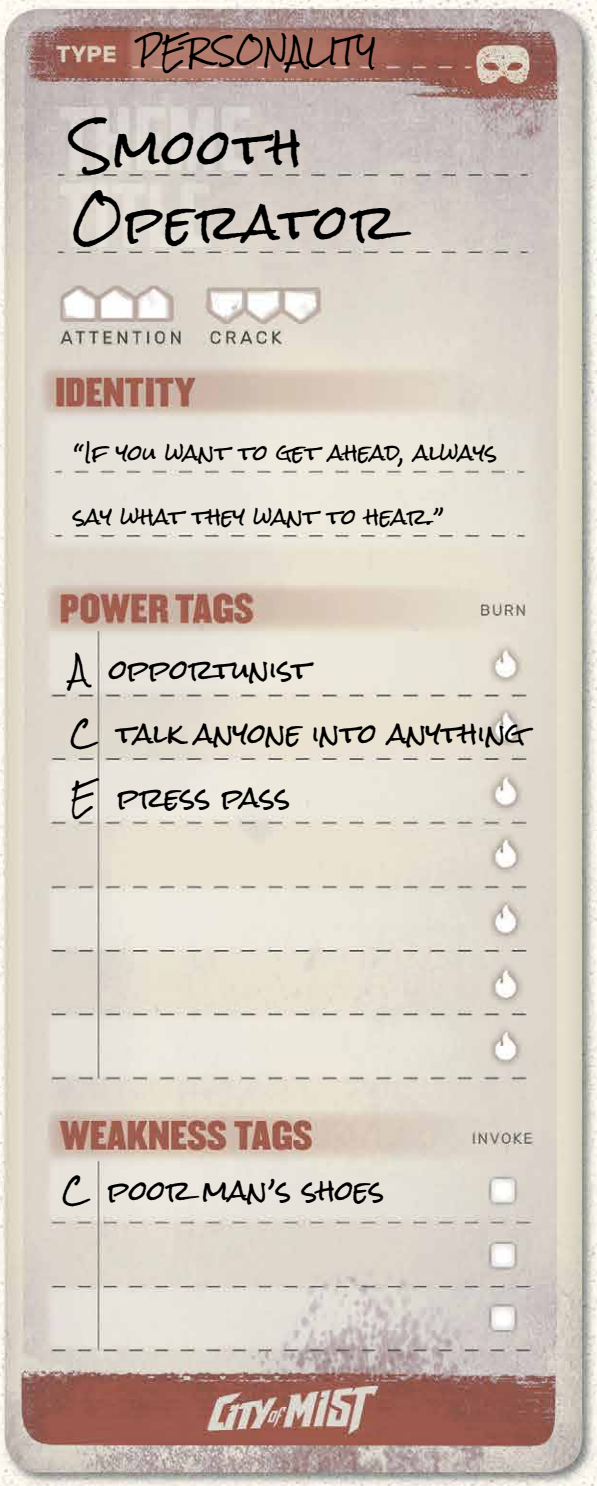
☐ **This Is My Moment**
Once per session, you can impose +1 tier when you **Convince** or get +1 Juice when you **Change the Game** using tags from this theme.

☐ **It's Showtime**
Choose a single power tag from this theme. When you burn it for a hit, you get an automatic result of 9 (instead of 7) and a Power of 3, for a total unmodified score of 12. Statuses apply to both your automatic result and your Power, as usual.

☐ **Reinvent Myself**
When you replace this theme, you can choose to take a new Personality theme instead of a Mythos theme. As usual, you lose all your improvements, including this one, and gain Build-Up points instead. Your new personality must be entirely different than the theme you discarded.

☐ **Why I Do This**
Choose and answer a power tag question from the Defining Relationship, Possessions, or Routine themebooks that reflects the company you keep, the things you own, or the things you do regularly because of your personality. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **Getting Good At This**
Choose a Core Move that best represents your personality. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

POSSESSIONS

GUNS, LOTS OF GUNS · AN OUTFITTED VEHICLE · A TOOL SET · CASH, SAVINGS, OR ASSETS · A HOARD · USEFUL PERSONAL EFFECTS · STANDARD ISSUE OR CUSTOM GEAR · TRINKETS

The world is full of useful stuff: things that make your life easier, that do your job for you, or that can make other people do as you say. The right tools can speed things up, and sometimes you can't get the job done without them at all. Weapons can be used for self-defense, intimidation, tackling opposition, or just mindless violence. Vehicles help you get around. Worldly possessions keep you happy and flush.

Possessions may or may not have a purpose. When you keep or carry certain equipment, expecting you'll need it, it is most likely connected to your activities. Conversely, you may be hoarding things just for the sake of owning them or for no reason at all.

Note that this theme represents only mundane possessions; if there's anything legendary, supernatural, technologically advanced, or even mysterious about your possessions, such as Dr. Frankenstein's lab equipment, you should use the Relic theme.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. What does she normally carry around on her person? What interesting items does she keep in her purse, in a locked desk drawer, or a compartment hidden under the rug? What does she own?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT DO I KEEP OR CARRY IN MY POSSESSION?

- It's all about one item: the _____.
- Gear or equipment that helps me with _____.
- A collection of _____.
- My entire estate.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: When and how did you acquire these possessions? What did it cost you? Where can you get more, if you had to?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR POSSESSION?

a magnifying glass, *a pair of old revolvers*, *safe-cracking tools*, *a world-renowned painting*, *my multi-billion dollar company*, *a warehouse full of junk*, *a necklace that belonged to my mother*

B HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR POSSESSIONS IN GENERAL?

an arsenal of medieval weapons, *a pawn shop full of wonders*, *Burke Industries Inc.*, *a farm at the edge of the city*

C WHAT OTHER IMPORTANT ITEM IS IN YOUR POSSESSION?

a police badge, *a shotgun*, *black catsuit*, *a golden ring*, *a luxurious yacht*, *hobo rags*, *a picture of the man who killed my mother*

D WHAT COMPONENT OR ATTACHMENT ADDED TO ONE OF YOUR ITEMS CAN CHANGE OR IMPROVE ITS FUNCTION?

magnifying glass → *fingerprint kit*, *a pair of old revolvers* → *hollow point rounds*, *a shotgun* → *cable-gun extension*, *cherry red 66' Chevy* → *liquid nitrogen tank*, *a luxurious yacht* → *helipad and helicopter*, *a sniper rifle* → *telescopic sight*

E WHAT KIND OF STUNTS OR MOVES DO YOU TYPICALLY DO WITH YOUR POSSESSIONS?

gunslinging stunts, *quick draw*, *pick a lock*, *sales pitch*, *throw money at the problem*, *hostile takeover*, *find a needle in a haystack*, *threatening monologue*

F WHAT HELPS YOU CONCEAL YOUR POSSESSIONS OR THE FACT YOU ARE USING THEM?

concealed holster, *unregistered warehouse*, *no license plate*, *sound suppressor*, *fake paperwork*

G WHAT KEEPS YOUR POSSESSIONS SAFE?

thick steel chain, *alarm system*, *private security*, *inventory list*, *pickpocket alertness*, *Growlie*

H HOW DO YOU HANDLE, FIX, OR TAKE CARE OF YOUR POSSESSIONS?

firearms workshop, *jeweler*, *animal husbandry*, *DIY guru*, *repair kit*

I WHAT USEFUL QUALITY DO YOUR POSSESSIONS HAVE?

adjusted sights, *robust*, *fastest bike in town*, *good traction*, *refreshing*, *one of a kind*

J WHAT ITEM COMPLETES A SET WITH YOUR OTHER POWER TAGS?

magnifying glass, *police badge* → *standard issue pistol*, *safe-cracking tools*, *black catsuit* → *glass cutter*, *yacht*, *helicopter* → *sports car*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT TECHNICAL OR PRACTICAL FLAW DO YOUR ITEMS OR POSSESSIONS HAVE?

chipped away, *slippery grip*, *guzzler*, *expensive to use*, *loud*, *older model*, *weapon jam*, *ugly as hell*, *short-range*

B WHAT BAD HABITS OR TRAITS RELATED TO YOUR POSSESSIONS DO YOU DISPLAY?

possessive, *big spender*, *too reliant on gear*, *reclusive nutjob*, *constantly fidgeting with equipment*

C WHAT CONDITIONS COULD RENDER YOUR POSSESSIONS LESS EFFECTIVE?

rusty, *dirt in the mechanism*, *useless in crowded places*, *can't read in the dark*, *need a quiet space*

D WHO OR WHAT CAN PREVENT YOU FROM PUTTING YOUR POSSESSIONS TO USE?

sentimental value, *never strike an unarmed foe*, *concerned board of directors*, *police in hot pursuit*, *running out of ammo*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your possessions. For example:

- (Surveillance gear) "This government is going down."
- (Pawn shop) "Everyone deserves a second chance."
- (Getaway car) "They'll never catch me!"

You can try exploring the following options:

- What these specific possessions mean to you
- A general belief about possessions, wealth, gear, etc.
- What you intend to do with your possessions

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means you are losing interest in your possessions or losing the drive to use them. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your possessions or what they mean for you. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Surveillance gear) Stevo's Conspiracy-Busting Van
- (Pawn shop) Second Chance Pawnbrokers
- (Getaway car) Red Hot

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them admires what you have (and maybe secretly desires it, too). Take a Help point on them.
- One of them thinks THEY should be in possession of your things. Ask them why. Whatever they answer, take a Hurt point on them.
- When you acquired your possessions, one of them was involved. If they helped you or even gave you your possessions, take a Help point on them. If they got in your way or tried to take your possessions, take a Hurt point on them.

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POSSESSIONS THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

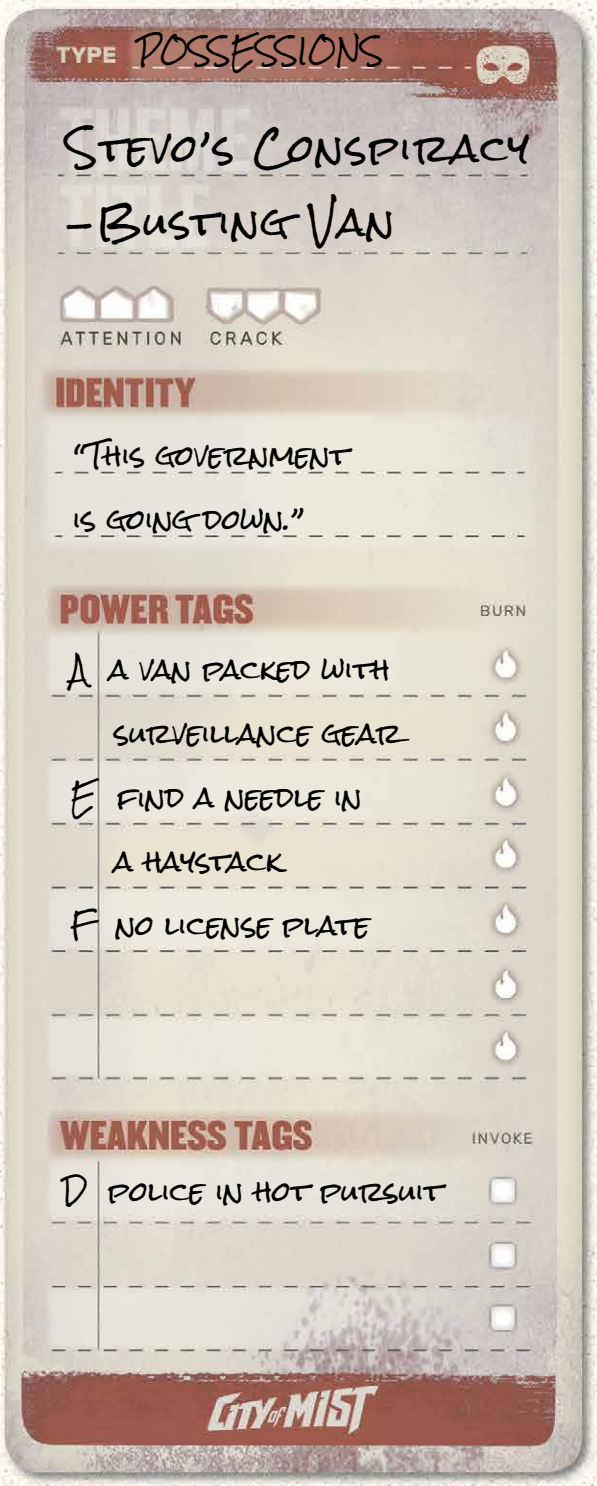
☐ **Found it!**
Once per session, create a temporary tag that describes an item.

☐ **It's The Gift That Keeps On Giving**
Whenever you have an ongoing tag that you created which describes an item, you can make it into a permanent power tag (of this theme). If you already have a permanent power tag created by this move, you must discard it to use this move again. You can discard the permanent power tag whenever you wish.

☐ **Tools Of The Trade**
Choose a power tag question from the Training or Routine themebooks that reflects skills or benefits associated with your possessions, and answer it. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **Quartermaster**
Once per scene, you can let another player use a power tag from this theme, provided that tag describes an item or thing that can be given, and that you can reasonably give it to them (or could have previously given it to them). You do not need to make the **Change The Game** move to do so.

☐ **Quality Matters**
One of your items or possessions is a real gem, perfect for what it was made for. Choose one tag from this theme. It must describe an item or possession. Any Core Move you make using this tag is *Dynamite!*



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LOGOS THEMEBOOK

ROUTINE

A JOB OR OCCUPATION · A POLITICAL POSITION · A ROLE IN AN ORGANIZATION · RESPONSIBILITY OVER SOMEONE'S CARE · A TIME-CONSUMING HOBBY · DAILY SURVIVAL · BUMMING AROUND · SCHOOL · CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Beyond all the other things that push you here and there in life, there is always one thing that you come back to: your routine. It's what you actually do with your time, what most of your waking hours are dedicated to. Many of the City's adult residents spend most of their time carrying out their jobs. Perhaps you are a lawyer, a nurse, or a window cleaner. Others spend their time caring for family, friends, or property; attending kindergarten, school or college; indulging in a life of pleasures and debauchery; or simply wandering about the City streets, people-watching, junk-hunting, or for no good reason.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. What is her daily routine? How does she spend her time? When she wakes up in the morning (or whenever), what kind of day is waiting for her? What kind of night?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT ROUTINE ACTIVITY TAKES UP MOST OF YOUR TIME?

- I work as _____.
- I take care of _____.
- I spend time _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: How long have you been doing this? Why do you do it? What is your daily routine? What do you like or dislike about it?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR TIME?

city official, *archaeologist*, *police officer*, *office building caretaker*, *hobo*, *burger flipper*, *single dad*, *corporate board member*

B WHAT PRIVILEGES COME WITH THE TERRITORY OF WHAT YOU DO?

city waterways access, *popular antiques merchant*, *the badge*, *union membership*, *nobody bothers me*, *employee rights*, *a quiet night*, *company resources*

C WHAT SORT OF TOOLS DO YOU USE?

emergency services radio, *forgery kit*, *standard issue pistol*, *a mop*, *shopping cart full of junk*, *McYummy uniform*, *diaper bag*, *a tailor-made suit*

D WHO USUALLY HELPS YOU?

my boss, *business connections*, *previous field training officer*, *pest control*, *the pigeons*, *the new guy*, *Sam – my eldest daughter*, *this week's personal assistant*

E WHAT DID YOU LEARN ON YOUR DAILY ACTIVITIES?

knows every street, *general history*, *the City's organized crime*, *logistics*, *junk can tell stories*, *health & safety regulations*, *daytime television shows*, *outsmart the competition*

F WHAT SPECIFIC ACTIVITY DO YOU ENGAGE IN AS PART OF YOUR MAIN OCCUPATION?

plumbing, *smuggling*, *asking questions*, *befriending hotshots*, *mad street preaching*, *cooking*, *schedule coordination*, *evaluating risk*

G WHAT TRICK HAVE YOU PICKED UP DOING WHAT YOU DO?

understands how water moves, *disable security systems*, *get out of handcuffs*, *remove blood stains*, *hide in the dumpster*, *juggling*, *who needs sleep anyway*, *embezzling*

H WHAT QUALITY DO YOU NOW POSSESS BECAUSE OF YOUR ROUTINE?

hold my breath, *haggler*, *drilled in field tactics*, *looks harmless*, *eidetic memory*, *can hold my own under stress*, *calm in the storm*, *elegance*

I WHERE DO YOU CARRY OUT YOUR ROUTINE, OR WHERE DO YOU GO TO ESCAPE IT?

secret underwater hideout, *the antiques shop*, *Mickey's bar*, *lord of the cafeteria (after hours)*, *I own the streets*, *my tiny apartment*, *smoke on the porch*, *luxurious office*

J WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE SAME PLACE EVERY DAY?

hard-working man, *a passion for the past*, *commitment to the job*, *the mailman*, *endless curiosity*, *dreams of being an actress*, *love for my family*, *the thrill of winning*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A AT THE END OF YOUR DAY, WHAT ARE YOU LEFT WITH?

wet and smelly, *black market heat*, *a pain behind the eyes*, *all alone*, *the voices in my head*, *sorely underpaid*, *cranky kids who won't go to bed*, *pangs of remorse*

B WHAT ARE THE MUNDANE LIMITS OR DOWNSIDES OF YOUR ROUTINE?

"You have no authority here!", *small-time operation*, *standard issue gear*, *"It's only the janitor"*, *so hungry*, *risk of being fired*, *can't always be there*, *dog-eat-dog*

C WHO OR WHAT CAN INTERFERE WITH YOUR ROUTINE?

waterworks crisis, *City customs*, *"Calling all units..."*, *irritable building manager*, *another downpour*, *unmanageable workload*, *kids fight*, *the Chairwoman*

D WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE THROWN OUT OF YOUR ROUTINE?

like a fish out of water, *overcompensating*, *must follow procedure*, *old geezer*, *socially inept*, *too afraid to go big*, *no idea what I want*, *hates to compromise*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive or belief related to your routine. For example:

- (Police officer) "I can't risk it. Just a few more years to retirement."
- (Crazy homeless hobo) "Doomsday is upon us!"
- (Corporate board member) "The good of the company comes first."

You can try exploring the following options:

- How you feel about your routine
- Why you hold on to your routine
- What you need to believe to carry out your routine

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means you are losing interest in your routine or feeling the need for a change. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your everyday routine. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Police officer) Beat Nights
- (Crazy homeless hobo) Manic Street Preacher
- (Corporate board member) Corporate Shark

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them is a regular part of your routine. If your routine is to promote them, care for them, or help them, or if they help you with your routine, take a Help point on them. If your routine is to work against them or they might interfere with your routine, take a Hurt point on them.
- You think one of them has a penchant for mayhem or drama and could destabilize your routine if you let them. Take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them views your routine as rather prosaic, mundane, or repetitive. Ask them whether they look down on it or they admire your for it. If they look down on it, take a Hurt point on them. If they admire you for it, take a Help point on them.

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ROUTINE THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

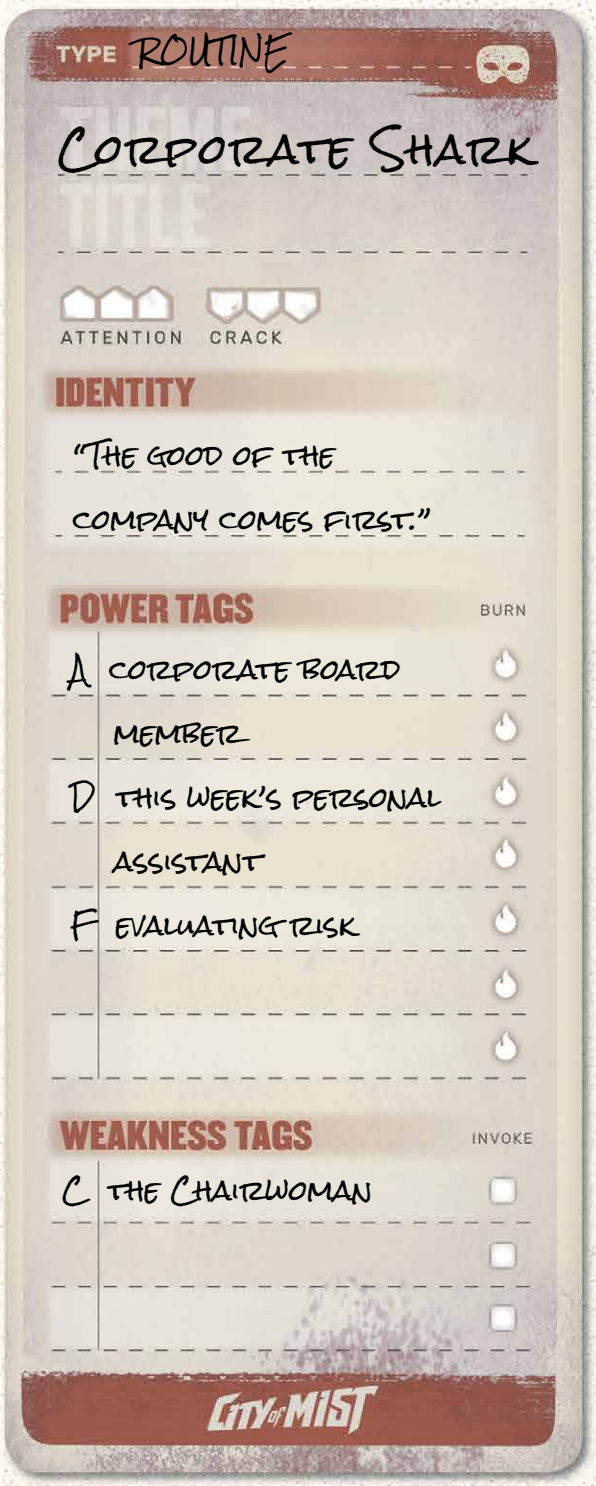
☐ **Incidental Shuteye**
When you have some downtime, if you do not choose to recover all your burnt tags, you still recover one burnt tag.

☐ **All In A Day's Work**
Once per scene, if you are in the middle of your routine and you make a Core Move as part of your routine, you can choose to make it *Dynamite!*

☐ **Good Memory**
Every session, you can choose to get up to three Clues on a location or person within the domain of your routine. The first Clue is free. When you take the second Clue, the MC gets to ask you a question, which you must answer truthfully. On the third Clue, you expose yourself to danger (as in the **Investigate** move).

☐ **Why I Do This**
Choose and answer a power tag question from the Training, Mission, or Defining Relationship themebooks that reflects your background, your dedication, or the people involved in your daily routine. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **Getting Good At This**
Choose a Core Move that best represents the most common action you take during your daily routine. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*



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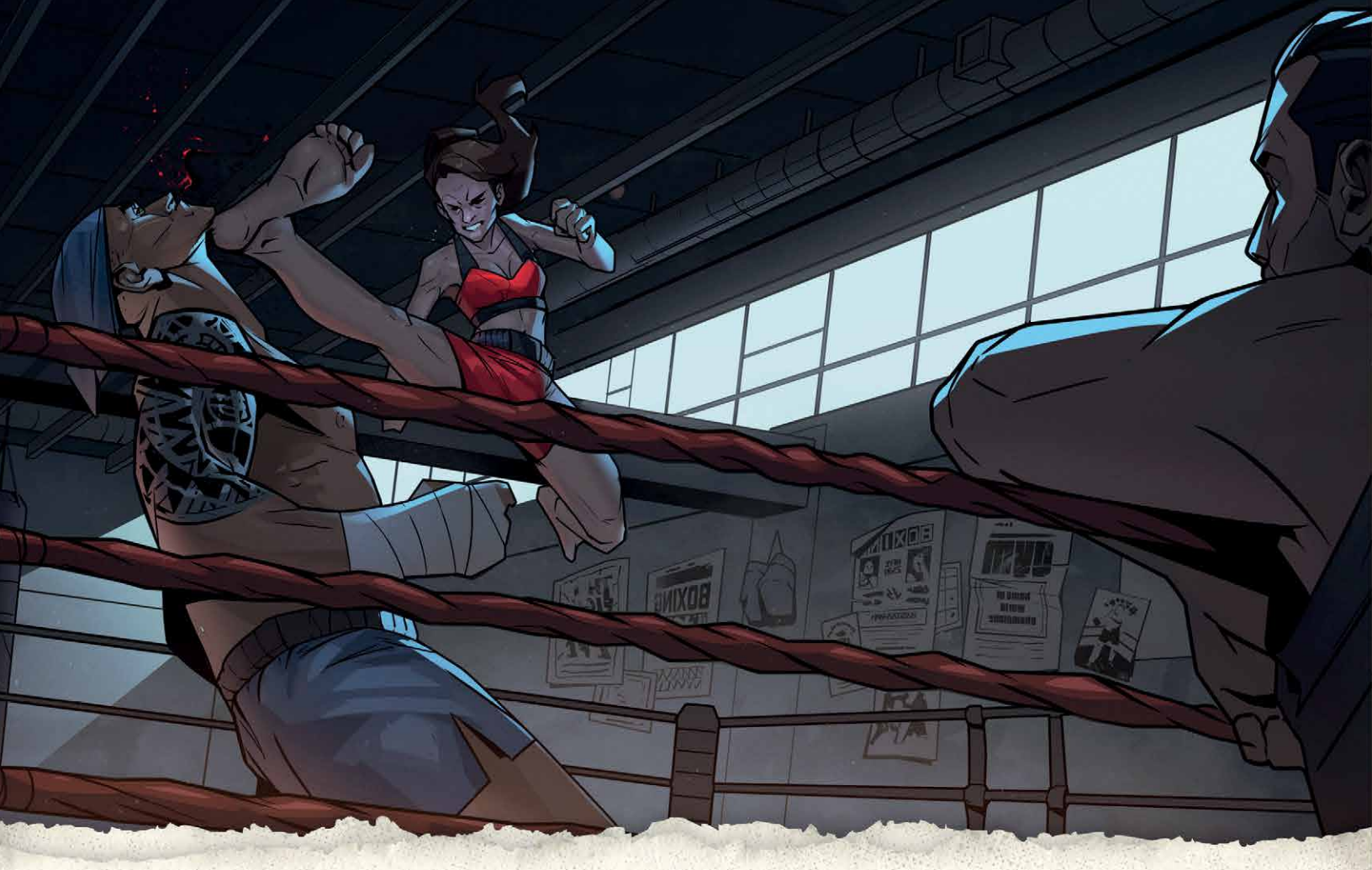

LOGOS THEMEBOOK

TRAINING

EDUCATION · COMBAT OR MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING · JACK OF ALL TRADES · AN INTERNSHIP OR APPRENTICESHIP · LIFE EXPERIENCE · FIELD RECORD · RESEARCH

Modern life offers countless and varied opportunities to learn, practice, and eventually master a skillset or a knowledge domain. Whether through disciplined and rigorous physical exercise, a painful process of trial and error, or a careful analysis of data, you have learned the ins-and-outs of your field of expertise. Perhaps you are a dangerous martial artist, an ex-navy seal, a spy, an opera singer, or an acrobatic circus trainee. Alternatively, the training you acquired can be a lot more mundane, yet still useful. Perhaps you trained as a security guard, studied every detail of the City's historic architecture, or learned how to haggle at the market.

While training can often correlate with one's occupation, it isn't necessarily your job, or even something you actively engage in during your everyday life. Training could be something from your past, a personal interest or hobby, or just something you know how to do. If you want this theme to focus on your everyday occupation rather than your expertise, choose the Routine themebook instead.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's modern-day life. Is she an expert, a scholar, or a master? Has she spent a lot of time honing a skill or studying a field?

Based on this, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT IS YOUR FIELD OF EXPERTISE?

- I am a master of _____.
- In the past, I trained in _____.
- I have learned the art of _____.
- I know all there is to know about _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: When and under what circumstances did the training take place? Who was responsible for the training?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT DO YOU DO, OR KNOW, BEST?

boxing, *martial arts*, *computers*, *circus acrobatics*, *applied chemistry*, *law*, *metalworking*, *logical deduction*, *instigator of civil unrest*

B WITHIN YOUR FIELD OF EXPERTISE, AT WHICH SPECIFIC SKILL OR SUBJECT DO YOU EXCEL?

stealth, *mean right hook*, *use opponent's strength*, *making bombs*, *firearm modification*, *art appraisal*

C WHAT OTHER TANGENT FIELD HAVE YOU VENTURED INTO INDIRECTLY?

climbing, *gambling*, *research methods*, *animal handling*, *crime scene investigation*, *technical troubleshooting*

D WHAT MOVE, METHOD, MANEUVER, HABIT, OR TRICK DID YOU PICK UP DURING YOUR TRAINING?

eye on the door, *dodge*, *hotwire an engine*, *threaten with violence*, *chant the golden crane sutra*

E WHAT QUALITY OR TRAIT DID YOUR TRAINING FOSTER?

marksmanship, *can take a pounding*, *hard-boiled*, *poker face*, *an eye for details*, *careful and measured*, *hardliner*

F NAME A TEACHER, TRAINER, OR FELLOW TRAINEE THAT YOU CAN RELY ON FOR HELP IN THIS FIELD.

Grand Master Xian, *Old Man River*, *prof. Chandra*, *a university chum*, *Buster the demolitions dog*

G WHAT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT RELATED TO YOUR TRAINING DO YOU NORMALLY HAVE ACCESS TO?

improvised weapons, *lock-picking tools*, *rappelling harness*, *evidence bag*, *botany textbook*

H AGAINST WHO OR WHAT DOES YOUR TRAINING GIVE THE BEST RESULTS?

crowd-pleaser, *military strategy*, *the Knight Templars*, *spot structural weakness*

I UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS DOES YOUR TECHNIQUE WORK BEST?

under the cover of darkness, *laboratory access*, *"When I see it, I'll know"*, *experienced Alpine survivalist*

J WHAT UNUSUAL NEW APPLICATION OF YOUR TRAINING ARE YOU EXPLORING?

get into the suspect's head, *experimental car engines*, *pin-down opponent with footwork*, *money laundering*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MOST PROBLEMATIC FLAW IN YOUR TECHNIQUE?

scattered notes, *short-sighted*, *designed for single combat*, *outdated methods*, *inexperienced*

B HOW DID YOUR TRAINING ADVERSELY AFFECT YOUR PSYCHE OR BODY?

tyrannical tendencies, *over-confident*, *sleepless nights*, *busted knee*

C WHO IS AFTER YOU DUE TO YOUR PROMINENCE IN THE FIELD?

underworld reputation, *academic rival*, *"they threaten to shut down my research"*, *pushy fans*

D NAME A FLAW UNIQUE TO A SPECIFIC MOVE OR METHOD YOU DESCRIBED IN YOUR POWER TAGS.

mean right hook → *exposed after right hook*, *threaten with violence* → *threats require a disguise*, *making bombs* → *need to prepare*

EXTRA TAGS

If you have not done so in other themebooks, you may choose one additional power tag question and one additional weakness tag question to answer. Write both tags on your theme card as above.

IDENTITY

Choose an Identity for this theme: an absolute statement that captures an attitude, motive, or belief related to your training. For example:

- (Circus acrobat) "Nothing is more important than my freedom."
- (Spy) "No one can ever see the real me."
- (City architecture expert) "I must tell you just one more detail about this building…"

You can try exploring the following options:

- A doctrine, conviction, or attitude that has become ingrained in you due to your training
- The goal or purpose for which you started your training
- Opinions you hold on your peers or competitors

Write your Identity on your theme card.

Acting in conflict with this statement means you are losing faith in your training or losing the drive to apply what you learned. Let everyone at the table know what could constitute acting against this Identity.

TITLE

Name your theme in a way that encapsulates your proficiency or style. Write its name on your theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Circus acrobat) Born to Fly
- (Spy) That Quiet Guy
- (City architecture expert) Architecture Buff

CREW RELATIONSHIPS

When creating the relationships within your crew, you can cast the other crew members in one of the following scenarios, after receiving their approval:

- One of them was there to support you while you trained, perhaps even mentored you. Take a Help point on them.
- One of them looks down on your training and finds it morally questionable, inefficient, or distasteful. If it makes you want to impress them, take a Help point on them. If it makes you want to punch them, take a Hurt point on them.
- One of them helps you keep your act sharp. If it's because they're competing with you or threatening you, take a Hurt point on them; otherwise, take a Help point on them.

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TRAINING THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

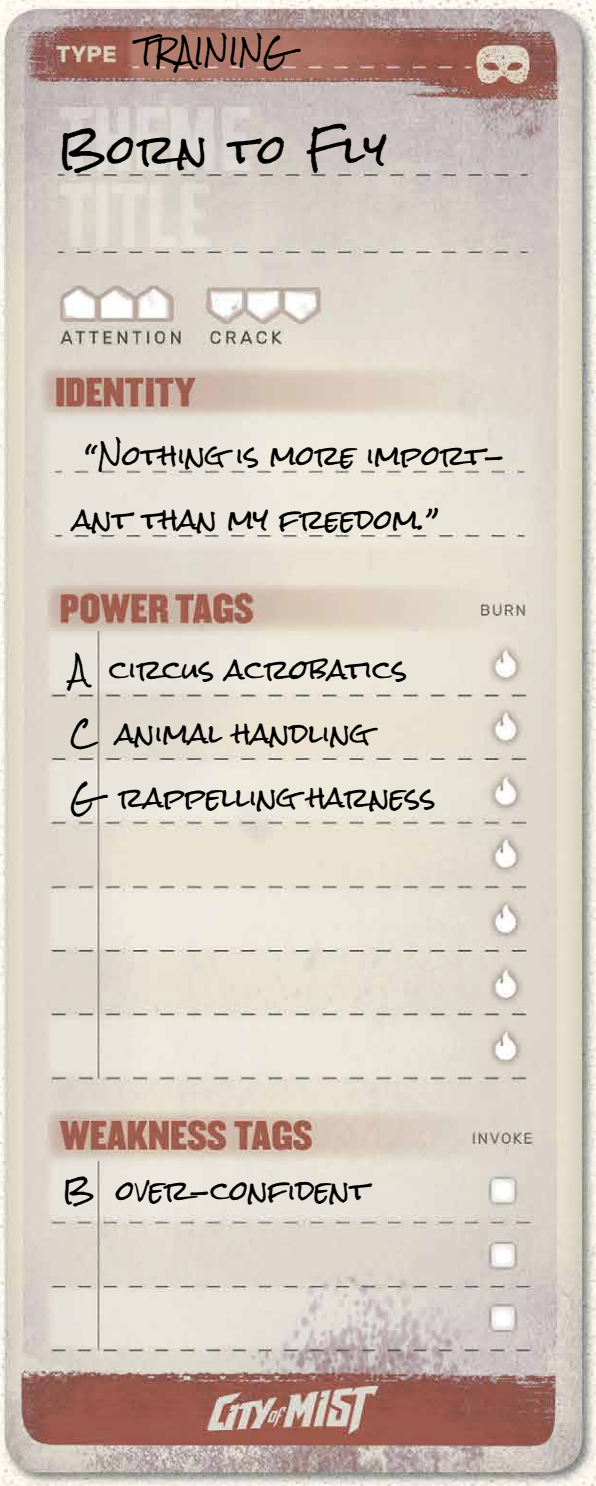
☐ **Expert Advice**
Once per scene, you can let another player use a power tag from this theme, provided that tag describes a skill that you can reasonably teach them (or could have taught them in advance). You do not need to make the **Change The Game** move to do so.

☐ **Broad Training**
Once per session, you can create a temporary story tag that reflects a useful method or detail covered by your training, within reason.

☐ **Sense of Purpose**
Choose and answer a power tag question from the Routine, Defining Event, or Mission themebooks that describes how you are applying your training today or an outcome of the way you acquired this training. Write down the answer as a new power tag on this theme.

☐ **It's Showtime**
Choose a single power tag from this theme. When you burn it for a hit, you get an automatic result of 9 (instead of 7) and a Power of 3, for a total unmodified score of 12. Statuses apply to both your automatic result and your Power, as usual.

☐ **Getting Good At This**
Choose a Core Move that best represents the actions you most often use your training for. Whenever you use it with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*



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LANCE SULLIVAN, REPORTER FOR THE CITY HERALD (DON QUIXOTE)

In Step 2, Lamar established Sullivan's four themes (see page 69):

- **Routine (Logos)** - investigative reporter
- **Defining Relationship (Logos)** - Sánchez
- **Possessions (Logos)** - retro car and gear
- **Bastion (Mythos)** - knightly protector

Moving on to Step 3, Lamar fills out the four theme cards, using the four corresponding themebooks. He's eager to choose his Mythos powers, so he starts with **Bastion**.

BASTION THEME

Going over the concept section, Lamar decides that since Don Quixote lives in a world of fantasy, Sullivan will have the ability to dream up knightly armor and weaponry. However, because they are, in a way, figments of his imagination, Lamar decides that these powers will appear as spectral apparitions rather than tangible objects.

Moving over to the power tag questions, Lamar answers the first question (which is obligatory) and writes down the answer as the first power tag on this theme's card.

A WHAT QUALITY OR ABILITY GRANTED BY YOUR MYTHOS MOST OFTEN PROTECTS YOU?

spectral armor

He then picks out two more power tag questions, answers them, and writes down the answers as power tags:

B WHAT MEANS DO YOU HAVE OF EXTENDING PROTECTION TO OTHERS?

a shield to match

G WHAT OTHER EFFECT OR QUALITY, NOT NECESSARILY DEFENSIVE, CAME WITH YOUR DEFENSE?

the lance of honor

Later, Alice the MC might ask Lamar what exactly he means by *the lance of honor*: is it something to be used in a conversation or a fight? Lamar plans to explain that this tag represents a spectral lance that Sullivan can conjure to actually fight others with, when his cause is honorable.

Lamar moves on to the weakness tag questions. He picks out one and answers it, writing the answer on his Bastion theme card:

D WHAT PERSONALITY TRAIT DERIVED FROM YOUR DEFENSE GETS YOU INTO TROUBLE?

delusional

Next he thinks of this theme's Mystery. In the story, Don Quixote imagines that a neighboring farm girl is his damsel in distress, and names her Dulcinea. Lamar decides that Sullivan doesn't know who his Dulcinea is, but his Mythos is urging him to find out. How else could he protect her? Therefore, he puts down **"Who is my Dulcinea?"** as Sullivan's Mystery for this theme.

To wrap up the theme, he titles it **Imaginary Knight**, and moves on to the next theme.

ROUTINE THEME

Lamar picks up the Routine themebook and starts going over it. Considering the questions in the concept section, Lamar decides that Sullivan has been working as a reporter since he lost everything when the pond appeared, a major event his crew is built around. He is most often covering stories about people who vanished during the event and he makes a meager living out of it.

In the power tag questions, Lamar answers the first question and two more of his choice, as before. He writes each answer on the theme card as a power tag:

A WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR TIME?

investigative reporter

G WHAT TRICK HAVE YOU PICKED UP DOING WHAT YOU DO?

lockpicking

J WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE SAME PLACE EVERY DAY?

sorrow for the victims

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He then chooses a weakness tag question and answers it, noting down the theme's weakness tag on the card:

C WHO OR WHAT CAN INTERFERE WITH YOUR ROUTINE?

reluctant witnesses

For an Identity, Lamar wants a statement that will encapsulate Sullivan's commitment to the cases he is investigating. He writes down "**The people of this neighborhood deserve to know.**" If Sullivan ever acts to the contrary during the game, he will start marking Crack and might end up replacing this theme. Finally, he titles the theme **Searching For The Lost**.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP THEME

Moving on to his next theme, Lamar goes over the Defining Relationship themebook. He already knows that Sullivan has a Defining Relationship with his podgy partner and photographer, Alejandro Sánchez. Going over the concept section, he also decides that Sánchez, who is a Sleeper, has no idea about Sullivan's abilities. As such, he often helps Sullivan cope with mundane reality. He chooses the following power tags:

A WHY IS THIS RELATIONSHIP SO IMPORTANT TO YOU?

saves my butt every time

C WHAT WERE YOU FORCED TO LEARN BECAUSE OF THIS RELATIONSHIP?

reality check

H NAME AN ACTIVITY THAT YOU SHARE.

long unbreakable speeches

The last tag is a bit of a stretch, because Sullivan and Sánchez don't technically share long unbreakable speeches, they inflict them upon one another. But Lamar is amused by the idea and thinks it would be a fun tag to use during the game.

For a weakness tag, Lamar chooses something he knows Sullivan does quite frequently:

D UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD THEY BE UNABLE TO HELP YOU?

ignore his warning

Sánchez is a down-to-earth, pragmatic man. He would very much like Sullivan to stop putting himself at risk so he takes every opportunity to try and dissuade his partner from putting himself in unnecessary danger (hence the long unbreakable speeches). With this tag, every time Sullivan takes an action that ignores Sánchez's warnings and this tag activates, he will have one less point of Power but also gain a point of Attention. Lamar thinks this could be quite comical on the verge of tragic, which fits Sullivan's Mythos and overall story perfectly.

Lamar considers the relationship Sullivan and Sánchez have. It's based on hard-earned trust; maybe they even worked together before the lake showed up. He thinks about a statement that can capture this. For an Identity, he puts down **"If it wasn't for him, I'd be dead."** If Sullivan ever questions this, for example, if he suspected Sánchez for betraying him or trying to act against him, he stands to mark Crack, which could eventually bring him to replace this theme. Lamar wraps up by titling this theme **My Sancho Panza**.

POSSESSIONS THEME

Addressing Sullivan's final theme, Lamar picks up the Possessions themebook and reads through it. His concept for this theme is already quite solid – he wants Sullivan to be a typical old-school reporter, wearing a worn-out leather jacket and driving an old beat-up Mustang, whose trunk is full of surprises. He's got plenty of ideas for tags, so when he reads the power tag questions he ends up answering several of them and answering some of them more than once:

A WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR POSSESSION?

a beat-up old Mustang

C WHAT OTHER IMPORTANT ITEM IS IN YOUR POSSESSION?

a worn-out leather jacket, *a rusty crowbar*

D WHAT COMPONENT OR ATTACHMENT ADDED TO ONE OF YOUR ITEMS CAN CHANGE OR IMPROVE ITS FUNCTION?

nitrous oxide injection system

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J WHAT ITEM COMPLETES A SET WITH YOUR OTHER POWER TAGS?

a sawed-off shotgun

Lamar writes down *a beat-up old Mustang* on his card because it's the answer to the first question, which is obligatory. He also wants this to be his broad tag because he wants to be able to pull out all sorts of useful things from the trunk of his car, which the MC approves. After going over the rest of his answers, he chooses *a worn-out leather jacket* and *a sawed-off shotgun* and writes them down on the theme card. Later, when he clocks some Attention and earns an improvement, he can pick up the remaining tags.

To gain Attention, this theme needs a weakness tag. Lamar wants it to indicate the general condition of his gear so he chooses:

A WHAT TECHNICAL OR PRACTICAL FLAW DO YOUR ITEMS OR POSSESSIONS HAVE?

wear and tear

Finally, for his Possessions Identity, Lamar chooses a statement that tells something about Sullivan's relationship with his tools, as well as adding to his personality: **"I believe in a good ole, tried and true piece of equipment."** He names this theme **Retro Renegade**.

EXTRA TAGS

Lamar can choose to take extra power and weakness tags for one of his themes. Going over his cards, he sees a lot of potential for growth in all of Sullivan's themes. However, feeling that the romantic aspect of his Mythos could do with additional airtime, he decides to give the extra tags to his Bastion theme. He chooses an additional power tag question and an additional weakness tag question, answers them, and writes down the answers in their respective spaces on the theme card.

H WHO OR WHAT WERE YOUR POWERS MEANT TO PROTECT?

in defense of love

C TO WHAT ATTACKS IS YOUR DEFENSE SUSCEPTIBLE?

reality hurts

With these tags, Sullivan is stronger when he's acting in defense of love, a circumstance which may crop up in different ways during play. When Alice the MC asks for clarification regarding *reality hurts*, Lamar explains that since Sullivan's knighthood is imaginary, it is more effective against Mythos powers (which also come from imagined stories, in a way) and less effective against real-world attacks such as punches, baseball bats, and gunshots (as long as they are not backed by a Mythos). Since this is a pretty clear-cut interpretation, the MC approves.

ALMOST DONE

Sullivan's theme cards are ready for the game.

After Lamar and his friends wrap up their characters, they go back to a group discussion in order to create their crew and the relationships between their characters. Any additional details about their characters will be completed in the last phase of the Exposition Session, "A Day In The Life".

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TYPE Bastion

Imaginary Knight

ATTENTION FADE

MYSTERY

"Who is my Dulcinea?"

POWER TAGS

BURN

A Spectral Armor

B Shield to Match

G The Lance of Honor

H In Defense of Love

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

D Delusional

C Reality Hurts

City of Mist

TYPE Routine

Searching for the Lost

ATTENTION CRACK

IDENTITY

"The people of this neighborhood deserve to know."

POWER TAGS

BURN

A Investigative Reporter

G Lockpicking

J Sorrow for the Victims

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

C Reluctant Witnesses

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TYPE Defining Relationship

My Sancho Panza

ATTENTION CRACK

IDENTITY

"If it wasn't for him, I'd be dead."

POWER TAGS

BURN

A Saves my butt every time

C Reality check

H Long unbreakable speeches

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

D Ignore his warnings

City of Mist

TYPE Possessions

Retro Renegade

ATTENTION CRACK

IDENTITY

"I believe in good ole, tried and true piece of equipment."

POWER TAGS

BURN

A A beat-up old Mustang

C A worn-out leather jacket

J A sawed-off shotgun

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

A Wear and tear

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YOUR CREW

Once the players finish character creation and each player has his character's cards filled out, it's time to focus on the crew. Every player introduces his character to the rest of the group. The group now decides on what resources they have as a team, what binds them together, and what has the potential to break them apart. This is reflected in the **crew theme** and in **crew relationships**.

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THE CREW THEME

The crew theme represents the shared resources and beliefs of the crew, as well as its weaknesses. It is built like the character themes: three power tags, one weakness tag, and a Mystery or an Identity.

The details of the theme are chosen together by all the players and the MC. Take an empty crew theme card and fill it out based on the crew themebook below, just as you would with a character's theme card.

CHOOSING CREW POWER TAGS

Crew power tags function similarly to the PCs' power tags: when a player activates a move, he can invoke one or more crew power tags (if the tag is appropriate to the action taken), gaining another point of Power for each tag, as usual. However, unlike character power tags, crew power tags are single-use; once used in a move, they are burnt and become unavailable until they are recovered. Read more about using crew power tags under Tags in Crew and Extra Themes (page 215).

The same guidelines given for choosing character power tags apply when choosing crew power tags. A crew cannot have more than one broad tag (even if later the crew gains additional crew themes) and all the power tags should describe things useful to all crew members, such as a resource that is shared by the entire crew. Unlike character power tags (which are limited by the theme type), a crew theme's power tag can describe both mundane and legendary or magical details. There is no limitation on the content of the description except that it must be related to the theme as a whole.

CAN A CREW HAVE A MYTHOS?

While it can be somewhat unusual and would not fit every series concept, a crew can become a Rift for a Mythos. This stipulates that a Mythos other than the Mythoi of the lead characters is telling its story through the crew as a whole. For example, the Mythos of Jason's Argonauts could be seeking to tell its story through a street gang riding a souped up van.

Adding a Mythos to your crew is a purely narrative decision and bears no impact on the rules of the game. Crew themes do not have a Mythos or Logos type. However, an overarching Mythos could be a way to explain supernatural occurences around the group as well as Mythos powers that they seem to display only when the crew members are together. It can be included in the series concept from the start or introduced as a discovery at a later point.

CHOOSING CREW WEAKNESS TAGS

Crew weakness tags function similarly to the player characters' weakness tags. Whenever any crew member takes an action to which the crew weakness tag can be appropriately applied, the crew weakness tag may be invoked, reducing the Power for that action by one. Every time the crew weakness point is activated, the crew theme gains Attention. Read more about using crew weakness tags under Tags in Crew and Extra Themes (page 215).

The same guidelines given for choosing character weakness tags apply when choosing crew weakness tags: they should describe things that hinder and complicate the crew members' actions, never things that help them or drive them to action. As an additional guideline, crew power tags should describe a weakness that is plaguing all the crew members or the crew as a whole. However, unlike character weakness tags (which are limited by the theme type), a crew theme's weakness tags can describe both mundane and legendary or magical details. There are no limitations on the content of the description except that it must be related to the theme as a whole.

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CHOOSING A CREW MYSTERY OR IDENTITY

The crew's Mystery or Identity is the glue that binds the crew together, the reason for which they are operating as a crew. In a way, it is the boiled-down version of the series concept created at the beginning of the Exposition Session: either a question all crew members are trying to answer together or a conviction all crew members share. The group can choose whether to phrase this core aspect as a Mystery or an Identity.

It is essential that not only the players but also the characters they portray agree with this agenda of the crew, even if it is an unspoken agreement. For example, if a group playing a crew of vigilantes chooses the Identity "Someone has to do the dirty work to keep this City clean", all crew members should conform to this statement at least to some extent. If a team of conspiracy busters wants to know "Who is behind the kidnappings?", and chooses this question as their Mystery, it means everyone agrees that this question is the most important thing, for now.

Remember, the characters start the game already knowing each other and have worked with each other for a while, at least long enough to have a joint purpose. This is not to say all members completely agree on what drives the crew but simply that for the time being they agree to set aside any qualms they might have. Once the game starts, anything can happen.

A crew Mystery functions similarly to the player characters' Mysteries: it is a question that embodies what the crew is searching for. Whenever any crew member has a chance of obtaining new information regarding the crew's Mystery and foregoes it, she erodes the crew theme, which could eventually lead to losing the theme completely. Read more about crew theme evolution during the game in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

A crew Identity functions similarly to the PCs' Identities: it is a statement that captures the essential attitude, belief, or goal shared by all crew members. Whenever any crew member acts contrary to this statement, she erodes the crew theme, which could eventually lead to losing the theme completely, as in the case of a Mystery.

The same guidelines given for choosing character Mysteries and Identities apply here. A crew Mystery must be a deep and burning question that drives the crew to investigate and take action in order to find answers. A crew Identity must be a real and binding statement that drives the crew to take action and reflects their motive. The crew's Mystery or Identity should also be related to the nature of the crew as it was defined in the series concept and to the power and weakness tags in the crew theme.

THE CREW THEMEBOOK

CONCEPT

Review the concept of your crew as a reflection of the series concept you all agreed upon at the beginning of the Exposition Session. Flesh it out together by thinking about the following questions:

- **WHAT IS OUR SHARED GOAL?**
- **WHO OR WHAT BROUGHT US TOGETHER?**
- **WHY DO WE WORK TOGETHER? WHAT DOES EACH MEMBER CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE?**
- **WHERE DO WE MEET? WHERE DO WE COLLECT OUR EVIDENCE OR PREPARE FOR ACTION?**
- **WHAT SORT OF RESOURCES DO WE HAVE AT OUR DISPOSAL?**

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Choose three questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your crew during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your crew theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

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A HOW DO YOU HELP, ASSIST, OR SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER?

catch overlooked details, *tactical coordination*, *a prayer of protection*, *watch each other's back*, *the bond of Zeus's children*

B WHERE DO YOU MEET, WORK, REST, OR PREPARE FOR ACTION?

Havana Club, *headquarters on the docks*, *Sylvia's book shop*, *the classroom*, *the Olympus dimension*

C WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED TO DO WELL TOGETHER?

good-cop-bad-cop technique, *storm the target*, *a summoning ritual*, *breaking and entry*, *toy with the mortals*

D WHO IS GUIDING, BACKING, OR ASSISTING YOUR OPERATION?

Lily – our moral compass, *the Client*, *spirit animal*, *the professor*, *almighty Zeus*

E HOW DO YOU GET AROUND?

rooftops, *armored assault vehicle*, *knowledge of the subway tunnels*, *the van*, *Hermes' winged sandals*

F WHAT ENVIRONMENTS OR SITUATIONS ARE YOU MOST COMFORTABLE IN?

morally gray situations, *under the cloak of darkness*, *on hallowed ground*, *lots of witnesses*, *admired and worshipped*

G WHAT SPECIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION DO YOU HAVE?

police informant, *the hackers at Oversight*, *unexplained intuitions*, *you don't fool us*, *telepathy*

H WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION OR NAME HAVE YOU MADE FOR YOURSELVES?

neighborhood support, *underworld reputation*, *known in the Otherworld*, *the corrupt fear us*, *government connections*

I WHAT APPROACH OR TACTIC DO YOU SHARE IN TACKLING CHALLENGES?

ruthless punishment, *divide and conquer*, *harmony and peace*, *keep a cool head*, *divine superiority*

J WHAT KIND OF SPECIAL GEAR, RESOURCE, OR POWER IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL?

dark clothing, *arsenal of firearms*, *mystical supplies*, *boobytraps*, *Pandora's box*

WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your crew's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS FLAWED OR LACKING IN THE WAY YOU OPERATE TOGETHER?

no clear leadership, *overconfident*, *in over our heads*, *we keep losing each other*, *egotistical backstabbers*

B HOW DO YOU GET EACH OTHER INTO TROUBLE?

who is watching the suspect?, *friendly fire*, *big mouth*, *stumble into each other*, *vying for the spotlight*

C WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU ALL AFRAID OF?

exposed family members, *the Client*, *Cult of the Seventh Circle*, *not taken seriously*, *uncle Poseidon*

D WHAT PLACES OR SITUATIONS DO YOU FIND TOUGH TO HANDLE?

legal problems, *never involve personal matters*, *real-life problems*, *too afraid to look*, *we're only human*

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MYSTERY OR IDENTITY

Choose a Mystery or an Identity for this theme. For example:

- (Paramilitary mercenaries) "Get it done. Get Paid. Don't ask questions."
- (High school detective team) "What strange forces are meddling with our school and why?"
- (Greek gods) "It's either us or the Titans."

You can try exploring the following options:

- Something you all agree must be done or must never be allowed. (Identity)
- The central question in a case you all want to solve. (Mystery)
- A code of conduct you all abide by. (Identity)
- A strange riddle which is the key to your destiny. (Mystery)

Write your Mystery or Identity on your crew theme card.

TITLE

Name your crew theme in a way that encapsulates your crew's nature and style. Write it on your crew theme card. For example:

- (Paramilitary mercenaries) Guns for Hire
- (High school detective team) The City High Gang
- (Greek gods) The Olympians

CREW THEME IMPROVEMENTS

During the game, whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

☐ **Tight Like That**
Once per session, when one of you uses Juice points to help or interfere with another crew member's move, you gain one more point of Juice to do so.

☐ **Quality Matters**
One of the items or possessions of your crew is a real gem, perfect for what it was made for. Choose one tag from the crew theme. It must describe an item or a possession. Any Core Move you make using this tag is *Dynamite!*

☐ **Sacrifice**
When two or more of you **Face Danger** against the same status and you get a hit, you may choose to extend the hit to one other crew member, at the cost of exposing yourself. On a 10+, they take no status and you take the status with -1 tier. On a 7-9, they take the status with -1 tier and you take the full status. If the move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you can choose to fully protect both of you (instead of choosing one of the other 12+ options).

☐ **Pull It Together**
Once per session, you can recover a burnt crew power tag.

☐ **Black Sheep**
Choose together one crew member who is the black sheep of the crew. When the black sheep of the crew acts against your Mystery or Identity, it's expected, so it does not weaken your crew. For everyone else, overlooking the black sheep's actions does not count as acting against your Mystery or Identity either. You can choose a new black sheep at the beginning or end of each session.

QUICK START CREW THEMES

The following crew themes correspond to the crew types suggested in the Series Concept section. You can use them as they are or tweak them to the needs of your game:

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

THE CASUAL DETECTIVES

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"Investigating is a hobby. Our personal lives come first."

POWER TAGS BURN

A Cover for each other

I Inconspicuous

B Garage full of things

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

D Personal life calls

City of Mist

TYPE Crew Theme +/

COMPANY MEN

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"Follow protocol."

POWER TAGS BURN

E Company car

G Company database

I Bend the rules

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

C Liability

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

Conspiracy Busters

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"Who else is involved in this?"

POWER TAGS

BURN

F Won't get fooled again

D Insider tip

J Surveillance equipment

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

A Evidence disappears

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

Dabblers in the Mist

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"What ancient secrets are hidden in this City?"

POWER TAGS

BURN

A Empathic connection

D Guidance from a strange mystic

J Divine intervention

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

B In over our heads

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

The Event

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"What really happened there?"

POWER TAGS

BURN

- G Flashbacks
- F This is where it happened
- J Supernatural residual effects

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

- D Emotional overload

City of Mist

TYPE Crew Theme +/

Modern Gods

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"Embrace your divinity."

POWER TAGS

BURN

- A We stand united
- B Our sacred place
- C Fury of the gods

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

- A Pantheon drama

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

Masked Vigilante Investigations

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"To keep this City clean, we need to get our hands dirty."

POWER TAGS

BURN

- B Office space
- A Got each other's back
- C Blow off some steam

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

- B Stepping on each other's toes

City of Mist

TYPE Crew Theme +/

The Order

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"The Enemy must never be allowed to prevail!"

POWER TAGS

BURN

- G Know thy enemy
- J Ancient weapons
- I Steely resolve

WEAKNESS TAGS

INVOKE

- C What lies beneath

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TYPE Crew Theme +/

THE PROS

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"Eyes on the prize"

POWER TAGS BURN

A professional

coordination

J expenses account

F cool-headed

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

A greedy bastards

City of Mist

TYPE Crew Theme +/

THE GANG

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

"We will always have each other."

POWER TAGS BURN

I true friendship

C lend a hand

G powers of deduction

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

B trouble magnets

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CREW THEME EXAMPLE: POND INCIDENT SURVIVORS

Now that Lamar, Jerry, and Megan completed their character creation, they join with Alice the MC to create the crew theme. Based on their series concept of Lakeside Drive, the group talks about what the crew is actually trying to achieve. Since their characters Sullivan, Det. Enkidu, and Goodfellow are all survivors of the pond incident who know each other, it seems apt that they will be trying to figure out what was the catastrophe that hit their neighborhood and why it was so violently hushed by the Mist. Also, what the hell is going on? How was an entire neighborhood covered by water and nobody talks about it?

They start by picking out some power tags and a weakness tag. Jerry suggests the crew meets at a local diner that is like a second home to them; they work from the storage area and can grab a bite and a drink when they need to recover:

B WHERE DO YOU MEET, WORK, REST, OR PREPARE FOR ACTION?

Louis' diner

Alice the MC would like to introduce a character from Arthurian legend that is guiding the crew but whose motives are questionable. She suggests the following:

D WHO IS GUIDING, BACKING, OR ASSISTING YOUR OPERATION?

Lady of the Lake

Lamar thinks that even though most people don't remember what happened, the crew members are still local faces who have friends and connections in the community. He suggests an appropriate tag:

G WHAT SPECIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION DO YOU HAVE?

friends in Lakeside Drive

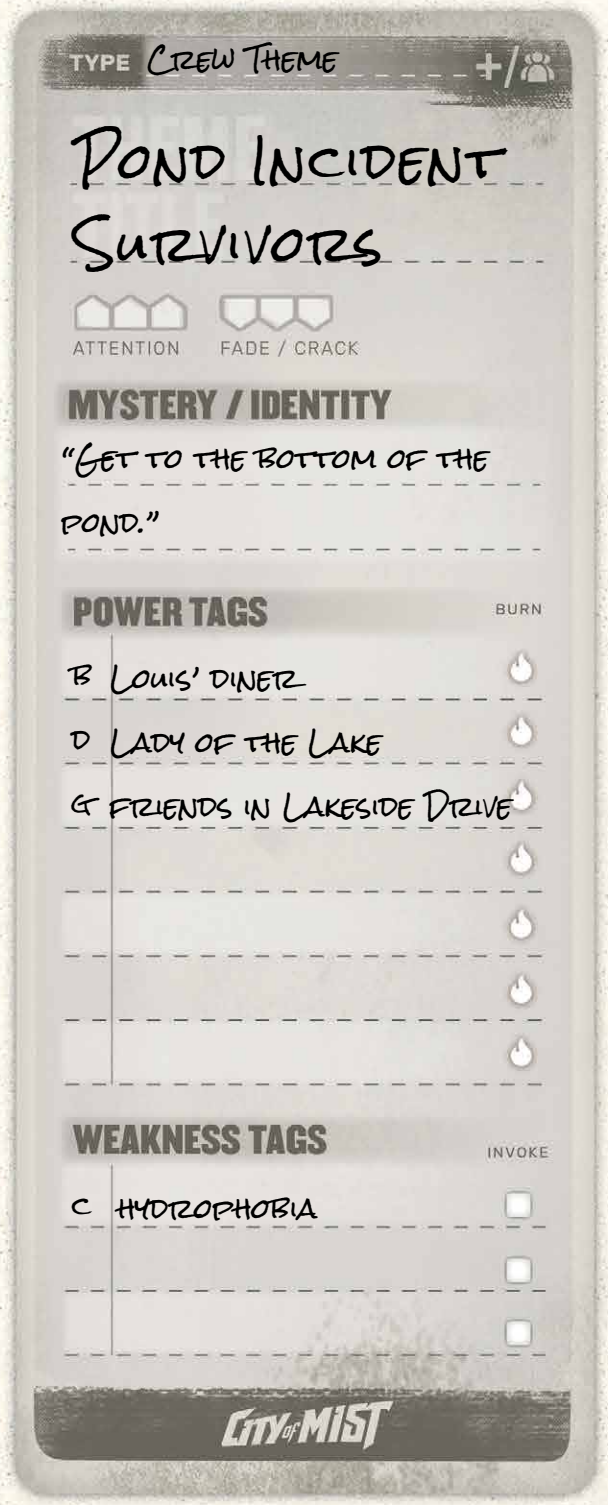
Being survivors of a supernatural flash flood, Megan thinks it makes sense to choose a weakness tag based on that:

C WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU ALL AFRAID OF?

hydrophobia

Finally, the four discuss what Mystery or Identity would best encapsulate the crew. They choose **"Get to the bottom of the pond."** for its dual meaning: the crew wants to understand what happened with the pond but it seems the answers are submerged deep in the bottom of the pond and that sooner or later the crew will have to venture down there and confront a shocking truth.

They name their crew theme **Pond Incident Survivors**



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CREW RELATIONSHIPS

Underneath the goal or ideal that makes your crew members collaborate there is a complex network of relationships. Even though they work together, the crew members can have complicated personal relationships and a dark past. Some of the crew members have known each other for a while and have been through a lot together; others, while knowing each other only briefly, have already formed opinions on one another. And since everyone is a Rift, there are also the relationships between your Mythoi to consider.

Once you have your crew theme ready, you can build your crew relationships. Crew relationships help quickly flesh out the shared history of the crew members. First, each player writes down the names of all the other crew members on his character card under CREW. Sullivan's card looks like this:

CREW	HELP	HURT
Det. Enkidu		
Goodfellow		

Next, go around the table, taking turns. On your turn, pick up one of your themebooks at random and refer to the Crew Relationship section. Each section contains three ideas for events or attitudes that shaped your relationship with one of your crew members. Choose one at random or at your whim and read it out loud. You then choose if you want to use this item or discard it. If you choose to use the item, choose which crew member it applies to. If the player playing that crew member approves, you can work out the details then and there, or later. The MC and the other players can suggest how to interpret this item.

Lamar chooses an item at random and reads it: "You once protected something very dear to one of them, possibly even from them. If they were grateful, take a Help point on them. If they were not, take a Hurt point on them." I think this would be something to do with your character, Megan. You said Goodfellow had a grandchild? Maybe he once entered his furious state and I prevented this kid from seeing it?

Megan: Ooh, that sounds good. I would definitely be trying to hide that from him, so I think Goodfellow would be grateful.

Each item also tells you to take a Help or a Hurt point on that character. Write it next to that character's name on your character card's CREW section.

Lamar: Cool, I'm adding one Help point next to Goodfellow.

CREW	HELP	HURT
Det. Enkidu		
Goodfellow	1	

If you already have points of the same type for that character, they add up. However, Help & Hurt points do not cancel each other out; you accumulate them separately.

When you're done, move on to the next player. Keep going around the table until you feel your history is rich enough. You will not necessarily end up with an equal amount of Help & Hurt points across the board: some crew members have baggage for better or worse, while others are more indifferent to each other.

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A DAY IN THE LIFE

In the final stage of the Exposition Session, you and your group play a short and casual session of the game to help tie everything together and complete missing details. The main purpose of this short game is to flesh out your characters, their lives, and the locations and characters that would appear in your series, as well as to give the MC enough to start the series with.

As you play out this "Day In The Life" of your characters, you may even get to try out some of the basic rules, such as making moves. However, teaching the rules or promoting the story should come second to the main focus: creating story details. The MC should clarify that "A Day In The Life" is a setting-building process, so no one expects any dramatic events (these will come when you start playing the game).

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When you start this phase, your character, theme, and crew theme cards should already be filled out, so you have your concept, themes, tags, Mysteries, and Identities in front of you. These elements provide the core of your character and game, something to build on when you play out this first mini-session.

STARTING OUT

The MC starts by picking out a time of the day and asking the players where their characters would be at that time and what would they be doing.

? WHERE ARE YOUR CHARACTERS AND WHAT ARE THEY DOING ON THIS NORMAL DAY IN THEIR LIVES?

Imagining their character's lives, the players respond by describing their character's activities on a typical day.

The setting for the scenes you describe may vary greatly depending on your series concept. If you are playing **The Pros**, maybe your "Day In The Life" revolves around a job you've taken on as a crew. If you're playing **Masked Vigilante Investigations** you may be working a case or cracking down on crime late at night, and so on.

For example:

MC: It's a nice and peaceful morning in the neighborhood of Lakeside Drive. Where are your characters now? What are they doing?

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Goodfellow is in the kitchen of his town house, still reading the newspaper with a cold cup of coffee in his hand. He's retired so he doesn't have anywhere urgent to go to. He does most of his business at night.

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): The detective is driving a squad car with the sirens screaming overhead. She's on her way to a crime scene. Let's say someone found a body.

MC: Oooh, that escalated quickly! And Sullivan?

Lamar (playing Sullivan): Sullivan is only now waking up, blinded by sunlight coming through the blinds. Around him there is a messy bedroom. He moans and rolls over lazily when he catches sight of the alarm clock. His alarm didn't go off! And today is the deadline for his latest article. He leaps out of bed.

ASKING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERING THEM

During "A Day In The Life", whenever you think of an interesting detail in the story that you don't yet know, but would like to know, you ask it out loud. Everyone asks about what is interesting to them personally. As you and your group ask questions, you discover what is interesting to all of you together.

Ask and answer as many interesting questions as you can. While in a normal game session this can slow down the game, "A Day In The Life" is all about asking questions. You can ask the other players, the MC, and yourself (out loud). You can ask about anything, including:

- A character's appearance
- A character's life situation including lifestyle, housing, family, income, etc.
- A character's daily routine
- Important non-player characters in the lives of the characters, as individuals and as a crew
- Key locations that will appear in the series
- Minor or major events that influence the series
- A character's Mythos powers, how they manifest, what they look like for Rifts or Sleepers
- The state of affairs in the City and specifically in the domain the characters operate in (a specific district, the business sphere, the underworld, political life, etc.)

When someone raises a question, suggest answers. During "A Day In The Life", you can suggest answers to any question, even if it's not about your character. You can suggest anything from tiny cool details that give the game the right feel to pivotal details that have a dramatic effect over the series. Later, the MC will take over the non-player characters and events in the City; for now, you are all creating the game together.

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Players have the final word about details related to their characters. Details related to the crew or series as a whole become a formal part of your canon if everyone agrees on them. You can always build on someone else's suggestion or make an alternative suggestion. Keep in mind, however, that this is a shared world-building process: some of your ideas will be accepted by the group and others will not, it's just the way it works. The MC should make sure everyone gets to have a say about the direction of the game, if they want to. The goal is to have an open discussion that gradually produces enough details so that your *City of Mist* series feels real and interesting. For example:

Alice the MC, asking Lamar: So what does Sullivan's *lance of honor* actually look like? What do Rifts see and what do Sleepers see?

Lamar: I'm thinking it's like a scintillating and flickering beam of multi-colored light that he is holding like a lance but it extends very far, maybe 30 feet. Maybe sometimes it's accompanied by a ghostly silhouette of a rider. I guess it's an imaginary lance so even Rifts see it fading in and out of existence. Sleepers see nothing more than a flash of light, like blinding headlights or a camera glare.

Or:

Lamar, asking Megan: Is Goodfellow married?

Megan: Good question. I want to say his wife is not around, but there's a story there.

Alice the MC: Has she passed away?

Megan: I don't think so. I think it would be more interesting if she's kind of a wild card in his backstory.

Jerry: How about she disappeared during the Lakeside Drive catastrophe?

Megan: Yeah, sounds good! It will give him a solid motive to investigate with the crew, especially if he thinks she's still out there.

Alice the MC: Does he have any family? Assuming they are Sleepers, they wouldn't know anything about the catastrophe. But are they Sleepers...?

Megan: I'd say he has children and grandchildren. They are all Sleepers, although maybe some will awaken during the series. I think it would be interesting if they all think his wife passed away, but Goodfellow is the only one who knows it may not be true. Maybe they think he's losing it.

Lamar: That's awesome.

Or:

Jerry, asking Alice the MC: So what do we actually know about the catastrophe?

Alice the MC: You tell me, what do you know?

Megan: How about the catastrophe and the flooding all happened in one fateful night. We just heard a deafening sound and felt a massive explosion close to the center of the neighborhood. Then the water just started rushing in from every direction.

Lamar: That sounds good. Maybe we don't even know they were separate events. Only later, when we realized it's all being hushed, did we start suspecting a conspiracy and got into investigating.

And so on.

WHAT TO COVER AND WHAT TO AVOID

In your questions, you should cover the following areas:

(a) your individual characters,
(b) your crew and what you do together,
(c) general facts and the current state of affairs in the City, and
(d) any potential cases you are working on and any threats involved that you know about at the beginning of the series.

Avoid tying loose ends. If someone wants to know what is the legend behind the new celebrity superstar or what is really happening down at the docklands, they can wait to find out during the series as you investigate these questions.

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PLAYING SCENES

Sometimes during "A Day In The Life" you will have the opportunity to play a scene in your story. The MC, or someone who read the rules in Chapter 3: Working The Case, can explain the basics of the conversation. You each play your characters and the MC plays any non-player characters. Everyone is improvising, so treat this casually and enjoy the ride. As you play through the scene, continue to raise questions and add details.

Alice the MC: So let's fast forward a little. It's afternoon and you're all in Louis' diner, your regular gathering place.

Lamar: Sullivan is there, drinking a fortified coffee to calm his nerves after the hectic day he had.

Megan: Goodfellow is also there, sitting across the table from Sullivan, still reading the newspaper.

Jerry: Det. Enkidu storms through the door, signals Sullivan to scoot over and crashes into the red leather seat. She asks Louis for her regular and, when her dinner arrives and she vulgarly scarfs it down, she mumbles "Murder last night near the pond. Fishy business."

Megan: Goodfellow drops the newspaper. "Is that a pun?"

Jerry, asking the MC: Can I add details or do I need to make a move?

MC: We're still in the Exposition Session so sure.

Jerry, answering Megan: Enkidu shrugs, "no, I mean fishy. The whole crime scene smelled like fish."

Alice the MC: Louis the owner comes around with some fries and pancakes. "What are you three up to this time?"

Lamar: Wait, is Louis a Rift?

As you continue to play, your "Day In The Life" can evolve in many different directions covering additional aspects of your series. If you wish, you can also begin introducing the basic rules and try making a few of the Core Moves, as explained in Chapter 3: Working The Case.

MC: As you drive around the pond that night in Sullivan's old Mustang, you see a dark figure of a man hiding in the treeline of the Lakeside Drive park. When he sees the headlights of your car, he starts running away from you.

Lamar: I want to overtake him and cut off his escape path with the car.

MC: Great, I guess this is a good point to explain how moves work. Since you are trying to outmaneuver the dark figure, you are **Going Toe to Toe** with him. What power tags do you have that directly support this action?

CONCLUSION

Keep on playing and ask questions until you feel you have enough details and enough investigative leads to go on. When you are done, put together a few questions that the crew will be investigating when the series begins; the MC will note them down. For example:

- What is at the bottom of the pond?
- What happened on the night of the catastrophe?
- Who is responsible?
- Who is behind the murders by the pond?

When you're done, you wrap up your "Day In The Life" and with it the Exposition Session as a whole. You now have your characters and crew ready and the MC has collected enough information to write the first case or adapt existing cases for your series.

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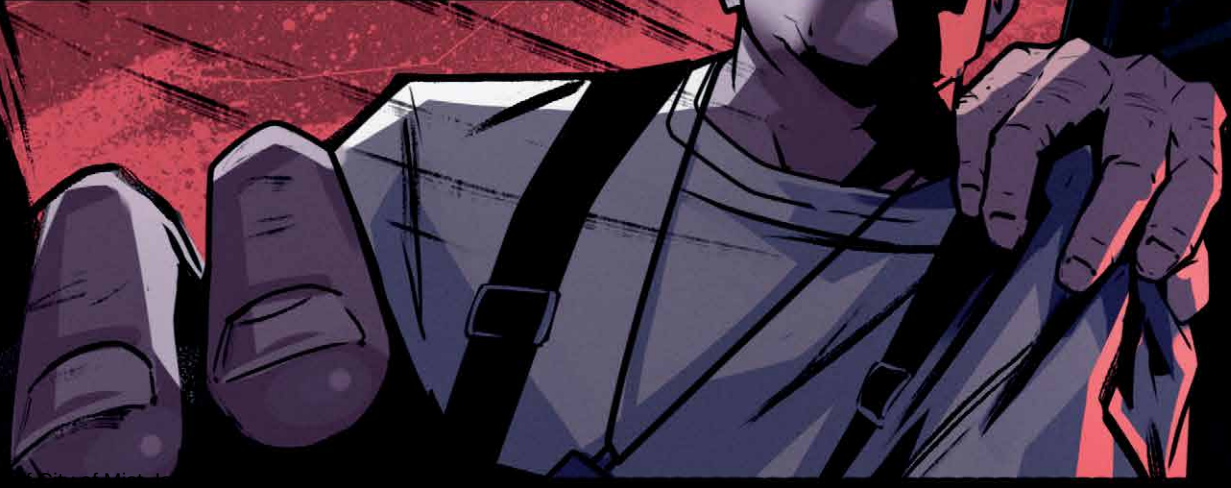
THIS IS WHERE SHE LIVES?

I HOPE YOUR TEACHER IS **OKAY** BUT YOU DID GOOD TO CALL ME. HER CAR WAS A FISH CASTLE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER BY THE TIME I FOUND IT.

IS THIS THE PLACE?...
IT'S OPEN...

MS. APPLEBAUM?



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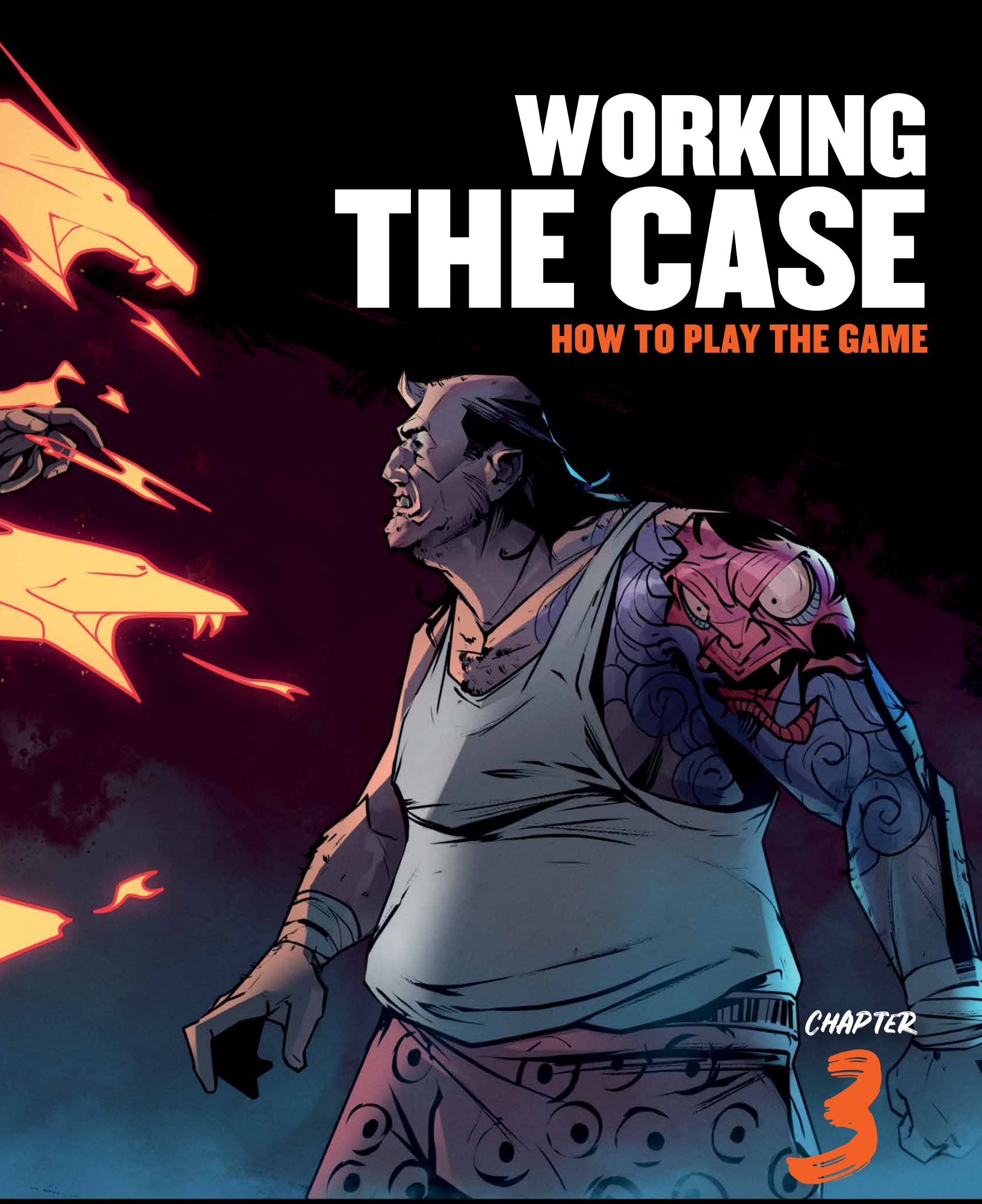
WORKING THE CASE

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME



CHAPTER 3

PLAYER RULES

HOW TO MAKE A MOVE . . . . . PAGE 172

1. Describe your character's action AND name the move you are making
2. Determine your Power †
3. Roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and add the result to your Power †
4. Follow the outcome description based on your score

THE CORE MOVES

CHANGE THE GAME (page 182) to give you or your allies an advantage (generate **Juice**).

CONVINCE (page 185) to talk, threaten, or seduce someone into doing something.

FACE DANGER (page 187) to avoid a hit, endure harm, or resist an influence. (Reduce or avoid a **status**)

GO TOE TO TOE (page 188) to overcome someone or something in a struggle for control. (Give and/or take a **status**)

HIT WITH ALL YOU'VE GOT (page 190) to take a clear shot at someone with all of your power. (Give a **status**, and possibly take one)

INVESTIGATE (page 192) to seek answers to burning questions or gain information. (Generate **Clues**)

SNEAK AROUND (page 195) to do something discreetly or deceptively.

TAKE THE RISK (page 196) to perform a feat of daring.

DETERMINING POWER. . . . . PAGE 175

A. **Invoke tags that directly help your action.** You gain +1 Power for each tag.

B. **Invoke tags that directly impede your action.** For each tag, you lose 1 Power. For each weakness tag, mark 1 Attention on that tag's theme.

C. **Add the tier of your highest helpful status to your Power.**

D. **Subtract the tier of your highest impeding status from your Power.**

† Does not apply in some moves or when using optional rules.

TAG INVOCATION RULES

- **Final Call:** The MC has the final call on which tags are relevant and can be invoked.
- **No Tag Cap:** You can invoke any number of relevant tags from all of your character's themes, the crew themes, or available story tags. †
- **Reusable:** Tags can be invoked again in subsequent actions †, except for:
  - » **Repeating Moves:** You cannot repeat an action using the same tags until the conditions have changed (page 178).
  - » **Linked Moves:** If your move is related to your previous move, you cannot use the same tags again (page 178).
- **Power of Zero:** If your action does not require special abilities or resources, you can take it without invoking any tags (page 217).
- **Minimum One:** If a move grants a benefit based on Power, you always get at least one point of benefit, even if your Power is zero or less (page 181).
- **Using your weakness:** The MC or a PC that is the target of your move can also invoke your weakness tags (page 207).

MOVE OUTCOMES . . . . . PAGE 177

- **MISS:** a score of 6 or less. The MC makes an MC move against you or your crew.
- **HIT:** a score of 7 or more.
  - » 7-9 is a weak hit, granting benefits with complications.
  - » +10 is a strong hit, granting mostly benefits.
  - » If your move is *Dynamite!,* +12 is an extraordinary hit, granting special benefits.

See the move descriptions for the exact outcome of every score category.

HELPING OR INTERFERING . . . . . PAGE 181

You can help or interfere with a crewmate's action before the player rolls the dice. Spend Juice (you may **Change the Game**) to give them a relevant status or story tag.

BURNING TAGS . . . . . PAGE 209

A burnt tag cannot be invoked. Burnt tags can be recovered with the **Montage** move (page 201).

Burning for a Hit: You can voluntarily burn a tag when you make a move. You gain a Power of 3 and instead of rolling the dice, treat the roll as if you rolled 7 (total unmodified score of 10). No other tags can be invoked in this roll, but statuses apply normally.

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OTHER TAGS.....PAGE 212

Story tags represent things and essential qualities important to the story, such as *a pistol*. To create story tags, you spend **Juice**. Their duration may vary:

- **Temporary** story tags expire after a single invocation and cannot be burnt for a hit.
- **Ongoing** story tags last until they narratively expire or until they are burnt.
- **Permanent** story tags do not expire (and thus can be burnt and recovered).

Power Tags in Crew and Extra Themes are "crispy": they burn once you invoke them and cannot be burnt for a hit.

You can recover Crew Power Tags with the **Geek Out During Credits** move (page 202). You can recover Extra Power Tags with the **Montage** move.

STATUSES.....PAGE 218

Statuses represent conditions that are acquired or transient, such as *tired-2*. A status has a **tag** and a **tier**:

- **Tier 1-4** statuses increase or decrease the Power of relevant actions.
- **Tier 5 (OUT)** statuses incapacitate your character, preventing any action related to the status.
- **Tier 6 (MC)** statuses kill or permanently transform your character, MC's choice.

When you give a status, your move defines the tier and you choose a tag appropriate to your action. **Statuses on Dangers (adversaries)** may affect their actions, affect your actions, or contribute to their defeat (MC's choice, see page 128 in the MC Toolkit).

When you take a status, you may **Face Danger** to reduce the status (MC's choice). Statuses of similar nature ("on the same spectrum") stack:

- A greater tier replaces a lower tier (tier-2 replaces tier-1).
- An equal tier increases the tier by 1 (tier-2 increases an existing tier-2 to tier-3)
- A smaller tier adds pips to the greater tier until the next tier is reached (tier-2 adds two pips to an existing tier-3; when 3 pips are reached, it becomes tier-4).

DURATION:

- **Most statuses are Ongoing**, lasting until they narratively expire or are removed.
- **Temporary** statuses expire after they apply to a single action.
- **Permanent** statuses do not expire.

Recovery: Statuses can be reduced or removed with **Juice** (**Change the Game** move) or with the **Montage** move.

CLUES.....PAGE 227

Clues are a game resource that can be traded for information.

- To generate Clues, you **Investigate**.
- Each Clue allows you to ask one question and get an answer or a solid lead to the answer (MC or target's choice).
- The information you receive is limited to the **method** of your investigation and the **source** of information.
- You can bank Clues, but they expire when the information they represent becomes obsolete.

JUICE .....PAGE 232

Juice points represent your ability to shape the scene. To generate Juice, you **Change the Game**. Each point of Juice allows you to:

- Create one story tag
- Burn one Power Tag or story tag
- Create a tier-1 status, and give it +1 tier for every additional point of Juice spent
- Reduce the tier of a status by 1 (if the tier is reduced to zero, the status is removed)

Juice can only create effects related to the action you took to generate it (its **method**). You can bank Juice, but it expires when its method becomes obsolete.

Help & Hurt points are Juice that represents your relationships with your crewmates. You can spend them to help or interfere with your crewmates as you would with Juice. Help & Hurt points do not recover. You can gain new Help & Hurt points with the **Geek Out During Credits** move.

THE CINEMATIC MOVES ..... PAGE 198

- **Voiceover Monologue (page 199):** At the beginning of each session, one player sets the mood by describing his character's thoughts and feelings.
- **Flashback (page 199):** Once per session, describe a past event and possibly make a retroactive move or gain 1 Clue or 1 Juice.
- **Montage (page 201):** Choose your character's activity during **downtime** and gain benefits accordingly.
- **Geek Out During Credits (page 202):** At the end of every session, debrief character development, crew growth, and crew relationships and gain benefits accordingly.

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THE CONVERSATION

Playing City of Mist is a conversation. You all get together, in person or online. Picking up where you left off, the MC describes a scene and then asks the players 'What do you do?'. The players describe how their characters act. The MC responds by adding details, perhaps relating to the actions of the other characters in the scene, and describes any changes to the environment of the scene. She then asks again "What do you do?", the players respond, and so on.

This conversation has rules. A freeform conversation can make a great story, but it wouldn't be much of a game if anyone at any point could just say "I destroy the entire City with a blast of radiation from my evil green eye." Instead, rules turn the conversation into a game by defining how the participants can shape the story.

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As a player, whenever you want your character to take a significant action in the game, the rules kick in to determine its outcome. This is the most common form of rules, called **player moves**. Other rules determine what your character can or cannot do at certain points, or give a new direction to the story. Your character's destiny, therefore, is not just in your hands, but also in the hands of the MC, the other players, and the rules, which often include an element of chance (by rolling dice). During the game, you use your game options (such as moves) and resources (such as tags) to play your character and advance the story.

As an MC, the rules define what you can and cannot introduce into the game at any point. Player moves leave certain decisions in your hands; furthermore, when players miss a move, you can activate your own **MC moves**. The MC options that relate to the player moves are explained in this chapter, while the MC moves are explained in Chapter 2: Behind the Scenes in the MC Toolkit. As the MC, you also act as the game's referee, applying the rules and calling the shots to keep the game running smoothly, so you should be familiar with the player rules.

STORY AND RULES

During the game, the conversation around the table revolves around two things: **story** and **rules**. When someone says "I step out of the shadows of the alley, pointing my revolver at the consigliere so that he's looking down the barrel, and say 'Checkmate'", they are describing what happens in the story. When someone says "I'm going to **Hit With All I've Got**. I have a Power of 3. Let's roll the dice…", they are talking about the rules.

The story and the rules always go hand in hand, affecting one another. Sometimes the story is translated into the language of rules:

MC: You arrive at the docks. It's late at night and it's raining cats and dogs, to the point that it's hard to make out the dark hull of the Ulysses in the water. (Story)

Player: Great, rain is good for my character. I have the tag *works better in damp conditions* so I get +1 Power when using my Mythos powers in the rain. (Rules)

Other times, the rules are translated into the story:

Player: I give the doorman a status of *full-of-doubts-3.* (Rules)

MC: Okay, then following your earnest petition, the doorman wobbles nervously, scratching the back of his head. "Well, I guess if you are Mr. Crane's niece I should let you in. But the regulations say I should give him a call. It's very confusing…" (Story)

Whenever something changes in the rules, translate it into the story, as above. However, not everything in the story must be translated into rules. The player moves determine when something happening in the story triggers the rules, but the MC has the final call on when the rules are activated. Most commonly, the rules are triggered when a player tries to have his character take a significant action that can have various outcomes, invoking a move:

MC: The wind howls as you approach the abandoned fairground, and for a moment you can almost hear the melody of electric rides. The place looks grim: broken signs with shattered light bulbs, exposed machinery crops out of torn and rotten props, all is covered in dust.

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Player: I step silently over the knocked down gate, glancing around. If the lead I got was solid, I should find some evidence that this place is being used as a hideout: footprints in the dust, drag marks in the mud, active power generators. (Story) I am looking for answers, so I guess I am making the **Investigate** move. (Rules)

Occasionally, you'll find yourself spending a while describing the actions of your characters in the story without triggering the rules. For example, when the crew faces a moral dilemma and a discussion ensues, you can play out the discussion as your characters without necessarily translating the story into rules. If someone then tries to change another character's mind, the rules might be triggered. While the rules are intended to make the game more interesting and dramatic, sometimes they are just not needed.

BREAKING DOWN THE CONVERSATION

As mentioned previously, your story is built like a comic book or TV series; it is a series that can be broken down into issues or episodes, which in turn can be broken down into scenes. The rules of the game sometimes refer to these definitions and those described below. For example, temporary effects last until the end of the next ***action*** and some themebook improvements can only be activated once per ***scene*** or once per ***session***.

An action is the smallest event that can take place in the game. It is something that the character does or says with a defined purpose, using defined means, and under defined circumstances, such as searching a crime scene, slashing the tires of the rival crew's getaway car, or magically healing the wounds of an ally. An action can take any length of time; pulling the trigger of a pistol and questioning all the witnesses of a crime are both actions, even though one takes a fraction of a second and the other can take hours. Significant actions in the story are usually translated into **player moves** to determine their outcome.

A scene is a defined period of time in a specific location ("around midnight, back alley"), during which the lead characters take actions. Most actions take place within a scene. To play a scene, at least one lead character must be present (otherwise it's a cutscene; see below).

When a scene begins, the lead characters either just arrived at the location or they are already there. Sometimes a scene begins with only some of the characters, with others joining later on.

The MC begins the scene by describing the location and anything happening there; this is called "establishing the scene". The MC might decide to delegate the description to one of the players, instead (e.g., if the scene takes place in that player character's apartment or if the MC wants to share the role of the narrator with the players). This description should include details about the environment as well as other characters or threats present in the scene:

MC: Inside the boarded-up warehouse, you see laborers packing a suspicious new brand of fizzy drink, guarded by paramilitaries with submachine guns.

Once the scene is established, the MC asks "What do you do?", giving the stage to the actions of the lead characters, played by the players.

A scene has no pre-defined duration or a length measured in actions. It might include a series of events lasting no more than a few minutes or it might take hours or even days (as long as it's all being done in the same place as one continuous stretch of time). Similarly, it can include a single action or dozens of actions.

A scene is exhausted when the lead characters leave, when it seems there aren't going to be any more significant actions, or when the MC wants to end the scene and cut to a new scene as a narration technique. When a scene is exhausted, the MC and the players decide what scene will come next based on what the lead characters are planning to do next. If there are several options for upcoming scenes (for example, if the lead characters split up), the MC as the narrator decides which scene to play out next, or when to cut between scenes.

A cutscene is a scene without the lead characters. Often set in a location removed from the lead characters and describing events that the lead

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characters have no knowledge of, a cutscene is a device mostly used by the MC to create suspense and reveal information that would drive the story forward, for the players if not for the characters. Cutscenes are usually kept quite short as they force the players to be passive observers.

Downtime is a significant stretch of time that takes place between scenes, when the lead characters are either inactive or engage in individual actions that are described in broad terms. When a scene ends, if the crew members turn to different activities, often taking a break from active investigation as a group, the MC can declare a stretch of downtime. Each player briefly describes what their character does during that stretch of time. Actions taken during downtime are governed by the move **Montage (Downtime)**. When downtime ends, a new scene begins, which may take place hours, days, or even weeks later.

A session (also called an episode or issue) is a single meeting of your group spent playing the game, usually a few hours long. While a session is defined by the real world rather than the story, it can be roughly equivalent to an episode of a TV show or an issue of a comic. Most sessions contain multiple scenes and at least one stretch of downtime, but sometimes an entire session can be spent playing a single, long scene. Every session starts with the move **Voiceover Monologue (Session Start)** and ends with the move **Geek Out During Credits (Session End)**.

A season is a sequence of sessions that is chronologically and thematically linked, usually by an overarching investigation or challenge that the crew is facing. The terms season premiere and season finale are used to refer to the first and last sessions of the season, respectively.

A series is the entire story of a specific *City of Mist* game, created over several sessions and possibly spanning multiple seasons.

THE SPOTLIGHT

During play, the MC acts as the host of the game and is responsible for judicially dividing airtime between the players and their characters. A scene most often starts with the MC describing the relevant location, characters, and events, as explained above. Subsequently, when it's time for the players to describe their characters' actions, the MC manages the conversation by giving the stage to each player in turn, asking him or her "What do you do?" This is referred to as giving and receiving the **spotlight**. Managing the spotlight is comparable to a director switching between cameras to ensure all the lead characters receive enough airtime in the story.

A player who receives the spotlight can describe his character's actions in the scene. When describing his character's actions, the player must take into consideration everything that has already happened in the scene, including what the MC and the other players said up to this point. The MC and the other players can intrude in specific ways given in the rules (for example, helping or interfering with the active player's action), but otherwise they give the active player the stage.

There is no particular order for receiving spotlight in a scene. Most commonly, the MC begins a scene by giving the spotlight to the character who arrived first at the scene or to a character who received the least airtime in previous scenes. The MC and the group as a whole should make sure that each player receives the spotlight regularly and that overall the distribution of spotlight is equal among the players. One option is to set up a set order of turns (i.e., a round) and repeat it after everyone has taken a turn; another option is going by the order of what takes place in the story, but ensuring everyone gets the spotlight once before going back to someone who already played this round.

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THINK CINEMATIC

As a player, you get to play your character any way you want to, so make the most out of it! Here are a few things you can try:

Take dramatic actions: Make your actions count. Don't be afraid to make moves that will rattle the entire series or put your character and the things dear to her on the line. Great stories are made of great risks and epic successes and failures. Let your character be what she is, all the way: foolhardy, vengeful, romantic, ostentatious, conniving – anything that makes your character come alive and feel cool.

MC: You arrive just in time to see Jessica take a dive from the top of the building.

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): No, not another one! Screw this, Enkidu runs to the ledge and jumps right after her. I'll try to break the fall somehow, but I'm not losing this victim!

Make your character look great on screen: When you describe your actions, describe them as if you are seeing them on the big screen, on TV, in a comic-book, or a computer game. Let everyone know what it looks and feels like:

Lamar (playing Sullivan): Sullivan walks out of the flames, the charred shell of his car burning behind him. Around him, ethereal wisps sparkle and scintillate as his armor, shield, and lance phase in from beyond the Mist. He looks up to the giant and you can almost see the blades of the windmill turning behind the hulk. The battle begins.

Think about the story as a whole. What will happen to your character? Your crew? The other characters? The City? Use your character to steer the story where you want it to go, but stay open to any outcome: the MC, the other players, and the dice will surprise you, and therein lies all the fun. Make space and give the stage to other players and the MC so they can do their share of storytelling and, when appropriate, weave your character's story into theirs.

The duration of a player's spotlight isn't set and, depending on the story and at the MC's discretion, a player can take several actions before the spotlight passes on to the next player. However, for the sake of the flow of the game, the MC is advised to limit players to no more than one or two moves (not including linked moves, see below) before giving the spotlight to the next player.

The MC takes the spotlight as needed. After every player action and sometimes even during the action, the MC takes the spotlight to describe how everything in the scene responds to what the character just did. When a player misses a move, the MC makes an MC move and describes a more dramatic development. When the MC is done, she returns the spotlight to the player who had it last or passes it on to the next player by asking again "What do you do?"

MOMENTARILY SHIFTING THE SPOTLIGHT

In some cases, the actions of other characters must be resolved before the character who received the spotlight can act. The MC then temporarily shifts the spotlight away from the active character to the character or characters whose actions must be resolved. This occurs when:

- **Other player characters are trying to help or interfere with the action of the character who has the spotlight**. The spotlight temporarily shifts to them for the sake of resolving their helping or interfering actions (usually using Help & Hurt points, banked Juice, or the **Change the Game** move). Once their influence on the spotlight player's action is determined, the spotlight returns to him and he completes the action.
- **Other players are affected by the outcome of the action taken by the character who has the spotlight.** If the player character who has the spotlight tries to affect one of the other player characters or causes them to be affected (e.g., by missing a roll and inviting an MC move), the spotlight temporarily shifts to the affected player characters in order to resolve their attempts to defend themselves, if any. When the effect is resolved, the spotlight returns to the active character or passes on to the next player character, at the MC's discretion.

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TRYING TO ACT FIRST

When a dramatic situation within the story drives a character to try to act before the other characters (player or non-player) or before something happens, the attempt to act first is considered an action in and of itself. The player portraying the character must make a move to determine whether his character manages to act before other events and actions take place.

When two or more characters (player or non-player) are struggling to act first, they are essentially fighting for control of the situation, so use the **Go Toe to Toe** move (described below). If the character is simply trying to act before something else happens, e.g., slip between closing elevator doors in time, she is probably **Taking the Risk**.

If the move scores a hit and the player chooses to act first, the player receives the spotlight. If the move is missed or if the player chooses to forego acting first in order to avoid other negative effects, the spotlight goes to another character. All other implications described in the move's description are applied. Moreover, if the player misses the move, the MC makes an MC move as usual.

If two or more players are vying for the chance to act first, the MC chooses one at her whim to make the move. Other players may attempt to interfere with this move, using their own moves and resources, as usual (see Helping or Interfering With Core Moves, page 181).

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ASKING FOR MORE INFORMATION

As a player, you can always ask for more information about the scene to help you imagine it. Based on what the MC has prepared about the scene or based on details improvised on the spot, the MC will relate any information that is easily perceptible or known to your character. For example:

Player: Is it raining?

MC: Yes.

Player: How long is that alley?

MC: About a hundred yards.

Player: What does my character know about this gang?

MC: Well, since you are involved with the underworld, it's safe to say you've heard about them. They mostly serve as enforcers for loan sharks.

If you ask for information that isn't easily available to your character, the MC will ask you to take an action to find out the answer (most likely using the **Investigate** move).

Player: Does the mayor look nervous around these people?

MC: If he is, he's hiding it well. You'll have to study him for a while to be sure. Would you like to **Investigate**?

It's up to the MC to decide what information is available to your character. Asking questions about the scene does not require having the spotlight. However, players should avoid bogging down the conversation with too many questions and instead focus on what is important in the scene.

MOVES: TAKING ACTION

When you receive the spotlight, you can describe what actions your character takes in the story. Depending on the nature of the scene, your character can observe the scene, move around it, speak, and take casual actions without triggering the rules. Actions that do not involve the rules are considered to happen as you describe them: your character says what you say she says, she walks where you say she walks, etc.

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): Enkidu walks up to the filthy kid in the junkyard and says, "It's late, little guy. You shouldn't be hanging around these places after dark. Let me drive you home." All this time, she is having flashbacks of her past, when she herself was found in a junkyard.

Much of the time, however, your character's actions will have some dramatic importance and will therefore trigger the rules. When the rules come into play, you still describe your character's action, but you use the rules to determine its outcome and consequences. The rules decide how well or how miserably you perform the action, what unexpected side-effects transpire from your action, and how other elements in the scene respond to what you did. The rules that govern the outcome of your actions are called **moves**.

PLAYERS MOVES VS. MC MOVES

This section relates to actions taken by players when playing one of the lead characters. The MC, who portrays all the other, non-player characters in the story, uses different rules for taking actions with her characters. The rules for the MC characters are given in the MC Toolkit. However, the MC should also be familiar with the rules for the players actions as they often involve decision-making by the MC.

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MC: The kid only smiles. Before you know it, you hear the swoosh of something moving very fast above you. It's the scrap magnet, and it's freefalling down on you! You can get out in time but the kid is just perching there. What do you do?

Jerry: Can't let this happen. I'm going to leap at him and push him out of harm's way!

MC: Cool, you take the leap, but let's see how that works out for you. You make the **Take the Risk** move.

Standard moves have three parts: condition, roll, and outcome. For example:

TAKE THE RISK

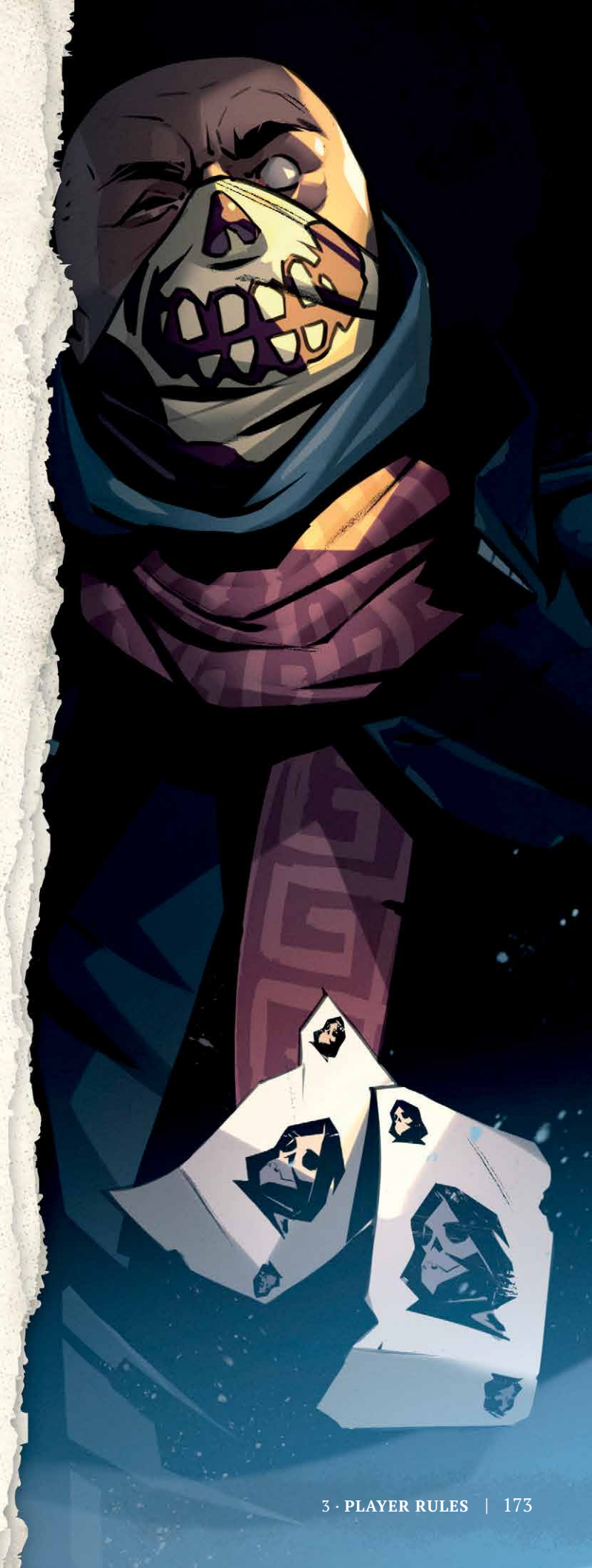
When you **perform a daring, risky, or outright stupid feat**, roll+Power. On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

Condition:
When you **perform a daring, risky, or outright stupid feat**,

Roll:
roll+Power.

Outcome:
On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

The condition of a move describes a circumstance or type of action. **Whenever you describe your character taking an action that matches the condition, the move is triggered.** You must then roll the dice, add a modifier (usually Power, see below) to the result, and compare the total to the description of the move to determine the outcome of your action. This is called **making a move**.



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1. MATCHING ACTION AND MOVE

When you describe an action that triggers a move, you must also name the move you are making. If you don't know which move to use, the MC will tell you. The action and the condition of the move must match. For example:

Player: I'm going to hide behind the hedge and wait for the owner to leave the house. I'm **Sneaking Around.**

Or:

Player: I'm going to flirt with the cafeteria lady and try to understand when she last saw headmaster Boyd. I'm **Investigating.**

Or:

Player: If we don't get out of this water tank before it fills up, we're doomed! I am going to try to melt a hole in the bottom, but since I've never used my Mythos fire powers underwater, I guess I **Stop. Holding. Back.**

Your character cannot take an action that matches the condition of a move without also making the move. If you want your character to take the action in the story, you must back your description with a move. Whenever you describe an action without invoking a move, the MC will suggest one. For example:

Player: That thing killed Marcy! I'm gonna blow his lights out. I pick up the crowbar and take advantage of the fact he's not looking at me to take a swing at its scaly face.

MC: Okay – so are you **Hitting With All You've Got**?

Player: Hell yeah! Let me roll for that...

The reverse is also true: you cannot make a move without describing an action that matches the condition of that move. Whenever you invoke a move without describing the action, the MC will ask you to describe what happens in the story by asking you:

? WHAT DO WE SEE?

For example:

Player: Arggh, so I'm hanging off the bridge, holding onto the rope with one hand and the bag with the other? Can't let that bag of jewelry drop into the river. I'm going to **Take The Risk.**

MC: Okay, but **what do we see**?

TAKING A SEQUENCE OF ACTIONS

When you plan to take a sequence of different actions, always break down the sequence into distinct actions and make the move for the first action only. Depending on how the first action ended, the MC rules whether you may continue your planned sequence by making the move for the next action, etc. For example:

Player: I drift the car around the street corner, burning the tires; then I pull out my SMG and spray the rival gang with my flaming bullets; then I bring the car to a halt in front of all the mayhem and say — 'Valtierra has a message for you: join him, or join the dead!'

MC: Okay. That's a handful! Start with the drift, you're **Taking the Risk.** If you pull it off, you can go on to opening fire.

Rolling a miss on a move often means something interrupted your sequence but other effects may apply instead. For example, the MC might use an MC move to impose a status on your character but allow you to continue your sequence.

A sequence may or may not be completed before passing the spotlight to another character. If you did not complete your sequence of actions and the spotlight moved on, you may continue the sequence next time you receive the spotlight, assuming the actions of the other characters and their outcomes did not interrupt your own.

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Player: Oh, right. My character kicks himself off the bridge posts and tries to build momentum to swing himself onto one of the beams.

MC: Ballsy. Make the move.

2. DETERMINING POWER

Power represents your character's ability to perform a specific action. Power takes into consideration your character's skills and resources, her weaknesses, the conditions under which she is operating, and her current status. It's a measure of how much your character is in her element when taking the action. Power starts at zero for every new action taken; the Power of previous rolls does not affect the Power of new rolls.

If the MC or the other players wish to invoke the rules to somehow affect your move, they must do so at this point. Such intrusions are most commonly used to create new story tags and statuses that will increase or decrease your Power.

Power is determined as follows:

A. COUNT POWER TAGS

Name the power tags (and/or story tags) which directly help you perform the action you are taking (e.g. *observant* while searching a crime scene). You can invoke any of the power tags your character has, including tags from different themes, as long as they reasonably enhance your action. Read more about power tags on page 205.

The number of power tags you invoke is your initial Power. If you have no appropriate power tags but your character is reasonably able to perform the action (e.g. talk to a reporter, climb over a chainlink fence), your initial Power is zero.

At your option, briefly describe how each power tag invoked helps your character perform the action better.

B. SUBTRACT WEAKNESS TAGS

You, the MC, or any player whose character is the unwilling target of your move can choose to invoke any of your weakness tags (and/or story tags) that reasonably impede the action your character is taking (e.g., *out of shape* while pursuing a fleeing suspect on foot). Read more about weakness tags on page 207.

For each weakness tag invoked, reduce your Power by one and mark Attention on that tag's theme. Your Power can be reduced below zero to a negative number.

At your option, briefly describe how each weakness tag invoked hinders your character while performing the action.

C. ADD OR SUBTRACT OTHER FACTORS

Statuses are descriptive tags with tiers that are used to define temporary conditions (see page 218). Your statuses can affect your move. In some cases, the MC may rule that the statuses of *the target of your move* can also affect your move.

If your character (or the target of your move) has any statuses that *help* your action, add the tier of the *highest* status among them to your Power.

If your character (or the target of your move) has any statuses that *impede* your action, subtract the tier of the *highest* status among them from your Power. Your Power can be reduced below zero to a negative number.

EXAMPLE 1: DETERMINING POWER

Lamar is playing his new character, Sullivan, who is investigating the derelict apartment of a runaway witness in the blue-collar residential neighborhood. According to Alice the MC, it seems like a fight took place in the apartment.

Lamar (playing Sullivan): Sullivan surveys the apartment trying to find clues as to what happened here. I'm **Investigating.** I have one relevant power tag, *investigative reporter*, so I start with a Power of 1.

MC: Great, roll with a Power of 1.

Alice could also say:

MC: Hmmm, you're all alone in an apartment that's totally turned upside-down. I think it's a good time to invoke your weakness tag *delusional*. That brings your Power back down to zero. Roll with a Power of zero. Oh, and mark one Attention on your theme Imaginary Knight.

If Sullivan had any relevant statuses, Lamar would factor them into the action:

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Lamar: Sullivan also has a status *in-hot-pursuit-2* which I think applies here, because I already have a few leads about this witness. This is the only (and therefore highest) positive status I have, so I add its tier to my Power of zero, getting a Power of 2. I don't have any negative statuses that apply, fortunately.

Optionally, one of the other players could also affect the move's Power by helping or interfering, giving Sullivan a status:

Megan: My fairy trickster Goodfellow is the one responsible for all this mess. He admires Sullivan so he really doesn't want the reporter to find out about his involvement. I'm going to use a Hurt point to give Sullivan a *fooled-by-a-Goodfellow-1* status and knock down his Power by one.

Lamar: That's harsh! But cute at the same time. I'm left with a Power of 1.

EXAMPLE 2: DETERMINING POWER

Det. Enkidu is trying to subdue and restrain the Rift of Thor, the Norse storm god. She is **Going Toe to Toe** with him and invokes three power tags: *beastily athletic*, *thorny tentacles*, and *wild rage*. This gives her a Power of 3. She has no helpful statuses, but she is *dizzy-1* from a punch that Thor landed earlier. The Rift of Thor also has a relevant status *berserk-2*, positive for him but detrimental to Enkidu's action. The MC decides this status applies to the action. Out of the two statuses, only *berserk-2* applies because it's the highest negative status. The detective's Power of 3 is reduced by 2, for a final Power of 1.

OPTIONAL RULE: GRIT MODE

Grit Mode is a special mode of play you can choose to apply in your game in order to make actions more difficult for the players and make the character's lives harder. Grit Mode makes it harder to achieve a Power of 3 or more when making a move. As a result, players tend to score less and the outcomes of actions lean more toward mixed or negative results.

You should use Grit Mode when:

a) you would like to give your game a darker outlook and make your City a place where things usually turn out for the worse; or

b) your characters have become too strong and you would like to increase the level of difficulty in the game; or

c) you find the standard checks and values for limiting characters' Power (such as weakness tags, negative statuses, and power tag caps) difficult to apply and you want to set a stricter limit on the character's Power.

When Grit Mode is activated, you roll+Grit instead of roll+Power for all the Core Moves. To determine your Grit, determine your Power as usual and compare it to the table below, or use the status bar: starting on the left side of the status bar, count one box for each point of Power you have. The last number you reach is your Grit.

For example, a character with a Power of 5 counts five boxes from the left: the box labeled 1, the box labeled 2, an empty box, the box labeled 3, and another empty box. Since 3 is the last number reached, that character's Grit for the action is 3.

POWER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
GRIT	0	1	2	2	3	3	3	4

Negative Power is translated to Grit in the same way, resulting in negative Grit.

In addition to replacing roll+Power with roll+Grit, Grit is also used instead of Power whenever a move mentions Power. For example, if a move indicates you give your target a status with a tier equals to your Power, you use Grit instead.

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3. ROLLING THE DICE

Now that you know your Power, roll two six-sided dice (also known as 2d6), add up the results, and add it to your Power. This is known as roll+Power. The final result is your score for this move. Once the dice are cast, the Power for this action cannot be changed by invoking additional tags or using any other feature of the game.

For example, if your Power is 3 and you roll 2 and 5, your score for the roll is 3 + 2 + 5 = 10. if your Power is -1 and you roll 4 and 1, your score for the roll is -1 + 4 + 1 = 4.

In moves that use modifiers other than Power, replace Power with the relevant modifier as listed (e.g. roll+Mythos, roll+Logos, etc.)

4. ESTABLISHING THE OUTCOME

OUTCOME CATEGORIES

All moves interpret the score of your roll according to the same general categories:

A final score of 6 or less is a MISS. When you miss a move, the MC gets an opportunity to invoke one of her own MC moves, usually complicating things for you and your crew. A miss doesn't necessarily mean you failed the action you attempted, but it does mean a new complication presented itself either due to your action or in conjunction with it. On a miss, the MC describes the outcome of your action.

A final score of 7 or more is a HIT. **A score of 7-9 is considered a weak hit**. It represents a mixture of success and complication, where you manage to achieve some of the intended outcome but in doing so you also suffer negative implications. **A score of 10 or more is considered a strong hit**. It represents a good success which allows you to accomplish what you attempted with few or no complications.

Some options in the game allow you to unlock an additional category of success which activates when you score **12 or more**, representing an extraordinary success with special benefits. Unless the 12 or more category is unlocked, a score of 12 or more is treated as 10 or more.

The moves refer to these categories with the following designations:

On a miss, ... (when you score 6 or less)
On a hit, ... (when you score 7 or more)
On a 7-9, ... (when you score 7, 8, or 9)
On a 10+, ... (when you score 10 or more)
On a 12+, ... (when you score 12 or more)

OUTCOME DESCRIPTIONS

Each move has different outcome descriptions for 7-9 and 10+. Some moves also define what occurs when you miss the move (by scoring 6 or less), in addition to or instead of the standard MC move. The outcomes of the Core Moves are described later in this chapter.

Once you establish your score for the roll, follow the respective outcome description. Outcome descriptions can describe both story- and rules-related results. For example, a move can specify that your character is exposed to danger in the story or it can specify that you take a status.

OUTCOMES THAT ASK YOU TO CHOOSE

Some move outcomes specify choices for the player who made the move, for the MC, or for another player. For example, on 7-9, the **Sneak Around** move tells the MC to choose one option out of a list to affect the character who took the action:

On a 7-9, the MC chooses one:

- Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?
- You are perceived only by a secondary sense (someone picks up your scent while you're stalking them; you're seen whispering a message but the message is not heard).
- You must leave something important behind – or be discovered.

Similarly, on a hit, the **Hit With All You've Got** move states that you give a status to your target. You must choose the tag of the status you give with your action.

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On a hit, you give the target an appropriate status of your choice with tier=Power.

Whenever you make a choice in a move, whether your own or another player's, describe how this choice is reflected in the story. In other words, you translate the rules into the story.

For example:

Matt (playing Kitsune): I'm going to parkour onto the roof of the metalworks factory and then try to take the crooks inside by surprise. I'm **Sneaking Around.** My Power is 2, I rolled 3 and 3, so that's 8 all together. Eek, 7-9! That can't be good…

MC: Okay, in **Sneaking Around,** on 7-9, it says I choose one of the options. So I choose "Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?". Let me think… You definitely get the drop on whoever is INSIDE. But suddenly white light washes over your jacket and hoodie as the security guard at the gate points his flashlight at you. He then starts running towards his booth. Looks like he's going to call the cops.

Or:

Jerry (playing Detective Enkidu): These violent Infection Club teenagers are getting on my nerves. It's time to push them back with my vines. It's a close-quarter scuffle so I guess I am **Going Toe to Toe**? My Power is 3, I roll 4 and 6, wow! Total score of 13, which is 10+.

MC: When **Going Toe to Toe,** on a 10+, you choose two options from the move.

Jerry (looking over the options): I choose to achieve my goal, so first I whip out vines and plant-like tentacles that push them away from me. I also choose to give them a status, let's call it *constricted-3!* So now they are suspended in mid-air, held up and strangled by my vines…

MORE ON USING MOVES

REPEATING A MOVE

You cannot repeat an action using the same tags, until the conditions have changed. This is true regardless of whether you scored a hit or a miss. In other words, you can't keep making identical actions such as attacking the same target in the same way twice or investigating the same subject using the same methods again and again. You can attempt an action again when the conditions have changed, as decided by the MC. This could be a matter of moments, e.g., in a rapidly changing battlefield, or days, e.g., when you got all you can get from a witness using a specific approach and you need him to cool down before trying again. You can attempt an action again if you change your approach and use different tags.

Face Danger is an exception to this rule. So long as you are able to protect yourself, you can **Face Danger** again and again using the same tags

LINKED MOVES

Moves often follow one another in succession either because they trigger one another or because the rules or the MC ask you to make one move before you can perform the other. Most often, failed moves are followed by a **Face Danger** move to avoid harm; **Change the Game** moves are followed by the move they augment. Such moves are called **linked moves**.

A tag can only be used *once* within a set of linked moves. In other words, it can only be used in one of the linked moves. This applies even if the tag is available and relevant to more than one move in the set. For example:

Lamar (playing Sullivan): "I use *shield to match* to bash that goblin-mercenary in the head and knock him off the ship. That's **Hit With All You've Got** with a Power of 1. I roll… ouch. 2 and 2, for a total score of 5. I missed the move."

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MC: "Ouch indeed. As you lunge towards the mercenary and pin him to the railing, he pulls out a combat knife and stabs you with it, for an *ugly-cut-2*. It's time for Sullivan to **Face Danger**, but you can't use the *shield to match* tag because you already used it in the previous move, and they're directly linked. Let's say that since the shield is locked between you two, you can't use it to defend yourself."

Lamar: "That makes sense. Thank god I still have my *spectral armor*…"

Moves that have the same purpose are also considered linked moves, even if they don't follow one another. For example, if you use your tag *devout believer* to resist being brainwashed by a cult, and **Change the Game** to give yourself a status of *reinforced-faith-2*, you cannot use the tag again when you **Face Danger** against being brainwashed, since both moves have the same purpose of protecting you.

POSTPONED MOVES

The MC can choose to postpone the resolution of a move for dramatic effect. When the outcome of your character's action would only become meaningful later on in the story, the MC can ask you to hold off making the move. Your character's action is assumed to have happened but its results remain unknown and the game continues normally. When the outcome of the move becomes important, the MC will ask you to make the move for the action taken in the past in order to dramatically reveal its outcome in the present.

For example, a player is playing a criminal mastermind who is trying to intimidate the crew's getaway driver to make sure he is there on time to extract the crew. The MC can decide to postpone this move until the crew is actually fleeing the scene of the crime. Within the story, the intimidating dialog takes place hours before the fateful pick up; the rules, however, are resolved only when it's time to find out what was the outcome of the dialog, in this case, when the crew runs out of the City Central Bank heist to discover whether the getaway driver showed up or not.

DICELESS MOVES

Diceless moves are moves that do not require a roll. Instead, the move is triggered whenever your character takes an action in the story that fulfills the condition (or, in some moves, whenever the players take game actions that fulfill the condition). You must then follow the outcome description given in the move. For example:

Condition:
When you sacrifice something you truly want to abide by your Identity,

Outcome:
mark Attention on that Identity's theme.

In the above move, the outcome of the move instructs you to mark Attention on a given theme. Whenever the move condition is fulfilled, you do so.

Diceless moves are used throughout the game to create rules that are triggered in certain circumstances regardless of the character's Power or roll, such as moves related to character development explained in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth and custom moves created by the MC, explained in Chapter 3: This is MY City! in the MC Toolkit.

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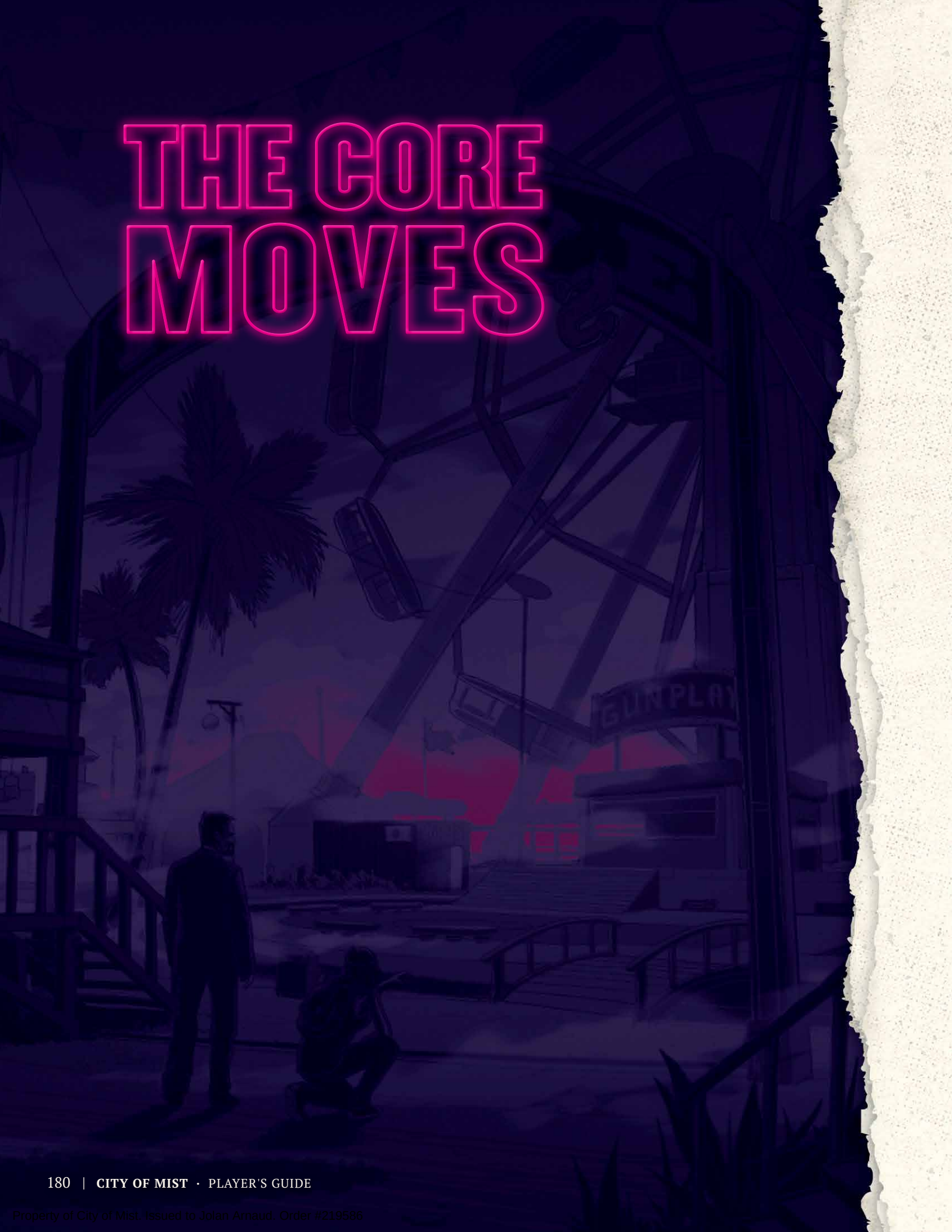
THE CORE MOVES



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The eight Core Moves cover the vast majority of actions players can take in *City of Mist*. The following section illustrates the moves and explains their conditions and possible outcomes.

The Core Moves use terms such as tags, statuses, Clues, and Juice, all of which are summarized on pages 164-165 and explained fully under Game Resources, starting on page 204.

THE RULE OF "MINIMUM ONE"

Some Core Moves define the benefit you derive from the move, such as Clues, Juice, or statuses you give, in terms of Power. For example, when you score a hit with the **Investigate** move, you gain a number of Clues equal to your Power.

When you make a move with a Power of zero or less and score a hit, **you always get at least one point of benefit**: one Clue, one Juice, or a tier-1 status.

DYNAMITE!

Several character improvements can make a Core Move *Dynamite!* Most commonly, these improvements allow you to use the *Dynamite!* option every time you make a specific Core Move using specific tags or tags from a specific theme.

Normally, a result of 12 or more is treated as a result of 10 or more. When a move is *Dynamite!* the 12 or more outcome category becomes available, and a result of 12 or more activates it. The 12 or more outcome category represents an outstanding success with special benefits, as explained in each move.

HELPING OR INTERFERING WITH CORE MOVES

Crewmates can help or interfere with each other's moves by spending Juice, including Help & Hurt points, to give each other helpful or impeding statuses or change the environment to support or hinder the move, etc. When a crewmate makes a move, before the player rolls the dice, you can ask for the spotlight temporarily to help or interfere with their action.

The simplest way to help or interfere with an crewmate's action is to spend a Help point or a Hurt point to give them a positive or a negative temporary status. Describe how you help or interfere with your crewmate's action and what status you give them. They cannot **Face Danger** from this status.

The other way to help or interfere with a crewmate's action is to spend Juice. If you have relevant banked Juice that you can use, you can spend it. If you don't, but your character is able to take action to affect your crewmate's action before they act, you can make a **Change the Game** move, generating Juice specifically for this purpose. You can also burn a tag for a hit to ensure the success of this **Change the Game** move.

Normally, a player character cannot Face Danger to reduce a temporary status given by a crew member as an intereference. The MC can make an exception to this rule if the interference is clearly blockable by the acting character's defenses.

Finally, if you are the unwilling target of your crewmate's move, you may invoke the crewmate's weakness tags when appropriate.

MULTIPLE CREW MEMBERS HELPING OR INTERFERING

Each crewmember may ask for the spotlight to attempt to help or interfere with an action, if their character is capable of doing so. However, note that to compound helping or interfering statuses given by different team members, they must be on the same spectrum. Otherwise, helpful and detrimental statuses do not stack; only the status with the highest tier among the helpful statuses and the status with the highest tier among the detrimental statuses apply.

HELP AND INTERFERE EXAMPLE

Sullivan, Goodfellow, and Det. Enkidu face off with sinister businessman Craig Cetus on a wharf in the docklands. Mr. Cetus has used his Mythos powers to call forth a monstrous sea creature from the bay and

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had it attack the lead characters. Det. Enkidu has an opening and wants to shoot to kill, before Cetus does any more damage. However, Sullivan wants to keep him alive to question him about where he is keeping a young man who has incriminating information about Cetus. Goodfellow is still undecided.

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): This has gone too far. I have to shoot him. I'm going to **Hit With All I've Got,** and I have a Power of 3.

Lamar (playing Sullivan): I am going to interfere with this action. I don't have any Hurt points left with Enkidu, so I will **Change the Game.** Sullivan is going to push Enkidu's hand up before she pulls the trigger. Since my motivation is to help save a victim of Cetus, I'll burn *sorrow for the victims* for a score of 10 and a Power of 3. I give Enkidu a temporary status of *off-her-mark-3*.

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Yikes, this is getting heated. Goodfellow wants Cetus to talk, but he's too dangerous. He shouts, "Sullivan, don't!" to warn Enkidu. I'll use my Help point to give Enkidu a temporary status of *forewarned-1*.

MC: Jerry, this means you have a helpful tier-1 status and a detrimental tier-3 status, leaving you with -2 Power. You roll with a Power of 1.

CHANGE THE GAME

When you use your abilities **to give yourself or your allies an advantage**, roll+Power. On a hit, you get Juice=Power. Spend your Juice to gain the following effects, one-to-one:

- Create a story tag
- Burn a power tag or a story tag
- Give or reduce a status (one tier per point of Juice)

On a 10+, you get a minimum of 2 Juice, and you can also use your Juice to choose:

- Scale up the effect (greater area or more targets)
- Prolong the effect (make it ongoing)
- Hide the effect
- Any other improvement you and the MC agree on

HEAL, RESTORE, OR FIX · GET OUT OF A TOUGH SPOT · GAIN OR GIVE A TACTICAL ADVANTAGE · SET UP A DEFENSE · CREATE OR ACQUIRE A USEFUL OBJECT · WEAKEN THE OPPOSITION · CONJURE, SUMMON, OR RALLY ALLIES · ETC.

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Change the Game is the most versatile of the Core Moves. It applies whenever your character is trying to gain advantage for herself or for her allies by improving their abilities, changing the situation to their benefit, helping herself or her allies shake off negative effects, inflicting a disadvantageous condition on their foes, or creating useful objects, beings, or conditions.

OUTCOME

On a hit, you gain Juice equal to the Power of this action. On a 10+, you get at least 2 Juice. You can spend the Juice to create various effects as explained under Juice (page 232): each point of Juice allows you to create one story tag, burn one tag, reduce one status by 1 tier, or create one tier-1 status (and increase it by 1 tier for every additional point spent). Note that the tags you use to **Change the Game** determine the method of your Juice and limit what you can use your Juice for. For example, you cannot invoke the tag *a healing touch* and then use your Juice to give someone a harmful status.

Story tags and statuses you create using Juice are temporary and affect a single target or a small area per point. Furthermore, like all actions, they are discernable to those around and those who come in contact with the effects of the move.

EFFECT IMPROVEMENTS

On a 10+, you have the option to enhance your effects by spending Juice on one or more of the following improvements. An effect is a single tag or status (of any tier) you created, reduced, removed, or burned. Each point of Juice activates a single improvement for a single effect. You can add these improvements at any time you spend Juice. You can only use Juice to improve effects created with the same batch of Juice.

- **Scale up the effect:** You make a single effect bigger, make it cover a greater area, or make it affect a small group of targets (normally up to 10 targets, but the final decision is up to the MC). With this option you can make your *fire elemental* the size of a small building, spread *moonlight* over an entire block, and have your *protected-by-wards-1* or *gassed-to-sleep-2* statuses affect multiple targets.
- **Prolong the effect:** If you use this option on newly-created temporary story tags or statuses, you make them ongoing. If you use it on a power tag you burn, it stays burnt until recovered by ordinary means. (When Grit Mode is activated, this improvement allows you to reduce/remove ongoing statuses or burn ongoing story tags).

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- **Hide the effect:** You make a single effect indiscernible to those you wish to hide it from. At the MC's discretion, a scrupulous investigation may reveal something about the effect, but would still not reveal it completely.
- **Other improvements:** You or the MC can come up with additional improvements for your effects, such as affecting other dimensions or allowing the effect to slip past an enemy's defenses. Once you agree on the improvement, you can spend a single point of Juice to activate it, as usual.

"Prolong the effect" and "Hide the effect" may be chosen only once for each effect you want to improve. The other options may be chosen multiple times for a greater improvement, at the MC's discretion.

> The Rift of Geppetto is calling upon his toys to help him fight off two crooks trying to set his workshop on fire. The player invokes *puppeteer & toymaker*, *cluttered workshop* (because he's there), and *necessity is the mother of invention* for a Power of 3. Rolling 3 and 4, the player scores a total of 3 + 3 + 4 = 10, or a 10+. This generates Juice equals to Power, in this case 3 Juice. The player can also choose from the effect improvements. He decides to get his toys to move chaotically around the workshop and make a ruckus, throwing off the crooks and giving them *bewildered-1* (1 Juice). To affect both of them he chooses to scale up the effect (1 Juice) and to keep them at a loss he chooses to prolong the effect (1 Juice). The crooks now both have an ongoing *bewildered-1*.
>
> Later, as the drama unfolds, Geppetto is *held-back-2* by one of the crooks as the other pours gasoline around his precious workshop. The player **Changes the Game** again, using the same tags, but rolls 1 and 5, for a score of 3 + 1 + 5 = 9, or a 7-9. He gets 3 Juice again, but can't choose any effect improvement. Geppetto gets an electrical toy to zap the crook holding him so he can escape, removing the tier-2 status entirely (2 Juice) and then grabs a *chinese finger trap* off one of the workbenches, creating a temporary story tag (1 Juice). On his next action, he will use it on the crook who was holding him.

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you get a minimum of 3 Juice and can choose to activate one of the following special improvements by spending 1 Juice:

- **Large-scale effect**: scale up a single effect to a large scale or make it affect a large group. The exact limit of this scale is up to you and the MC.
- **Permanent effect:** make a single effect permanent or be able to use one of your effects to remove or reduce a permanent effect (except tier-6 statuses). You can only have one permanent effect at a time. You can discard a permanent effect you created whenever you wish.
- **Mist-hidden effect**: make a single effect Mist-hidden. The Mist itself conspires to hide the existence of this effect even from Rifts so that no-one can know about it without your approval.

As with the the 10+ effect improvements, these special improvements can only be applied to effects created with Juice from the same batch.

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OPTIONAL RULE: STATUS FILTER

You can allow players in the game to use the option **Reduce or Remove a Status** to set up an ongoing effect that reduces incoming statuses from a target. To do so, a player must score 10 or more on his **Change the Game** move and spend a Juice point to activate the option "Make the effect ongoing". Every additional point of Juice spent to **Reduce or Remove a Status** adds one tier to the filter. From that point on and until the effect expires, any relevant status the target takes is reduced by the number of tiers in the status filter

> The Rift of the divine blacksmith Hephaestus wants to use his control over metals to block incoming bullets. The player scores 10+ on his **Change the Game** move and gains 3 Juice for erecting this magical barrier. He spends 2 Juice on the reduction effect and one point to make it ongoing. This sets up a tier-2 status filter, which reduces two tiers from any status related to metals that might affect him, such as *perforated-by-bullets-5* or *ricochet-2*, for as long as the status filter effect remains.
>
> Alternatively, the blacksmith can spend 1 Juice on the reduction effect, 1 Juice to make it ongoing, and the final Juice point to scale up the effect. Now his entire crew is protected by a tier-1 status filter.
>
> Similarly, a samurai garners 2 Juice from invoking her *martial prowess* and scoring 10+. She can then set up a tier-1 status filter on her opponent, reducing any combat advantages statuses he tries to give himself by one tier.

Depending on the method of your Juice, the MC rules whether this filter activates before or after a player character's **Face Danger** move, affecting either the incoming status or the status remaining after the **Face Danger** move. As usual with the **Reduce or Remove a Status** effect, statuses reduced to tier 0 are removed completely.

Note that the tags you used to set up a status filter cannot be used again to attack or defend the target while the status filter is active. For example, if you used your *amulet of protection* to erect a magical barrier, you cannot use this tag in any **Face Danger** moves to protect yourself from statuses filtered by the magical barrier; nor can you use your *martial prowess* to enhance an attack on the opponent while he is under the effect of the status filter. (See Linked Moves, page 178)

You can reduce or remove an existing status filter by using any effect that could reduce or remove an ongoing status, including **Reduce or Remove a Status**.

CONVINCE

When you use your abilities **to talk, threaten, or seduce someone into doing something,** roll+Power. On a hit, choose a relevant status with tier=Power. Your target can choose either to take the status or:

- on a 7-9, to give in a little, but protect their own agenda.
- on a 10+, to change their agenda to include yours, at least for the time being.

HOLD SOMEONE AT GUNPOINT · BRIBE AN OFFICIAL · CLOSE A DEAL · FLIRT TO GET WHAT YOU WANT · THREATEN WITH VIOLENCE OR A PROMISE OF FUTURE PAIN · BLACKMAIL SOMEONE · ETC.

Convince is activated when your character openly tries to influence another character to do something that character wouldn't normally do. How you influence your target is determined by the tags you invoke. When a character tries to influence someone to provide information, use **Investigate** instead. When a character tries to influence someone deceptively, use **Sneak Around** instead.

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LEVERAGE AND COUNTER-LEVERAGE

If you have something the target wants or if you can threaten the target with implications she wishes to avoid, the MC may translate such leverage into an appropriate temporary story tag or tags, depending on how much added influence this leverage provides. This story tag only affects the Power of this specific action. For example, if you are convincing an auctioneer to open the vault, and you are threatening to smash his favorite artifact, the MC may give you the temporary story tag *favorite artifact*.

Conversely, if the target has a great deal to lose by doing as you say or if she is under someone else's influence, the MC may translate such counter-leverage into an appropriate temporary story tag as well. This story tag affects the Power of this action only. The MC may also rule that an existing status of the target affects your attempt. For example, if you are attempting to convince a *threatened-3* shop owner to report his loan shark to the police, his status may apply to your Power.

> Sullivan (played by Lamar) is on a crane in the Industrial Zone, trying to dissuade a *suicidal-4* teenager from jumping to his death after a traumatic discovery. Lamar invokes Sullivan's power tags of *sorrow for the victims* and *long unbreakable speeches* for a Power of 2. He also knows the kid likes burgers, so he gets a *burger* which the MC represents as a temporary story tag, raising the Power to 3. However, the teenager's tier-4 status applies as a negative status, so Lamar rolls with a Power of -1. He rolls 2 and 6 for a total of -1 + 2 + 6 = 7, or a 7-9.

OUTCOME

A hit indicates you managed to exert some influence over your target. Choose a "stick": a status that reflects a negative outcome for the target in case the target decides to resist and act differently than you asked. The tier of the status is equal to your Power in this action.

The "stick" status could be a psychological or social outcome such as *guilty-3*, a practical repercussion e.g. *wanted-for-questioning-2*, or even physical punishment, such as *gunshot-4*. The status you choose must match the nature of your action. However, it cannot be identical to the action you want the target to perform. For example, if you order a bank robber to drop his firearm, you cannot give him the status *disarmed-3* instead.

The target of the action can choose whether to take the status or do as you say. On a 7-9, the target needs to do something for you to avoid the status, but can continue to protect her own agenda. On a 10+, she must fully promote your agenda, at least temporarily, to avoid the status.

> Lamar chooses to give the kid a status of *paralyzed-1* (tier-1 because the Power is zero or less). The MC must choose whether the kid takes the status or listens to Sullivan. Since Lamar scored a 7-9, the kid can listen to Sullivan but still protect his own agenda. He slowly moves away from the edge of the crane, agreeing to hear Sullivan out, but the drama is not over yet. Since he chose to listen to Sullivan, the kid does not take the status *paralyzed-1*.

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, the tier of the "stick" status you give the target equals Power+2. To avoid it, target must change their agenda as in 10+, but in addition the target must take a tier-2 temporary status of your choice representing your influence, such as *indebted-2*, *convinced-2*, *friendly-2*, etc. Its tag cannot be the same as that of the "stick" status.

If the target is a player character, you can trade tiers of the status (either the "stick" or the influence) for Hurt points against the target, one-for-one. For example, if your Power is 2, the "stick" is a tier-4 status. If a player character chooses to take this status, you can choose to reduce the status by 3 tiers to a tier-1 status and instead receive 3 Hurt points against that player character.

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FACE DANGER

When you use your abilities **to avoid an incoming hit, endure harm, resist a malign influence, or hold it together,** the MC (or player) will name a status with its tag and tier. Roll+Power. On a 10+, you fend off the effect and take no status at all. On a 7-9, you take the status, but with -1 tier. On a miss, you take the full status.

TAKE A HIT · DODGE A HIT · BLOCK A HIT · WITHSTAND HARSH CONDITIONS · PROJECT A PROTECTIVE BARRIER · FEND OFF ENEMIES · ENDURE THE EFFECTS OF A TOXIN OR DISEASE · OVERCOME FEAR · ETC.

Face Danger triggers whenever your character is about to unwillingly take a status and has the capacity to resist or avoid it. The MC or the player giving you the status names its tag and notes its tier. The given status represents the worst effect that you can suffer; you **Face Danger** to see how well your character defended herself from its harm or influence. Therefore, **Face Danger** often follows other moves and game options that impose statuses.

In order to **Face Danger**, your character must be able to defend herself in the way you described and have the wherewithal to tackle the status: either because any person can attempt to do so (for example, take a punch), or because you have the specific tags to do so (for example, *counterspell* to avoid a *turned-into-a-frog-5* status).

Face Danger isn't automatically applied against all incoming harmful statuses. When you miss a move, the MC can choose to give your character a status without the chance to **Face Danger**. For example, your character can suddenly become surrounded by enemies, not realizing it before it's too late, taking *overrun-3* without **Facing Danger**.

If you **Face Danger** as a result of another move you made, you cannot use any power or story tags you invoked in the first move to **Face Danger** (see Linked Moves, page 178).

If you take a status from another player's move, you usually have the option to **Face Danger** (based on your ability to defend yourself and exempting temporary statuses created with Juice, as explained under Helping or Interfering With Core Moves, page 181). However, if you invoked any of your power or story tags to interfere with the other player's move, they cannot be used again to **Face Danger** against the resulting status.

The status you are defending against is never counted as a detrimental status for the **Face Danger** move itself. Only statuses you already have affect the Power of this move.

OUTCOME

On a 10+, your character completely defends herself from the danger at hand and takes no status at all. On a 7-9, your character mitigates only some of the harm or influence; she takes the status but reduces its tier by one. The MC or the player who gave you the status rephrase the tag to represent the reduced tier. For example, *bruised-2* can be reduced to *lip-cut-1* and *turned-to-sea-foam-5* could be reduced to *melting-into-sea-water-4*.

On a miss, you take the full status as named by the MC or the player who gave it. Unlike with other moves, the MC does not make a move when you miss **Face Danger**; getting the status is bad enough.

Post-Mortem, the undead assassin, Excalibur, the steely dame, and Kitsune, the fox-spirit teenager, inadvertently crash their car into a pizzeria while being chased by murderous ninjas. The MC states they all take *banged-up-3*.

Post-Mortem **Faces Danger** first; she invokes *can't die — already dead* and *can't feel pain*. The player wants to also invoke *force-field generator*, but the MC rules that it's unlikely that Post-Mortem had the time to reach for the device. So Post-Mortem's action has a Power of 2; rolling 6 and 2, she scores a total of 2 + 6 + 2 = 10, or a 10+, avoiding the status completely.

Excalibur has one tag, *tough as nails*, to **Face Danger** with. Rolling 4 and 3, she scores a total of 1 + 4 + 3 = 8, or 7-9. She reduces the original tier-3

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status by one to a tier-2 status, which she takes. The MC dubs this new tier *cuts-and-bruises-2*.

Kitsune, unfortunately, is in trouble. He cannot invoke *parkour artist* or *nimble as a fox* because he is stuck in a car, buckled to the seat; so he has no relevant power tags for this action. The MC rules Kitsune can still try to **Face Danger**, but invokes his weakness tag *fragile* (the player marks Attention). With a Power of -1, the player rolls 1 and 1 for an all-time low score of -1 + 1 + 1 = 1, or a miss. Kitsune takes the full status and is *banged-up-3*.

Declan L'Estrange is *passed-out-5* and *tied-up-3* in the trunk, recovering from a close encounter with the ninja's mistress. The MC rules he cannot **Face Danger**, so he takes the full *banged-up-3* status. Since this is on the same spectrum as the hurt that made him *pass-out-5*, Declan's player marks 3 pips next to tier-5 on his tracking card, and the MC rephrases the status to *bleeding-to-death-5*. If he takes 2 more pips, he's a goner.

Indicator lights blink while the alarm tears through the trashed pizzeria and the empty street. Smoke and steam rise from the engine and curl all around. Shadowy figures slink closer and closer to the crash site...

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you avoid the status completely and choose one:

- You reflect the status at your attacker or otherwise use it against them. You give your attacker an appropriate status of your choice with tier=tier of the original status.
- You bolster your defenses. You take an appropriate ongoing tier-1 status of your choice describing your improved defenses.

If you **Faced Danger** as a follow up to a move in which you already gave a status, like **Hit With All You've Got** or **Go Toe to Toe**, the status you give using the reflect option can only replace the status you gave in the original move; it cannot stack with it.

GO TOE TO TOE

When you use your abilities **to overcome someone or something in a struggle for control,** state what your goal is. Your opponent can describe how they respond, at their option. Roll+Power. On a 7-9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2:

- You manage to achieve your goal, e.g., take something they hold.
- You get them good, giving your opponent a status with tier=Power.
- You block, dodge, or counter their best attempts. If you don't choose this, they can impose a status on you. If they are a PC, its tier=their Power.

ENGAGE IN MARTIAL-ARTS OR CLOSE-QUARTERS COMBAT · EXCHANGE FIRE · FIGHT SOMEONE FOR CONTROL OF A POSITION OR OBJECT · OUTSHINE OTHERS AT A SOCIAL GATHERING · TRY TO OUTRUN PURSUERS · GAIN THE UPPER HAND IN A GAME · ENGAGE IN A BATTLE OF WITS · ETC.

Go Toe to Toe is a catch-all move for situations where your character is trying to achieve a goal, such as grabbing an object or securing a position, but in doing so faces opposition. It represents any kind of challenge or contest between your character and another party or force. Depending on the situation, your character could be **Going Toe to Toe** with an opponent, a predicament, a mystical force, etc.

When you **Go Toe to Toe**, you state the goal your character is trying to achieve before invoking tags and rolling the dice. Your goal could be anything related to the current scene, such as knocking an opponent out of the way, banishing a ghost from a possessed person, blocking the rival crew's getaway car, pulling strings to get someone out of jail, etc. The tags you use must fit your goal and the means you employ to get it.

If your primary goal in this action is to successfully hurt or affect someone by imposing a status on them, then say so. The MC may also tell you that

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the goal you are trying to achieve requires imposing a status (especially if you cannot achieve it in a single action).

The MC or the player playing your opponent can also describe how they respond before you roll. For a player, this affects their counter-attack later on.

OUTCOME

On a hit, you choose out of the following outcome options. You choose one option on a 7-9, two on a 10+. You can choose each option only once.

- **You manage to achieve your goal or gain an advantage:** You achieve the goal you set before you rolled the dice or any advantage that can be gained through your action, such as grabbing something they hold, blocking their path, creating an opening for an ally to attack, etc. This option dictates a story development. It does not have any particular game effect, but it changes the situation significantly in your favor by allowing you to achieve what you set out to do. If your goal was to impose a status, this option can provide a secondary advantage.
- **You get them good:** You give your opponent a status of your choice with a tier equal to the Power of this action. The status must be reasonably connected to the circumstances and the tags you invoked.
- **You block, dodge, or counter their best attempts:** You defend yourself from your opponent's attempts to get you. If you do not choose this option, the MC or the player who plays your opponent will give you a status of their choice against which you can **Face Danger** (unless you don't have the means to do so). If your opponent is a player character, the tier of the status they impose on you cannot be greater than the Power they would have for the action they described as their response.

Det. Enkidu, played by Jerry, is caught in the middle of a masterfully-planned bank robbery. The masked robbers, armed with assault rifles, are pinning her down to a cramped position behind a concrete post, where she's taken cover, exchanging random shots with them. A few yards away from her lies a knocked out security guard who has a radio attached to his belt. The detective wants that radio so she can communicate with her crew. Since the robbers don't want her to reach the radio, raining bullets down on her cover, the MC rules going for the radio would be **Going Toe to Toe.**

Jerry chooses reaching the radio and calling Enkidu's crew as the goal, and invokes *beastily athletic* (Enkidu is going to take a leap) and *standard issue pistol* (firing back at the robbers gives her the pause she needs to jump) for a Power of 2. Jerry rolls 5 and 5, scoring a total of 2 + 5 + 5 = 12, or 10+. He can now choose two options. He definitely wants the radio, so he chooses to achieve his goal. For his second choice, he could choose to land a tier-2 status on the robbers, such as *man-down-2*, or avoid the status they would give him. Since Enkidu's Mythos power allow her to heal quite quickly, Jerry chooses to take a few robbers out. However, the MC gives Enkidu the status *pinned-down-3*, against which she can now **Face Danger.**

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you receive all three move options.

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HIT WITH ALL YOU'VE GOT

When you **have a clear shot** and you use your abilities **to hit someone or something with all you've got**, roll+Power. On a hit, you give the target an appropriate status of your choice with tier=Power. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- You take cover or secure a superior position. If you don't choose this, they can impose a status on you. If they are a PC, its tier=their Power.
- You get them good or get many of them (+1 tier).
- You control the collateral damage.
- You hold the target's attention, if possible.
- You gain the upper hand. Take 1 Juice.

THROW A PUNCH AT SOMEONE · THROW A CAR AT SOMEONE · FIRE AT SOMEONE · USE A SUPERNATURAL ABILITY ON SOMEONE AT FULL POWER · SPRAY-FIRE INTO AN AREA · ETC.

Hit with All You've Got covers moments when your character has the chance to really thump the living daylights out of a foe or blast them to smithereens. The purpose of the move is to attack, dealing the maximum possible impact to your target; for anything else, such as threatening your target with possible harm, use other moves.

To trigger this move, you must have a clear shot or a golden opportunity to hit your opponent; if you're in a struggle, e.g., close-quarters combat or exchanging fire with fortified targets, you should use **Go Toe to Toe**.

Hit With All You've Got is not limited to inflicting physical harm; you can just as well **Hit With All You've Got** using your psychic powers, your evil-banishing children's rhyme, or your political influence in the City. The difference is only in the status you deliver.

OUTCOME

On a hit, you give your target an ongoing status of your choice with a tier equal to the Power of this action. You can only give your target a status that is appropriate to the nature of your hit and its tier. You then choose from the following list of options. On a 7-9 you choose one option, while on a 10+ you choose two options. You can choose each option only once.

- **You take cover or secure a superior position:** You defend yourself from any retaliation coming from your target or from other imminent threats. If you do not choose this option, the MC or the player who plays your opponent can give you a status of their choice against which you can **Face Danger** (unless you don't have the means to do so). If your opponent is a player character, they can describe their retaliation; the tier of the status they impose on you cannot be greater than the Power they would have for such an action (see example under **Go Toe to Toe**).
- **You get them good or get more of them (+1 tier):** If you are fighting a single target or a collective, increase the tier of the status you give by one. If you are affecting multiple targets, give the same status to two targets instead of one. You must be able to reasonably affect them in the same way.
- **You control the collateral damage:** You can choose whether your action causes a great deal of collateral damage, some collateral damage, or no collateral damage at all. You can define the nature of the damage you cause to the environ-

HITTING COLLECTIVES

Fighting groups in *City of Mist* is identical to fighting individuals. Dangers that represent a collective are considered a single target. Compared to an individual target, a collective can deal statuses with higher tiers and can take higher-tier statuses before it is defeated. Hence, the option of increasing the tier of your status by one can also be interpreted as hitting more members of a collective, thereby weakening the collective as a whole.

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ment. If you do not choose this option, the MC chooses the collateral damage.

In any case, the collateral damage is descriptive: while it affects the story, you do not give any status to represent it (if you want to affect the environment, you should target objects in the environment directly). However, the MC may choose to reflect the damage in a status, perhaps forcing others around you to **Face Danger** against it.

- **You hold the target's attention, if possible**: The target of your attack remains focused on you, temporarily ignoring other goals and threats. The target could be enraged, interested in you or what you have to say, focused on you as the biggest threat, etc. This effect lasts until the end of the encounter, until the circumstances change, or until someone else uses this option on the same target.
- **You gain the upper hand:** Your attack gives you a secondary advantage and you gain 1 Juice. The method for this Juice is your attack; you can only use it to create effects that reasonably emerge from hitting your target. If you choose to use this Juice to give your target a status, it cannot be on the same spectrum as the attack's main status. However, you can give other targets a status similar to the attack's main status (although note that 1 Juice only allows you to give a tier-1 temporary status).

Goodfellow and Tlaloc, the Rift of the Aztec rain god, are on the roof of the museum, trying to stop a cat burglar from escaping with an ancient figurine that is key to their investigation. The burglar already tried to kill them by knocking over an Egyptian statue, so now there are no holds barred.

Goodfellow uses his shapeshifting tricks to **Hit With All He's Got** and change the burglar's legs to chicken legs. He has a Power of 1, and rolls 3 and 4, for a score of 1 + 3 + 4 = 8, or 7–9. With a Power of 1, he gives the burglar a tier-1 status, but chooses to get the burglar good, increasing it to a tier-2 status, or *chicken-legs-2*. Unfortunately for Goodfellow, he did not choose to protect himself. As the cat burglar trips over his new chicken legs, he reaches for his golden medallion and mutters dark words, giving Goodfellow a status of *turned-into-a-tree-5*. Goodfellow can't **Face Danger**, since he has nothing to counter this dark magic with, so he turns into a tree.

Things just got real. Seeing his friend transformed, Tlaloc calls forth a lightning from the heavens to smite the cat burglar. He has a Power of 2 but the MC rules that the burglar's *chicken-legs-2* works for Tlaloc's benefit, so his Power is 4. He rolls 5 and 2, scoring 4 + 5 + 2 = 11, or 10+. He chooses to impose a status of *fried-chicken-4*. For his two options, he chooses to take cover from the medallion's effect behind a water tank, and to get 1 Juice with which to reduce Goodfellow's status to *branches-for-limbs-4*, saying his lightning interferes with the medallion's powers. However, not choosing to control the collateral damage, he left it in the hands of the MC. The MC considers the lightning hit and informs the players that the museum's roof collapses under their feet.

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, choose one option from this list:

- **Outstanding hit:** Choose three options from the move's standard list.
- **Defend another:** You protect both yourself and another ally from a counterstrike. The target of your attack cannot attack that ally on the target's next move.
- **Hit them hard:** You hit them hard, increasing the tier of the status you give by two or hitting two more targets with the same status.
- **Extreme collateral damage:** everything and everyone around the target takes a status similar to the main status, with a tier equal to Power. This includes you or any allies, if you are nearby.
- **Control the conflict:** Take 2 Juice and you can use it to choose effect improvements from **Change the Game**.

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INVESTIGATE

When you use your abilities **to seek answers to burning questions,** roll+Power. On a hit, you get Clues=Power. Spend your Clues one-to-one to ask the MC a question about the subject of your investigation or ask another player a relevant question about their character. They must give you either a straight answer or a solid lead. On a 7-9, they can also choose 1:

- Your investigation exposes you to danger.
- The clues you get are fuzzy, incomplete, or part-true part-false.
- Whoever or whatever you are asking the question(s) can ask you one question as well. You answer on the same terms.

SEARCH USING YOUR SENSES · ASK QUESTIONS IN A CONVERSATION · INSPECT AN OBJECT OR A SCENE · LOOK UP OR DECIPHER INFORMATION · MAKE CALLS TO CONTACTS · EVALUATE A PERSON OR A SITUATION · ETC.

Investigate is triggered whenever a character is using her abilities to garner more information or when a player asks for more details that are not readily available to the character. **Investigate** also applies to longer actions, such as spending a day snooping around an important location or hitting the streets and asking questions.

Note that not every question from the player to the MC constitutes **Investigating**; simply using the character's normal senses to observe the perceivable surrounding does not usually require this move. However, if you want to find that which is hidden, as things often are in City of Mist, you need to **Investigate**.

Separate methods of investigation require separate **Investigate** moves; you can only invoke tags related to a single method of investigation in each move. For example, you can either investigate by employing your knowledge of *history* and *research methods* or by asking your *underworld connections* and stating you were *born in this neighborhood*, but you cannot mix all tags into a single move.

As explained under Repeating a Move (page 178), you cannot use the same tags to investigate the same source more than once, at least not until the circumstances change: the source has new information, you gain new access, the attitude of the source toward you changed, etc.

OUTCOME

On a hit, you gain a number of Clues equal to your Power. You can spend your Clues to ask the MC (or another player) questions about the subject of your investigation and receive either a straight answer or a solid lead, as explained under Clues (page 227). The **method** and **source** of your Clues are derived from the tags you invoked and the circumstances. They affect the questions you can ask and the answers you can get by spending Clues in this batch.

Salamander and Kitsune are looking for Kitsune's school teacher, Ms. Applebaum, who has gone missing. Salamander uses *snooping around* and *streetwise* to ask questions around her apartment block in the blue-collar residential neighborhood. With his Power of 2, he rolls 5 and 3, scoring 2 + 5 + 3 = 10, or 10+. He receives two Clues, which he uses to ask "Where is Ms. Applebaum?" and "Who is responsible for Ms. Applebaum's disappearance?"

The MC answers based on the details of the case that she wrote. Her notes tell her that Ms. Applebaum is actually dead, having jumped off the Bay Bridge after being threatened with a fate worse than death over a debt she could not repay; but the players don't know that yet. The MC considers the method of investigation (asking around) and the source (the people in Ms. Applebaum's apartment block), and comes up with the following answers:

For the first clue, regarding Ms. Applebaum's whereabouts (the morgue), the MC doesn't want to divulge too much. Instead she says: "You see the mailman on the next stop and go over to have a chat with him. He says Ms. Applebaum hasn't collected her mail for a week, but today a request came in to redirect her mail to an address in the City's industrial zone, signed by her."

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The MC wants to use the second clue, regarding the people involved in Ms. Applebaum's disappearance, to give the players a thread to follow. She says: "The next person you speak to is an old lady in Ms. Applebaum's building. She's happy you are trying to help and tells you Ms. Applebaum has fell in with the wrong crowd, some money lenders; she can't recall the full story, something to do with her half-sister, Ms. Lind."

On a 10+, your investigation runs smoothly without any complications. On a 7-9, something goes awry. The MC can choose one of the following complications, before or after you ask your questions:

- **Your investigation exposes you to danger:** the MC introduces a new threat or complication into the story. It can be minor or major, but not insignificant. While this threat has no immediate game effect, it can rapidly escalate into serious trouble. Possible complications include:

  » You are noticed or caught by whoever is in charge
  » You are ambushed by the subject of your investigation, an involved party, a local Danger, a nemesis, etc.
  » You run into obstacles in the environment: you get tangled in wires or branches, you get interrupted by a person or a crowd, etc.
  » You lose track of time and miss an opportunity, a date, or a deadline
  » The subject of your investigation flees, shuts down, become unavailable, etc.

  The MC should use this option to increase the suspense and intensity of the scene or to emphasize the personal cost you pay for this investigation.

  If Salamander had scored 7-9 and the MC chose the first option, she could decide that the people who were after Ms. Applebaum have a Rift in the building, who deals with anyone asking questions. She would then describe how the duo's investigation leads to a direct confrontation with that Rift.

- **The clues you get are fuzzy, incomplete, or part-true part-false:** the MC can answer your Clue questions with vague leads rather than solid leads. Alternately, the MC can incorporate some falsehoods into his straight answers or solid leads. The information you receive must still be valuable, although it may be harder to decipher or use. The MC should use this option to raise the challenge level of an investigation or add to the mystery surrounding it.

  If Salamander had scored 7-9 and the MC chose the second option, she could explain that the people of the neighborhood seem reluctant to speak to the pair. Instead of the information above, she would say that the mailman tells the duo that Ms. Applebaum redirected her mail but he's not at liberty to say where to (incomplete clue); and the old lady says Ms. Applebaum has only herself and her half-sister, Ms. Lind, to blame for what happened to her, and refuse to say more (part-true part-false clue).

- **Whoever or whatever you are asking the question(s) can ask you one question as well:** If you investigated another player, he gets a Clue on you. Otherwise, the MC asks you a question, to which you answer on the same terms: with a straight answer or a solid lead. Your answer is considered information that one of the Dangers in the story obtained, either at this instant, or by collecting it over time. The Danger can then use this information against your character or it can otherwise affect their decisions and change the course of the story. Possible questions include:

  » What are you willing to do to find out?
  » What is the thing you care about the most?
  » Who do you think is responsible for this?
  » Can you be trusted?
  » What are your intentions towards the subject of the investigation?

  The MC should use this option to ask provocative questions that reveal something important about your character, to put your character on the spot, and to remind you that while you are conducting your investigations, other forces are at play – and they are watching you.

  If Salamander had scored 7-9 and the MC chose the third option, she could decide it means someone was spying on the investigative duo and ask the player something that the villains would want to know, such as "What would make Salamander drop this case?" If the play-

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er answered "Nothing", then the money lenders would have to do away with him once and for all; if he answered, "Knowing Ms. Applebaum is well", then the money lenders may try to fake a message from Ms. Applebaum, etc.

If you investigated a player's character, the player of that character must provide the information under the same terms as the MC and chooses the complication instead of the MC (possibly gaining a Clue on you).

LOOK BEYOND THE MIST

When you reach inside to get in touch with your Mythos, you can feel the truth behind things without even knowing how. Play it out like the Investigate move, but roll+Mythos instead. On a hit, you get Clues=Mythos.

In some cases, it is not enough to work with your abilities. You must tap into something deeper if you want to uncover the mythical forces that operate behind the veil of the Mist. Your character can use her connection with her Mythos to investigate; however, instead of using her abilities as in the **Investigate** move, she instead receives inexplicable intuitions as she uncannily senses what lies beyond the Mist. For a while, she can perceive the world naked of its trappings and see things for what they truly are.

Unfortunately, the Mist sets in soon thereafter, and your mind struggles to interpret the symbolic language of your Mythos. When you use this move, you can get clues that are closer to the true essence of the subject of your investigation and are less obscured by the mundane appearances of the Mist. However, since these clues are coming from the perspective of your Mythos, they may be difficult to interpret (e.g., visions, gut feelings, sensations) or skewed by your Mythos' relation to the object of your investigation (e.g., attraction, indifference, clash, etc.). They also rarely constitute valid evidence that can be shared with others.

To make the move **Look Beyond the Mist** you must explain how your character taps into her Mythos and how she receives information from her Mythos. Does she meditate in a specific place? Does she perform a forgotten ritual or one that she came up with herself? Does she fall into a trance? Does she speak to herself, mumbling in a strange language?

Look Beyond the Mist works like the **Investigate** move, with some changes. When you **Look Beyond the Mist**, you add the number of Mythos themes you have (also simply called your Mythos) to the result of the roll instead of Power. No other game elements are included in this roll: tags and statuses are irrelevant (so you cannot burn a tag for a hit). This also applies to tags that describe your Mythos powers.

On a hit, you receive a number of Clues equal to the number of Mythos themes you have (your Mythos). The method for this batch of Clues is your method of connecting with your Mythos, while the source is your Mythos itself so the MC should describe the clues appropriately.

On a 7-9, the MC or the player who plays the character you are investigating choose a complication from the list given in **Investigate.**

Lamar is playing Sullivan whose Mythos is the story of Don Quixote, the romantic yet rather deranged Spanish nobleman who fought windmills thinking they were giants. Sullivan has 1 Mythos theme and 3 Logos themes, so his Mythos is 1.

Sullivan arrives at a strange crime scene: a man seemingly pecked to death by a murder of crows in an abandoned subway tunnel. Sensing something's off, Sullivan turns to his Mythos for answers. Lamar describes it as a bout of daydreaming; Sullivan's eyes glaze over and he sees faraway places and times immemorial. With a Mythos of 1, he rolls 4 and 2, scoring 1 + 4 + 2 = 8, or 7-9. He gets one Clue, asking "Who did this?"

The MC tells him what Sullivan sees: flying over golden barley fields and rivers, Sullivan's mind's eye follows the path of a raven. Crossing a stormy channel and flying over white cliffs, the raven finally arrives at green but dreary land, spotted with silver lakes and rivers. There, in a foreboding castle, lives a sad king, surrounded by ravens. He seems to be chained.

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This is all the MC says, but she uses the 7–9 outcome to ask Lamar a question about Sullivan. In his daydream the king faces Sullivan as if he knows he is being watched. He asks: "How far would you go to protect your kingdom, knight?" The MC plans to use Lamar's answer to determine "the king"'s attitude toward Sullivan.

When the vision ends, Sullivan is still in the abandoned subway tunnel, surrounded by a crime scene and black feathers. He doesn't know who this king is or where to find him, but he has a solid lead to go on.

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, your investigation reveals a key detail. The MC will reveal the most valuable detail in the scene that your investigation could reveal. You can then use your Clues to ask follow-up questions or other questions as usual.

SNEAK AROUND

When you use your abilities **to act secretly or deceptively**, roll+Power. On a hit, everyone that should fall for it falls for it. On a 7-9, it's complicated. The MC chooses 1:

- Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?
- You are perceived only by a secondary sense (someone picks up your scent while you're stalking them; you're seen whispering a message but the message is not heard).
- You must leave something important behind – or be discovered.

LIE OR DECEIVE · IMPERSONATE · PICKPOCKET · MOVE UNDETECTED · EAVESDROP · HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT · ETC.

Sneak Around can be triggered by any action that your character is trying to carry out discreetly or any action intended to make one thing look like another (i.e., being sneaky). **Sneak Around** applies only when the focus of the action is its subtlety; if subtlety is a secondary goal of the action, use a different move.

Sneak Around can be made in conjunction with another move. For example, if you hide in the shadows and pounce on an unsuspecting victim, the MC may rule that your **Sneak Around** roll will determine whether you take them by surprise: a hit would mean getting a clear shot that can be followed with a **Hit With All You've Got** move, while a failure could spell a messy struggle with **Go Toe to Toe**.

However, not every action that follows **Sneak Around** requires its own move. If the focus of the action is its secrecy, just roll **Sneak Around**. For example, if you're spying on someone and succeed in **Sneaking Around**, you don't have to **Investigate** to simply see what they are doing (unless you want to garner information that isn't readily available, e.g., speak with the ancestral spirits guarding the house).

OUTCOME

On a 10+, all the targets of the move believe what you wish them to believe or perceive what you wish them to perceive (including nothing at all). For example, if you sneak behind a monster and its babies then none of them perceive you at all; if you con a rich man into giving you his car he believes he is doing the right thing until it is too late.

On a 7-9, while you manage to fool most of your targets, there are some flaws in your performance. The MC can choose one of the following complications:

- **Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?** The MC chooses a previously insignificant character or introduces a new one; this character has seen through your act, caught you red-handed, became aware of your machinations, etc. and that makes her the only person who knows about you. The question of whether this character will spill the beans on you or not becomes a problem that you need to address. When the MC chooses this option, you always know that you have been spotted and you know who spotted you

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(for someone to spot you without your knowledge requires an MC move).

For example, while sneaking into an office building on your way to steal the blueprints of the City Hall, you are spotted by a homeless woman pushing a shopping cart across the road. Will you stop to talk to her? Come back later? Leave her and hope for the best?

- **You are perceived only by a secondary sense:** The MC chooses a sense secondary to the action you are carrying out, which you fail to mask sufficiently. The target of your move may not know the whole truth about what you've been up to, but it knows something. For example:
  - » someone picks up your scent while you're stalking them, eliminating the element of surprise;
  - » you're seen whispering a message but the message is not heard;
  - » you are wearing a mask but your target takes note of your voice – they will recognize it if they hear it again.
- **You must leave something behind – or be discovered.** The MC chooses an object, piece of evidence, ally, or even aspect of your character that you must leave behind in order to avoid being discovered. What you leave behind may be evidence linking you to the scene or simply something that matters to you. You then must choose whether or not to make the sacrifice. If you do, you fool your targets as if you scored 10 or more. If the sacrifice chosen by the MC is represented by a tag, the MC may rule it is burned. If you do not make the sacrifice, you are discovered. However, the MC cannot make an MC move as when you score 6 or less, although she can describe the consequences of being discovered.

  Flicker is in the mayor's office, flicking through secret files about a shadow organization, when suddenly someone knocks on the office door. Through the milky glass, she sees two unidentified suits, probably federal agents of some sort. The mayor's staff seems to have disappeared. Flicker then decides to use her Mythos powers to move faster than humanly possible and zip out of the office before the two can even perceive her. Unfortunately, the player scores a 7–9. The MC decides that, as Flicker is zooming away, it dawns on her that she left her glasses on the mayor's desk. It's up to the player now whether she swooshes back in and picks up her glasses just in time to welcome the agents in, or leave her glasses behind as evidence of her unauthorized visit.

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, your target is so entirely fooled by your secretive or deceptive actions that you can continue to move and/or act completely undetected by this target for the rest of the scene, so long as you do so in the same way you did when you scored 12 or more.

For example, if you broke into a bank safe by overriding its security systems, you can move in and out of the safe undetected by those systems for the rest of the scene; however, if you try to leave the bank in the guise of a security guard, you must roll again. Similarly, if you fooled the police detectives to think you are an innocent bystander, they will continue to believe any story you will tell them so long as it does not exceed the nature of the tags you used in this move.

TAKE THE RISK

When you **perform a daring, risky, or outright stupid feat**, roll+Power. On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

CLIMB A SLIPPERY LEDGE · DEFUSE A BOMB · DRIVE THROUGH A MARKETPLACE · SLIDE UNDER A CLOSING GATE · DIVE THROUGH A GLASS CEILING · STEP UP TO AN ARMED GANG OF MOBSTERS AND START TALKING · ETC.

Take the Risk applies when your character attempts a feat of daring. Such feats are often all-or-nothing; while there can be complications, the

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high stakes involved imply the action as a whole can either succeed or fail miserably.

OUTCOME

On a 10+, you somehow perform your daring feat well without any glitches, flaws, or complications. On a 7-9, things get hairy and the MC will present you with a difficult choice between two or three negative outcomes for your feat.

For each negative outcome, the MC can give you a status, burn one of your tags, complicate the situation, deny you something you want, etc. In other words, in exchange for success in your feat of daring, the MC will make an MC move as if you scored a miss (specifically **Force Them to Choose**, an MC move explained in the MC Toolkit).

You cannot choose to forego the feat to avoid choosing a negative outcome. You have already **Taken the Risk**; a score of 7-9 simply means you pushed through despite complications and suffered one consequence to mitigate another. For example:

- When walking on the window ledge of a skyscraper in the rain, you slip; choose whether you drop your pistol (burn a tag) or your radio (burn a tag).
- When performing a motorcycle jump over sixteen burning trucks, you screw up the stunt; choose whether to jump off your motorcycle mid-air and your bike takes *in-flames-5* (status without **Face Danger**) or stay on the bike and **Face Danger** against *spinal-injury-4* (status).
- When free-diving through the hull of a sunken ship in the harbor, searching for the Rift of a water nymph, you're diving too deep; choose whether you run out of air (complication) or you take *raptures-of-the-deep-2* (status).
- When groping for a vaccine vial through a lab full of disease-ridden rats in a *hazmat suit*, one of them climbs on you; choose whether to shake him off aggressively and be attacked by the pack (complication) or let it bite you and risk infection (burn the suit tag).
- When defusing a bomb, you run out of time; choose whether you pull a random wire and end up with *adrenaline-overload-3* (status without **Face Danger**) or that you must keep your finger on a specific button in the bomb or it will go off (complication).

DYNAMITE!

If your move is *Dynamite!*, on a 12+, you pull it off spectacularly and even turn the situation to your advantage. Take 2 Juice and you can use it to choose effect improvements from **Change the Game**.

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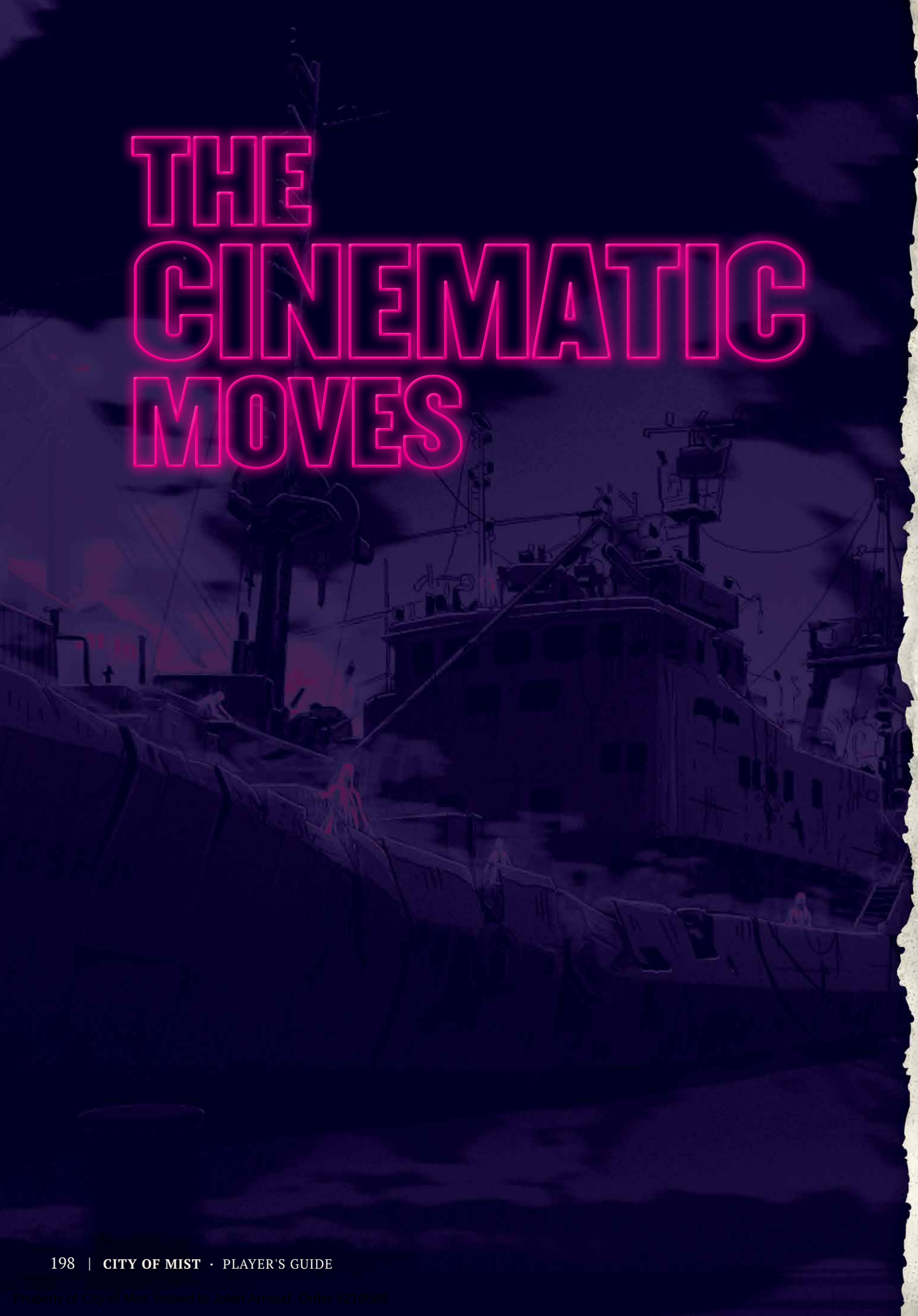
THE CINEMATIC MOVES



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VOICEOVER MONOLOGUE (SESSION START)

At the beginning of every session, one player goes into a monologue as his or her character, relating the character's thoughts and feelings at this point in the story.

Every good noir story starts with a voiceover monologue: we hear the voice of the lead character sharing her thoughts with us, the audience, as views of the city and previously seen locations slide by on the screen.

Every time you start a session of *City of Mist*, one player takes the role of the voiceover monologue. Throughout the series, make sure to cycle through all the players so that all the characters get to talk. The MC can also join the pool with a monologue by one of the non-player characters central to the series. When you finish your voiceover monologue, the MC takes over and starts the first scene of the session.

FLASHBACK

Once per session, when you have the spotlight, choose 1:

Describe an action carried out by your character in the past and make a move for that action. The outcome of the move affects the current scene.

Describe events from your character's backstory that become relevant now. The MC can award you with 1 Juice or 1 Clue based on your description.

Flashbacks are a staple of the noir genre: they help reveal new information in a dramatic way. When you have the spotlight, you can choose to describe something that happened in the past: either an action your character carried out in advance and is now coming into play, or events from your character's backstory that are now becoming important. Your description must have repercussions that affect the story right now (or it would make a rather uninteresting flashback). Furthermore, you should avoid describing details that make too great assumptions, such as having defeated a major villain in the story; the MC will help you by limiting your storytelling.

FLASHBACKS TO A PAST ACTION

If you choose to describe a past action, you make the move for that action as if you were taking it now. For example:

MC: Arthur walks into the library overlooking the mansion grounds, followed by two goons armed with shotguns. He turns to you, Excalibur, and says "Give it up, babe. You're surrounded and defenseless. I will not have you interfering with my plan to blow up the district's police department."

Dani (playing Excalibur): I reply "Darling… It's over… but not for me. The police are already here." Flashback time! A few hours earlier, Excalibur is sitting at her desk in the library. She looks at the setting sun, pondering her upcoming face off with Arthur. She realizes the man she loves has become power-hungry and that it's up to her to bring him to justice. Reluctantly, she picks up the handle of an antique phone and dials the number of the chief of police, a close friend of her family. "Be here soon if you want him alive," she says and hangs up the phone. I'm **Convincing.**

The outcome of the flashback move always applies to the present moment in the story. Use the move's outcome descriptions as usual to determine the impact that the past action has on the current scene. For example, if Dani scored 10 or more, the outcome could be:

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MC: As you finish your sentence, the sound of sirens echoes all around the mansion.

Dani: "Who's surrounded now, darling?"

If Dani scored 7-9, the success could be less overwhelming:

MC: As you finish your sentence, two policemen appear at the door. One is podgy and chewing on a doughnut, the other tall and lanky, rubbernecking around the mansion in awe. When they realize there are armed men in the room, they fumble sloppily for their guns.

Dani: Excalibur facepalms.

If Dani missed the move, the MC would get a move of her own, as usual:

MC: As you finish your sentence, the sound of sirens echoes all around the mansion. A few moments later, the chief of police enters the room followed by twenty officers. The looks he and Arthur exchange tell Excalibur that she has been betrayed. "Arrest this woman!" he commands.

Dani: Uh oh.

Naturally, actions taken in the past cannot be informed by any knowledge or involve any abilities or benefits gained after performing the action. For example, a player playing a neighborhood pawnshop owner who finds his store is attacked by werewolves cannot do a flashback describing how he boughts silver bullets in advance, unless there was something in the story to inspire such an action at the time. He can, however, do a flashback describing a strange visitor who traded an old revolver with six silver bullets etched with strange symbols (assuming he has the tags to support such an action, e.g. *pawnshop*).

FLASHBACKS TO YOUR BACKSTORY

Flashbacks are a great cinematic tool to use in your story, even when they are not associated with a move. You can use flashbacks to expand your character's backstory and add interesting details to the series. They can give meaning to a character's actions and decisions. Flashbacks should only be initiated when their content is relevant to the current scene.

At a critical point in the story, Lamar, Jerry, and Megan all decide to do a series of flashbacks to the night their neighborhood was submerged under the pond (see Series Concept Example: Lakeside Drive, page 53). Each player describes where each of their character was and who she was with when water started flowing in from nowhere. At the end of the flashback, the players and the MC learn more about the lead characters' past and motives and perhaps a few details about some supporting characters.

At any point in the flashback, or when it concludes, the MC can award the player with a single point of a game resource, such as a Clue or Juice, to represent the effects of the memory.

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MONTAGE (DOWNTIME)

Whenever your character has some downtime, choose one way to spend it:

- **Give attention** to one of your Logos (or extra) themes. Tell everyone at the table how you do it and mark Attention on that theme.
- **Work the case.** Tell everyone at the table how you do it, and gain 3 Clues with a method and a source based on your description.
- **Explore your Mythos.** Tell everyone at the table which Mystery you explore and how you do it. You gain 1 Clue with a method and a source based on your description. Mark Attention on that Mystery's theme.
- **Prepare for your next activity.** Tell everyone at the table how you prepare and choose one: recover all your burnt power tags OR gain 3 Juice with a method based on your description. You can choose from the effect improvements under **Change the Game**.
- **Recover from your last activity.** For each ongoing status still affecting you, the MC will tell you if and how it can be reduced during your downtime and by how many tiers. Alternatively, the MC can allow you to reduce any or some of your statuses by one tier for each relevant tag you have.

The MC can cue into any of the montage events and continue them as scenes.

Like in any story, the scenes in your game follow one another in succession, mixing action, drama, and investigation. Sometimes, however, a long period of time passes between two scenes, during which your character could be doing other activities, e.g. working on a project or spending time with loved ones.

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The time characters spend between scenes has consequences, reflected in the **Montage (Downtime)** move. When you have some downtime in the story, go around the table with each player taking their pick of how their character spends her downtime. For example:

MC: It's noontime, but your raid on the Mononoke drug factory will not begin until nightfall. Looks like it's time for a **Montage (Downtime)**. What does each of you do in the hours before the raid?

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Goodfellow goes home. It's been a while since he had an adventure like this and that reminds him of his heyday. I'm going to spend time giving attention to my Defining Event Logos theme, Heyday Adventure. He will look at pictures of his old wartime buddies and reminisce. I mark Attention on that theme.

Jerry (playing Enkidu): Det. Enkido has nothing much to come back to. She's going to continue working the case by staking out the drug factory and learning more about the Mononoke clan. I get 3 Clues but I will bank them for later.

Lamar (playing Sullivan): Sullivan is going to follow the mysterious beautiful woman from the last scene and explore his Mystery "Where is my Dulcinea?". I mark Attention on that theme and I get 1 Clue. I'll use it as a reverse Clue to say I follow her to a poor neighborhood, where I see her speaking to some of the locals who seem to admire her. She may be the one I was looking for.

MC: Cool. Let's say you also see her putting on an apron before walking into the back room of a small supermarket called Lorenzo Foods. You can follow up on that later. Who's next?

Dani (playing Excalibur): Excalibur wants to prepare for her next meeting with the Mononoke Syndicate. She's going to a secluded area on her mansion grounds to practice until she can evoke what she needs out of her bracelet. I get 3 Juice which I will use to take the tag *cut through spirits* (1 Juice), make it ongoing (1 Juice) and hidden (1 Juice). The Mononoke are in for a surprise.

Clay (playing Mitosis): Mitosis is messed up after the last encounter with the Mononoke delivery team. I got a *slashed-by-a-demon-sword-3*, can I recover from it?

MC: Your healing is pretty strong but this is no ordinary cut. In the time you have, you can bring it down to *festering-demon-wound-1*. Okay, that's everyone. So I think we'll pick it up with Detective Enkidu. You stake out the Mononoke's drug factory, when suddenly...

GEEK OUT DURING CREDITS (SESSION END)

At the end of the session, when the credits roll, go around the table. Each player can answer one or more of the following questions:

- **How has the crew grown this session?**
  Recover a burnt crew power tag or mark Attention on a crew theme.
- **Which character had the most meaningful interaction with your character this session?**
  Add one Help point or one Hurt point next to their name on your character card.
- **Which of your themes is under the most strain? If it collapses, what new aspect will show up in its place?**
  Write down the answer under FLIPSIDE on that theme's card.

The end of a session can be likened to the end of an episode in a TV show or the last page of a comic book issue. Just like you would geek out after an episode or an issue concludes, analyzing the events that took place, this move allows you to geek out about what happened this session. Remember to leave time for this move at the end of each session. Alternatively, you can do this later (possibly online) after you've had the chance to process the events of the session.

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Geek Out During Credits takes a look at three aspects: the crew as a whole, your individual relationships with other player characters, and the state of your character and her themes.

- **How has the crew grown this session?**
  Looking at the development of the crew as a whole, you have the option to back your impression by recovering a burnt crew power tag or by marking Attention on your crew theme (this applies to just one theme, if you have several crew themes).
- **Which character had the most meaningful interaction with your character this session?**
  Reviewing your interaction with each of the other player characters and considering your character's intentions towards them, you can decide whether to give yourself a Help or Hurt point with one of them. If you feel closer to them or think that your agendas are aligned, you can add a Help point which will allow you to offer better support. If you think you are going to work behind their back or betray them, you can take a Hurt point instead, as it may come in handy.
- **Which of your themes is under most strain? If it collapses, what new aspect will show up in its place?**
  Take a look at all of your themes. Which of them are in danger of fading or cracking? Which of your Mysteries have you been neglecting and which of your Identities have you ignored this session, or came close to? Identify the theme with the most potential to change. Now, speculate: if this aspect of your character was gone, what would happen to her? How would she survive the crisis? And most importantly, what new theme would take the place of the lost theme?

  When you lose a Logos theme, you get a Mythos theme instead, and vice versa. Think about what new Mythos powers or new ordinary aspect would emerge in the ashes of the theme you might replace. This is its **Flipside**. Write it down on your theme card.

  Flipsides help you think about interesting angles for character development, and prepare for the inevitable change. Read more about character development and replacing themes in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

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GAME RESOURCES

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TAGS

Tags are details you can bring into the story in a meaningful way. As explained in Chapter 2: Who Are You?, anything from the characters' qualities, through equipment and allies, to thematic catchphrases can be a tag. Tags can also describe elements of the story. Tags play a dual role in the game: they both describe a character or a situation and power or depower your character's moves.

The descriptive role of tags is intuitive: if a character has the tag *tall* then she is tall; if she has the tag *crossbow*, she possesses and probably carries a crossbow. Within your story, your character receives all the benefits and suffers the shortcomings described by the tag. For example, if your character is *rich* she could have all the trappings of wealth, such as property, a fancy car, fine clothes, etc.

The second role of the tags, pertaining to their game effects, requires interpretation: based on the situation at hand, you decide whether a tag is **relevant to a given action** and can therefore be invoked to affect the Power of the move for an action. For example, being *a football coach* can help your character when trying to inspire her crew while being *weak-minded* could weaken her attempt to resist powers of hypnotism.

Taking a step further, you can shape your actions based on the tags you have by trying to describe them in a way that makes your tags relevant. For example, if you are racing on your motorbike, trying to escape a mafia overlord's henchmen, you might choose to slide under an approaching semi-trailer because you have the tags *fastest bike in town*, *perfect reflexes*, and *daredevil*. On the other hand, if you have the tags *knows every street* and *moonlight shadow*, you might prefer trying to lose the henchmen by ducking into back alleys.

All tags can be used with any move as long as they reasonably impact the action it describes. For example, if you have the tag *a deck of tarot cards*, you can use it to read into someone's past with **Investigate**, but you can also presumably use it to disguise yourself as a fortune teller using **Sneak Around**. You couldn't, under normal circumstances, use it to attack someone with **Hit With All You've Got**.

Whenever there's doubt whether a tag is relevant to an action, the MC as the referee has the final word and should make a quick decision. Play time should not be wasted on tag discussions.

The MC should try to strike a balance between empowering the players and setting clear limits on tag invocation. She should reward players for creative and cinematic descriptions by allowing flexible use of tags. At the same time, disallowing the use of loosely-connected tags or requiring an additional move to use them helps define the boundaries of play: what types of tag associations and interpretations are and aren't acceptable to you. Players, on the other hand, should help the flow of the game by only invoking tags that are clearly relevant or by having a description that clarifies how they use the tag. The group as a whole should aspire to keep the game flowing and tag invocation as short as possible, focusing on advancing the story.

POWER TAGS

Power tags represent things that are helpful to your character. Therefore, power tags can only be used to increase the Power of a move, never to reduce it (see the exception below). Only you can invoke your character's power tags and you can only invoke your character's power tags for moves made by you. Each power tag can only be invoked once per move; however, the same power tag can be invoked again and again in different moves, as long as it is relevant to all of them and unless otherwise stated.

Power tags can only be invoked and counted toward the Power of a move when they directly help you perform the action you are taking. In other words, you only receive a point of Power for us-

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ing a power tag when it clearly improves your character's chances of succeeding in the action or improves the effectiveness of her action. For example:

- Being *a professional boxer* helps you throw a punch when you **Go Toe To Toe** with an opponent.
- Having *iron skin* improves your ability to withstand blows with **Face Danger**.
- Flashing *wads of cash* at a greedy informant can help **Convince** him to play along.
- Walking with *inaudible steps* improves your ability to **Sneak Around** a security guard.
- Talking to *Eddie, my only confidant* at the bar can help you overcome the strange and dark thoughts that have been haunting you with **Change the Game**.

Tags that do not directly help the specific action you're performing in this specific situation cannot be invoked and therefore do not add to your Power. For example, in most imaginable cases:

- Being a *sweet talker* doesn't help you throw a punch when you **Go Toe To Toe** with an opponent.
- Having the ability to *see through walls* doesn't improve your ability to withstand blows with **Face Danger**.
- Sharing your knowledge of *botany* with a greedy informant cannot help **Convince** him to play along.
- Being surrounded by *relentless fans* does not improve your ability to **Sneak Around** a security guard.
- Talking to your *hunting rifle* at the bar cannot help you overcome the strange and dark thoughts that have been haunting you with **Change the Game**.

When you invoke a tag, but it is unclear *how* it helps your character perform the action she is taking, the MC can ask you to clarify the use of the tag by asking:

? HOW DOES THIS TAG HELP YOUR ACTION?

For example:

MC: Taking you by surprise, the deranged tattooed skulker leaps off a street light and lands right behind you, Sullivan, holding a ritualistic bone knife to your throat. He reeks of sweat and dried blood. You take a status *nowhere-to-run-3*.

Lamar (playing Sullivan): Yikes. I'm going to **Face Danger** to avoid that using *long unbreakable speeches*.

MC: How does this tag help you to **Face Danger**?

Lamar: I'm glad you asked. I'm going to give him a long lecture about how it's not right to creep up on an old middle-aged dog like me.

MC: That may have worked on a novice gang member. This guy is crazy. Roll with a Power of zero.

TAGS THAT REQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL MOVE

Tags that *indirectly* improve an action cannot be invoked for that action and therefore do not add to your Power. However, they can often be used in another move that may improve your action indirectly by giving you an advantage or by shaking off impeding statuses. For example:

- Being *brave* does not directly help you throw a better punch when you **Go Toe To Toe** with an opponent, no matter how scared you are. However, if your opponent is threatening you, *brave* can help you **Face Danger** and avoid negative statuses that impede your fighting.
- Having a *trusty sidekick* doesn't directly improve your own ability to withstand blows with **Face Danger**. However, if you get your *trusty sidekick* to throw you a manhole cover with the **Change the Game** move, you could get a story tag that would help you endure harm.
- Even if you *never forget a face*, it will not directly help you **Convince** a greedy informant to play along. However, you can **Investigate** to remember when you last saw him (perhaps using a flashback, see page 199) and use whatever you dig up as leverage.

When you want to apply a tag that indirectly helps your action by using an additional move, you describe and make the supporting move before

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making the move for your main action. Note that making such a supporting move holds a risk: scoring a miss may mean you will never get to make the move for the main action. Following the above examples, you could end up too scared to fight back, too involved with your sidekick to notice an incoming blow, or too taken by your trip down memory lane to notice the informant has left.

USING POWER TAGS AS WEAKNESS TAGS

Power tags are designed to be useful to the character and should not be used to weaken the character's actions, even when appropriate. However, in extreme cases where a power tag very appropriately impedes a character's action, it can be treated as a weakness tag if both the MC and the player agree to do so.

OPTIONAL RULE: TAG CAP

Different players and MCs have varying styles of tag interpretation, which can affect the average number of power tags and story tags invoked in each move and, therefore, the likelihood of player moves succeeding. If you find that players invoke four or more tags for most moves in the game (including power tags and positive story tags but not including weakness tags or negative story tags), you should tighten your tag interpretation policy, use less story tags, or make sure that players do not start the game with more than one broad tag.

Alternatively, you can set a cap on the number of positive tags a player can invoke for any single move. The recommended cap is three tags per move, as this gives players enough freedom to creatively describe their actions but keeps Power reasonably low. Another option, which can be used either instead of or in tandem with a tag cap, is activating Grit Mode (see page 176).

WEAKNESS TAGS

Weakness tags represent things that impede your character's actions. Therefore, weakness tags can only be used to reduce the Power of a move, never to increase it (see the exception below). Your character's weakness tags can only be invoked for moves made by you. Each weakness tag can only be invoked once per move; however, the same weakness tag can be invoked again and again in different moves, as long as it is relevant to all of them and unless otherwise stated.

Your character's weaknesses are also her greatest opportunity for growth. The more she faces and experiences her weaknesses, the more she'll learn about herself and evolves. Whenever one of your weakness tags is invoked, by anyone, you mark one **Attention** on the weakness tag's theme (using the track on the theme card). Marking Attention allows you to gain improvements for your theme and your character, as explained in Chapter 4: Moments of Truth.

Your weakness tags can be invoked by (a) you; (b) the MC; and (c) any player whose character is the unwilling target of your move.

Weakness tags can only be invoked to reduce the Power of a move when they impede the action you are taking. In other words, you only remove a point of Power (and gain Attention) for a weakness tag when it hurts your character's chances of succeeding in the action or weakens the effectiveness of her action. For example:

- Delivering *inaccurate blows* decrease your ability to throw a punch when you **Go Toe To Toe** with an opponent.
- Being *fragile* weakens your ability to withstand blows with **Face Danger**.
- Being *reputedly penniless* can spoil your chances to **Convince** a greedy informant to play along.
- If your *aboriginal necklaces rattle too much*, it hinders your ability to **Sneak Around** a security guard.
- Being *prone to depression* can make it harder for you to overcome the strange and dark thoughts that have been haunting you with **Change the Game**.

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Tags that do not directly impede the specific action you're performing in this situation cannot be invoked and therefore do not reduce your Power or grant Attention. For example, in most imaginable cases:

- Having an *unbearable personality* does not decrease your ability to throw a punch when you **Go Toe To Toe** with an opponent.
- Having an *unreliable scooter* does not weaken your ability to withstand blows with **Face Danger**.
- Being *susceptible to fire* cannot spoil your chances to **Convince** a greedy informant to play along.
- If you *can't carry heavy loads*, it does not hinder your ability to **Sneak Around** a security guard.
- If your hunting rifle *easily slips out of hand*, it cannot make it harder for you to overcome the strange and dark thoughts that have been haunting you with **Change the Game**.

When you invoke a weakness tag, but it is unclear *how* it impedes your character's action, the MC can ask you to clarify the use of the tag by asking:

? HOW DOES THIS TAG IMPEDE YOUR ACTION?

OPTIONAL RULE: SLOWER THEME PROGRESSION

If you find that player characters in your game mark Attention too often or if you would like to slow the pace of their improvement (for example, if you are planning a long series), you can limit the use of each weakness tag to no more than once per session. With this optional rule, whenever a player invokes a weakness tag, he marks the checkbox next to that weakness tag on its theme card. Invoked weakness tags cannot be invoked again by the player to whom they belong but they may always be invoked by the MC and unwilling PC targets of that player's moves (in which case, the player gains Attention as normal). At the end of every session, clear all the weakness tag checkboxes.

You can also use this question to ask the MC how a weakness tag invoked by the MC impedes your action. For example:

Lily (playing a young snoopy reporter): Now that I'm in the tycoon's office, I'm going to **Investigate.** Sadly enough, I only have *snooping around* as a power tag, so that's a Power of 1. But I'm going to activate my weakness tag — *amateurish*, for a Power of zero.

MC: How does this tag impede your investigation?

Lily: Well, I'm new to this investigative reporter thing, so I'm pretty sloppy. I might overlook some details, fail to recognize important paperwork…

MC: ...or even turn on the light and alert the guards. Okay, gotcha. Roll with a Power of zero and mark Attention. Maybe you'll learn from this experience!

USING WEAKNESS TAGS AS POWER TAGS

Weakness tags are meant to hinder the character and therefore shouldn't be used to enhance the character's actions, even when appropriate. However, in extreme cases where a weakness tag very appropriately helps a character's action, it can be treated as a power tag if both the MC and the player agree to do so.

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OPTIONAL RULE: WEAKNESS TAGS AS FLAWS

While weakness tags are designed first and foremost to get in the way of your character's actions, sometimes they seem to be relevant to the story even when the character isn't taking any particular action. With this optional rule, either you or the MC can invoke your character's weakness tag outside of an action, when appropriate. Regardless of who invoked the tag, the MC can then make an MC move against you, as if you missed a move. You also get to mark Attention on the tag's theme.

For example, a player playing the Rift of the Monkey King has powers of shapeshifting and size-changing, with the weakness tag *shift to the wrong size*. In the middle of a conversational scene at a restaurant, the player decides his character changes size to the size of a gorilla. He invokes the tag and gets to mark Attention; the MC makes an MC move against the character. If the character was taking an action, such as crawling through an air ventilation pipe, the weakness tag could have just reduced the Power of the action as normal, so the MC would have been able to make an MC move only if the player had missed the move.

This optional rule allows players to bring their character's flaws and weaknesses into the limelight at moments that do not necessarily involve an action. However, MCs should use this option sparingly and only in situations where activating the weakness tag might lead to interesting and dramatic complications.

BURNING TAGS

During the game, the rules may tell you to burn one or more of your power tags. This can happen when:

- you voluntarily burn a power tag to gain a boost for an action (see below)
- you miss a move and the MC uses her move to tell you to burn a power tag
- an adversary controlled by the MC uses their abilities to impair your abilities
- a fellow PC uses the **Change the Game** move against you
- you unleash your mythical powers and burn out (see **Stop. Holding. Back.**, page 256)

When one or more of your tags is burnt, check the burn icon (🔥) next to the affected tag or tags on their respective theme card or cards.

A burnt tag is temporarily unavailable and cannot be invoked or burnt again until recovered. When one or more of your tags is burnt, translate the rules into the story by explaining why it is unavailable. The circumstances under which your tag was burnt should be included in your explanation. There can be several appropriate explanations for a burnt tag, including:

- you have lost the will to use whatever this tag represents or decided not to apply it;
- whatever this tag represents is no longer as effective as it used to be – you can still use it, but it won't really make a difference;
- your powers or abilities are temporarily shutdown, inactive, or inaccessible;
- your allies and contacts have done all they can for you, or they are upset with you (not answering your calls, etc.), or wary of helping you;
- you have temporarily exhausted the resources this tag requires, e.g., ran out of ammunition; or
- your gear or Relic is damaged, lost, or dysfunctioning.

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For example:

- When you decide to go all out with your *crushing uppercut* and voluntarily burn it, it could mean you pulled a muscle in your arm and cannot use this maneuver again, or that your opponents saw you use it and will be ready for it, next time.
- When you fail using **Convince** and the MC tells you to burn your tag *commanding presence*, it could mean your character is riddled with self-doubt and does not feel up to the task of leading, for the time being.
- When you fight the Rift of the Abominable Snowman and he blows freezing winds on your *fire-wreathed Ifrit,* it could mean the fires of your Ifrit are quenched and he must take time to replenish them before he can use them again.
- When during a fight with one of your crewmates, he grabs your *baseball bat* with **Change the Game**, it could mean that he kicked it over a ledge and you lost it or that he broke it and you must get a new one.
- After you've used all of your mystical powers to put a curse on the City's most nefarious arms dealer, your powers are depleted until you rest or find a new magical power source to tap into.

Only power tags and story tags can be burnt. Weakness tags cannot be burnt.

RECOVERING BURNT POWER TAGS

Normally, burnt power tags can only be recovered with the **Montage (Downtime)** move (see page 201). In other words, burnt power tags can only be recovered during downtime, when your character has some time to rest and recover or fix her equipment. Burnt tags are not automatically recovered between sessions; instead, their burnt condition carries over from one session to the next.

When you recover one or more of your burnt power tags, uncheck the burn icon (🔥) next to the affected tag or tags on their respective theme card or cards.

BURNING FOR A HIT

You can voluntarily burn a power tag to gain a dramatic boost to a move. Think of it as using up all of the tag's narrative power for a single dramatic action. As a player, this allows you to choose to succeed in important actions at the cost of burning a tag. Within your story, burning a tag for a hit translates into a moment when the spotlight is centered on your character: she performs that insane acrobatic maneuver, delivers a deadly blow, surprises her enemies with a small army of allies, or uses her magical powers to perfectly counter the destructive spell of a dangerous Rift.

When making a Core Move, before determining Power (Step 2), you can choose to burn one of your power tags. In order to burn it, you must be able to invoke the tag for this move: the tag must be relevant to the action and it cannot be used if it is already burnt.

When burning a tag for a hit, you automatically gain a Power of 3. Furthermore, instead of rolling the dice, **treat the move as if you rolled a total of 7**. Therefore, an unmodified move with a tag burnt for a hit always achieves a final score of 3 + 7 = 10, and the 10+ outcome of the move is applied.

No other tags (power, weakness, story, etc.) can affect the Power of a move made with a tag burnt for a hit. However, **statuses still apply normally and may increase or decrease the Power of the action.** If the Power of the action is modified by statutes, the final score is also modified in the same way (since it includes the Power of the action). This could bring the final score of an action into any of the outcome categories (12+, 10+, 7-9, 6 or less) and affect the outcome of the move.

If another player wants to help or interfere with your action, they can spend Juice (see page 232) or make a move to give you a status, as usual. You cannot go back on your decision to burn a tag for a hit based on the results of their move or any other rule which affects the outcome.

For example:

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Goodfellow is enraged at this bully! I'm going to thump the living daylights out of him, burning my *good in a scuffle* to **Hit With All You've Got.** I don't have any statuses so it's a clean 10+ with a Power of 3!

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Or:

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): I don't have the time to deal with this status of *withering-disease-3*, while this gardener from hell is sowing those poisonous seeds all over town. I'm going to **Change the Game,** and I'm burning my *wellspring of nature* tag. Det. Enkidu is going to tap into the heart of the wild inside her and find the power to cure this thing so she can get back on the streets. That should give me a Power of 3 and a final score of 10.

MC: Unfortunately for the detective, the status of *withering-disease-3* still applies to the action of curing the disease because it's a powerful curse. That reduces your Power to zero, and gives you a final score of 7.

Jerry: Far from ideal, but at least it's a guaranteed success. I go for it.

BURNING FOR A HIT IN GRIT MODE

When you run your game in Grit Mode (see page 176, burning a tag for a hit has the same effect as in normal mode: it gives you a Power of 3 for the move, and you treat the move as if you rolled a total of 7 on the dice. However, in Grit Mode you convert your Power of 3 to a Grit of 2 and then add it to the dice roll result. This means the unmodified final score for a tag burnt for a hit in Grit Mode is 7 + 2 = 9, falling within the 7-9 outcome category. To increase your Grit to 3 and reach the outcome category of 10 or more, you must muster at least one additional point of Power from statuses and reach a Power of 4 (remember, when you burn a tag for a hit you cannot count other tags towards your Power).

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STORY TAGS

Story tags are used to describe two categories of story elements:

- **Temporary abilities, qualities, perks, and items possessed by your character**, like a *cleaver* you picked up, a *wolf-form* you adopted, or the ability to *fly* bestowed upon you by a vampire.
- **Independent objects, beings, concepts, or effects included in a scene:** a quality of the environment such as *pouring rain*, a person or entity who is present at the scene, such as *the Gingerbread Man* or *the police*, an item that is readily available such as *a bottle of whiskey* or *a yellow Lamborghini*, or even a force or a concept present at the scene such as *an aura of protection* or *the hard-knock life*.

Not every detail in a scene should have a corresponding story tag. Tags are means of making a detail meaningful to the story by giving it airtime; you, the other players, and the MC must choose which details merit a story tag.

CREATING STORY TAGS

Players can create story tags using the **Change the Game** move (or any move or game option that generates Juice, see page 232). For example, a player playing the Rift of Aladdin can use his *wish-fulfilling djinni* power tag to **Change the Game** and create *a yacht*, conjure a *sand monster*, or make him *a king*. Another character can then use his *weaponsmith* power tag and **Change the Game** to install a *harpoon ballista* on the yacht conjured by the djinni. A player playing the Rift of Balor of the Evil Eye, could use his *commander of the Fomori* with **Change the Game** to summon *an army of Fomori*, and give them additional tags such as *unyielding*, *giants*, and *desolating ray*.

The MC can create story tags whenever she deems it appropriate, but is advised to use them sparingly; one or two story tags per scene should be enough to make things interesting. For example:

MC: You step into the abandoned house, amid piles of debris, rotting furniture, and crawling vines. The rain is pouring in through holes in the ceiling and the second floor, pooling on the ground, where a shattered family picture lays solemnly. We have a new story tag: *abandoned house*.

CONTROL OVER STORY TAGS

Story tags can either be under the control of a specific player or non-player character, or they can be communal, if no-one in particular controls them. Environmental conditions, such as *blistering winds* are often communal, while items lying about at a scene, such as *a bloody knife*, are communal as long as no-one specific has control over them

When you create a story tag, you can assume control over it. For example, if you summoned a *phantom lance* or an *incubus*, you have control over the lance or the incubus until the tag expires, until you give it away, or until someone else makes a move to gain control over it.

You can give a story tag you control to a willing player or non-player character or object based on the circumstances. For example, the Rift for the Queen of Hearts could make things *red* to suit her liking or a ritualistic tattoo artist can tattoo *demon-repelling symbols* onto another character. If you want to give an unwilling character a tag, you should use a status instead (e.g., *painted-red-2*, *tattooed-1*, *transformed-3*).

Depending on the circumstances, you may or may not be able to take back control over a tag you gave to another character or story element. For example, if a sorceress allows a mermaid to walk on land by giving her *feet*, she may be able to take it away at will, or not, if they signed a contract. A rich mogul who lends *lots of cash* to a crewmate may have to take action if he wants to retrieve that tag later (and presumably, he can always make more).

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TRACKING STORY TAGS

When a new story tag enters the game, take a tracking card, circle the tag icon ( ), and write the name of the tag under TAG. Give the card to the player who currently controls the tag or place it at the center of the table if the tag represents a story element with no particular controller.

When a story tag expires, is burnt, or is otherwise removed, erase its tag from the tracking card and return the card to the deck.

WHAT CAN YOU CREATE WITH STORY TAGS?

Story tags allow players to temporarily introduce new characters, beings and objects into the story, even such that aren't directly represented by their power tags.

You can cluster story tags together in order to create beings and objects that are more useful. The number of story tags you can generate and their duration depends on the amount of Juice you can create using **Change the Game** or other game features.

Here are some examples of what you can do with story tags:

CONJURE AN IFRIT
A Sufi mystic can beseech the angel Jibrail to command a powerful genie, or Ifrit, to appear before him and serve him.

Tags: *fire-wreathed Ifrit*, *made of smoke*, *enormously strong*, *consuming fire*

BUILD A MOTORCYCLE
A mechanic can take some time in a workshop to build a custom motorcycle.

Tags: *souped-up motorcycle*, *excellent traction*, *eat dust!*, *shotgun in the rack*

ASSEMBLE A GANG
A well-connected gangster can spread the word and rally a gang of delinquents to fight for his cause.

Tag: *street gang*, *violent*, *armed and dangerous*, *loyal*

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INVOKING STORY TAGS

Story tags are neither power tags nor weakness tags; instead, **story tags can be used to either increase or decrease the Power of an action by one** per story tag invoked. You can invoke a story tag to increase the Power of the action you are taking by one. The MC or a PC opposing your move can invoke a story tag to decrease the Power of the action you are taking by one. However, since story tags are not weakness tags, when they are invoked to decrease your Power, you do not mark Attention.

Like power and weakness tags, a story tag must be relevant to be invoked. When invoking a story tag to increase Power, it must follow the guidelines for invoking power tags (i.e., it must directly help the action). When invoking a story tag to decrease power, it must follow the guidelines of weakness tags (i.e., it must be impeding the action). If a story tag both helps and impedes an action at the same time, it can be invoked but without any effect on the Power of the action.

Differently from power tags and weakness tags, you, the MC, or any player whose character is the target of your move don't have to be in control of a story tag to invoke it. For example, if a saboteur is holding *a bag full of explosives* and you attempt to shoot the bag and blow it up, you can invoke the tag even though it is under that saboteur's control, since it helps your action.

You can make moves using story tags you control, even if they represent an independent entity. For example, in the above example, the player playing Balor of the Evil Eye can use his *army of Fomori* to knock over an armored car, in which case the tag *giants* would also be helpful, giving the player a Power of 2 for his **Hit With All You've Got** move. Similarly, if the army of giants comes under heavy fire from the local SWAT team, that player rolls **Face Danger** for them and can invoke any relevant tags, e.g., *unyielding*. Using other characters in your own moves is further explained under Secondary Characters (page 236).

ABSOLUTE VALUE VS. NARRATIVE VALUE

Similarly to the difference between absolute power level and narrative power level (see page 68), there is a difference between the absolute value of a story element and its narrative value, measured in tags.

In *City of Mist*, the absolute value of details in the story is important but not all-important. If a character has the ability to create *a duffel bag full of money*, how much money exactly is in the bag is a minor detail, used mostly for flavor and to create a sense of realism.

What really matters to your story is what actions can be taken with the duffel bag: is it enough to retire? Enough to buy your freedom? Enough to pay off Ricardo Sacomán to leave your kids alone? That is determined not by the absolute value of the duffel bag, but by the fact the bag is a tag that can be used in a move, such as **Convince**. The more tags you give to a story element, the more meaningful it becomes and the greater effect it has on your moves. However, note that you cannot create the same tag over and over again to make story elements stronger. You must create different tags, giving new aspects to that important story element. For example, the *duffel bag full of money* could have additional tags such as *more where it came from* and *unmarked notes*, tags which tell us new things about the money in the bag.

DURATION

Story tags have a set duration that is determined by the rules when they are created:

- **Temporary tags** can only be invoked once. Once a temporary tag is invoked, the tag expires. So long as the tag was not invoked, it remains in the story. However, the MC may rule it expires at the end of a scene or when the conditions in the story would make it irrelevant. For example, an unused *stolen ID* tag could expire once it has been reported to the police. A temporary tag cannot be burnt for a hit; if it is burnt in another way, it expires.

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- **Ongoing tags** can be invoked repeatedly. They expire when the conditions in the story would make them irrelevant. For example, *a house on fire* expires when the fire brigade overcomes the fire or *a spell of invisibility* might last until dawn. The MC has the final say on when an ongoing tag expires, which may be as short as a few actions in a single scene or as long as several scenes, and even spanning across sessions. An ongoing tag can be burnt for a hit. When an ongoing tag is burnt for any reason, it expires and cannot be recovered.
- **Permanent tags** can be invoked repeatedly and do not expire. They are identical to power tags except they do not belong to a theme. Permanent tags can also be burnt for a hit and can be recovered after being burnt in the same ways as power tags.

When a tag expires, the element it describes does not necessarily leave the story; it may continue to take part in it, if it makes sense (the MC has the final say on that). For example, if a player creates the temporary tag *a pack of crooks* to help him fight a gang and uses it to **Go Toe to Toe**, the crooks do not automatically vanish after the tag is used. Depending on the details of the story and the outcome of the move, they may leave, pass out, become passive spectators, turn on the player character who recruited them, etc. Regardless, the player cannot use the tag again once it is expired, unless he recreates it using the regular rules.

BURNING STORY TAGS TO REMOVE THEM

Change the Game (or any move or game option that generates Juice) allows the players to burn story tags, thus removing them before they expire naturally. The MC can burn story tags using an MC move. For example, if a player misses a move after creating the ongoing tag *bar stool* in a bar fight, the MC can use an MC move to burn the tag and describe how the bar stool is taken from the character.

TAGS IN CREW AND EXTRA THEMES

Your crew starts the game with a crew theme which includes both crew power tags and crew weakness tags. As the game evolves, characters may gain access to a new type of theme called extra themes (see Chapter 4: Moments of Truth) as well as to additional crew themes.

CREW OR EXTRA POWER TAGS

Crew and extra power tags behave like character power tags for the most part: they follow the same rules for invoking power tags and they increase the Power of an action by one when invoked. (If there is a cap set on the number of power tags which can be used in each action, they also count towards that maximum; see Optional Rule: Tag Cap, page 207.)

Unlike character power tags, crew and extra power tags are **crispy**: they burn as soon as they are used. In other words, such tags can only be invoked *once* before they become unavailable (similarly to temporary story tags). Furthermore, these crispy tags cannot be burnt for a hit. This reflects the limited airtime that crispy tags command; they are not as central to the story as the characters' power tags.

RECOVERING BURNT CREW OR EXTRA POWER TAGS

In order to be used again, crew and extra power tags must first be recovered. Each type of tag has its own rules for recovery:

- Crew power tags are recovered at the end of a session, using the **Geek Out During Credits (Session End)** move (see page 202).
- Like character power tags, extra power tags are recovered when a player chooses to recover all burnt power tags during downtime, using the **Montage (Downtime)** (see page 201). All the extra power tags are also recovered automatically when a player chooses to give attention or explore the Mythos of the extra theme they belong to.

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CREW OR EXTRA WEAKNESS TAGS

Crew and extra weakness tags behave like character weakness tags for the most part: they follow the same rules for invoking weakness tags, they decrease the Power of an action by one when invoked, and they allow you to mark Attention on their theme once for every weakness tag invoked.

HOW TO USE TAGS IN YOUR GAME

The descriptive nature of tags makes them a versatile game element that can be used in many different ways. When you play *City of Mist*, whether as a player or as the MC, keep in mind the following principles:

NEED THE TAG

To make a move, a character must have the wherewithal to perform the action she is attempting. This is quite simple in some cases: for example, a character that isn't holding a pistol cannot take the action of firing a pistol. Similarly, a character that lacks any mind-reading powers cannot attempt to read the minds of other characters.

The MC can require a player to have the appropriate tag or tags in order to attempt an action. For example:

MC: You bust through the rusty door at the top of the stairs. It opens up to a vista of the City lights at night. You're on the roof, and they're coming after you.

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Ahhhh! I gotta get off the roof. I'm going to rappel my way down.

MC: Do you have anything to rappel with?

Megan: Not really. Is there a rope lying around?

MC: Sorry, I don't think there are ropes normally lying around on apartment building roofs. At least you don't see one now. However, you will need the tag *rope* or something similar to even attempt this. You can search and hopefully find one with **Change the Game.**

This principle especially applies when the lead characters are facing threats they don't know or understand. For example, if one of the crew members was subjected to a terrible curse, she and her crewmates would need the appropriate mystical tags to attempt to remove the curse. If the characters don't have such power tags, they will not be able to take any action to remove the curse until they obtain them, either with an appropriate **Change the Game** move (which in itself might require some mystical tags) or by undertaking a 'quest' to find the cure.

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Requiring a tag is an instrument the MC can employ to increase realism as well as add suspense by putting the lead characters in a bind.

FORGET THE TAG

As a counterbalance to requiring a tag, remember that some actions can be attempted simply because your character is a human being. Unless she is limited by other conditions, your character is perfectly capable of leaping under a table to take cover, punching someone in the face, or exploring a crime scene in search for clues. If an action is reasonably within the capacity of your character, you do not need a specific tag to perform it. If you don't have any tags to support the action, you can simply attempt the action with a Power of zero.

GET OR GIVE THE TAG

Just as the rules are translated into the story (see The Conversation, page 166), the story can be translated into rules. When a useful object, person, or effect is present at the scene and is available to the lead characters, the MC can simply make it into a story tag that the players control. For example:

MC: You exit the stairs to the roof of the construction site but your pursuers are hot on your trail. You're trapped at the edge, surrounded by cranes and scaffolding.

Megan (playing Goodfellow): Ahhhh! I gotta get off the roof. I'm going to rappel my way down. Is there a rope lying around?

MC: Sure, it's a construction site. You find a rolled up swathe of rope on the scaffolding. You get the temporary tag *rope*. Time to **Take the Risk.**

Similarly, the MC can give a player a story tag for *a love potion* that his character was given or *Triad bodyguards* if for some reason the character is being guarded by the Chinese mafia. However, giving the tag should be used only for important details and only when they already exist in the story. If players want to introduce new elements into the story, e.g., summon a flock of ravens, they should generate new story tags with **Change the Game**.

RESPECT THE TAG

As explained above, tags are not only game elements – they also define your character. Each tag you chose for your character should carry a weight in her story. Sometimes, this means receiving special benefits within the story, as long as those do not take away from the fairness and engagement of the game. If your character has a tag that describes a special quality, you can enjoy some advantages that arise from that tag. For example, if your character is *filthy rich*, you can assume she is able to afford a mansion, various vehicles, a chauffeur and a pilot, a personal bodyguard, lavish clothing, and many other luxuries. None of these are tags in and of themselves, so such benefits are meaningless in game terms (unless you use *filthy rich* to generate other tags with **Change the Game**, an action that holds a certain amount of risk). However, making such assumptions allows the character to truly be filthy rich in the story, and not just on paper.

When appropriate, the MC can even rule that certain effects do not apply to your character thanks to aspects described by her tags. This could mean you are exempt from making a **Face Danger** move that would otherwise be required. For example, if your character *doesn't breathe*, the MC may rule that a weaponized airborne toxin favored by a squad of eco-terrorists simply does not affect your character. If you chose *invincibility* as one of your tags, the MC may allow your character to be truly impervious to mundane weapons and attacks, a la *Luke Cage*. As you will see in the next principle, this does not mean you cannot get in trouble – it simply means you'll have *different* troubles. Either way, exempting a character from certain effects and moves is at the MC's discretion.

Respecting a character's tag lets a character's details shine and allows the player to play the character he wants to play, without disrupting the story.

QUESTION THE TAG

While your character's aspects, as described by your tags, can allow you to do great things, there are always ways to go around them. Every power, ability, and advantage has a weakness (even if it is not represented by a weakness tag). When you interpret a tag, think creatively about its possi-

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ble flaws. For example, Post-Mortem, the undead assassin who is the Rift of the revenant (included in the *City of Mist Starter Set*) has the tag *can't die – already dead*. This would seemingly make her invincible, as according to the principle of respecting a tag she cannot be killed. However, not being able to die is different from being indestructible. Bullets, shrapnel, and cold weapons can still cut through Post-Mortem's undead flesh and injure her, even if they can't actually kill her or cause her pain. She can still be confined, buried, dismembered, hypnotized, or otherwise prevented from achieving her goals.

The MC can decide not to exempt you from a move, even if at a first glance your tags say you should be. Going back to the above example, if you chose *invincibility* as your tag, the MC can rule you still need to **Face Danger** against the many implications of being invincible: you can still be blinded, suffocated, or buried in debris, and bullets can ricochet off of you and injure innocent bystanders or your crewmates. From a psychological standpoint, you could be building up guilt or overconfidence. All of these can become statuses that the MC gives you, statuses that are just as dangerous and just as potent in game terms as physical injuries.

Questioning a tag is the counterbalance for respecting a tag. It allows the game to keep being interesting and challenging, even when incredible abilities are involved.

STATUSES

Statuses reflect temporary conditions of all kinds that affect your character. Any imaginable condition can be a status, including:

- **Physical conditions:** scrapes, bruises, injuries, illness, gunshots, nausea, feeling energized, temporary blindness, boosted immune system, cuffed, restrained, etc.
- **Psychological conditions:** fear, ecstasy, confidence, depression, cheerfulness, suspicion, obliviousness, intoxication, etc.
- **Social conditions:** crowd's favorite, rejected, humiliated, center of attention, etc.
- **Supernatural or mystical conditions**: cursed, under a spell, guarded by an angel, a lion's strength, looks like the chief of police, etc.
- **Combat situations:** cover, cornered, good sniping position, blocked escape path, shielded, etc.

Statuses always represent transient states. They never represent things, like guns or an angry mob, or permanent qualities, like being smart. For things or permanent qualities, use power, weakness, and story tags.

POWER, WEAKNESS, AND STORY TAGS VS. STATUSES

Tags are used to describe people and objects and their essential qualities and nature, such as abilities, strengths, weaknesses, possibilities, etc. Tags never represent the current state of a person or object. Tags such as *mortally wounded* or *dead* cannot exist, unless they represent the essential nature of someone (like Post-Mortem, the undead assassin).

Conversely, statuses always represent conditions: the current state of a person or object. Statuses never represent a person, object, or essential quality. There cannot be a status of *gun-2* or *smart-5*.

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Each status is composed of a descriptive **tag** and a **tier**: the tag defines the nature of the status, while the tier defines its severity or intensity. For example: *chained-2*, *sick-1*, or *hypnotized-5*. A status' tier can range between 1 and 6: tier 1 represents mild effects while tier 6 represents the worst or most intense degree of a status, one which can kill the character or essentially transform her into something else.

The tag of a status should more or less match its tier and represent how debilitating or enhancing this status is: there cannot be *dead-1* or *scratched-5* statuses, unless in a bizarre situation where being dead is a very mild nuisance and being scratched is incapacitating. When the tier of a status changes (e.g., if it is cured or worsened), rephrase its tag accordingly to match the new tier.

A status is always attached to the thing that carries the condition it describes: it can belong to a character (whether a PC or an NPC), an object such as a Relic or a building, a collective of people, the City, etc.

TIER	INTENSITY OF EFFECT, DISADVANTAGE, OR ADVANTAGE	EXAMPLES	TIER
0	No effect	-	-
1	Mild	*bruised-1*, *melancholic-1*, *distracted-1*, *partial-cover-1*	Temporary or ongoing
2	Minor	*prone-2*, *good-aim-2*, *loosing-the-match-2*	Temporary or ongoing
3	Major	*broken-arm-3*, *flat-tire-3*, *in-the-zone-3*, *playing-with-my-prey-3*	Temporary or ongoing
4	Dramatic	*suffocating-4*, *gravely-injured-4*, *the-life-of-the-party-4*, *collapsing-walls-4*	Temporary or ongoing
5 or OUT	Incapacitating	*defeated-5*, *passed-out-5*, *overcharged-5*, *excommunicated-5*, *oblivious-5*	Ongoing
6 or MC	Lethal or permanently transformative	*dead-6*, *turned-into-stone-6*, *a-soul-without-a-body-6*	Permanent

EFFECTS OF STATUSES

Statuses of tiers 1 to 4 affect player characters by changing the Power of actions. When a player character who has one or more statuses takes action, each of these statuses is then determined to be helpful, detrimental, or neutral for that action. The player then adds the highest tier among the helpful statuses to the Power of the action and subtracts the highest tier among the detrimental statuses from the Power of the action. For example:

```
Simone is playing a con artist who has
been caught red-handed by the casino
security trying to steal a business-
```


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man's checkbook, receiving the status of *suspect-3*. As the security officers are questioning the victim, the con artist tries to sneak out without being noticed (**Sneak Around**). As she's already suspected of causing trouble and security has their eyes on her, the status is considered detrimental, and her Power for the action is reduced by 3.

If the con artist had an additional status of *limp-2* from an earlier bar brawl, it would also be detrimental to the action of **Sneaking Around** as it would make it harder for her to slip outside quickly before her absence is noticed. However, since only the highest detrimental status applies, she would still only suffer a reduction of 3 to this action's Power.

The con artist decides to first use her illusory powers to wear another man's face, using **Change the Game** to give herself a status of *unrecognizable-2*. Since this status is helpful for **Sneaking Around**, and since it is her highest helpful status, its tier is added to the Power of the action. Now the Power of the action is reduced by 3 and increased by 2, or all together, reduced by 1.

Just before she attempts her getaway, the con artist's crewmates set off the fire alarm in the casino using **Change the Game** and give her an *all-but-forgotten-4* status, which helps her escape. Since this is now the highest helpful status she has (higher than *unrecognizable-2*), it increases her Power by 4. Since she is still a *suspect-3*, she reduces her Power by 3, for a total Power increase of 1.

Statuses are not inherently negative or positive (although their tags may be). The same status can be helpful to one action and detrimental to another. For example:

A hard-boiled detective takes a *gunshot-wound-3* status. If he attempts to **Go Toe to Toe** by exchanging shots with the mobsters who are after him, being wounded certainly does not help; the status will be deemed detrimental for this action and the detective's Power will be reduced by 3. However, if the detective tries to **Convince** a compassionate nurse to help him, the MC could deem that being wounded actually strengthens his argument. The same status is then determined to be helpful and the detective gets to add 3 to the Power of the convincing action.

TIER 5 STATUSES: YOU'RE OUT

At tier 5, labeled **OUT**, the status becomes so damaging or intense that the character or object to whom it is attached becomes somehow incapacitated. The character cannot take actions for which the status would be helpful or detrimental until the status is removed. For example:

A cage fighter is hit too many times in a fight and becomes *vanquished-5*, so he can no longer take any actions that involve fighting or otherwise attempting to overcome his opponent (as he is now vanquished). He can, however, beg for mercy.

If the fight ended with him *passed-out-5*, he would not be able to take any actions that require him to be conscious. The MC might allow him to take passive actions, such as **Facing Danger** against a final blow with his *body of stone*.

Depending on the status, the character may continue to be fully functional in certain aspects while being entirely incapacitated in other fields. For example, a character who has a *frozen-heart-5* status may be able to perform tasks normally but lack the ability to relate to anyone else and perhaps even lose the will to live. The MC has the final say on which actions can or cannot be taken due to a tier-5 status.

For statuses that are mostly negative or debilitating, tier-5 marks the point when the status shuts down the character's ability to take actions that go against it. A *mind-controlled-5* character does everything her controller wishes her to do; a character *encased-in-a-web-5* is completely encapsulated and cannot move.

For statuses that are mostly positive or enhancing, tier-5 marks the point when they tip over and become detrimental. A warrior monk who can focus his concentration and grant himself *focused-3* and *unshakeable-concentration-4* statuses, would become *tunnel-visioned-5* or attain *nirvana-5* if he reached tier 5, ignoring all that is happening around him. Similarly, a potion of giant's strength

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could grant *immense-strength-4* but taken over to tier 5 would cause the drinker to take a *muscle-overload-5* status.

TIER 6 STATUSES: DEAD OR MIGHT AS WELL BE

At tier 6, labeled **MC**, the player loses control over his character and turns her over to the MC. The character is either dead due to the intensity of the status or permanently transformed into something else: a bronze statue, a mindless zombie, a villain, or the wind in the reeds. The MC and the player can decide together if the character remains in the story as an NPC or leaves the story. At any rate, her death or transformation is permanent and cannot be recovered as a normal status. Reversing a tier-6 status could be the subject of an entire story arc.

When appropriate and with the player's approval, the MC may choose to trade the tier-6 status for the loss of any number of power tags, the addition or loss of weakness tags, and/or the replacement of an entire theme. This can represent the permanent transformation the character has undergone. The character's tier-6 status is then reduced to tier 5.

While it is possible to give a status with a tier higher than 6 (*e.g. total-and-utter-destruction-10*), a character cannot take a status with a tier higher than 6. After a character **Faces Danger** (or applies other defenses), if the tier of the status is higher than 6, it is reduced to 6.

STATUSES OF YOUR ITEMS OR ALLIES

Items described by your themes, power tags, or story tags – such as Relics, weapons, vehicles, etc. – can take statuses separately from you. Such statuses apply to your action when you invoke tags describing the item. For example, if your *speed boat* received a status of *enriched-fuel-2*, and you were trying to outrun a jetski with **Go Toe to Toe**, the Power of your action would be increased by 2 (assuming there are no other statuses).

If an item takes a tier-5 status, you cannot take actions with that item until that status is reduced or removed. If an item takes a tier-6 status, you might permanently lose themes and tags related to that item, as explained under Tier 6, above. The MC determines which of your themes and tags are lost.

Non-player characters described by your themes, power tags, or story tags may be your secondary characters, which follow rules similar to items. For example, if you have a tag representing your ally *Malory, hired gun* and Malory receives the status *despondent-3*, the Power of relevant moves you make using Malory will be reduced by 3 (at least until you snap him out of it). Secondary characters are further explained on page 236.

You can reduce or remove your item and ally statuses as you do your own; see Reducing or Removing Statuses below.

THE DESCRIPTIVE SIDE OF STATUSES

A status' tag works like any other tag: it has both a game effect and a descriptive effect. While a status tag must describe a condition that roughly matches its tier, it may still affect and even prevent certain actions based on its descriptive nature alone.

For example, a *cuffed-2* status may make it harder for a character to punch someone or dial a phone; however, it makes it quite impossible to spread your hands apart, unless you first make a move to break the cuffs and remove the status. Similarly, a *drenched-in-gasoline-3* status means that the character smells of gasoline and could easily light up with even the slightest spark that touches her.

GIVING A STATUS

You can use the moves **Convince**, **Hit With All You've Got**, **Go Toe to Toe, and Change the Game**, as well as other game options, to give various statuses to both player and non-player characters, objects, groups, etc. When you give a status, the rules define only the tier of the status; *you* must choose an appropriate tag. In most cases, the tier of the status you give is equal to the Power of the move you used.

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DANGERS AND STATUSES

Non-player characters, objects, places, and forces that pose a threat to your character, your crew, or your investigation are called Dangers. Dangers can take statuses just like the lead characters. However, statuses affect Dangers differently than they do the player characters.

First, since Dangers are not player character and cannot use the Core Moves, they do not **Face Danger** against the statuses you give them. Instead, they use different moves and game features to reduce or avoid the statuses you impose on them.

Second, Dangers status spectrums may have 6 or less tiers and follow somewhat different rules. Some Dangers are defeated when they take a low tier status while others are only defeated when they take a tier-6 status. Dangers may also be completely immune to certain types of statuses. You and the other players do not know in advance which statuses are needed to overcome a Danger and at what tier. You simply must face them and find out for yourselves or **Investigate** to learn more about them.

Third, when a Danger takes a status, it can have one of three effects: contribute to the defeat of the Danger, affect the Danger's moves, or affect your moves. (When appropriate, however, the MC can choose multiple effects.)

If a status contributes to defeating a Danger, it is said to be on the Danger's **spectrums**. Such a status does not improve your moves, even if its tag is helpful to your move.

> Det. Enkidu is fighting an 8-feet-tall golden and armored angel, a knight of the Anunnaki gods sent to destroy her. During the fight, the detective imposes a status of *injured-3* on the angel. Because this status is on the angel's spectrums, the MC rules the status does not help the detective with her move. Next time she **Goes Toe to Toe** with the angel, the status is not considered a helpful status, even if an injured angel is easier to fight, because the status already has a different effect on the angel.

If a status affects a Danger's moves, your moves will not be affected:

> Later in the fight, the detective imposes a status of *head-ringer-1* on the angel. The MC chooses that this status will weaken the angel's moves, so now it delivers only a *system-shock-4* instead of *electrocuted-5* with its alien spear. If Enkidu then tries to strike the angel using **Hit With All You've Got**, *head-ringer-1* is not considered a helpful status, even if a dizzy angel is easier to strike, because the status already has a different effect on the angel.

If, however, the MC rules that a Danger's status applies to your moves, you treat it as your own status.

> If the MC had chosen that this status would affects Det. Enkidu, the detective would count the angel's *head-ringer-1* as her own helpful status, increasing her Power by 1 for **Hit With All You've Got** (assuming she has no higher helpful statuses).

> Losing the fight, the angel uses his divine light to give himself a status of *blinding-brilliance-2*. The MC rules this status affects Enkidu, so she treats it as her own detrimental status and reduces the Power of her next strike by 2 (assuming she has no higher detrimental statuses).

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TAKING A STATUS

When your character is about to take a status, the MC or the player giving the status will name the tag and the tier of the status. If your character has the ability to defend herself from such a status (depending on her tags, the status, and the situation in the story), she can momentarily take the spotlight and make a **Face Danger** move against that status. As explained below, a successful **Face Danger** move allows your character to reduce the tier of the status, perhaps even completely prevent it. If your character cannot defend herself against the status, that is, she does not have the right tags or the opportunity to do so, you cannot **Face Danger**.

Furthermore, when you fail a move and the MC chooses to give your character a status, the MC can also choose to deny your ability to **Face Danger**. This reflects a moment of weakness for your character: an exposed chink in her armor (figuratively or literally), a mistake on her part that was exploited by her adversaries, or an onslaught of trouble she simply could not handle.

If you do not prevent the status using **Face Danger**, you take the status (whether with its full or reduced tier). Take a tracking card, circle the status icon ( ), write down the tag, and mark the tier:

STATUSES ON THE SAME SPECTRUM

Statuses that have similar effects – or in other words, are *on the same spectrum* – stack together. A spectrum groups statuses of similar nature, for example statuses describing physical injuries such as *graze-1, open-cut-2,* and *broken-rib-3;* a team's morale such as *inspired-2*, *encouraged-1*, and *CHARGE!!!!-4*; or trouble with the police such as *wanted-man-5*, *blacklisted-3*, and *I'm-watching-you-1*. Naturally, identical statuses, such as *hysterical-3* and *hysterical-3*, are always on the same spectrum.

When you take a status and you already have other statuses, check with the MC whether they are on the same spectrum. ("Are *dislocated-shoulder-3* and *punch-to-the-gut-2* on the same spectrum?" "Hell yeah. They're both on the spectrum of PAIN!"). If the statuses are on the same spectrum, they stack as follows:

- **A higher status supersedes the existing status.** If the tier of the new status is higher than what's on your card, erase the existing tier and mark the tier of the new status instead. For example, *drowsy-3* replaces *tired-1*. You can update the tag to reflect the union of both tags. For example, *broken-windshield-2* and *dented-3* become *busted-out-3*.

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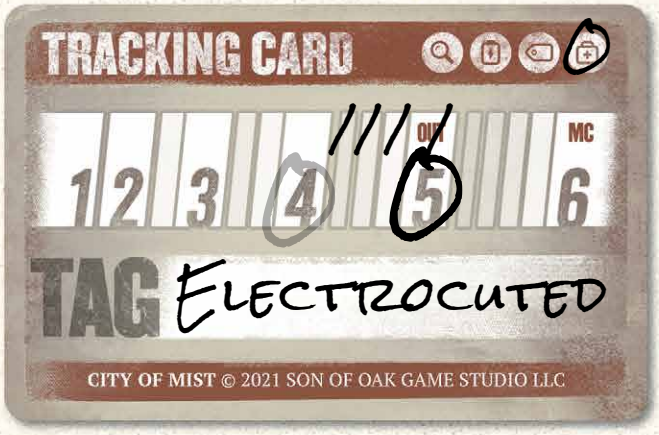
- **Two equal statuses become a single status, with the tier increased by 1.** If the tier of the new status is equal to what's on your card, erase the existing tier and mark the next tier on the card. Update the tag accordingly. So *shamed-2* and *shamed-2* become *humiliated-3*.
- **A lower status gradually adds pips to the existing status. When you get enough pips, the status increases to the next tier.** If the tier of the new status is lower than what's on your card, mark a number of boxes equal to the new tier to the right of the current tier. If there are already boxes marked, start right of the rightmost marked box. If you mark the next tier, it becomes the new tier for this spectrum. Erase the previous tier. For example, if you were already *shocked-4*:

  Taking a status of *zapped-1*, you would mark one box right of tier 4. The tier of this status spectrum would still be 4.

  Taking a status of *zapped-2*, you would mark two boxes right of tier 4. The tier of this status spectrum would still be 4.

  Taking two *zapped-2* statuses, one after the other, you would first mark the two boxes right of tier 4. (This does not affect the tier, yet.) Then you would mark the two boxes right of that, marking the box for tier 5. From this point on, the status has increased to tier 5. The tag changes accordingly, presumably to *electrocuted-5*.



  Taking two *systems-shock-3* statuses, one after the other, you would first mark the three boxes right of tier 4. (This does not affect the tier, yet.) Then you would mark three boxes right of that, marking the box for tier 5 and two boxes right of it. From this point on, the status has increased to tier 5. The tag changes accordingly, presumably to *electrocuted-5*. If you take additional statuses with a tier lower than 5, you will start to mark boxes from the third box right of 5.

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DURATION OF STATUSES

Unless otherwise stated, statuses are **ongoing**: they remain in effect until removed or until the conditions in the story dictate that they have expired. Therefore, the duration of a status can vary greatly. For example, *bound-in-ice-5* can expire within a few hours as the ice melts away or even immediately if the Snow Queen so wishes, while *a-curse-of-ugliness-2* may last forever. An ongoing status affects all relevant actions taken by the character until it expires (unless there is a greater helpful or detrimental status). Tier-5 statuses are ongoing by definition, even if they were created as a temporary status.

Some statuses are **temporary**: they expire after being applied to a single action, or when the conditions in the story dictate so. For example, if a *distracted-1* status is applied to an **Investigate** move made by a player, reducing its Power by 1, it will expire when the move is resolved and will not affect additional moves. So long as the player does not make a move to which *distracted-1* applies, the status will remain in effect until the distracting effect ends (e.g., when the colorful dragon firework parade moves away). Temporary and ongoing statuses are different in nature; they cannot be on the same spectrum and therefore cannot stack with one another.

Permanent statuses do not expire and cannot be normally recovered. Tier-6 statuses are permanent by definition, even if they were created as temporary or ongoing statuses.

When a status expires, erase its tag and tier from the tracking card and return the card to the deck.

REDUCING OR REMOVING STATUSES

The moves **Change the Game** and **Montage (Downtime)**, as well as other game options, represent actions that your character takes to alleviate or fix unwanted statuses. In game terms, these moves reduce the tiers of statuses you have taken or even remove them completely.

Change the Game represents an action taken during a scene to remove a status from either yourself, your allies, or your gear. Like any move, it requires the means and time to perform the action. For example, without using magical means, a *broken-rib-3* cannot be healed within several hours. However, instead of healing the broken rib, you can try to bandage it well enough to allow your ally to function until he can receive medical attention. In such a case, the MC can allow your move but limit the number of tiers you can remove from the status.

Montage (Downtime) offers the option to spend your downtime recovering from statuses received during your last activity. As in the move's description (page 201), you can only recover statuses that can be reasonably resolved during the available downtime and with the resources you have.

When you reduce the tier of a status, erase its previous tier and any boxes marked right of the new, lower tier from the tracking card. If you reduce the tier of a status to zero, the status is removed. Erase its tag and tier from the tracking card and return the card to the deck.

DOES A STATUS APPLY TO THE ATTEMPT TO REMOVE IT?

Most of the time, a status does not apply to the action of removing it. In other words, it cannot weaken a **Change the Game** move made to remove it. For example, if a character is *dizzy-2* and she tries to shake it off, the status *dizzy-2* does not apply to her **Change the Game** move.

However, there are several cases where a status *is* considered detrimental to the attempt to remove it:

- **When it's especially hard for a character to treat her own status**, the MC may rule the same status applies to the **Change the Game** move that the character is making. This depends on the nature of the status. For example, if a character is *depressed-2*, the status may count as detrimental to the character's attempt to fight depression, reducing the Power of her **Change the Game** move by 2. Another player character who tries to help the depressed character would not be affected.

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- **When a status is especially persistent because of its nature** (as described in its tag), it can even affect other characters who attempt to remove it. For example, if you make the move **Change the Game** to break a persistent *magical-slumber-5* curse cast on your lover, your Power would be reduced by 5.

The only way to negate this effect is to make the move under ideal conditions. This requires that your character not only have the ability to make the move but also the time, knowledge, skill, power, gear, and assistance needed to ideally handle the condition of the status. For example, to dispel your lover's magical sleep without applying the status to your **Change the Game** move, you must know the required mystical knowledge, have the rare ingredients, and perform the ceremony on the night of the full moon. To heal your own *broken-rib-3* without reducing your Power by 3, you must be in a good medical facility, have the training to patch yourself up or at least access to doctors who can do so, and enough time to let yourself heal.

The MC has the final call on whether a status applies to the attempt to remove it, and she should decide on a case-by-case basis.

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CLUES

Your *City of Mist* story always involves an investigation. You and your crewmates are searching for answers to strange cases: incidents that cannot be explained, happenings that hide a deeper truth, events veiled by the Mist. To uncover the truth, you must put one and two together and follow the trail of breadcrumbs that will lead you to shocking discoveries. This trail is made of Clues.

Clues are a game resource that can be traded for information. The most common way to receive Clues is by making the **Investigate** move (page 192). Some other moves and game options also grant Clues.

Clues are a resource possessed by a player; they are not the same as evidence or information gathered by your character within the story, although the two are related, as explained below.

GAINING CLUES

Whenever you gain Clues, the rules tell you how many Clues you gain, e.g., one Clue or five Clues. Every Clue or batch of Clues you obtain has a **method** and a **source** that are determined by the action you took to receive the Clues. The method of your Clues is the means and techniques you used to obtain the information as well as the circumstances under which your character received it. Their source indicates where you got your information.

For example, if you research a mythological deity by going through crumbling tomes in the Old Quarter Library, then the method of your Clues is "research" and their source is "the Old Quarter Library". If you have a tense conversation with one Jimmy Rudolfi, a reluctant witness of a murder, any Clues generated will have "questioning" as method and "Jimmy Rudolfi" as source. Even scoping out a creepy graveyard before you enter can land you some Clues, with the method "scouting" and the source "graveyard".

The method and source of your Clues are used to track the origin of each set of Clues. If you wish, you can be even more specific and include the time and place, for example: "questioning Jimmy Rudolfi outside the 24/7 diner, a little before midnight on Thursday". You cannot change the method or the source of Clues you have, only obtain new ones using different methods and/or tapping different sources.

SPENDING CLUES

You can spend Clues to learn more about the subject of your investigation by asking the MC questions. Each Clue allows you to ask the MC a single question. **You can ask any question you can think of**, for example:

If you're doing research in the Old Quarter Library, you can ask:

- Who is Tezcatlipoca?
- Who is the modern-day manifestation of Tezcatlipoca?
- What are Tezcatlipoca's weaknesses?
- What does Tezcatlipoca want the most?
- How can I get Tezcatlipoca to serve me?
- Who are the mythological enemies of Tezcatlipoca?

If you're questioning a witness you can ask:

- Who is the killer?
- Is this witness telling the truth?
- Where was this witness in the time of the murder?
- What is the witness trying to hide?
- What does the witness think about me?
- What detail did I miss?

If you're scoping out a graveyard, you can ask:

- Is there anyone else here?
- What is my best escape route in case of trouble?
- Where is the grave I am looking for?
- Are there any dark forces at work here?
- What here is not as it seems?

There is one caveat for asking questions with Clues: you cannot use your Clues to ask for information that cannot be obtained using the method you used. For example, unless you used mind reading or psychological profiling, you won't be able to ask the MC "What are the witness's repressed childhood traumas?"

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THE MC'S RESPONSE

In response to your question, the MC will provide information based on the case that she has prepared (some of the investigation threads are pre-written while others are improvised, see Chapter 2: Behind the Scenes in the MC Toolkit). However, the MC does not have to expose the whole truth about the subject of your investigation. The MC can choose either to give you a **straight answer** to your question or to give you a **solid lead**. A solid lead is a useful detail that, when combined with other details, can point you toward the answer. For example, if you ask "Who is the killer?", a straight answer is "Jackie the barmaid." while a solid lead could be "There are no signs of struggle. The victim knew the killer."

The MC will provide the information based on the source of your Clues: the books and people in the Old Quarter Library, what Jimmy Rudolfi knows and how he behaves, what can be discovered in the graveyard. The MC cannot lie or provide false information – she must speak the truth, even if not the whole truth (with the exception of saying half-truths as explained under the **Investigate** move).

When the MC provides the answer or lead, she also translates it into the story, describing how your character obtains or deduces this information. For example:

Alex (playing Declan L'Estrange): I'll spend a Clue from my library research. Tell me, MC, who is the modern-day manifestation of Tezcatlipoca?

MC: You read through academic books and transcriptions in Spanish, German, and Nahuatl for hours, before you suddenly stop on a page showing an ancient Aztec symbol associated with Xochiquetzal, a goddess Tezcatlipoca once kidnapped. You remember this symbol; it was tattooed on the shoulder of the lady in the cocktail party.

Alex: She can lead me to him!

Or:

Jerry (playing Det. Enkidu): Good, I have 3 Clues from scouting the graveyard. I'll spend one to know if there is anyone else here.

MC: There is. As you look over the lichen-stained stone wall, you see the hidden silhouette of a tall man in a raincoat, solemnly holding an umbrella over a grave.

You never know how much of the available information the MC chose to reveal or whether it was a straight answer or a lead, unless the MC chooses to divulge that. In the above example, there may be others in the graveyard; to know for certain, the player would need to spend another Clue and ask "Is there anyone else there?"

If the MC reveals interesting information, you can ask about that too. For example,

Jerry: I want to spend my second Clue by asking: does this man pose a threat to me?

MC: Interesting question. After studying the outline of his rain coat, you see the barrel of a rifle poking out of one of his sleeves. He's standing motionless by the grave; this could be a trap.

A Clue is considered spent only if you receive an answer or a lead for your question. If you cannot get an answer or a lead for a question you asked, your Clue is not spent. For example, if you question Jimmy Rudolfi and ask "Who is the killer?" but there is absolutely nothing to learn about the identity of the killer from Jimmy, the MC will tell you that and your Clue will not be spent. The MC has the final call on whether an answer to a Clue is useful enough to consider the Clue spent.

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THE ROLE OF THE MC: PACING THE INVESTIGATION

As the MC, your option to provide a solid lead instead of a straight answer allows you to control the trickle of information delivered to the players and their characters. You should provide leads instead of answers when you feel that the lead characters should work harder to discover the answers to the questions the players are asking. Conversely, you should provide straight answers when it's time to further the plot or expand on an interesting subject.

For example, if a player asks "Who is the killer?" in a murder investigation, you are more likely to provide a solid lead than a straight answer, to prevent the investigation from ending then and there.

However, remember that Clues are a game resource that is earned through taking risks and applying the character's abilities. When a player spends a Clue, they should always get something valuable for it.

USING CLUES IN A CONVERSATION

When an investigation involves speaking to other characters, make sure you highlight the difference between the questions and answers of the players and MC and those of the characters. There is a difference between questions asked in the story by a character and the questions asked by a player who is spending Clues. Similarly, the answers provided by the MC to the player are not necessarily spoken by the characters in the scene.

A character can ask another non-player character questions within the story as part of a conversation without spending Clues:

Tyrone (playing Salamander): As we're both standing in the rain watching the warehouse burn, I invite the news reporter to shack under the piece of newspaper I'm holding over my head. I ask her, "care to share my umbrella?"

MC: She looks you up and down and answers, "not very fancy, but it will do."

Tyrone: "What news channel do you work for?", I ask.

MC: She turns her back to you, and points at the logo on her windbreaker. "Channel 5".

When the player wants answers for information that isn't readily available, he can spend Clues to get them. The player can decide whether the questions he asks are also asked by his character in the conversation:

Tyrone: I want to spend a Clue to ask: What is she really here for?

MC: Okay. Do you ask her directly or just study her movements?

Tyrone: Salamander isn't one for refinement. He asks, "But you're not really here for your news channel, are you?"

Or as non-verbal actions:

Tyrone: Salamander isn't one for refinement, but he feels it's better to be subtle. While he continues the small-talk, he studies the reporter carefully.

Similarly, the MC can provide the answer or lead through dialog:

MC: She takes a deep sigh. "I'm looking for my sister. She's been involved with the people who own this warehouse. You wouldn't know anything about that?"

Or, alternatively, outside of dialog:

MC: "I'm just doing my job," she says, and you know she's lying. While she is watching the warehouse going up in flames, you spot a photocopied paper popping out of her backpack, a missing persons file with a picture of a girl who bears a striking resemblance to her."

CLUES FROM A PLAYER CHARACTER

You can obtain Clues by investigating another player's character. When you spend them, the player of that character provides the answers instead of the MC. The same applies to you when another player gets a Clue on you. While your characters may lie in the story, as players you must provide truthful information: either a straight answer or a solid lead.

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OPTIONAL RULE: REVERSED CLUES

Instead of asking for details, players can spend Clues to introduce details into the investigation. When you spend a Clue this way, you loosely describe what your investigation turned up and the MC then adds details to tie it into the case she prepared.

For example, while inspecting a crime scene, you spend a Clue to say your character finds a matchbook. The MC completes the details by saying the matchbook has the logo of the famous Ambrosia nightclub with a scribble saying "Don't forget me!". In another instance, you could be searching files and say that you find a record of an incident that is similar to the one you are investigating. The MC thinks about how this could tie in to the case (she may or may not have another similar incident ready in her notes) and describes additional details about the related incident. Or a player can say that they reach out to their contact "Handbag, the Fence", who has some hot leads for them about missing works of art.

Reversed Clues are simply another way of asking a question, one that gives the players more freedom in narrating their actions. By finding a matchbook the player is asking "Where can I find more information about this crime scene?"; finding a record of a similar incident is akin to asking "Has there been a similar incident before?", etc.

Note that the details introduced by the player must match the method and source of the Clues, just as when spending Clues normally.

Since reversed Clues require a great amount of improvisation on the MC's part, the MC should consider whether they can be used in your game. If reversed Clues are used, the MC may always negotiate the details with the player in order to better integrate it with the existing case. For example:

Megan (playing Goodfellow): So, since Donna Rice stole my money, I'm going to turn her apartment upside down until I find something that will tell me where she went. I spend one Clue to find a picture hidden in the back of drawer: it's Donna and her mother in front of a famous mansion.

The MC reviews her notes for the case and sees that it would be a stretch to tie Donna's to the City's elite, but her childhood home in the suburbs is important to the investigation.

MC: How about instead of a mansion you see a suburban house with a unique green roof; if you ask around, you might be able to find it.

Megan: Great. Whatever helps me catch her!

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BANKING CLUES

Most of the time you'll be spending your Clues the moment you get them. However, you always have the option to keep the Clues you gained for later use. Your Clues retain their method and source: the method you used when you obtained them and the source as it was when you conducted your investigation. When you spend Clues later, the questions you can ask and the answers you can get are still limited by their method and source. In other words, you cannot use your banked Clues to ask questions on a different subject. Spending banked Clues could be described by flashbacking to your conversation with the witness and remembering additional details, or reviewing your notes from your research at the library and finding new information.

You can track your banked Clues using a tracking card. Take a card, circle the Clue icon (🔍) and mark the number of remaining Clues on the status bar; write down the method and source of your Clues in the TAG field. When you spend your Clues, update the number of remaining Clues. Discard the card when you have no remaining Clues of this origin.

Clues expire when the information they represent becomes obsolete. For example, when you scope the graveyard for dangers and gain Clues, they expire when you leave the graveyard. If you came back, you would need to scope the graveyard again to learn if there were new dangers lurking there.

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JUICE

The scenes you play out in *City of Mist* are dynamic and dangerous: a villainous media magnate can besmirch your reputation, giving you a status of *infamous-3*; hungry ghosts can give you paralytic kisses that burn out your tags; and an army of killer rag dolls can close in on your crew and cut you off from each other. As an investigator, a vigilante, a criminal, or just someone trying to survive in the City, you need to be able to take actions that change the battlefield in your favor. Rallying your crew and leading them out of a cult's underground complex or conjuring a pack of wraith-like wolves from the abyss are all in a day's work for a Rift.

Juice points represent your ability to shape what is going on around you by using your abilities, resources, and allies. They can stand for an advantage in battle, a healing touch, psychological stability, or even general preparedness when you pull out just the right equipment out of the back of your pick-up truck. They can also reflect Mythical resources like a cloud of elemental power, the power to conjure beings and items, or spells you dig up in your grimoire.

In game terms, Juice points allow you to create and remove story tags, give and remove statuses, and burn other players tags, giving you immense freedom to use your character's abilities creatively.

The most common way to receive Juice is by making the **Change the Game** move (page 182), but other moves and game options also grant Juice.

GAINING JUICE

When you gain Juice, the rules tell you how many Juice points you gain, e.g., four Juice or two Juice.

Every batch of Juice points you receive has a **method**: the means you used to gain that advantage and the specific circumstances in which you did so. Your Juice's method is determined by the action you took to gain it.

For example, if you open a crate of weapons in the middle of a downtown shootout, handing out gun after grenade after gun to your henchmen, then the method of your Juice is "dispensing arms out of a crate". If you summon the restorative powers of Gaia in an effort to heal your fellow investigator, your method is "healing powers". If you sing a mesmerizing siren's song to captivate the attention of all who hear, your method is "enchanting song". Once Juice is generated, you cannot change its method, only obtain more Juice using different methods.

SPENDING JUICE

You can spend your Juice at any point in the game: before, during, or after a move made by you, another player, or the MC. However, for your Juice to affect another player's move, you must use it before the dice are rolled for that move.

The effects you wish to generate with your Juice must fit its method and the circumstances in which you are using it. For example, if your method was "healing powers" you cannot use your

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Juice to conjure a suitcase full of money or give yourself an advantage in a battle of wits. Similarly, if you are an ordinary paramedic patching up a crewmate in the heat of battle, the MC may rule that you cannot heal the injuries completely, only reduce the pain and provide first aid.

Juice points can be spent to activate one or more of the following options:

CREATE A NEW STORY TAG

For each Juice point spent, you can add a new temporary story tag of your choice to the scene. All story tags you create must be distinct from one another. For example, depending on your abilities, you can:

- control the elements and make the scene *stormy*
- empty an oil tank from your running speedboat to create an *oil spill*
- call *the police*, bringing them into the scene
- search your spellbook for *a spell that summons fog*
- search your backpack for *a compass*, *a climbing axe*, or *a flare gun*
- call your lawyer for some *legal advice*
- conjure a *nightmarish horror*, give it *claws*, and make it *difficult to banish*

BURN A TAG

For each Juice point spent, you can burn a temporary or ongoing story tag, removing it from the scene. For example, depending on your abilities, you can:

- control the elements and disperse the *stormy* weather
- lie to *the police* to make them leave the place
- throw the *revolver* out the window so no-one can grab it
- calm down everyone and remove the *gang animosity*

Alternatively, for each point of Juice spent, you can temporarily burn a power tag belonging to a fellow player's character or a permanent story tag. A temporarily burnt tag is recovered after the target makes any one move (without using the burnt tag, of course). If this option is made ongoing, using the **Change the Game** move options, the tag is burnt "for real" and can be recovered using the normal methods for recovering burnt tags (see page 210). You cannot spend Juice during another player's spotlight to burn a tag they invoked in their move.

Finally, for each point of Juice spent, you can burn a crispy tag (crew or extra theme power tag). It can be recovered normally.

GIVE A STATUS

You can give one target a temporary status of your choice with one tier for each point of Juice spent. For example, you can spend 2 Juice to give a target the status *glued-2*. You cannot increase an existing status using Juice, except by giving a status on the same spectrum, which will stack with the existing status as usual (see Statuses on the Same Spectrum, page 223). Note that temporary and ongoing statuses do not stack.

You can divide your Juice points between different targets to give each of them a temporary status of your choice with one tier for each point of Juice

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you spend on that target. For example, you can spend 3 Juice to give one target the status *dazzled-1* and another target the status *shocked-2*, or give three different targets the status *dazzled-1*.

The target of your status can be your character, another player's character, or a non-player character or object. If you choose to give the status to an unwilling player character, they can make the **Face Danger** move to reduce or avoid it.

For example, depending on your abilities, you can:

- prepare to acrobatically evade the guards with your feline grace, making yourself *uncatchable-2*
- analyze an opponent's fighting style and give her the status *exposed-weakness-3*
- take over the lighting and sound in a nightclub to give your crewmate *spotlight-1*
- put yourself in the line of fire to give a helpless bystander *shielded-4*
- put a sleeping spell on the bounty hunter *(drowsy-3)* and his Rottweiler *(sleepy-1)*
- get your motorbike's engine *revved-up-2* to prepare for a crazy jump
- use your martial arts training to give yourself *deadly-strikes-2* and your enemy *exposed-1*

REDUCE OR REMOVE A STATUS

For each point of Juice spent, you can reduce the tier of any single status by one. If you reduce a status to tier zero, you remove it altogether. For example, you can spend 1 Juice to reduce a *mesmerized-2* status to *distracted-1*, or spend 2 Juice to remove *mesmerized-2* altogether.

You can divide your Juice points between different statuses to reduce each of them by one tier for each point of Juice you spent on that status. You can affect statuses attached to different targets.

You can affect a status either before or after it is attached to a target. For example, you can reduce or even prevent *shrapnel-wounds-4* by using Juice to block the explosion before it hits the target or, if the damage was already done, you can use Juice to accelerate the target's natural healing (depending on its method).

For example, depending on your abilities, you can:

- use your medical training to reduce your buddy's *broken-leg-4* to *leg-in-cast-2*
- pull it together after being *drugged-3* and reduce it to *dazed-1*
- send a showgirl from your cabaret to distract the mobsters and remove their *nervous-and-alert-2*
- use your empathic connection with your mother to help her overcome *infuriated-4*
- cut the ropes binding your two crewmates, removing *bound-2* from one and *loosely-bound-1* from the other
- block the claws of a Manticore coming right at your face and reduce *crushed-skull-6* to *slashed-face-3*

BANKING JUICE

Since you can only use Juice to create effects that are related to its method of generation, most Juice expires soon after it is generated as its method becomes obsolete.

For example, if you tried to suck the alcohol out of a *drunk-2* crewmate and generated 3 Juice, the remaining Juice point (after removing the tier-2 status) would expire immediately because you can only use it to suck the alcohol out of your drunk crewmate in the current circumstances and your crewmate is now sober.

If your method remains relevant for longer, you can save Juice you generated for later use. For example, if you summon the dead to your help and generate 2 Juice, you can create one story tag *zombie* now and bank the remaining one point of Juice for later in the scene. Depending on your method, the MC may rule that your Juice can be banked for any length of time.

Your banked Juice retains its method until you use it or until it expires because its method becomes obsolete. You can use it at any time appropriate to your method. However, **while you have Juice banked, you cannot generate any more Juice using the same or similar methods**. All the game elements you used to create this batch of Juice (power tags, story tags, statuses, and any other game options) are locked down: they cannot be used to generate more Juice until you either spend your remaining banked Juice or discard it. You may discard your banked Juice at any time. Furthermore, **batches of Juice never stack together**; you cannot add them to make a bigger batch.

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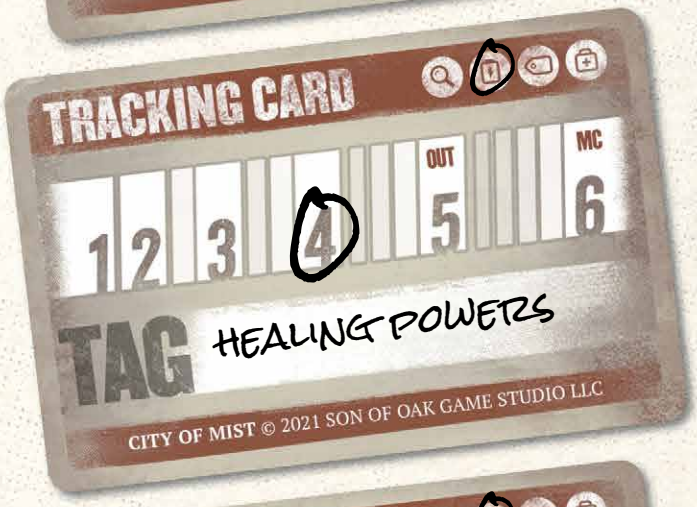
You can track your banked Juice using a tracking card. Take a card, circle the Juice icon ( ) and mark the number of remaining Juice points on the status bar; then write down the method of your Juice in the TAG field.

When you spend your Juice, update the number of remaining Juice points. When all your Juice is gone or when it expires, clear the tracking card and return the card to the deck.



GRIT MODE: JUICE

The grittier your story is, the harder injuries are to heal and the harder it gets to overcome trouble and adversity. If Grit Mode is activated in your game (see page 176), you can choose to make things harder for the players by limiting the options to **BURN A TAG** and **REDUCE OR REMOVE A STATUS** to temporary tags and statuses only. In order to affect ongoing story tags and statuses, a player must score 10 or more on your **Change the Game** move and spend a Juice point to activate the option "Make the effect ongoing".

OPTIONAL RULE: RECOVER A BURNT TAG WITH JUICE

Normally, burning a tag is a lasting effect which continues through at least one scene until your character has the option to use the **Montage (Downtime)** move to restore her burnt tags. This is true whether your tag was burnt by someone else or voluntarily by you, for a hit. As an optional rule, the MC may allow players in your game to spend Juice to choose on this additional option:

RECOVER A BURNT POWER TAG (1 OR 3 JUICE)

For every three points of Juice you spend, you may recover any single burnt power tag, whether it belongs to your character or to another player character. As always, the method of your Juice must reasonably allow you to do so. This depends on the story circumstances under which you lost the ability to use the tag. If the tag is only temporarily burnt or if the tag is crispy (crew and extra themes power tag), you may recover it by spending just one point of Juice. To remove a permanently burnt tag you must be able to remove permanent effects, as in the **Change the Game** move, in addition to spending three Juice for this effect.

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HELP & HURT

The Help & Hurt points you established with each one of your crewmates during crew creation are a special type of Juice points and function in a similar way. The method for the Help & Hurt Juice is based on your ongoing relationship with each crewmate. Therefore, Help & Hurt points do not expire as long as that crewmate is in the story. Furthermore, Help & Hurt points can only generate effects related to your character's relationship with that particular crewmate.

Help points represent your desire and ability to help your crewmate, whether by taking actions to help her or by helping with the actions she takes. They can only be used to create effects that enhance actions you take for your crewmate's sake or enhance actions your crewmate takes. In rare cases, when you believe interfering with your crewmate's action would serve her best interest, you may use a Help point to create effects that interfere with her action.

Hurt points represent your desire and ability to hurt your crewmate, whether by taking actions to hurt her or by interfering with the actions she takes. They can only be used to create effects that enhance actions you take to hurt your crewmate or interfere with actions your crewmate takes. In rare cases, when you believe supporting your crewmate's action would hurt her, you may use a Hurt point to create effects that enhance her action.

You receive new Help & Hurt points at the end of every session, using the move **Geek Out During Credits (Session End)** (see page 202).

SECONDARY CHARACTERS

Characters and beings that feature exclusively or mostly on your themes and tags are considered your **secondary characters**. For example, if you have a Defining Relationship with a rescue dog or a set of tags describing a sidekick, they could be a secondary character. Characters and beings you create using story tags may also be secondary characters, if you have control over them.

For all intents and purposes, secondary characters are considered an extension of your character. When you receive the spotlight, you can choose to act with one of your secondary characters instead of your primary one; you do not receive spotlight more often for having secondary characters.

> Finding himself cornered by hired armed thugs, Merlin the Wizard summons a green dragon, creating the story tags *green dragon*, *scaly*, and *talons*. The dragon is now an extension of Merlin. Elliott, who is playing Merlin, controls the dragon's actions, describing what the dragon does, where it goes, what it looks like, etc.

When your themes and tags refer to a character whose role in the series extends beyond your primary character's story, the MC decides whether this character is a secondary character of yours or not. If not, you can use these tags when you take actions that involve that character, but not *as* that character.

> Clare's character, Charmaine, has a Routine theme named Assistant To The Mayor, including a tag *friendly with the mayor*. The MC rules that since the mayor is a major character in the series in and of herself, she is not an extension of Charmaine and therefore is not considered a secondary character of Clare. However, Clare can still invoke the tag when Charmaine tries to **Convince** the mayor to do something.

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You can portray your secondary characters, describing their actions, words, behavior, and appearance as you would for your primary character. Alternatively, you can choose to have the MC portray your secondary character and decide on her actions. Regardless of what you choose, you can always invoke tags related to this character to support your moves.

> Lamar, who is playing Sullivan, decides to leave Sullivan's sidekick, Sánchez, in the hands of Alice the MC. He thinks it would make Sullivan's interactions with Sánchez more interesting as he and the MC will each play a character (it's weird to have a dialog with yourself). However, Lamar can still invoke tags related to Sánchez when he's taking action with Sullivan.
>
> When Sullivan later falls off a fire escape stair, Lamar invokes the power tag *saves my butt every time* from his theme My Sancho Panza (which describes his relationship with Sánchez) in his **Face Danger** move. The MC says that Sánchez shows up at the last minute, pushing a dumpster right under Sullivan and saving him from breaking his neck.

PLAYING SECONDARY CHARACTERS

When you describe your secondary character taking action, you use the rules in the same way you would for your primary character. For example, if the actions of your secondary character trigger a move, you play the move as you would for your primary character.

> Elliott wants to use the dragon to defend Merlin from the thugs. When he receives the spotlight, he **Hits With All He's Got**, using the tags *green dragon* and *talons*.

Statuses taken by a secondary character affect only actions you are taking with that secondary character; they do not affect your primary character's actions (unless they are somehow made relevant to you). You can remove statuses from secondary characters using the same moves and game options you use to remove them from yourself.

> The slashed muggers open fire at the dragon, inflicting *full-of-lead-4*. Elliott rolls **Face Danger** for the dragon using *green dragon* and *scaly*, and reduces it to *gunshot-wounds-3*. This status affects any further relevant actions with the dragon, but it does not affect Merlin's actions.

The MC rules when it is possible for your main and secondary characters to combine their tags, depending on the action taken:

> Merlin and the dragon now team up to vanquish "the foul bandits". However, since they are attacking separately, one with *talons* and one with *bolts of fire*, the MC rules Elliott will make a separate move for each of them. Elliott then decides to have Merlin support the dragon's attack with **Change the Game**, while the dragon will **Hits With All It's Got**.
>
> After surviving this onslaught, the last thug standing takes a final shot at Merlin. Elliott rolls **Face Danger** for Merlin. Since the dragon is nearby and can easily block the shot, the MC rules Elliott can invoke *green dragon* and *scaly* to boost Merlin's Power.

Secondary characters can be incapacitated and killed separately from you. If a secondary character takes a tier-5 status, you cannot take actions with that character until that status is reduced or removed. If a secondary character takes a tier-6 status, you might permanently lose themes and tags related to that character, as explained under Statuses (page 218). The MC determines which of your themes and tags are lost.

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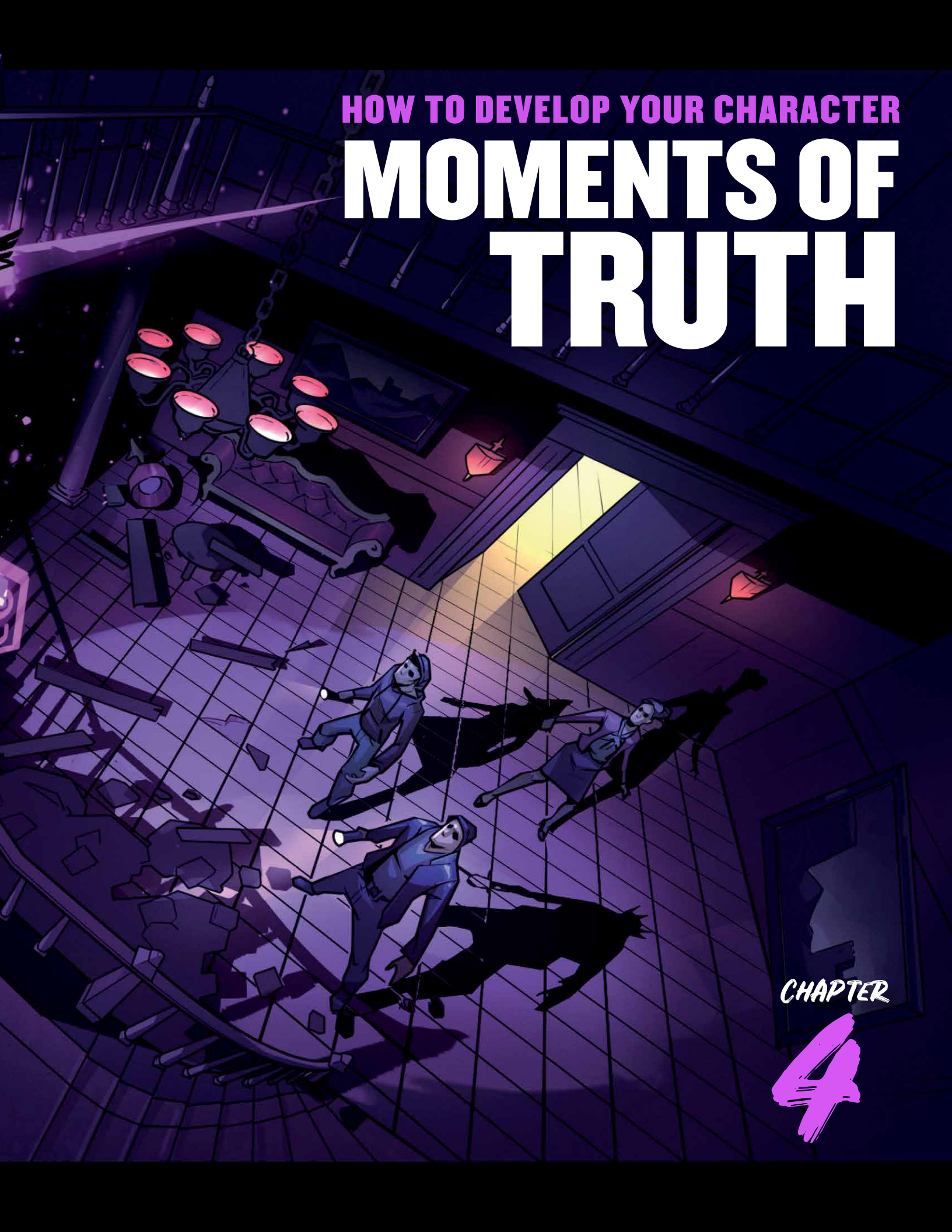
EXCALIBUR?
WE BETTER FIND HER BEFORE THIS GETS OUT OF HAND.
CLICK!
NOOOOOO!!!
THERE'S NO PULSE! HE'S DEAD!!!
HER OWN FATHER...

BABE, WA'RE HERE TO TALK!
NO MORE.
"NO MORE WIELDING ME AS A TOOL."
"NOT FOR POWER..."
"NOT TO HELP OTHERS..."
"NOT FOR KNOWLEDGE..."
I'M FREE OF YOU ALL.

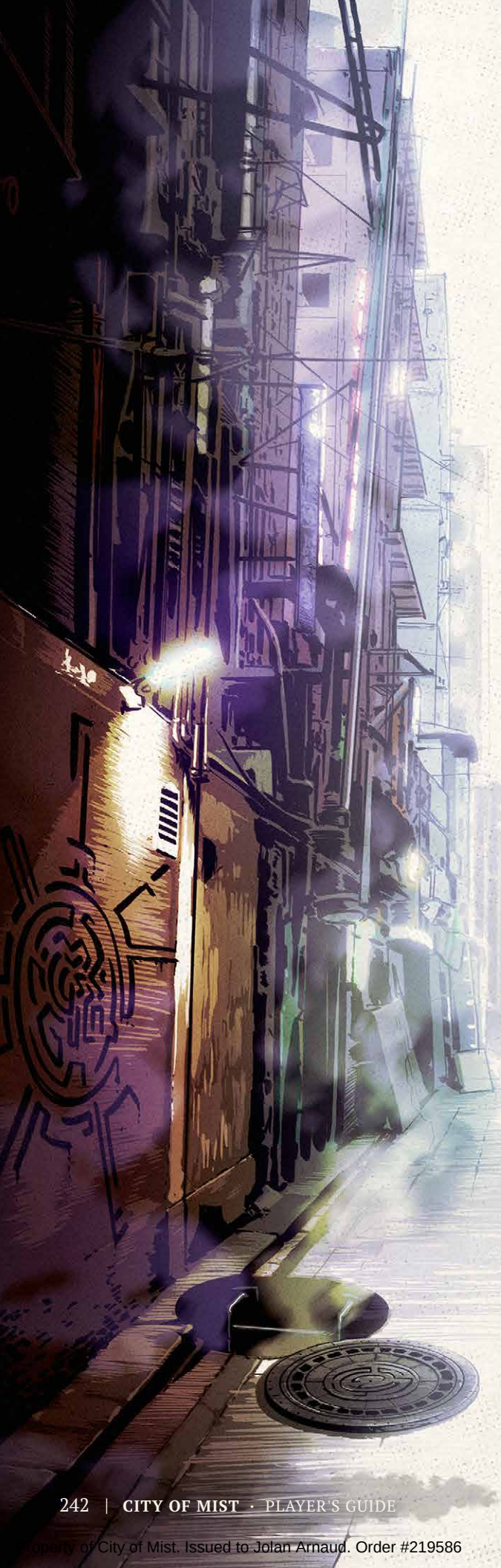
I'M FREE OF MYSELF!
I AM JUSTICE...
...AND DESTRUCTION!



HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR CHARACTER

MOMENTS OF TRUTH

CHAPTER 4



As your group's story in *City of Mist* evolves, your characters will go through experiences that will change them irrevocably. Whether they will be harrowed by their own weaknesses, forced to make gut-wrenching choices, or haunted by the consequences of their decisions, the lead characters continuously learn, grow, and reveal new dimensions within themselves: perhaps they unlock strange new legendary powers; meet a new ally that will become their sidekick or mentor; or acquire a very unique object.

Maybe they will sacrifice their job for their Mythos, or vice versa. One of them might even completely lose her inner balance and give in to either her Mythos or the Mist. Anything can happen; this is why we play. This section presents the rules that will help you get the most out of your character's development.

PLAYER-DRIVEN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

You, not the MC, are responsible for driving your character's story forward. While some character development rules are explicit, others are open to your interpretation. For example, a character's Mystery or Identity may or may not be applicable in any given situation – depending on *your* decision. Unlike other game systems and unlike elsewhere in *City of Mist*, the final arbitrator on interpreting matters of character development is the player playing that character. Therefore, as a player, you have the power and the responsibility to shape the narrative direction in which your character is going. You may choose to emphasize some character development options while downplaying others. You may choose to let go of some useful aspects of your character for the sake of narrative impact, or vice versa. The only exception to this rule is the invocation of weakness tags; as tags, the final arbitrator on when they can be invoked is the MC.

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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

ATTENTION ..... PAGE 244

Mark Attention on a theme when:

- Anyone invokes the theme's weakness tags (one Attention per tag invoked)
- (For character themes) You choose to **give attention (Logos)** or **explore your Mythos (Mythos)** on the **Montage (Downtime)** move
- You find answers to the theme's Mystery
- You sacrifice something to hold to the theme Identity
- (For a crew theme) A player chooses so on the **Geek Out During Credits (Session End)** move

When the Attention track on one of your themes is full, reset it and choose an **improvement**:

- Choose a new power tag
- Add, remove, or rewrite a weakness tag
- Choose a theme improvement from the themebook
- Reset Fade or Crack

CREW THEME DEVELOPMENT ..... PAGE 247

Season Premiere, Season Finale: When the crew has a new overarching goal, it gets a new nascent crew theme. When the crew has achieved its goal, it gets a new nascent extra theme.

MYTHOS & LOGOS MOVES

When you make these special moves, instead of adding your Power to your roll, you add:

- **Mythos rating:** the number of Mythos themes you have
- **Logos rating:** the number of Logos themes you have

Tags and statuses do not apply.

- **Stop.Holding.Back.** allows you to use your powers in a never-before-seen way or scope, but you must make a sacrifice (page 256).
- **Look Beyond the Mist** allows you to **Investigate** by communing with your Mythos (explained under the **Investigate** move, page 194).

DRAMATIC MOMENTS ..... PAGE 248

MAKE A HARD CHOICE ..... PAGE 254

Fade (Mythos themes) represents losing your Mythos and giving in to your everyday.

- When you forego answers to your Mystery, you mark Fade.
- When you mark 3 Fade on a theme, you replace it.

Crack (Logos themes) represents losing your identity and opening up to your Mythos.

- When you act against your Identity, you mark Crack.
- When you mark 3 Crack on a theme, you replace it.

REPLACING A THEME ..... PAGE 261

1. **Lose the theme:** You discard the theme card. You can no longer use its tags and improvements.
2. **Gain a Nemesis**: Your gain a complication due to the loss of the theme. It may only appear starting in the next session.
3. **Gain Build-Up points** (or Help & Hurt points when you lose a crew theme):
   - » One Build-Up point for every tag in the lost theme beyond the third
   - » One Build-Up point for every theme improvement in the lost theme
4. **Transform:**
   - » If this was your last Logos theme, you become an **Avatar** (page 270).
   - » If this was your last Mythos theme, you become a **Sleeper** (page 276).
   - » Otherwise, you gain a **nascent theme** of your choice from the type opposite to the one you lost (Mythos <> Logos).

NASCENT THEMES ..... PAGE 265

A nascent theme has only one power tag (weakness tags and Mystery/Identity as normal).

- When you first mark Attention on a nascent theme, it gains another power tag.
- When you first complete the Attention track on a nascent theme, it gains another power tag (you cannot choose another improvement). It is now a standard theme.

MOMENTS OF EVOLUTION ..... PG 267

When you mark 5 Build Up point, reset the track and choose a Moment of Evolution from the list on your character card. You can only choose each option once.

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CHARACTER AND CREW GROWTH

ATTENTION AND IMPROVEMENTS

Attention is the most basic form of character development. It represents the straightforward growth that can be achieved by focusing on a specific aspect in your character's life, represented by one of her themes.

Every theme card has an Attention track with three boxes. When the rules tell you to mark Attention on a given theme, check one of the boxes on the Attention track of that specific theme. You cannot choose to mark Attention on a different theme instead. When all three boxes are checked, reset the track to zero (erase all check marks) and choose an improvement for that theme (see below).

GAINING ATTENTION

You can gain Attention in the following ways:

INVOKING WEAKNESS TAGS

When your character must face her own weaknesses, she inevitably grows. The more your weaknesses come into play, the faster you will evolve.

Whenever you or anyone else invokes one of your weakness tags, you mark Attention once on the theme to which that tag belongs. If more than one weakness tag is invoked, you mark Attention once for each tag, on its corresponding theme. Note that you can only invoke your weakness tags when they are relevant; therefore, a weakness tag is a valuable resource for your character's growth.

DOWNTIME

Your character can spend whatever spare time she has to improve or develop an aspect of her life, represented by a theme. When your group has some downtime and the MC asks you to make the **Montage (Downtime)** move, you can choose to **give attention** (for Logos themes) or **explore your Mythos** (for Mythos themes) and mark Attention on a single theme of your choice.

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MYSTERIES AND IDENTITIES

As explained under Dramatic Moments (page 248), when you find answers to your Mystery or when you sacrifice something to maintain your Identity, you have the option to mark Attention on the theme to which the Mystery or Identity belongs (or sometimes on another theme).

OTHER RULES

Theme improvements and custom moves may tell you to mark Attention or change the way you gain Attention.

CHOOSING IMPROVEMENTS

When the Attention track on one of your themes is full, reset it and choose one of the following improvements (you may pick the same option again and again):

CHOOSE A NEW POWER TAG

Adding a new power tag means introducing a new detail, such as an ability or a resource, into your character's story. This could mean she has developed a new power, gained a new ally, bought new gear, learned a new skill or maneuver, etc. Alternatively, you could say that the subject of the new power tag has always been a part of your character's life, but is only now receiving attention in the story, like a previously unrevealed ability, skill, contact, power, etc.

To choose a new power tag, refer back to the themebook of the theme you are improving and choose a power tag question to answer. You may not choose a power tag question you previously chose if you still have the tag from that question. Answer the power tag question following the rules given in character creation (see page 249). Your answer becomes your new power tag. Write it down on the theme's card under POWER TAGS.

> Lamar gains an improvement on Sullivan's theme, My Sancho Panza (Defining Relationship). He wants to improve his investigative side so he decides to choose a new power tag. Out of the Defining Relationship themebook, he chooses a yet unchosen power tag question: *B. Name a useful quality or skill they have and can use to help you*. He answers *electronic surveillance* which becomes his new power tag under this theme. In the next session, the group is about to discover that Sánchez knows how to bug a phone, use a gun microphone to eavesdrop, etc.

ADD, REMOVE, OR REWRITE A WEAKNESS TAG

Weakness tags can potentially speed up a theme's growth, but they can also get in the way of your actions. As an improvement to your theme, you may choose to:

- **Add a weakness tag:** Refer back to the themebook of the theme you are improving and choose a weakness tag question to answer. You may not choose a weakness tag question you previously chose if you still have the tag from that question. Answer the weakness tag question following the rules given in character creation (see page 78). Your answer becomes your new weakness tag. Write it down on the theme's card under WEAKNESS TAGS.
- **Remove a weakness tag:** if you have two or more weakness tags on the theme you are improving, you may remove one of them. Erase the weakness tag from your theme card. When you choose to remove a weakness tag, choose another improvement as well.
- **Rewrite a weakness tag:** you may remove a weakness tag and choose another weakness tag instead (see "Add a weakness tag", above). You may choose any unanswered weakness tag question in the themebook, including the one you are rewriting. When you choose to rewrite a weakness tag, choose another improvement as well.

The appearance of a new weakness tag represents a new difficulty that is arising in your character's life in relation to that specific theme. Conversely, the removal of a weakness tag can be ascribed to a difficulty that has been solved, permanently or for the time being.

> Lamar gains an improvement on Sullivan's theme, Imaginary Knight (Bastion). Since Sullivan has become more grounded and realistic recently, Lamar finds his weakness tag *reality hurts* outdated, not to mention that it of-

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ten weakens his defense against mundane threats. Therefore, he decides to remove it, noting that Sullivan has learned to block ordinary attacks with the same effectiveness as he does legendary ones.

CHOOSE A THEME IMPROVEMENT

Each theme type has its own unique improvement options, described at the end of its themebook. As an improvement for your theme, you may choose one of these theme improvements. You cannot choose a specific improvement twice.

Every theme improvement describes either a permanent new rule, or one which may be invoked at certain times, such as once per session, once per scene, etc. The rules introduced by the theme improvements change the standard rules in various ways: they may allow you to make a Core Move *Dynamite!* or allow an ally to use the results of your move instead of theirs. Where there's a doubt, the rules given in theme improvements override the standard rules of the game.

A theme improvement does not necessarily require an explanation in the story. Some improvements are simply game elements that make a character better at what she does or allow her to do what she already does in new ways. In that, theme improvements resemble cinematic decisions made by the creators of the series (you!) to emphasize a detail or a set of details and allow the character to do more with existing abilities. However, you can always interpret an improvement as a change that your character has undergone: a new understanding on how to use her powers or skills, a stronger bond with an ally or her Relic, or an improved social position that gives her more leverage.

Lamar gains an improvement on Sullivan's theme, Retro Renegade (Possessions). Going over the theme improvements on the Possessions themebook, he chooses **Quality Matters:** every Core Move he makes with his *old beat-up Mustang* power tags is now *Dynamite!*

Lamar decides that this doesn't have a direct parallel in Sullivan's life; he's acting the same as always. However, it does mean Sullivan will be doing cooler things with his car from now on.

RESET FADE OR CRACK

Fade (for Mythos themes) and Crack (for Logos themes) are tracks that represent the deterioration of a theme. Gaining Fade or Crack means a theme is in danger of leaving the character's life (see Dramatic Moments, page 248). As an improvement, you can choose to reset the Fade or Crack track on the theme you are improving. When you do so, erase all checkmarks on the track.

Resetting Fade or Crack means your character has taken the time to patch up that aspect of her life, stabilize it, and return it to its functioning state. Perhaps she spent some time rekindling her love with her spouse (Defining Relationship) or a recent brush with death bolstered her connection with her ancestral spirits (Divination).

Lamar gains an improvement on Sullivan's theme, Searching For The Lost (Routine). Seeing that the Crack track on this theme is almost full (he has been busy with other affairs recently), Lamar decides to use this improvement to reset the track and stabilize this theme. He describes it as Sullivan returning home on his next downtime, opening a box full of case files of the individuals lost in the flood, and starting to go over all of them one after the other.

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CREW THEME DEVELOPMENT

Just like character themes, crew themes can gain Attention and evolve. At certain points in the game, the crew may receive additional themes or replace existing themes.

Attention on crew themes can be gained in the following ways:

- **Invoking a crew weakness tag:** Whenever a crew weakness tag is invoked by anyone, mark Attention on that theme.
- **The Geek Out During Credits (Session End) move:** At the end of every session, each crew member can choose whether to recover a crew power tag or to mark Attention on the crew theme.

When all three Attention boxes are checked, reset the track to zero (erase all check marks) and choose together an improvement for the crew theme. You may choose any of the improvements available for player themes.

GAINING NEW THEMES FOR THE CREW

A crew theme represents the unified overarching goal or purpose the crew has and the resources and problems associated with it. This doesn't refer to just any milestone or goal the crew has; it refers to the very essence of the crew, the reason for which the crew members work together – who they are as a team.

Sometimes during a series, especially a series with multiple story arcs and seasons, the essence of the team changes or expands. This usually happens at the beginning of a new story arc: either the characters start operating in a new way and the MC writes a story arc for them to investigate or the MC writes a story arc which makes the crew change its purpose, or add an entire new way of operating.

When this happens, the crew's new overarching goal or purpose can be reflected by choosing a new nascent crew theme, if everyone agrees on that.

Similarly, a crew may eventually complete one of its overarching goals or fulfill its purpose (e.g., bring peace to the neighborhood), which usually ends the story arc associated with that goal. As seen below in the moves **Finally, Some Answers** (page 251) and **End of the Road** (page 253), this may bring the crew to replace its current crew theme with a new crew theme, at the players' discretion. In addition to that, if everyone agrees that the crew completed its goal or fulfilled its purpose, the crew evolves and may choose an extra theme (see page 282) to represent their growing possibilities. This extra theme functions like a crew theme in terms of its tags, Mystery or Identity, gaining Attention, etc. However, if the crew ever loses this theme, they may choose to shelve it instead, as explained under Extra Themes.

Since choosing a new overarching goal and completing it corresponds to the beginning and ending of a story arc, it therefore often corresponds to a season's premiere and a season's finale, respectively (although not necessarily the same season, as story arcs may span several season). The move **Season Premiere, Season Finale** summarizes the rules regarding new crew themes and crew extra themes:

SEASON PREMIERE, SEASON FINALE

When all of you, including the MC, agree that your crew has a new overarching goal or purpose, you receive a new nascent crew theme (in addition to any existing ones) to represent this new aspect of your crew.

When all of you, including the MC, agree that the crew has achieved its overarching goal or purpose, take a new nascent extra theme for your crew.

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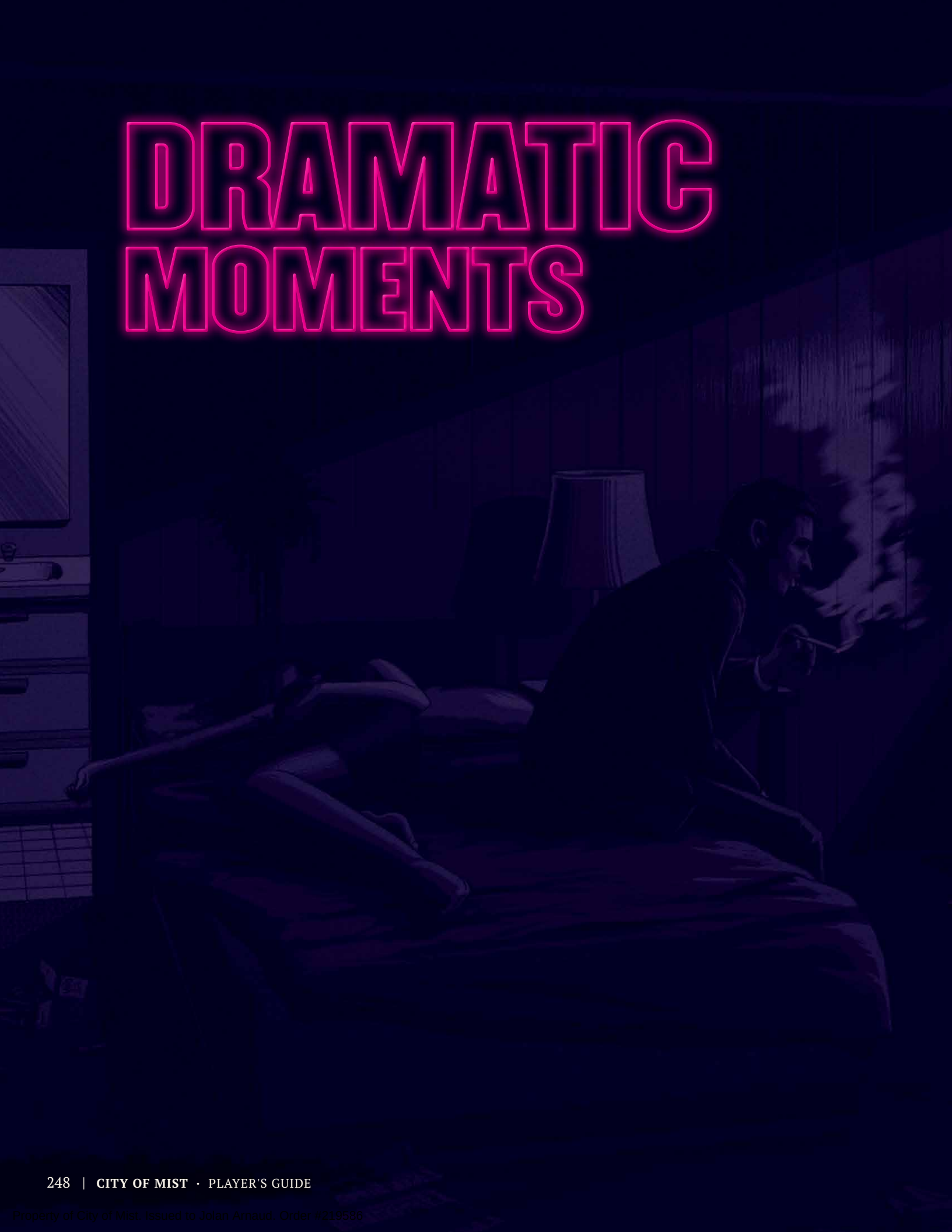
DRAMATIC MOMENTS



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Your character's life as a Rift will be wrought with dramatic developments. There's a reason your character is solving strange cases: she's looking for answers. To find them, she may be forced to make unspeakable sacrifices, both personal and moral, and persevere through challenges from within, from without, and from beyond the Mist.

When those answers are finally within reach, your character will have to choose, and you as the player will be faced with the same dilemmas. Do you even want to know anymore? Aren't you afraid that knowing will change your character forever? Everything in your character's personal life will conspire to keep her in the dark; everything inside her will tell her to walk away from the answers. And even if she chooses to know, the truth might shock her, break her, destroy what she thinks she knows.

Rifts are constantly living on the edge of their **Mythos** and **Logos**. On the one hand, there is your Mythos: a force so unfathomably sublime that you may never be able to truly understand it. It urges you to question the present makeup of your life, go out there, and investigate. It pushes you to the boundaries of the everyday and beyond. It wants you to discover what you truly are, what *it* is, and bring it back to life. Its call echoes inside you all the time, whether you heed it or not.

On the other hand, there is Logos: the life you know. Regardless of whether it is a life of misery, pleasure, indifference, or a mixture of them all, your Logos is always drawing you back to the comfort of what you know, backed by the lulling effect of the Mist. Your life is ahead of you; there are people whom you want to make happy or people you want to hurt; there is your work, your home, your habits, your family and friends. All these things are real, are they not? Sometimes they are more real than the legend living inside you. Even if you could let go of them, why would you ever want to? They define you, they make you who you are.

This struggle within your character is the foundation for her development. On the surface, it may seem your character wants to keep the status quo, keep things as they are now, with Mythos and Logos somehow balanced. But, in fact, your character continuously takes actions that put this balance at jeopardy: she investigates and she fights for what she believes in. Sooner or later, you will have to make hard choices: will I overlook a vile crime to learn about the origin of my powers? Will I forfeit a chance of a lifetime to save my family? When you arrive at the moment of truth and make such decisions, you and your friends at the table learn more about your character: you discover who she truly is.

But there are consequences within the story, too. **The aspects of your character's legendary powers and ordinary life rise and fall based on the decisions you make.** As some bridges are burnt, your character loses something of herself (a friend, a source of meaning, a dimension of legendary powers, etc.). At the same time, new doors open and new aspects take root in your character's story. Things from her past or echoes of life-altering decisions she made come back to haunt her. A beautiful and intricate tapestry of the forces within your character transpires, but it is a very delicate one. Pushing too far in one direction has the potential of tearing this tapestry to shreds, setting free an unstoppable power, or quenching the spark of mystery altogether.

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THE BALANCE OF MYTHOS AND LOGOS

At the beginning of the game, your character is made of four themes, divided between Mythos and Logos. Each theme represents a major aspect of your character. However, themes are not permanent elements. As the game progresses and you make hard choices, some of the themes that make up your character may erode, gradually slipping to oblivion. If your character doesn't take action to stabilize her themes, they will end up fading and cracking, eventually giving their place to new themes. As these changes take place, the balance of Mythos and Logos within you may change. This process of evolution that is happening inside your character may be slow or rapid, but it is always there.

Your character always has four themes. Any other themes, such as crew themes and extra themes, exist outside of the scope of your inner balance, although they may contribute to the struggle within you.

MYSTERIES FADE

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

Every Mythos theme has a Mystery: a burning question that your character is seeking the answers for, something that your Mythos wants you to find out. During the game, you can decide to take action or spend downtime investigating your Mysteries. Furthermore, the MC will continuously present opportunities for you to answer your Mysteries, or at least discover clues that will eventually lead you to answers.

FADE

Unfortunately for you, Mysteries can be forgotten, especially in *City of Mist*, where the Mist is constantly working to cut you off from your own destiny. Using your ordinary life (Logos themes) against you, the Mist strives to distract you and pull you away from any discovery that will deepen the bond between you and your Mythos.

To represent the possibility of forgetting your questions and giving in to your everyday routine and habits, each Mythos theme has a Fade track. Whenever you take action or make choices that draw you away from the answers you so desperately seek, or when you are subject to an influence that makes you forget your Mythos, you mark Fade.

When you mark Fade, translate the rules into the story and explain how you are beginning to lose touch with the powers described by this Mythos theme. For example:

- In a clinch, your divine powers of banishing evil (Expression) fail you momentarily.
- Your Armor of Jeanne D'Arc (Relic) starts falling apart.
- You get a feeling that your Dukun charms (Bastion) are not as strong as they used to be, but you don't know why.
- The all-knowing Buddha sends messengers to warn you that you are losing your path and with it your swiftness of motion (Mobility).
- As you transform into a jaguar (Adaptation), you notice you have a human hand instead of one of your paws.
- Kuebiko, the god of agriculture and knowledge, is cross with you and becomes increasingly difficult to get information from (Divination).
- You lose faith in subtlety, turning to direct conflict and neglecting your mastery of the Invisible Hand Technique (Subversion).

As you mark additional Fade, the chasm between you and this aspect of your Mythos becomes so unbridgeable that you are unable to manifest the powers associated with it.

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When all three boxes on the Fade track are checked, you lose contact with that aspect of your Mythos (or all of it, if it's your last Mythos theme). A new aspect of your ordinary life takes the place of the lost Mythos theme. To represent that, you replace the Mythos theme with a new Logos theme. Read more about replacing themes on page 261.

FINDING ANSWERS

Your character can find answers to her questions in many different ways. Perhaps she hunted down the people responsible for her transformation, meditated for weeks until the truth was revealed to her, or travelled through a dream-like forest in the City Park to reach a fabled hidden lake. Your character may receive a clear-cut answer or she may get a dumbfounding one that only leads to more questions.

When you find answers, what answers your character uncovers are largely up to you. You can work out the details with the MC to ensure your answers do not conflict with the case, but the MC should be as open-minded as possible, even if the answers you choose shuffle the deck entirely. You can then let everyone know what information you discovered. As an alternative, you can leave the answers entirely up to the MC and be surprised, or give the MC some guidelines or details you wish to include in your discovery, and leave the rest to her.

Sullivan, played by Lamar, is investigating his Mystery "Who is my Dulcinea?". In a previous investigation he obtained a lock of hair from his beloved maiden, although he doesn't know her identity. Now, he received the DNA results and he's about to learn the truth. Lamar wants "Dulcinea" to be a rather villainous NPC named Margo. He thinks it would be interesting to see Sullivan try to win her over. Alice the MC agrees. When Sullivan opens the DNA test results, he sees a match with a known criminal named Margo Falls.

Jerry, who plays Det. Farrah Enkidu, prefers to be surprised. Throughout the game the police detective investigates her Mystery of "Why do the gods want me dead?". When she finally finds answers, after working her way through the power pyramid of the Anunnaki gods, Alice the MC reveals the answer she had prepared. An angel sent to kill Det. Enkidu tells her: "You are a threat, because Gilgamesh would do anything for you; he would even turn on the gods."

Goodfellow, played by Megan, has finally found Oberon, the fairy king, and is about to discover the answer to his Mystery, "How can I make Oberon set me free?" Megan asked Alice the MC to choose an answer for her, but she wants it to be connected to a crime Goodfellow must commit. Alice thinks for a while and describes an ancient scroll that depicts a ritual that allows a fairy to escape the control of her king if the fairy puts another fairy under the king's power in its place.

Once your character finds answers, how she comes away from these answers is also up to you. Your character can be elated, shocked, satisfied, or all of the above. Use the **Finally, Some Answers** move to choose the implications of this revelation:

FINALLY, SOME ANSWERS

When you find answers to your Mystery, choose one, two, or all three:

You gain a deeper understanding of your Mythos, of the subject of your Mystery, or of the link between your Mystery and your Mythos. Mark Attention on the theme to which this Mystery belongs.

You are shocked by the discovery to the point of rejecting your Mythos or an aspect of your ordinary life. Mark Fade or Crack on any theme.

Your questions are answered. Choose a new Mystery for this theme.

In the above example, Lamar imagines that Sullivan is rather shocked by the discovery that his Mythos is pointing him to a relationship with a master criminal. He is so confused by the idea, that he is afraid to explore further, at least for the time being. He marks Fade.

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Pleased with the twist provided by the MC's answer, Jerry feels Det. Enkidu's questions were answered. She now knows why her enemies are her enemies. Jerry decides to change Enkidu's Mystery to "How can I get Gilgamesh to help me fight the gods?"

Megan, on the other hand, feels like Goodfellow is emboldened by his discovery. The scroll helped him better understand the laws that bind fairies and the cold, cruel nature of his Mythos. Megan marks Attention on Goodfellow's Subversion Mythos theme.

IDENTITIES CRACK

REAFFIRMING WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE

Every Logos theme has an Identity: a statement that your character firmly believes in, that defines who your character is (or thinks she is). During the game, different circumstances will call you to play your character in accordance with her Identities, affecting your character's decisions and actions.

CRACK

Identities are often the target of rebuttal by your character's Mythos. Seeking to emerge into the world in all its glory, your Mythos strives to break apart the worldly conglomeration of habits, desires, and fears that you call 'me'. No matter how lofty your self definitions are, or how exotic, your Mythos wants to show you an existence beyond them. It always calls you to question their significance.

To represent the possibility of your identity cracking, crumbling, and falling away, every Logos theme has a Crack track. Whenever you take action or make choices that contradict your Identities or when you are subject to an influence that makes you abandon your beliefs, you mark Crack.

When you mark Crack, translate the rules into the story and explain how your Logos theme is beginning to lose its place in your life. For example:

- Your company (Possessions) comes under threat of hostile takeover.
- Your Defining Relationship with your son is fraught with tension and unexpressed anger.
- You no longer feel the rage you felt after your house went up in flames (Defining Event).
- As gangsters strike roots in every social layer of your neighborhood, the Mission you undertook to clean the streets becomes virtually impossible.
- Your boss has had enough with your absence from work (Routine).
- You begin to feel your Training as a con man is not the path for you anymore.

As you continue to mark Crack, these issues become aggravated to the point that the subject of the theme may no longer be a part of your life.

When all three boxes on the Crack track are checked, your Identity is lost along with everything it represented: you quit or lose your job, you lose custody over your children, you get over an event that defined you or an attitude you had, etc. A new aspect of your legendary powers takes the place of the lost Logos theme. To represent that, you replace the Logos theme with a new Mythos theme. Read more about replacing themes below.

RESOLVING AN IDENTITY

Some Identities, such as the ones that define your core personality and nature, may go with you forever. Others, however, may eventually be resolved, leaving you with an awkward space inside. This is especially true for characters who dedicate their lives to achieve a specific goal; once the goal is achieved, the Identity is resolved and can no longer remain as it is.

Jeff's character, Malory, a two-bit crook from the blue-collar neighborhood, has sworn an oath in his youth to kill the mafia boss responsible for the disappearance of his childhood friend, Sammy. To represent this, Jeff has chosen a Mission Logos theme with the Identity "I will not rest until the mobster who took Sammy is dead."

After playing through numerous sessions with his crew and after facing many dangers, missed chances, and qualms, Malory finally manages to enact his revenge upon the mobster. His Identity is resolved.

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When one of your Identities is resolved, use the **End of the Road** move to choose the implications:

END OF THE ROAD

If your Identity ever becomes resolved, rephrase it in the same spirit to describe a new goal, a greater scope, a new angle, etc. Alternatively, if this aspect of your life truly ended, you may replace this Identity's theme.

Now that Malory's Identity has been resolved, Jeff has two options. He can rephrase Malory's Identity so that it redefines his Mission. For example, he could say Malory now decides to become a vigilante and fight all mobsters in the City ("I will not rest until organized crime is dead.") or he gets big ideas of becoming the next leader of the City's underworld ("I will not rest until I rule this City."). The other option is to drop this aspect of Malory entirely, and let his Mythos take over; now that his journey of revenge is complete, Malory suddenly has a vast space in his life, a space into which his legendary powers can grow.

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MAKING A HARD CHOICE

As explained above, the push and pull of Mythos and Logos within you and the machinations of the MC will often put you in a situation where you must choose between your Mysteries, your Identities, and/or some other benefit or course of action in the story. In such situations, your Mystery will require that you continue the investigation and make the necessary sacrifices in order to secure the answers you want. Your Identity, on the other hand, will demand that you do everything, even the unspeakable, to uphold your beliefs. Thirdly, the story may present a host of other incentives and considerations that limit your character, even if they are not represented by a Mystery or an Identity. Such considerations may include, among other things:

- **Acts your character deems undesirable and wishes to avoid**, such as immoral actions, criminal activity, or socially inappropriate behavior.
- **People your character wishes to impress or is beholden to**, such as a tycoon threatening to ruin her career or a father who may be disappointed if he finds out about her actions.
- **Things your character desires and are on the table**, like money, fame, a captive loved one, etc.
- **Your character's survival instinct**, if the choice holds the risk of death, injury, or other significant loss.

Your Mysteries, Identities, and circumstantial considerations can clash in any possible constellation. You may be forced to choose between:

- one of your Mysteries and one of your Identities;
- one of your Mysteries and circumstantial considerations;
- one of your Identities and circumstantial considerations;
- two of your Mysteries;
- two of your Identities;
- and so on.

(If the MC is feeling really inspired, she could even try to orchestrate a dilemma with three facets.)

Note that while your Identities may clash with one another quite regularly, a clash between two or more Mysteries can be contradictory to a Mythos' agenda; it occurs only when different aspects within the same Mythos are competing against one another.

> Det. Enkidu works hard to find a way to turn Gilgamesh against the Annunaki gods. When she finally finds him, Gilgamesh, who happens to be her former squad car partner, is willing to reestablish their partnership with the condition that she never brings up the subject of betraying the gods. Jerry, who plays Det. Enkidu, feels that this is a hard choice for her: she must either give up investigating her Mystery "How can I get Gilgamesh to help me fight the gods?" or give up her friendship with a very old and dear friend.
>
> Meanwhile, Sullivan managed to get a hot date with the super-criminal Margo Falls, who was revealed to be his "Dulcinea". He is planning to meet with her and further investigate his Mystery, "Who is my Dulcinea?". Unfortunately, his sidekick Sánchez has found out about this and warns him that he should never meet Falls. Lamar, who plays Sullivan, feels that if Sullivan chooses to ignore his friend's warning, he'd be going against his Identity "If it wasn't for him, I'd be dead." (which belongs to his Defining Relationship theme, My Sancho Panza).

You decide when your character is facing a dilemma. The MC can only introduce the complications in a way that she thinks will be interesting and interacts with your Mysteries, Identities, and circumstantial considerations. The MC and the other players can also ask you whether you think

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your character is facing a hard choice. However, it's up to you to respond to such opportunities in order to advance your character's story.

Whenever you feel your character is thus conflicted, check whether one of the triggers in the **Make A Hard Choice** move is activated, and follow the outcome:

MAKE A HARD CHOICE

When **answers to your Mystery are within reach, but you forego them**, mark Fade on that Mystery's theme.

When **your Identity demands you act or speak in a given way and you don't**, mark Crack on that Identity's theme.

When **you sacrifice something you truly want in order to abide by your Identity**, mark Attention on that Identity's theme.

If Det. Enkidu favors her friendship with Gilgamesh and decides to forego her search for a way to enlist him to a war with the gods, she must mark Fade (she is ignoring her Mystery). If she gives up the friendship and continues to prod Gilgamesh for answers, there are no game effects. However, in the story, Gilgamesh and she are finished.

As for Sullivan, if he chooses to meet Margo Falls despite Sánchez's warning, he is going against his Identity and chooses to mark Crack on Sánchez's theme, My Sancho Panza. Conversely, if he forgoes the opportunity to learn more about his Dulcinea, he chooses to mark Fade on his Imaginary Knight theme, but at the same time, since he is sacrificing something he truly wants to abide by his Sánchez Identity, he marks Attention on the theme My Sancho Panza.

Note that there is no reward in this move for choosing to investigate your Mystery over other benefits; the reward of investigating a Mystery lies with finding the answers and is covered by the **Finally, Some Answers** move.

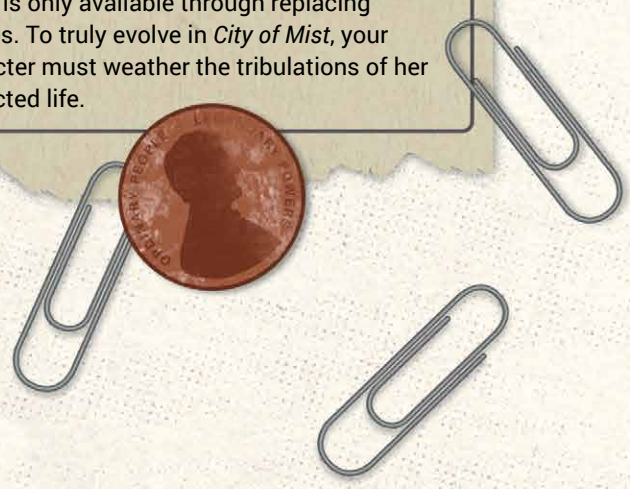
WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE TO MAKE A HARD CHOICE?

As you may have noticed, building up Fade and Crack can lead to some dramatic changes in your character. You can lose some abilities and resources and gain others. At your option, you can completely ignore your Mysteries and Identities, or use them purely as character role-playing guidelines, without ever invoking **Make a Hard Choice**. Your character will continue to develop linearly, albeit without any great leaps of evolution.

However, you'd be missing out on one of the best aspects of *City of Mist*. Ultimately, this is a game of storytelling, designed to take your character through dramatic changes. The *City of Mist* character development system is all about changing and re-discovering yourself – not about linear improvement in power level, toward a single goal.

The reason we enjoy good comic-book and TV series is the ups and downs their characters have to go through; life-altering moments, like losing a loved one or being denied of your powers, which then lead up to a new (and occasionally improved) version of the character. **Make a Hard Choice** allows you to introduce these dramatic moments into your character's story so you can enjoy not only the development of her powers, but also the unique story path that makes her who she is.

Furthermore, there is a special and permanent type of improvement, Moments of Evolution, which is only available through replacing themes. To truly evolve in *City of Mist*, your character must weather the tribulations of her conflicted life.



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MARKING FADE OR CRACK WITHOUT A DILEMMA

Sometimes, you may recognize that a certain situation in the game is eroding your character's connection with an aspect of her Mythos or is putting some distance between her and an aspect of her ordinary life (Logos). In such cases, even though there is no dilemma at hand (and so, you are not **Making a Hard Choice**), you can decide to translate the story into the rules: mark a single box of Fade or Crack on the theme that has come under threat or that is on the wane.

However, since every point of Fade and Crack has dramatic consequences, marking Fade or Crack should be kept for occasions when the weakening of the theme is obvious and substantial.

> In the living room of his town house, Goodfellow has entered his furious state (Mythos Expression theme) to scare a fence he was working with into giving him a better deal. Unfortunately for him, Goodfellow's ten year-old grandson walked in just when it happened. Horrified and frightened, the kid runs out into the street in tears. Megan, who plays Goodfellow, feels that this is a shattering blow for him. Something inside him never wants to tap into that furious state again, even if it's useful. She marks Fade on that theme. Whether he lets go of this part of his Mythos or not remains to be seen.

MYSTERIES AND IDENTITIES OF CREW THEMES

Like your character themes, crew themes also have a Mystery or an Identity which can demand certain actions from you, as well as a Fade or Crack track that can eventually lead the crew to fall apart or reform itself around a new concept. These aspects of the crew theme use the same rules as character themes:

- When the crew or a crew member finds answers to crew Mystery, the crew as a group chooses options from **Finally, Some Answers**.
- When your crew Identity is resolved, use **End of The Road**.
- When a crew member **Makes A Hard Choice** about the crew (ignores a chance to find answers for crew Mystery, acts against the crew Identity, or sacrifices something important for the crew Identity), the player making the move must have the support of at least one other player to activate the move. The supporting player does not have to agree with the actions of the other player's character, only to agree that they indeed ignore a crew Mystery, go against a crew Identity, etc. If the move is triggered, mark Fade, Crack, or Attention on the crew theme as explained in the move.

If the third box is marked on a Fade or Crack track of a Crew theme, the theme is replaced. Read more about Replacing Crew Themes on page 265.

STOP. HOLDING. BACK.

You are a Rift in the Mist, a gateway through which the miracles of myth and legend can become real. The power of the Mythos that wells out from inside you is vast beyond fathom, capable of altering the fabric of reality itself. However, you are also just an ordinary person, full of doubts, fears, and mortal limitations. The power of your Mythos cannot flow freely through you, except in the specific ways that you allow it. But what would happen if you stopped holding back? How would you even do that?

There are specific moments in a Rift's life when all barriers seem to drop, when he or she truly becomes a channel through which the Mythos can work its wonders on the City. These moments are rare, no matter how awake you are. Touched, Borderliners, Legendaries, and even Avatars have an equally slim chance of opening up so fully. In theory, even Sleepers could experience such a revelation, at the very moment they awaken to the legend within them.

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Fateful circumstances and the intense psychological and emotional stress that is associated with them can knock your inner walls down and unleash the power of your Mythos into the world. While your character cannot control when it happens, you as a player have the choice of declaring when you would like her to employ her Mythos powers to their utmost potential. To do so, you make the **Stop. Holding. Back.** move

STOP. HOLDING. BACK.

When you **use your powers in a new and never-before-seen way or scale**, tell the MC what you hope to achieve. The MC will tell you the sacrifice it will take from you. Then roll+Logos. On a hit, you achieve exactly what you wanted to achieve and pay the price:

Significant: On a 7-9, mark Fade/Crack and burn all the power tags on one theme. On a 10+, mark Fade/Crack on one theme.

No Return: On a 7-9, replace one theme. On a 10+, mark Fade/Crack and burn all the power tags on one theme.

Ultimate: On a 7-9, you are killed, destroyed, or transformed forever (for now). Take a tier-6 status. You cannot **Face Danger**. On a 10+, replace one theme

On a 6 or less, you pay the price given for 7-9, but you also lose control over your powers or fail to use them as planned. The MC will decide how, and what the consequences are.

To trigger **Stop. Holding. Back.**, you must describe using your powers in some new way that has not been described before in your series. This could mean using your powers in a way that exceeds the descriptors of your power tags or on a scale much greater than your powers normally affect.

Describe to everyone at the table how your powers are unleashed and how you use them. The specifics of your power tags no longer matter. You are able to pull off anything, *anything*, as long as it's reasonably related to your Mythos. Don't hold back when you think about the effect you want to achieve with this move; the MC will have to work around whatever you come up with and decide on the appropriate level of sacrifice. You could, for example:

- banish an invading horde of demons
- turn back time
- melt down the entire Central Train Station
- cure an incurable disease
- bring peace to a war-torn neighborhood
- pierce the defenses of an unbeatable Rift
- become the richest man in the City overnight

You should, however, consider both what your character wishes to achieve and what would be interesting for your series as a whole. For example, defeating the arch-villain and banishing his demons forever with the ultimate display of power may be a great culmination of a series or an annoying anti-climax, depending on the circumstances. Don't ruin the whole series just because you can.

The general recommendation for the MC is to try to accommodate your actions as much as possible. However, if after consideration the MC feels what you intend to achieve will be detrimental to your group's enjoyment, you can talk it out and find a happy medium.

After you describe your action, the MC will choose the degree of sacrifice your character must make to open up to her Mythos, from the following:

- **Significant:** Your character will probably burn all tags in a theme (which is temporary) and mark Fade or Crack. At the very least, she will mark Fade or Crack.
- **No-return:** Your character will probably replace a theme (which is permanent). At the very least, she will burn all tags in a theme and mark Fade or Crack.
- **Ultimate**: Your character will probably die or be transformed forever. At the very least, she will replace a theme.

If you don't like the odds, you can still back out, or negotiate your action with the MC to reduce the sacrifice. Once you roll the dice, however, you're committed to the results.

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THE ROLE OF THE MC: DEGREES OF SACRIFICE

As the MC, when a player makes the **Stop. Holding. Back.** move, it's up to you to decide what degree of sacrifice is required from the character in order to use her Mythos powers in the manner described by the player.

The criterion for choosing the degree of sacrifice is the degree of change the character is trying to enact on the story. The question you should ask yourself is:

? HOW DRAMATICALLY IS THIS GOING TO AFFECT THE STORY?

The guidelines below are given as a suggestion only; you should base your decision on the specifics of your series:

- a **significant** sacrifice befits a significant change:
  - » changing a detail that will affect the course of a case / session
  - » permanently defeating a minor Danger
  - » temporarily evading or surviving the main Danger of a case / session
  - » overcoming or circumventing a significant challenge or circumstance
  - » effecting a change with small repercussions on the entire series
  - » anything that is not covered by the character's power tags, but is on the same general scale as them
- a **no-return** sacrifice befits a change from which there is no return:
  - » changing a detail that will affect the course of a season
  - » permanently defeating a major Danger
  - » resolving one of the main challenges of a case / session
  - » temporarily evading or surviving the main Danger of a season
  - » overcoming or circumventing a major challenge or circumstance
  - » effecting a change with major repercussions on the entire series
- the **ultimate** sacrifice befits the ultimate change:
  - » changing a detail that will affect the course of the entire series
  - » permanently defeating a top-tier Danger
  - » resolving one of the main challenges of a season
  - » temporarily evading or surviving the main Danger of a series
  - » overcoming or circumventing an extreme challenge or circumstance
  - » effecting a change with dramatic repercussions on the entire series

Note that the degree of change an action effects in the story is not the same as the power level of the action. A character may wish to travel five minutes back in time so she can enter a building before the villain does. Travelling back in time is usually considered an extremely powerful ability; however, you should judge it based on its story implications, not its power level. If the character simply wants to ambush the villain, it may require only a significant sacrifice; if the character wants to go back in time because the villain just killed her loved one and she wants to stop him, that would be a major change to the story, and may require a no-return sacrifice or perhaps even the ultimate sacrifice.

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ROLL+LOGOS

Instead of roll+Power for this move, you add the number of Logos themes you have (simply called "your Logos") to the results on the die to get the final score. While Touched, Borderliners, and Legendaries are all just as likely to **Stop. Holding. Back.**, a greater degree of Logos helps your character control the outburst of mythical power. The more a Rift is grounded and enveloped in the Mist (the more Logos themes a Rift has), the greater her chances are to be able to tame her Mythos when it finally breaks out and thereby avoid harsh consequences.

Tags and statuses have no effect over this roll.

OUTCOME

On a hit, you succeed in manifesting your Mythos powers in the manner you described, and you pay the price (see below). The effects of your action are mostly resolved by describing them; when necessary, however, the MC will update the statuses, tags, etc. in the game to match the way the story changed. For example, if you healed someone from an incurable disease and they had a status *incurable-disease-5*, the MC will remove it.

On a miss, you still pay the price as if you rolled a 7-9, but there's more: you lose control over your powers. The MC then describes the repercussions, using MC moves with a severity that matches the degree of sacrifice and the circumstances.

The sacrifice you are forced to make for unleashing your Mythos powers is somewhat mitigated on a 10+, and worse on a 7-9 and on a miss. Depending on your sacrifice and score, it may involve:

- Marking Fade or Crack on a theme
- Marking Fade or Crack on a theme and burning all the tags in that theme
- Replacing a theme

You choose the affected theme. It may be:

- **a theme you had to let go of** in order to open up to your Mythos: something you had to give up or that was holding you back from your true powers;
- **the theme that you burnt out** due to the unchecked use of your Mythos powers: one of your Mythos themes that is most closely associated with the powers you activated or one that was eclipsed by the powers you activated; or
- **the theme that suffered the most as a result of your action:** e.g., someone close to you who died, an object that was destroyed, a position that was lost, or a way of thinking that came to an end because of what you did.

If you scored a 7-9 or missed the move while making the ultimate sacrifice, your character takes an instant tier-6 status without **Facing Danger**. In other words, your character is either dead, otherwise destroyed, or transformed forever. The status' tag and nature are decided by the MC. This is resolved in the same way as a character hitting tier-6 of a status (see Statuses, page 218).

Salamander and his crew are on the roof of a skyscraper, facing Jörmungandr, the snake who eats the world. The crew recently exposed Jörmungandr's ploy: unless stopped, he plans to tamper with the Mist itself, allowing him to consume the entire City! Unfortunately, Jörmungandr is ahead of the game and his associates are keeping the crew at bay while he proceeds with his evil scheme, bringing about Ragnarök, the end of days.

Tyrone (playing Salamander): That's it, we've tried everything and we can't get him to stop! Salamander is at wit's end. He understands that the City, maybe creation itself, is about to be consumed by this agent of the Void. And something primordial awakens in him. I'm going to **Stop. Holding. Back.**

MC: Yikes! What's going to happen?

Tyrone: Salamander taps into the depth of his primordial nature, the place where fire and water are one. He will use that to permanently fill the void of Jörmungandr.

The MC considers the issue. Jörmungandr is a major villain, and Salamander is trying to shut him down permanently.

MC: Filling the void with the essence of creation. That sounds like it would demand the ultimate sacrifice.

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Tyrone: Holy cannoli. Not sure I'm ready to lose Salamander over this… but he is willing to give his life to save the City. That's his destiny. I rolled 5 and 3, and my Logos is 3, so a total of 11. Yay, I got a 10+!

(Tyrone and the MC narrate the clash of both titanic forces. Jörmungandr is vanquished and his plan to swallow the City into the Void is thwarted. His associates, however, continue to battle the crew.)

MC: Let's talk about the sacrifice Salamander just made. On a 10+, for an ultimate sacrifice, you replace a theme. What part of Salamander's life is no longer?

Tyrone: Since he maxed out his Mythos powers, I guess it will be his Mythos Expression theme, Nimbus of Primordial Plasma. I guess creating life in a complete void just drained him of all his powers. Maybe even his Mythos moved from him over to Jörmungandr, that would be cool. At any rate, he can no longer use his powers. Salamander collapses to his knees, in the midst of all the fighting, looking at his steaming hands, realizing his powers are gone. "You're still here," he says to himself, tears streaming down his cheeks, "so get up, and fight!" And with great effort, he does.

MC: Intense.

WITH LOGOS

While **Stop. Holding. Back.** is more intuitively used with Mythos powers, it is possible to push one's Logos themes to the maximum using this move. For example, the filthy rich Excalibur could try to overturn the economic status quo in the City. Using **Stop. Holding. Back.** with your Logos aspects still requires the player to describe a radical action that exceeds the normal use of his character's power tags.

When you **Stop. Holding. Back.** with your Logos abilities and resources, you roll+Mythos (the number of Mythos themes you have) instead of rolling+Logos, to indicate that you must call on the miraculous power of your Mythos to evoke such an extreme result using your mundane possibilities.

OPTIONAL RULE: INESCAPABLE SACRIFICE

If your group seems to use **Stop. Holding. Back.** at the ultimate tier too often, and if you feel you need an even greater tier to cover some of their actions, you can add an additional tier of sacrifice to the mix. This sacrifice is reserved for characters trying to take down the major threat or villain of a series or attempting to alter the very cosmological fabric of your group's City of Mist. It posits that the powers the character is trying to harness and shape are so immeasurable and arcane that the character is facing certain death, or worse. In this case, making the move is not about surviving the attempt, but rather determining whether the character's outburst of power has the desired results and whether no-one else is hurt. The **inescapable** sacrifice option is as follows:

Inescapable: On 10+, you are killed, destroyed, or transformed forever (for now). Take a tier-6 status. You cannot **Face Danger**. On a 7-9, the same, and the MC chooses one: you only partly manage what you attempted OR your crew members, loved ones, or even the entire City is caught in the maelstrom of forces you unleashed.

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CRISIS & BEGINNING: REPLACING A THEME

The life of a Rift is full of turmoil. Big moments will always come, sooner or later, be they earth-shattering discoveries, tragic losses, unforeseen betrayals, or cold disillusionment. When they come, these moments signify the death of a part of you. What you once considered to be an integral component of who you are is now gone forever.

Stories, like nature, abhor a vacuum. In the ashes of your old self, something new will take root: a new beginning. As time goes by, it too may become an important part of you.

Replacing a theme is a dramatic moment for your character. It can happen in one of two ways:

- **Gradually:** You mark a total of three Fade or three Crack on a theme.
- **Suddenly:** You make a move that tells you to replace a theme, such as **Stop. Holding. Back.**

When you replace a theme, you discard the theme card of the theme you are replacing. Instead, you gain:

- Build-Up points (and possibly a Moment of Evolution)
- a new Nemesis, revealed when the MC chooses
- a new nascent theme, revealed when you choose

The theme you gain is always from the opposite side to the one you lost. If you lost a Mythos theme, you gain a nascent Logos theme; if you lost a Logos theme, you gain a nascent Mythos theme.

The exception to this rule applies when you lose your last Mythos theme (if you play a Touched character) or last Logos theme (if you play a Legendary character). When you lose your last Mythos theme, you become a **Sleeper**. When you lose your last Logos theme, you become an **Avatar**. Read more about these special conditions below.

LOST THEMES

Losing a theme represents a rattling experience for your character, if not a traumatic one.

If your character lost a Mythos theme, she lost touch with her essential nature, what she truly is underneath all her everyday masks. Her ordinary life may continue and even evolve (as she gains a new Logos theme instead of the lost Mythos theme), but something is lost inside her, something that despite being vague and unknown felt more real than anything else. To wit, she loses an aspect of her powers as her Mythos is further veiled by the Mist.

If your character lost a Logos theme, she lost a defining aspect of herself. Something she used to call her own has cracked and broken, revealing itself to be an empty shell and leaving her in a state of bedlam. In the story, this could be interpreted as either your character losing her interest or reason to have the subject of her theme in her life, or the subject of the theme breaking down or breaking away from your character.

When you lose a theme, translate the rules into the story and describe the circumstances for everyone at the table:

> Ignoring Sánchez's warnings for years, Sullivan puts the last nail in the coffin when he decides to meet the super-criminal Margo Falls despite the advice of his best friend and investigative partner. He marks the last box of Crack on his theme My Sancho Panza.

MC: On your last call with Sánchez, he said: "If you do this, don't bother showing up on Monday. You and I are through."

Lamar (playing Sullivan): That's right. He's an investigative photographer, so I imagine him following me to the restaurant where I am meeting with Margo Falls, the super-criminal and sitting in his car outside, snapping pictures of us together, as evidence. He's probably fuming and swearing in Spanish.

Losing a theme is permanent. The power tags and weakness tags of the lost theme cannot be invoked again and the Mystery or Identity are no longer

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relevant to your character. Any improvements you had on the theme are also lost. Translating the rules into the story, you may say that:

- Your powers have shut down and cannot be activated.
- Your Relic or equipment was destroyed or broken beyond repair.
- You have lost faith in your former practices and are unwilling to employ them again.
- Your relationship ended and you want nothing to do with that person or group.
- You lost access to the privileges you once had or lost your social standing.
- You lost all your fortune and possessions.
- You forgot or lost some of the knowledge you possessed (perhaps following some head injury)

As an alternative, you may decide that some or all of the abilities and resources described by the lost theme's power tags are still available to you but are sidelined as a result of recent events. The MC may rule that you can still take actions related to such abilities and resources, on occasion. However, you cannot invoke any tags from the lost theme; the theme remains in the story only as a part of your character's background.

Lamar discards the theme card for My Sancho Panza. From this point on, Lamar cannot invoke the power tags from the lost theme: *saves my butt every time*, *reality check*, and *long unbreakable speeches*. The first two seem reasonably ineffective without Sánchez around. For the third tag, Lamar explains that Sullivan can still give long unbreakable speeches, but they're just not the same without the short podgy guy around. He also cannot invoke his weakness tag from that theme, *ignore his warnings*. Finally, the Identity "If it wasn't for him, I'd be dead." holds no sway on Sullivan anymore. While he may still feel partial

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to his former sidekick, Sullivan understands that it's time to move out of the Sánchez safe zone, a realization he has backed up with actions.

BUILD-UP

The cycle of losing and gaining themes in your character's life is a never-ending one. New themes sprout, grow, mature, and eventually die, suddenly or gradually. However, this cycle is far from being meaningless. Every time your character loses a theme and goes through this experience, something stays with her: some sort of insight or understanding that builds up gradually and could eventually lead to her evolution.

Build-Up represents your character's gradual progression towards a dramatic and significant change, represented by a Moment of Evolution (see page 267). When you reach five points of Build-Up, your character experiences a Moment of Evolution, and the track resets to zero.

When you replace a theme, you gain Build-Up points based on how evolved your lost theme was. You gain:

- one Build-Up point for every tag in the lost theme beyond the third (including both power and weakness tags)
- one Build-Up point for every theme improvement chosen for that theme

Mark the Build-Up points you gained on the Build-Up track found on your character card. If this brings you at any point to a full Build-Up track, reset the track and continue to mark the remaining points you received. You gain a Moment of Evolution every time you reset the track.

When Sullivan loses his theme My Sancho Panza, his character card already has four Build-Up points marked. Hav-

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ing just let go of a theme with four tags (as enumerated in the example above), Lamar gets to mark one more point of Build-Up, for having one tag above three in this theme. That brings him up to five Build-Up points, so he gains a Moment of Evolution and resets the Build-Up track. Since his theme also had an improvement marked, **Back-To-Back,** he gets to mark an additional Build-Up point. Sullivan now has a Moment of Evolution and one Build-Up point on his character card.

MAKING A NEMESIS

The things that make up your character and her life don't just evaporate into thin air without repercussions. Old lovers, once scorned, can become vengeful enemies. The spirits of nature who once were your allies now turn the elements against you. Those who trained you may still be hunting you, even if you turned from that path. Real closure is hard to come by.

When you lose a theme, it turns into a Nemesis – a problem related to the theme which then haunts you. A Nemesis can be anything: an obsessed ex-boss, a chronic disease, a growing overdraft, a contract on your head, etc.

Your Nemesis doesn't enter the game until the next session, or later. You and the MC decide together what your new Nemesis will be (you can choose to leave it to the MC and be surprised). Write your Nemesis down on your character card under NEMESES. If a Nemesis is one of your former allies or something that was once in your possession, the MC now controls this character or object. The MC then incorporates it in the series as either a Danger you'll encounter periodically or a custom move that represents your affliction.

After the session, Alice the MC and Lamar discuss the loss of Sullivan's My Sancho Panza theme. They both agree it would be cool to keep Sánchez in the series as a Nemesis. Alice suggests that Sánchez is now obsessed with Sullivan and his new ally, Margo Falls, and tries to expose their operation, maybe even involving the cops. Lamar approves.

A nemesis cannot be resolved or overcome permanently. It always finds a way to come back, even if sometimes it may leave you alone for a long period of time. If it's a person and you kill them, they may come back from the dead, haunt you as a ghost, or their successors may come after you. The only way to permanently remove a Nemesis is through a Moment of Evolution.

OPTIONAL RULE: ROLL FOR NEMESES

Normally, the MC decides when to introduce a Nemesis into the story. However, you can choose to introduce an element of luck so that the appearances of Nemeses will come by surprise – even to the MC.

At the end of a session, when you **Geek Out During Credits**, have all the players roll the following move:

FORESHADOWING

At the end of a session, if one of your Nemeses is still out there, roll+(the number of sessions since one of your Nemeses last appeared).

- On a 10+, one of your Nemeses will overwhelm you or get the drop on you in the next session. When the MC introduces your Nemesis, she also gets to make a move as if you missed a player move.
- On a 7-9, you can sense your Nemesis is coming but you're not sure. The MC can choose whether to include your Nemesis in the next session or not. If she does, she does not get to make a surprise MC move.
- On a miss, you're safe for now. Your Nemesis will not take part in the next session.

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REPLACING CREW THEMES

When you replace a crew theme, you discard its card. Your crew is no longer bound together by this theme; if it was your last crew theme, you may not even be a crew anymore. You can no longer invoke any of the power and weakness tags on the theme, nor are you bound by its Mystery or Identity. Any improvements you had on the crew theme are also lost.

If you don't have another crew theme, you can choose a new nascent crew theme when you find a new reason to work together. At the MC's option, your lost crew theme spawns a Nemesis shared by the crew members.

In addition, when a crew is disbanded, the emotional and psychological backlash is reflected in the individual relationships of the (possibly former) crew members. Depending on the circumstances, they may feel angry, rejected, relieved, loved, or any other emotion; they may feel indebted to one another or even enraged to the point of becoming enemies. To represent this emotional charge, each crew member receives a pool of Help & Hurt points that she can distribute among her crew relationship. The number of Help & Hurt points that each crew member receives for this purpose is:

- one Help & Hurt point for every tag in the lost theme beyond the third (including both power and weakness tags)
- one Help & Hurt point for every theme improvement chosen for that theme

Each Help & Hurt point can be added as either a Help point or a Hurt point to your character's relationship with one other crew member. You can distribute the points as you wish.

The crew of Lakeside Drive — Sullivan, Goodfellow, and Enkidu — are falling apart. Sullivan is obsessed with a new lead called Margo Falls; Goodfellow is busy with his illegal shenanigans; and Enkidu is busy waging war with the gods. Each in their own way has betrayed their crew Identity "Get to the bottom of the pond." When the third Crack is marked on the theme, it is lost, and the crew is disbanded. Since the theme had a total of five tags (power and weakness) and two theme improvements, each crew member receives four Help & Hurt points.

Det. Enkidu thinks highly of Goodfellow, so Jerry (who plays Enkidu) adds two Help points next to Goodfellow's name on Det. Enkidu's character card. However, both her former crew members have resorted to assisting criminals, if not becoming criminals themselves, which makes the detective think she will have to arrest them soon. Jerry adds a Hurt point next to each of them. The players of Sullivan and Goodfellow also each distribute their Help & Hurt points as they see fit.

NASCENT THEMES

A nascent theme represents a new aspect in your character's life that is now emerging. A nascent theme always appears when there is a space in your character's life: either in the wake of a lost theme or during character creation, if you chose to play an awakening character.

A nascent theme has only one power tag (unlike a standard theme which has three or more power tags). In all other aspects it is identical to a standard theme: it has one weakness tag and a Mystery or an Identity, as well as a specific theme type, an Attention track, and a Fade or Crack track. A nascent theme can be replaced or lost just like a standard theme.

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CAN I USE A NEW THEME TO RECREATE AN OLDER THEME I LOST?

Technically speaking: yes, you could. But why would you? Imagine a comic book or a TV series where the hero, after many tribulations and efforts, ends up exactly where he started. This would only be interesting if the series found a way to give the hero's original point a new twist or an interesting re-interpretation. Therefore, it is recommended to think about trying out a new aspect for your character or coming up with a new interpretation for her old themes.

Note that this refers to themes of the same side, Mythos or Logos. Since you always gain a new theme from the opposite side to the one you lost, you can never recreate the same theme immediately after losing it.

GAINING A NEW NASCENT THEME

When you gain a new nascent theme, you do not have to introduce the theme immediately. You can take your time to consider what this new theme represents and review the different theme types available. If you gained this nascent theme by replacing another theme, check the FLIPSIDE section of the theme you replaced for ideas on what to introduce in its stead. You can hold off revealing the new nascent theme for dramatic purposes and uncover it only when the time is right.

> In the wake of his friendship with Sánchez (Logos theme), Sullivan is gaining a new Mythos theme — a new aspect for his powers. Not sure how this will play out yet, Lamar postpones the decision on the specific theme type, and continues the game with his three other themes.

When you're ready, choose a themebook for your new nascent theme and use it to fill out a new theme card as described under Themebooks (see page 74). However, since you only have a single power tag, you only answer the first power tag question in the themebook, without answering two more as usual.

> As it turns out, the super-criminal Margo Falls plans to hire Sullivan and his crew to bring down the people who are behind the Lakeside Drive neighborhood catastrophe. There seem to be some high-flying officials and powerful figureheads involved, so Lamar wants to take a theme that will help him tackle that. In his Mythos, Don Quixote charges at windmills, thinking they are giants. Lamar wants to use that, naming his new theme "Giant Slayer". He chooses the Expression themebook and uses it to choose a single power tag, *giant-slaying tilt*, which he defines as his ability to use his spectral lance on a massive scale, as well as a weakness tag, *tunnel vision*, and a Mystery: "Who is at the top of the windmill?"

When you have your new nascent theme, describe the rise of the new aspect in your life to everyone at the table. It can be dramatic and surprising or casual and offhanded.

> Lamar plans to wait until the first time Sullivan and his crew encounter one of those "great men" or their agents and then dramatically reveal Sullivan's newfound powers with a powerful blast of his lance.

EVOLVING A NASCENT THEME

Just like standard themes, nascent themes have Attention tracks. You can mark Attention on a nascent theme just as you would on a standard theme (when invoking its weakness tag, during downtime, by finding answers to its Mystery or sacrificing something for its Identity, etc.).

However, nascent themes evolve differently than standard themes. The following rules apply to nascent themes:

- When you first mark Attention on a nascent theme, you gain a new power tag. Follow the directions under Choose a New Power Tag, on page 245. This does not "cost" you the Attention; instead, you keep it marked.
- As you continue to mark Attention and complete the Attention track for the first time on a nascent theme, you gain another new power tag. Follow the directions under Choose a New Power Tag.

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You cannot choose a different improvement instead. Then reset the theme's Attention track.

Once you completed the Attention track on a nascent theme for the first time and picked out its third power tag, it becomes a standard theme. The next time you complete its Attention track, you can choose any improvement as normal.

When Lamar marks Attention for the first time on his nascent Giant Slayer theme, he gets a new power tag. He wants it to represent a general superiority over giants, so he chooses question E on the Expression themebook, "Against what targets are your expression powers more effective?" and names the tag *bring them down*. Later, when he gains two more Attention points, he will choose another question from the themebook and create another power tag, and then reset the Attention track. The theme will then become a standard theme.

MOMENTS OF EVOLUTION

Your character evolves in different ways throughout the series. Her themes grow and expand as they are given more and more Attention, while at the same time always being at risk of being replaced in a flash due to a dramatic turn of events. Throughout this journey of ups-and-downs, something changes about your character. She gains wisdom, insight, and experience; she becomes more worldly and savvy to the way things are. She is growing and the benefits of that development stay with her regardless of the roller-coaster of her life.

When your Build-Up track is full (all five circles are marked) a Moment of Evolution takes place. You then reset the Build-Up track and pick one of the options from the list on your character card and mark it. Once marked, you cannot choose the same item of Moment of Evolution again; Moments of Evolution that can be chosen multiple times appear as separate items on the list.

When you have a Moment of Evolution, translate the rules into the story and decide what exactly happens to your character. Since a Moment of Evolution always comes in conjunction with replacing a theme, your evolution could be a result of the events that transpired when you replaced the theme. Alternatively, it could be something that changed in the character over a long period of time and is now coming to fruition: a powerful undercurrent in the character's psyche that has been getting momentum or a master plan laid down months in advance. Like with your new themes, you don't have to apply the changes of the Moment of Evolution immediately; you can wait for the best time to introduce them into the story.

- ☐ Choose another broad power tag
- ☐ Gain an extra theme: Ally
- ☐ Gain an extra theme: Base of Operations
- ☐ Gain an extra theme: Ride
- ☐ Get closure from your Nemeses
- ☐ Go through a transformation
- ☐ Leave the City
- ☐ Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- ☐ Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- ☐ Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- ☐ See through the Mist

CHOOSE ANOTHER BROAD POWER TAG

Choose a single new power tag for any one of your themes, following the instructions under Choose a New Power Tag (see page 245). However, you are able to choose a broad tag, even if you already have one broad tag among your power tags. You still cannot choose a tag that is too broad.

From this point on, you are allowed to have two broad tags at most, instead of just one. If you ever lose one of your broad tags, you may choose a broad tag in its stead when you choose new power tags.

The sorceress Morgana experiences a Moment of Evolution when she defeats her long-time enemy, Merlin. Lizzy, who plays Morgana, feels like her Moment of Evolution should represent a dramatic

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increase in her magical power. Morgana already has the broad tag *book of shadows* which allows her to create different spells using **Change the Game.** Lizzy wants to use her Moment of Evolution to choose an additional tag, *surge of magical power*. Since the MC deems this tag too broad (it will boost any magical spell Morgana casts), Lizzy rewrites it into *stronger spells of darkness*, which will boost only dark spells. The MC approves this as her new broad power tag. If Morgana ever loses *book of shadows* or *stronger spells of darkness*, Morgana still retains the right to have two broad power tags. When she chooses new power tags for a new theme or as an improvement, she could pick a broad tag as long as she doesn't go over two broad tags in total.

GAIN AN EXTRA THEME

You gain an extra theme, in addition to your four character themes and any existing crew or extra themes. Depending on the improvement you chose, turn over to the Ally, Base of Operation, or Ride themebooks and answer the questions to create your new extra theme. Read more about extra themes at the end of this chapter.

Matt, who plays Kitsune, decides to use Kit's next Moment of Evolution to give him a new sidekick: a great fox spirit called Gon-Gon. He starts to drop hints about what Kitsune's crewmates see: big fox footprints in the snow or a fluffy big tail disappearing down the alley. Between sessions, he uses the Ally themebook to create Gon-Gon. In the next session, when Kitsune gets into trouble and summons his furry friend, Matt reveals the extra theme and puts Gon-Gon to work as it leaps from the shadows to the rescue.

GET CLOSURE FROM YOUR NEMESES

You learn how to solve problems permanently and put things to rest. You now have the means to permanently overcome or resolve both your existing Nemeses and any Nemeses you may gain in the future. The MC will usually require that you take action to permanently solve or vanquish a Nemesis but she must provide you with the opportunity to do so. Remove any Nemesis you successfully solve or vanquish from the list of Nemeses on your character card. It will stay solved or vanquished and will not return in any form (unless it is recreated when another theme is lost).

Det. Enkidu now has Gilgamesh as her Nemesis. When she acquires a Moment of Evolution, Jerry, who plays Enkidu, decides to find closure. The MC provides the detective with an ancient text that leads her to the Spear of Destiny, a weapon that can destroy demigods like Gilgamesh. She now must find Gilgamesh and strike him down with the spear (or threaten to do so). If she does, Gilgamesh leaves the game, at least as a Nemesis, and does not return.

Alternatively, Jerry could decide that the detective finds an old picture of the two from the days they were partners. Showing it to Gilgamesh, she reminds him of the good old days and they agree to part ways amicably.

Enkidu now knows how to find closure so she can permanently resolve all of her other Nemeses and any Nemeses she will get in the future.

GO THROUGH A TRANSFORMATION

Your character goes through a transformation that changes her to the core. It may be a complete physical transformation, a pivotal lifestyle change, a re-invention of her identity, or even a mystical change that leaves her with a new Mythos. You can alter any single detail in your character or rewrite the character completely. Do not take this lightly – you can only reinvent yourself *once*.

- **Concept:** Change your character concept, Mythos, or Logos
- **Themes:** Discard any of your themes. You do not get Build-Up, a Nemesis, or a new nascent theme. Instead, for each theme you discard, create a new theme that has the same number of power tags, weakness tags, and improvements as the theme you discarded. You may trade improvements for power tags and vice versa. Create a new Mystery or Identity for the new theme. The new theme has no Attention and no Fade or Crack; however, for every three Attention you had in all your discarded themes in total, you may take a Build-Up point (any remainder is discarded with no

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effect). You may choose to transfer a power tag or improvement allocation from a new theme to any of your themes, old or new.

- **Tags:** You may rewrite any of your power or weakness tags. You may also discard a tag and choose a tag of the same type (power or weakness) in another theme, old or new.
- **Mystery or Identity:** You may rewrite any of your Mysteries or Identities.
- **Theme Improvements:** You may discard any of your theme improvements and instead choose a new theme improvement, from any theme, old or new. You may also choose a new power tag on any theme instead of the theme improvement you discarded.
- **Moments of Evolution:** You can discard any of the Moments of Evolution you chose and choose others instead. You lose any benefits you received from them, such as extra themes or the ability to make a move *Dynamite!*

Your Build-Up points stay the same (unless you trade Attention for more Build-Up when you change some themes). Nemeses and Moments of Evolution you previously gained, if you have any, also do not change.

Lamar decides that meeting Margo Falls, his dangerous "Dulcinea", has changed Sullivan through and through. When he gets a Moment of Evolution, he chooses the transformation. Sullivan is no longer a retro-loving poor reporter; he is the suave and elegant right hand, bodyguard, and lover of a super-criminal. Lamar discards the themes Searching for The Lost (Routine) and Retro Renegade (Possessions) and instead builds two new themes: Pay For Your Sins (Mission), which describes his plan to bring down the people behind the pond incident, and Dulcinea (Defining Relationship), focusing on Margo Falls. Since he had two Attention marked on each of the themes he discarded, he has a total of four discarded Attention. He converts three into another Build-Up point and discards the remaining last point.

LEAVE THE CITY

For whatever odd reason, your character is able to cross the City boundaries and leave the City – and come back. It could be that she finds a way or a means to leave or that this aspect of the Mist simply doesn't work on her anymore. This Moment of Evolution is a story development that has no bearing on the rules but can have an enormous effect on your series. What your character finds beyond the City is up to you and the MC. Does she find the rest of the world? Is it as she expected or in a different state than she thought? Does she discover the dimension of the Mythoi, where pure legendary forces clash? Or is it just miles and miles of driving on a road through the fog? Anything could be out there, beyond the City. In the words of a great man: I envy your finding out.

MAKE ONE CORE MOVE PERMANENTLY *DYNAMITE!*

Choose one of the Core Moves. Whenever you make this move, it's *Dynamite!* You can choose this option up to three times, choosing a different Core Move every time.

After sacrificing his car and gear (Logos theme) in a dramatic showdown by the pond, Sullivan has a Moment of Evolution. Lamar, who plays Sullivan, thinks it's time his character got some answers about the origin of the pond. He decides to make **Investigate** permanently *Dynamite!* so that he can get more out of his inquiries and get to the bottom of the pond.

SEE THROUGH THE MIST

Your character awakens to the reality of the Mist and is able to peer through it. Choose one: either your character has a one-time monumental discovery or your character can permanently see a single type of thing of your choice through the Mist, such as the Mythos behind Rifts, traces of the influence of a specific Mythos, evidence of City-wide conspiracy, or the machinations of those who control the Mist. Like "Leave the City", this Moment of Evolution is a major story development that can significantly alter your series. How this plays out and what game effects should be used to reflect it is up to you and the MC.

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THE ROLE OF THE MC: WHAT'S BEYOND THE CITY AND THE MIST?

As the MC, the players depend on you to create details for your series which are exciting to uncover. When you design the series, or when a lead character is first about to have a Moment of Evolution, ask yourself what would happen if a player chose "Leave the City" or "See Through the Mist".

Plant some valuable information about the big questions of the series just outside of the City or behind the Mist so that the lead characters will have something substantial to discover. You can find some ideas under What the Characters Don't Know Yet (page 52 in the MC Toolkit) or come up with your own ideas. Leaving the City or Seeing Through the Mist doesn't have to reveal *everything*, but it should reveal something amazing.

BECOMING AN AVATAR

Your Mythos' ultimate goal is to turn you, its Rift, into an Avatar: a living embodiment of its story. An Avatar is a living god in the City. She is a portal to nearly unlimited power, playing out her Mythos' drama on a massive scale. Her own persona is all but gone; she is now a vessel existing purely to serve the narrative of her Mythos and its agenda in the City.

To become an Avatar, a Rift must give up the last thing that makes her human. In game terms, this is reflected by your last Logos theme. **When you lose your last Logos theme, you become an Avatar**, scintillating with pure legendary power. You do not get a new nascent Mythos theme instead of your lost Logos theme as normal, so you are left with three Mythos themes. However, you do receive the Build-Up points from losing your theme as well as a Nemesis.

When you become an Avatar, your character immediately knows how she can make your Mythos' legend come true on the grandest scale. As a player, you must define what your Mythos wants from the City. First, establish what your Mythos is about in its purest form and what the nature of its story is:

? WHAT DOES MY MYTHOS ULTIMATELY WANT?

The answer may be related to:

- **a lesson** your Mythos teaches, e.g., Zeus punished Prometheus for stealing
- **a desire** it represents, e.g., the Big Bad Wolf can embody the desire to devour
- **a goal** it has in the legend, e.g., the Monkey King wanted freedom from confinement
- **an emotion** it evokes, e.g., the Snow Queen was able to spread hate and make others see the worst in everything

Next, think of how your Mythos plans to apply its goal to the City on the grandest scale possible. Think in terms of practical goals:

? WHAT IS THE ENDGAME OF MY MYTHOS?

The answer could be:

- **a dramatic revolution** that your Mythos wants to enact, e.g., Prometheus wants to teach humans how to use fire to grow, so he aspires to clear the City from any violent use of fire (including firearms, explosives, etc.) or he's angry and he wants to take away fire (including electricity, combustion engines, etc.) from the undeserving humans and bring about total darkness.
- **a rampage through the City** where it reenacts its story, e.g., the Big Bad Wolf wants to roam the City and devour anything it wishes to, starting with the accursed Third Little Piggy who thwarted him before.
- **a specific achievement** that encapsulates what it wants, e.g., the Monkey King wants to ascertain the necessary means to kill the Buddha and then do it, freeing himself from the only one who could ever capture him.
- **an insidious scheme** to spread its emotions, ideas, etc. throughout the City, e.g., the Snow

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Queen wants to spread shards of hatred-inducing glass in the hearts of all the City residents.

Do not take your Logos themes or your crew into consideration when deciding on an endgame. Your Mythos doesn't care about that; everything in your mortal life is either a pawn that serves its agenda, an obstacle, or nonexistent. To clarify this point, even Mythoi that seek to help others ultimately see those in need as tools with which they can materialize their story.

AVATARS IN THE GAME

Becoming an Avatar makes your character extremely powerful while binding her to the aggressive agenda of her Mythos. While her Avatarhood lasts, you will be playing a force to be reckoned with, someone who has the power to change the fate of the City and the series.

Responding to the unbridled desires of your Mythos, the other player characters may try and stop your character or at least bring her back to a more human state, or they could join her cause.

While you can achieve a lot in the name of your Mythos, challenges from within (your ordinary persona) and from without (the crew and other forces in the CIty) will make it increasingly harder to maintain your Avatarhood. It's okay, because Avatarhood is designed to be a climactic yet short-lived moment in the series. Make the most out of it and enjoy the ride.

Once you know the endgame of your Mythos, it becomes your permanent **Agenda**. From this point on, this is the only thing that matters to you as an Avatar.

As Sullivan's story evolves, the investigative reporter continues his search after the people responsible for the catastrophe in his neighborhood. However, as his Mythos powers grow, he begins channeling more and more of Don Quixote, a rather insane Spanish nobleman who fought windmills thinking they were giants. Repeatedly choosing his Mythos over his investigations, he eventually loses his final Logos theme, Searching For The Lost, and becomes an Avatar.

To create Sullivan's Agenda as an Avatar, Lamar thinks about the nature of the Don Quixote story. He sees the story as revolving around foolhardy chivalry. Then, working that into the City, he thinks Sullivan will take the most stupidly chivalrous action he can think of as an Agenda, most likely tackling someone way out of his league. He decides that Sullivan targets a villainous character in the series that seems to be behind it all: the Rift of the Giant (from Jack and the Beanstalk), the CEO of a corrupt mega-corporation and possibly an Avatar himself (neither Sullivan nor Lamar know for certain). Once Don Quixote has his eyes set on this windmill, there is no turning back. He must pursue his Agenda to the very end, his or his enemy's.

YOUR SECRET IDENTITY

In the deepest recesses of an Avatar's heart, there is still one last fragment of humanity. In order to remain a Rift and not dissipate into pure Mythos, an Avatar must still have this mote of humanity in her. This final grain of ordinary life is based on your character's last Identity, the Identity of the last Logos theme you lost. Even though you sacrificed or lost this part of you when you became an Avatar, this last Identity represents the thing dearest to you in your mortal life, the thing that was the last to go.

When you become an Avatar, keep your last Identity in mind. It is the tiny part in you that is still somehow human and may make you human once more.

Avatars usually keep their last Identity a secret (along with who they were before their Avatarhood) because this last shred of humanity could also be their undoing: anyone who learns about it can use it to make them veer away from their Agenda, as explained below under Ending Your Avatarhood. For this reason, an Avatar's last Identity is also referred to as her **Secret Identity**. Your crewmates and other people who know about this weakness become potential threats.

Sullivan's last Identity was "The people of this neighborhood deserve to know." Lamar therefore notes that

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Sullivan still cares about the victims who were lost in the catastrophe and their families (even though he lost that Identity). If Sullivan believes at any point that his pursuit of the Giant would somehow bury the evidence of the catastrophe for good, eliminating the chance to find those who were lost, his conviction in his Agenda might waver.

PLAYING AN AVATAR

When you play an Avatar, you play your character as normal. However, **as long as you are an Avatar, you recover burnt tags instantly**. In other words, you are able to burn a tag for a hit with every action you take, which often means you garner an automatic 10+ with a Power of 3 (see Burning for a Hit, page 210). You are also completely impervious to any attempt to burn your tags, since you recover them instantly. You even recover permanently burnt tags when you have downtime.

One of the most impactful aspects of playing an Avatar is that it's very hard to impose a status on you because with even one relevant defensive tag to burn on your **Face Danger** move, you automatically shrug it off (assuming no other statuses reduce your score below 10 and assuming you can **Face Danger**).

While this grants you incredible power and allows you enormous freedom, you are still limited by all other rules, including the following:

- Your actions are still limited by your tags. You cannot take actions that exceed your tags (unless they are related to your Mythos powers and you **Stop. Holding. Back**).
- Statuses still affect you normally: they can reduce or increase your Power and they may incapacitate your character (tier 5) or even kill you (tier 6).
- You cannot invoke weakness tags (and therefore, mark Attention) when you burn a tag for a hit.
- You cannot **Face Danger** against temporary statuses imposed by your crewmates using Juice, unless the MC says otherwise.
- You cannot burn a tag for moves that do not use roll+Power, such as **Montage (Downtime)**, **Look Beyond the Mist**, and **Stop.Holding. Back.** For the sake of such moves, your Mythos is 3 and your Logos is 0.

In addition, **as an Avatar, you do not mark Fade when you Make a Hard Choice against your Mysteries**. Your Mysteries have taken you thus far, they brought you to the discovery of what you are. Now, they no longer limit you as you have your Mythos' Agenda set before you. You may still mark Fade for other reasons, such as the **Stop. Holding. Back.** move and other rules.

CHALLENGES OF AN AVATAR

Your main challenge as an Avatar is to accomplish what is on your Agenda. Veering away from your Agenda immediately ends your Avatarhood, as explained below.

Secondly, when you become an Avatar, the MC will consider how your Avatarhood affects the other major powers in the City and introduce complications accordingly. By definition, your Agenda does not sit well with some of the strongest forces in the City. When an Avatar is born, all the other Avatars in the City soon learn about it and may very well seek to recruit the new Avatar and form a pact or destroy it before it destroys them. Some of the Avatars in the City have been around for a very long time, gaining power and influence in preparation for exactly this kind of situation and have outlived many new Avatars. An Avatar's Mythos may also be somehow connected to your Mythos, so they may wish to clash or cooperate with you in order to reenact their Mythos' story.

Furthermore, an Avatar is a gaping Rift in the Mist. When an Avatar is born, the Mist is never late to try and repair itself. Sealing the rogue Rift becomes a top priority and all of the Mist's resources and powers of forgetfulness and illusion soon come crashing down on the Avatar and anyone who may have contacted him. The MC may introduce new Dangers into the game related to this effect.

Finally, your crewmates may present a challenge in and of themselves. If they disagree with your Agenda or even feel that you have lost your sanity to your Mythos, they might try to shut you down.

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THE ROLE OF THE MC: WHEN AN AVATAR ENTERS THE GAME

When a lead character becomes an Avatar, the balance of focus in the story changes a little. For the duration of the character's Avatarhood, some of the focus in the game shifts from the main plot to the transformed character. A new major player entered the City, and the future is now less clear. Think about all the story arcs and major arch-villains you planned for the series. How do they take in this new threat? How do their Mythoi react to the Avatar? How does she play into their worldly aspirations and schemes?

Naturally, the Avatar character receives more focus because this is the moment she is shining in all her glory (other characters will have their moment too). However, the series does not become completely centered on the Avatar: the rest of the characters may still continue their investigation with or without the Avatar. Furthermore, they must respond to this new situation, whether by joining the Avatar or trying to stop her. They may think they can stay indifferent, but an Avatar is a very aggressive force; eventually, they will either be in the Avatar's path or following behind her. This state of affairs can divert some of the airtime in the game to dealing with the crew's internal issues, possibly leaving less time for the case at hand.

As an MC, your job is to roll with this new development and make it interesting by (a) giving it the airtime it requires, even if it changes or temporarily sidelines the case you had in mind, (b) continue to give the other characters enough airtime to promote their stories, and (c) using the Avatarhood to make everyone's life interesting by introducing City-scale threats and complications like other Avatars and the Mist.

THE END OF YOUR AVATARHOOD

Your Avatarhood can end in several ways, listed below. In the end, however, Avatarhood is a chance to bring the Mythos side of your character to a dramatic climax. Because of the huge variety in Avatars, Agendas, and circumstances, you will need to interpret these rules on a case-by-case basis.

YOUR CHOICE

You can end your character's Avatarhood at any point. Perhaps you feel your Avatar has accomplished her Agenda or that someone touched her enough to make her feel human again and jolt her out of the Avatar state; the decision is up to you.

> Sullivan defeats the Rift of the Giant and wins the heart of his newfound Dulcinea, Margo Falls. Lamar feels the story is complete and was played out in the most dramatic way possible, so he decides to end the Avatarhood.

VEERING AWAY FROM THE AGENDA

When you take an action that does not promote your Agenda, your Avatarhood ends. In other words, you must always be striving to promote your Agenda, directly or indirectly, to remain an Avatar. When you make even a single move for any reason or cause other than promoting your Agenda, your Avatarhood ends. The ways in which you choose to promote your Agenda are up to you and may be overt, subtle, friendly, insidious, etc. – but they must always strive to bring your plan closer to your endgame, or secure the necessary means to do so (first of which is your survival, of course). For example, if your endgame is to become the mayor, you can attack the mayor openly and take his place by force or you can slowly and insidiously infiltrate local politics and sway the residents to elect you in the next election.

An Avatar is a force of nature. It is a tidal wave of legendary force, just barely human. If you stray from your Agenda to take other actions, you indicate that your character's human side still rules her, even if only for a brief moment. When this happens, you are no longer an Avatar. Perhaps the Mist uses this fragment of humanity to take over and seal your Rift or it is actually this fragment of humanity that elevates you beyond space and

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time into the heart of your Mythos, ending your existence in the City. Perhaps your Mythos loses interest in you. The choice of how to interpret this event is yours.

Other characters, and especially your crewmates, can try to make you veer away from your Agenda by appealing to your Secret Identity, which, while it does not bind you, may still have a place in your heart.

> In the final showdown between Sullivan and the Giant, the Giant knocks down a part of a building, and a child is buried in the debris. One might say that if Sullivan stops the battle to help the child, he is veering away from his Agenda to take down the Giant. However, since saving a child is an act of chivalry, and Sullivan's agenda is about chivalry, Lamar deems this action as not veering from the Agenda.
>
> If, instead of a helpless child, the debris would bury a folder full of evidence about the cause for the catastrophe in Lakeside Drive, that would be a different story altogether. Taking an action to secure the folder would definitely be going against Sullivan's Agenda of chivalrously defeating the Giant and would therefore end his Avatarhood. Sullivan is not bound by his Secret Identity but it's still an interesting choice because something inside him still wants to know. Lamar must choose between the truth about Lakeside Drive and the Don Quixote Mythos.

LOSING A THEME

When you lose a theme as an Avatar, your Avatarhood ends. This could happen if you **Stop. Holding. Back.** and lose a theme as a sacrifice or if you mark three Fade on one of your themes. You do not get a new theme to replace the one you lost; instead, follow the instructions under The Aftermath of Avatarhood below.

Losing a theme ends your Avatarhood because there are no half-measures in Avatarhood; either you are a fully open gateway for your Mythos or you're no longer an Avatar. Losing a Mythos theme represents a failure of your Mythos powers which, even if partial, leads to the collapse of your Avatarhood.

> During the battle with the Giant, Lamar uses **Stop. Holding. Back** to conjure a massive imaginary lance, a hundred feet long. He uses it to slay the Giant but the cost is dear: he loses a theme, which also ends his Avatarhood.

OTHER APPROPRIATE REASONS

You or the MC may define a reasonable set of means by which your Avatarhood can be ended, such as feeding you the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge or getting your Mythos to transfer to another Rift. This solution should be related to your Mythos, the Mist, etc. If anyone succeeds in applying the solution, your Avatarhood ends.

Your crewmates or non-player characters can try to discover what this method is (using **Investigate**) and obtain what is needed to end your Avatarhood. However, applying the solution should not be an easy task and may require a great deal of effort from those who desire to terminate your Avatarhood.

> Based on the Mythos of Don Quixote, Lamar and Alice the MC agree that if anyone makes Sullivan believe that the Giant was actually a windmill, it would end his Avatarhood. Later, Goodfellow and Det. Enkidu, who want to save their crewmate from a certain death, discover this loophole in his Avatarhood. They plan to use Goodfelllow's trickery to convince Sullivan that the Giant is not real and that he's just a distraction from the people who are truly behind Lakeside Drive. To make things a little more interesting, the MC adds that to create a believable illusion the size of the Giant, the two need to acquire a special artifact or something that belongs to the Giant. Furthermore, Goodfellow will have to **Stop. Holding. Back.**, and the sacrifice would be dear. If the duo succeeds and Sullivan is convinced, Sullivan's Avatarhood ends.

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THE AFTERMATH OF AVATARHOOD

When your Avatarhood ends, you may choose one of the following:

Your character transcends into her Mythos or dissipates into the Mist, never to be seen again. She leaves the story permanently.

Your character transcends into her Mythos or dissipates into the Mist and returns, now or later, as a new Touched character (one Mythos theme, which may be nascent, and three full Logos themes). You create your character as a brand new character, retaining none of her previous themes, crew relationships, Build-Up points, or Moments of Evolution. This represents your character's meteoric fall from grace or her rebirth as a flesh-and-blood mortal.

OPTIONAL RULE: REBUILD AN AVATAR

The fall from Avatarhood is not one easily survived. By any imaginable standards, opening up to a Mythos so wholly and then losing this connection should leave you as a pile of ashes. If you do come back from that, you are so deeply transformed that you might as well be a different person. For this reason, the core rules of *City of Mist* state you should build your character from scratch.

As an alternative to building a brand new character, your group can decide to opt for rebuilding characters that fall from Avatarhood. Your character still changes to a Touched character, losing two of her three Mythos themes, but she keeps everything else. To represent that, rebuild the character as in the Moment of Evolution "Go Through a Transformation" (page 268), with the exception that your transformed character must have one Mythos theme and three Logos themes.

FALLING ASLEEP

The Mist is always around you. Like a fish that cannot perceive the aquarium, you too cannot grasp its power over you. It is only in those rare moments when you *remember that you have forgotten* that you can get a taste of the Mist's work. But, what if you would never remember? What if you had never awakened again? What if you fell back to an oblivious daydream, as so many do? You would never know the Mist existed and you would never have any reason to believe there is anything beyond ordinary life.

To become a Sleeper again, a Rift must give up her last connection to her Mythos. In game terms, this is reflected by your last Mythos theme. **When you lose your last Mythos theme, you become a Sleeper again**, forgetting anything legendary you have ever seen or excusing it in the most creative ways. Life is again ordinary for you, in the sense that it lacks the magic of Mythos, although you may still lead an unorthodox or unusual lifestyle.

When you become a Sleeper, you do not get a nascent Logos theme as normal. Therefore, you are left with three Logos themes. You still receive the Build-Up points from losing your last Mythos theme, but you cannot choose Moments of Evolution with a Mythos nature (such as an Ally that is a Familiar) or choose the options Leave the City or See Through the Mist. Finally, you make a Nemesis as usual, but you are unable to perceive its legendary manifestations, if any. For example, if a household gnome haunts you, you deny it like everything else, thinking it's some strange prank.

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SLEEPERS IN THE GAME

Becoming a Sleeper allows you to play as an ordinary resident of the City, for a while. It creates a Mythos-free bubble around your character and puts a strong emphasis on your character's ordinary life and, if you so wish, on existential questions, such as:

- Who would my character be without her Mythos?
- What is the nature of the Mist?
- Is ignorance really bliss?
- Can ordinary life also be magical, in its own way?

Becoming a Sleeper can give you a great opportunity for role-playing your character and building up her backstory.

You can continue to play the game as a Sleeper for a while. However, the world of *City of Mist* does have Mythoi and your character's crew needs her, so various forces in the game will strive to wake your character up, from within and from without. That's fine, because being a Sleeper is a temporary state by design, meant to provide opportunities for granularity and depth against the grand backdrop of the Mythoi. Make the most out of it and enjoy the ride.

YOUR SECRET MYSTERY

Nobody is truly and utterly asleep. Your Sleeper has a last Mystery, the Mystery of the last Mythos theme you lost. It represents the last echoes of a question within her, which may one day reawaken, even though she has forsaken it. It is a tiny doubt in the back of her head about her life and her existence in the City, like a thread that is waiting to be pulled and unraveled but, for the most part, never is.

When you become a Sleeper, keep your last Mystery in mind. There is something of your Mythos still alive inside your character, a flame that may be rekindled by the events in the story.

Sleepers are apprehensive about revealing their last Mystery to others or even contemplating it themselves because, in a way, all Sleepers are afraid of waking up, and this final speck of the legendary can explode into a full awakening, as explained below under Waking Up Again. For this reason, a Sleeper's last Mystery is also referred to as her **Secret Mystery**. Your crewmates and other people who know about this weakness then become potential threats, even if unconsciously so.

```
Det. Enkidu finally gives up on her war
with the gods, what with angel assas-
sins, Gilgamesh, and a wilting disease
she was cursed with. She loses her last
Mythos theme, and becomes a Sleeper
again. However, her last Mystery, "How
can the gods themselves be defeated?"
is still there, somewhere, and may be
used to reawaken her.
```

PLAYING A SLEEPER

When you play a Sleeper, you play your character as normal. However, your character becomes entirely blinded by the Mist, unable to see anything legendary for what it is. You take a permanent status of *mistbound-5*. This status cannot be removed or changed, except by very unusual circumstances, such as abilities that affect the Mist itself. While you have this status, you cannot take any actions that involve Mythos powers, nor can you make any moves related to Mythos like **Look Beyond the Mist** and **Stop. Holding. Back.** Other legendary effects around your character still affect her normally.

```
As a Sleeper, Det. Enkidu is mist-
bound-5. The wilting-disease-3 she was
cursed with still continues to plague
her, but she cannot recognize its leg-
endary nature. To the detective, her
illness seems like an ordinary, albeit
horrible, condition.
```

DENYING THE BEYOND

Sometimes, when awakened Rifts fall asleep, a terrible reversal takes place and the power of their Mythos is harnessed to augment the Mist around them. Why this happens and through what mechanism is up to you and the MC and could be the subject of an entire investigation. Rifts in this state are **Denying the Beyond**: they reject the thought of anything beyond the ordinary so powerfully that they actually suppress the powers of the Mythoi around them, creating a thicker blanket of Mist, as it were. No Rift in

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the City can resist this influence and while Rifts present near a Sleeper who is Denying the Beyond can still remember having their powers, they are completely unable to manifest them. Sometimes the denial is so powerful that such Sleepers leave a trail of fortified Mist behind them, protecting not only themselves but also anything associated with them (family, friends, workplace, etc.) from Mythos powers. Rifts who are a part of these Sleepers' lives do not become a part of that trail, but they are affected by anyone else who is.

There is no telling what happens when a Sleeper Denying the Beyond encounters an Avatar. In such extreme cases, the MC decides how everyone is affected. Things might get weird.

When you become a Sleeper, you have the option to also be Denying the Beyond. You choose this when you lose your last Mythos theme and you cannot change this decision later (unless you reawaken and fall asleep again). If you choose to Deny the Beyond, the following move applies:

DENYING THE BEYOND

When you are a Sleeper Denying the Beyond:

- **Anyone and anything around you takes an immediate ongoing *suppressed-Mythos-powers-5* status. They can only Face Danger if they have the ability to resist Mist effects.**
- **Any existing Mythos-based story tags, statuses, and effects around you are either removed, temporarily suppressed, or revised to reflect a mundane version of themselves (MC's choice)**
- **The MC cannot use any Mythos-based moves.**

When affected targets leave your vicinity, all of the above effects expire. Removed statuses stay removed, suppressed statuses are restored, and revised statuses regain their original version.

Trail: You can make anyone or anything in your life who is not a Rift into a source of the same effect described above, as long as you regularly interact with them.

While under the full effect of the status, player and non-player characters cannot take any action that involves Mythos powers. Even Mythos powers activated from afar lose their effectiveness as they come near any source of a Denying the Beyond.

Note that even if someone is able to resist the effects of your Denying the Beyond and activate Mythos powers around you, you are still *mist-bound-5* and therefore cannot acknowledge their powers.

> Jerry, who plays Det. Enkidu, decides that she is Denying the Beyond. First, her status of *wilting-disease-3*, given by the gods, is removed (as ruled by the MC).
>
> Whenever the detective is around, her crewmates, Sullivan and Goodfellow, each take the status *suppressed-Mythos-powers-5* and cannot use Mythos powers or make Mythos-related moves. Furthermore, when the detective steps into a scene with any Mythos-based story tags, such as *witching glyphs*, the MC removes these tags. Finally, the MC can't use any Mythos-based moves on her, for example, the moves belonging to Gilgamesh, a non-player Rift character.
>
> Jerry wants to use the trail option to extend this effect to everyone on Enkidu's precinct. From this point on, all the Lakeside PD cops become sources of the same effect and Mythos-powers cannot be used when a Lakeside PD cop is present. Jerry can't make Rifts like Sullivan, Goodfellow, or Gilgamesh into sources of this effect, but their powers are suppressed whenever Det. Enkidu or a Lakeside PD cop is nearby.

Groups are encouraged to experiment with Denying the Beyond and use it to create interesting mystical situations. For example, a Sleeper Denying the Beyond could be a very reliable insurance policy against other Rifts. The specific nature of the effect (for example, its range, who exactly is affected, etc.) should be decided by the MC based on the particularities of your series.

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CHALLENGES OF A SLEEPER

A Sleeper wants to sleep (in a way everybody does, some just can't). Her first and foremost challenge is the powers that wish to awaken her. Her ultimate goal, even if completely unconscious, is to keep her life stable and avoid anything that could reawaken the Mythos inside her.

This sleep can be challenged by various characters in the story. First, there are the other player characters who may wish to reawaken their crewmate. Then there are other non-player Rifts or even other Sleepers who destabilize her life. Old enemies from her days as a Rift could come looking for a payback, especially now that she is without her powers. If she is Denying the Beyond, maybe some Rifts are suffering from it and want to end it.

WAKING UP AGAIN

Your sleep can come to an end in several ways, listed below. However, playing a Sleeper is a chance to bring the Logos side of your character as well as the effects of the Mist to the forefront of your story. You should interpret these rules on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific story of each Sleeper.

YOUR CHOICE

You can end your character's sleep at any point. Perhaps you feel that she has finally accepted the reality of something beyond the Mist or that events around her have somehow jolted her memory; the decision is up to you.

> After months as a Sleeper, Det. Enkidu bumps into a feral child involved in an investigation who reminds her of her own past and Mythos. As an emotional scene ensues, Jerry thinks it's a good place for Enkidu's Sleeper stint to end; the detective awakens.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LEGENDARY

When you take an action to look for answers beyond your ordinary life, your sleep ends. In other words, to remain asleep you must always be denying the existence of something beyond the ordinary. Other characters, and especially your crewmates, can try to make you acknowledge the world beyond the Mist by appealing to your Secret Mystery.

> As a Sleeper detective, Enkidu continues her work with the crew, but she never believes that the oddities they encounter have a truly supernatural origin. For her, the Rifts they meet are just psychos and weirdos, and she's happy to arrest them all. However, she does notice that there are greater players involved, people of immense influence and power. The evidence accumulates and eventually her crewmates confront her with the reality that these powerful movers-and-shakers actually possess legendary powers. If Enkidu takes any action to investigate this avenue, even once, she awakens.

LOSING A THEME

When you lose a theme as a Sleeper, your sleep ends. This could happen if you mark three Crack on one of your themes. You do not get a new theme to replace the one you lost; instead, follow the instructions under The Aftermath of Sleep below.

A Sleeper's sleep depends on the stability and comfort of the known. The moment a major element of your ordinary life shatters and you are left broken, doubting, or confused, your Mythos will come raining down on your consciousness and you will awaken. Losing a Logos theme represents a rattling loss of stability in one of the areas of your life which, even if partial, leads to an abrupt end to your sleep.

> Det. Enkidu's wild nature (Personality Logos theme) haunts her even when her Mythos is buried deep inside. Getting into a few fights with suspects and cops alike, she incurs the wrath of her chief, marking Crack once and then twice on her police detective Routine Logos theme. Meanwhile, avoiding fights makes her mark Crack on her Personality theme. The detective is walking on thin ice; if she gets into one more fight, she will lose her job and her Routine Logos theme. If she gets called out but doesn't respond, she will have controlled her temper, losing her Personality Logos theme. Either way, a change of this magnitude involving a lost Logos theme will wake her up and rekindle her forgotten Mythos.

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OTHER APPROPRIATE REASONS

You or the MC may define a reasonable set of means by which your Sleeper character can be awoken, such as finding and performing an ancient ritual or obtaining a dragon's heart to reignite your inner fire. This solution may be related to your Mythos, the Mist, etc. If anyone succeeds in applying the solution, your sleep ends.

Your crewmates or non-player characters can try to discover what this method is (using **Investigate**) and obtain what is needed to end your sleep. However, applying the solution to wake up your Sleeper should not be an easy task and may require a great deal of effort from those who desire your awakening.

> Sullivan and Goodfellow are finding the situation with Det. Enkidu unbearable, especially since her player, Jerry, chose to have her Deny the Beyond, suppressing their powers when she's around. Together, they conspire to reawaken the wild detective. Their research reveals that only an Annunaki god can do so. The problem is, the Annunaki gods want Enkidu dead and the only one who can talk to them is Gilgamesh, an old nemesis of Enkidu. The pair note, however, that the Annunaki gods can't use their divine means to kill Enkidu while she is Denying the Beyond, so they plan on tricking the Annunaki gods to awaken her but save her from the gods' clutches before the gods can enact their fatal verdict. This better work.

THE AFTERMATH OF YOUR SLEEP

When your sleep ends, you may choose one of the following:

- Your character wakes up to the reality of the Mythoi and the Mist and, having acknowledged what she is, decides (consciously or unconsciously) to forego her Mythos forever and become an entirely ordinary resident of the City, for better or worse. She leaves the story permanently.
- Your character wakes up to the reality of the Mythoi and the Mist and, having acknowledged what she is, decides to make the impossible leap back to awareness. She returns, now or later, as a new Legendary character (three Mythos themes and one Logos theme). However, this conscious leap demands everything she has. You create your character as a brand new character, retaining none of her previous themes, crew relationships, Build-Up points, or Moments of Evolution. This represents the total transformation required of your character in order to escape the gravitational pull of the Mist once more.

OPTIONAL RULE: REBUILD A SLEEPER

The power of the Mist is absolute. Waking up is impossible. Try to imagine the leap from a total state of obliviousness to awareness; it is like the difference between zero and infinity. Even if it were somehow possible for your character, she is no longer the person she once was. For this reason, the core rules of *City of Mist* state you should build your character from scratch.

As an alternative to building a brand new character, your group can decide to opt for rebuilding characters that wake up again. Your character still changes to a Legendary character, losing two of her three Logos themes, but she keeps everything else. To represent that, rebuild the character as in the Moment of Evolution "Go Through a Transformation" (page 268), with the exception that your transformed character must have three Mythos themes and one Logos theme.

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THE LIFE CYCLE OF THEMES

The dramatic moments in your character's life tell the story of her personal and mythical ups and downs, but also her evolution and possible rise to greatness or fall to slumber. In conclusion of this section, here is a summary of the life cycle of your character's themes.

Throughout the series, themes grow and deteriorate:

- **When a theme gains Attention**, it becomes stronger and more useful: power tags produce more Power, weakness tags produce more Attention, and improvements give you more possibilities. All of them also contribute to the amount of Build-Up you get when you finally let go of the theme.
- **When a theme gains Fade and Crack**, it's "cooking": it's getting ready to release all the narrative energy that it has been storing in the form of power tags, weakness tags, and improvements and transform it into Build-Up (much like a battery or a capacitor).

When a theme is finally replaced:

- **The theme converts all its power tags, weakness tags, and improvements into Build-Up**. As a result, sooner or later, you receive a Moment of Evolution, an improvement that is on another scale and more permanent than the improvements in your themes
- **You get a nascent theme of the other side**:
  - » The life cycle of the theme begins again and continues as described above.
  - » The balance of Mythos and Logos is changed. If it goes too far to either side, you become an Avatar or a Sleeper, and your character changes forever.

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EXTRA THEMES

Extra themes represent additional resources or allies available to your character. You can gain extra themes through a Moment of Evolution (page 267). The extra themes you can choose from are:

- **Ally**, someone who has pledged to either follow you, lead you, or help you on your path. An Ally can be a mundane one, such as a rich benefactor who sponsors you, or a Rift, such as a newly-awakened teenager who tails you and gets into trouble. It can also be an animal, whether mundane or a Familiar (an animal Rift), or even a sentient Relic (an object Rift).
- **Base of Operations**, a location that you have obtained and dedicated to your activities. This location may be a mundane one or an Enclave (a Rift attached to a place).
- **Ride**, a means of transportation adapted to your needs in the field. A ride can be a vehicle, a Relic such as a flying carpet, or a riding beast, whether a mundane one or a Familiar such as a sea dragon.

When you gain a new extra theme, pick up a theme card and follow your chosen themebook to fill it out. As with all Moments of Evolution, you may choose to create and unveil this new theme at a later stage in the game to avoid interrupting the flow of the session.

CONVERTING STORY ELEMENTS INTO EXTRA THEMES

You can choose to create an extra theme around a character, resource, or possession that already exists in the series. If this story element is reflected in your themes or power tags, follow these guidelines when converting it to an extra theme.

CONVERTING THEMES

While your character's themes represent major aspects of your character, extra themes represent secondary aspects. Therefore, you should not convert allies and items that are represented by existing themes – such as Relic, Defining Relationship, or Possessions – into extra themes.

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You can, however, use extra themes to expand on your existing themes and to represent a new role assumed by one of your allies or items, e.g., if your Defining Relationship also becomes your sidekick (Ally extra theme). However, the themes remain independent of each other. For example, if you lose your Defining Relationship it may mean this Ally is still your sidekick or that you replace them with a new sidekick; if you lose your Ally theme, it may mean that your Defining Relationship no longer acts as your sidekick but continues to be a major part of your life, and so on.

CONVERTING POWER TAGS

When you choose a new extra theme, you can choose to create it based on one or more of your existing power tags. If you do, you have the option of keeping or replacing each of the relevant power tags. If you choose to replace a power tag, remove it from your character's theme card and choose a different power tag for that theme by answering a question from the themebook (you can answer the question that generated the tag you removed again).

> Sullivan has a Moment of Evolution and his player, Lamar, chooses to use it to get a Ride extra theme, representing his old beat-up Mustang. Since Sullivan already has a power tag for his Mustang under his Retro Renegade (Possessions) theme, he can replace it with another power tag (using a power tag question from the Possessions themebook). However, Lamar opts to keep the power tag so he can pack more punch with his Mustang.

USING EXTRA THEMES

EXTRA THEMES TAGS

The rules for invoking power and weakness tags in extra themes, as well as for recovering burnt power tags in extra themes, are given in Tags in Crew and Extra Themes, page 215.

EXTRA THEMES ATTENTION & IMPROVEMENTS

Extra themes gain Attention in the same ways regular character themes do (see Character and Crew Growth, see page 244): invoking weakness tags, choosing to give the theme attention or explore its Mythos when making the **Montage (Downtime)** move, finding answers to the theme's Mystery (**Finally, Some Answers**), or sacrificing something for its Identity (**Make a Hard Choice**).

When all three Attention boxes on an extra theme are checked, reset the track to zero (erase all check marks) and choose an improvement for the theme. You may choose any of the improvements available for player themes.

FADE AND CRACK ON EXTRA THEMES

The Mysteries and Identities of extra themes follow the same rules as Mysteries and Identities of regular themes and are governed by the same rules and moves (**Finally, Some Answers**; **End of the Road**; and **Make a Hard Choice**), given under The Balance Of Mythos And Logos (page 250) and Making a Hard Choice (page 254)

SHELVING AN EXTRA THEME

Unlike regular character themes, extra themes are never lost, only shelved. When the third box on the Fade or Crack track of an extra theme is checked, the theme is shelved: its tags (power or weakness) cannot be invoked by anyone and you cannot mark any additional Fade or Crack on it. This could mean you and your Ally got into a fight or that your Ally was kidnapped; that your Base of Operations is shut down or overrun; that your Ride is busted and is undergoing repairs, etc.

To reinstate a shelved theme, you must use an improvement to reset your Fade or Crack track. You can still gain Attention normally on a shelved extra theme, but since you cannot invoke weakness tags, this Attention must come from the **Montage (Downtime)** move or from acting in favor of the theme's Mystery or Identity. When you reach three Attention, you must use the improvement to reset your Fade or Crack track (although you can hold off the return of your extra theme into the story for the right moment). You cannot use Attention on a shelved extra theme for any other purpose.

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EXTRA THEMEBOOK

ALLY

A SIDEKICK · A FAMILIAR · A SCIENTIST WHO BUILDS YOUR GADGETS · A MENTOR OR GURU · AN IMPORTANT OFFICIAL BACKING YOU · A MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURE FROM YOUR MYTHOS · AN INFORMER · A FILTHY-RICH SPONSOR · A MYSTERIOUS GUIDE · A REFORMED ENEMY

Reliable allies are hard to come by. Everyone in the City has their own agenda – Rifts more so than the rest – so coming across someone who believes in you and wants to help you do your job is a lucky opportunity. But not all allies are equal. Some follow you because they admire you, or even love you. Others share your objectives and want to see them through. For some allies, you are a pawn on their chessboard or a soldier in their war. And there are those who always stay in the shadows, whose true motives you may never really know – not until it's too late.

Allies come in all shapes and colors. Perhaps you are followed around by a wiccan teenager with a talent for getting into trouble. Maybe the red-eyed crow from your Mythos can be summoned at times of need. Or an unidentified contact in the mayor's office who calls himself Salem is tipping you off on some big backstage shenanigans. Your ally could even be a group, such as a band of ghostly samurais or creepy crawlers and insects that come out of the woodworks whenever you need them.

When you make an Ally, decide with the MC whether the Ally is your Secondary Character (see Secondary Characters, page 236).

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's agenda and what she is trying to accomplish. What sort of help could she use the most? What individuals would be best at giving her support, guidance, and backing? Does she need more firepower, a different skillset, social representation, or more information? Is there anyone she already met who would become her ally?

Alternately, think of your character's Mythos. In the legend, did your Mythos have a companion? Or a supernatural being that guided her path and protected her from greater threats? Was there an animal, mundane or legendary, who befriended your Mythos?

Based on the above, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHO IS HELPING ME?

- _____, who feels _____ towards me.
- _____, who, like me, wants to _____.
- _____, who plans to use me to _____.
- _____, my animal companion(s).
- _____, whose motives are mysterious to me.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details about your ally: What is their name? What do they look like? How did you meet? Why are they helping you?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT DOES YOUR ALLY HELP YOU WITH?

basic thaumaturgy, *scout ahead*, *inside information*, *follow my heart*, *mobbing*

B WHAT IS YOUR ALLY'S PROFESSION, TRAINING, SOCIAL POSITION, OR SPECIAL NATURE?

schoolgirl, *totem spirit*, *bureaucrat*, *fairy godmother*, *notorious gang*

C WHAT OTHER ABILITIES DOES YOUR ALLY POSSESS?

running away, *share senses*, *embezzlement*, *protection from creatures of darkness*, *knife-fighting*

D WHAT DRIVES YOUR ALLY TO HELP YOU?

she admires me, *I am the chosen one*, *masterplan*, *endless compassion*, *ratpack loyalty*

E HOW DOES YOUR ALLY FIGHT OFF OPPOSITION?

banishing spell, *iron beak*, *legal mumbo-jumbo*, *blind with bright light*, *aggressive swagger*

F WHAT CAN YOUR ALLY DO TO PROTECT YOU OR THEMSELVES?

hide, *flock the enemy*, *counter-surveillance tactics*, *"You cannot pass this sigil"*, *blend in with the locals*

G WHAT SPECIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION CAN YOUR ALLY TAP INTO?

hit the books, *spirits of the ancestors*, *shady government deals*, *the Compass of Conscience*, *word on the street*

H WHAT RESOURCES, ARTIFACTS, OR GEAR DOES YOUR ALLY POSSESS?

magical ingredients, *a shiny object*, *off-the-books extraction team*, *fairy dust*, *illegal firearms*

I WHO DOES YOUR ALLY KNOW?

fellow wiccans, *the dead walk with me*, *call the mayor*, *the Pleiades*, *owner of a criminal haven*

J WHY DO YOU TRUST YOUR ALLY?

she's no match for me, *telepathic link*, *aligned agendas*, *good intentions*, *we've been through a lot together*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A HOW DOES YOUR ALLY GET YOU IN TROUBLE?

conspicuous in a crowd, *eerie atmosphere*, *secret agenda*, *overprotective*, *easily provoked*

B WHAT ARE THE SHORTCOMINGS OF YOUR ALLY'S ABILITIES, METHODS, GEAR, OR ATTITUDE?

novice spellcaster, *limited grasp of technology*, *"There's no need to get physical"*, *requires a fairy's wand to focus*, *zero tactical coordination*

C WHAT CHARACTERISTIC OF YOUR ALLY IS MOST BOTHERSOME TO YOU?

stubborn, *immortal aloofness*, *conniving*, *naive*, *chatterbox*, *survival mentality*

D WHO OR WHAT IS MOST LIKELY TO HURT YOUR ALLY?

easy target, *archers & gunmen*, *"I think they're on to me"*, *creatures of darkness*, *police brutality*

MYSTERY OR IDENTITY

Choose a Mystery or an Identity for this theme. For example:

- (Teenage wiccan) "Who among my teachers uses black magic?"
- (Mayor's office informer) "Do exactly as I say or we're all screwed."
- (Fairy godmother) "What does destiny have in store for you?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- A statement that they often make and affects your relationship (Identity)
- A personal question (Mystery) or goal (Identity) that they expect your help with, such as a case they are working on or an enemy they swore to fight
- A general curiosity or an interest that holds their attention (Mystery)

Write your Mystery or Identity on your extra theme card.

TITLE

Name your Ally theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write it on your extra theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Teenage wiccan) Giggles & Witchcraft
- (Mayor's office informer) Our Inside Man
- (Fairy godmother) Someone Watching Over Me

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ALLY THEME IMPROVEMENTS

Whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

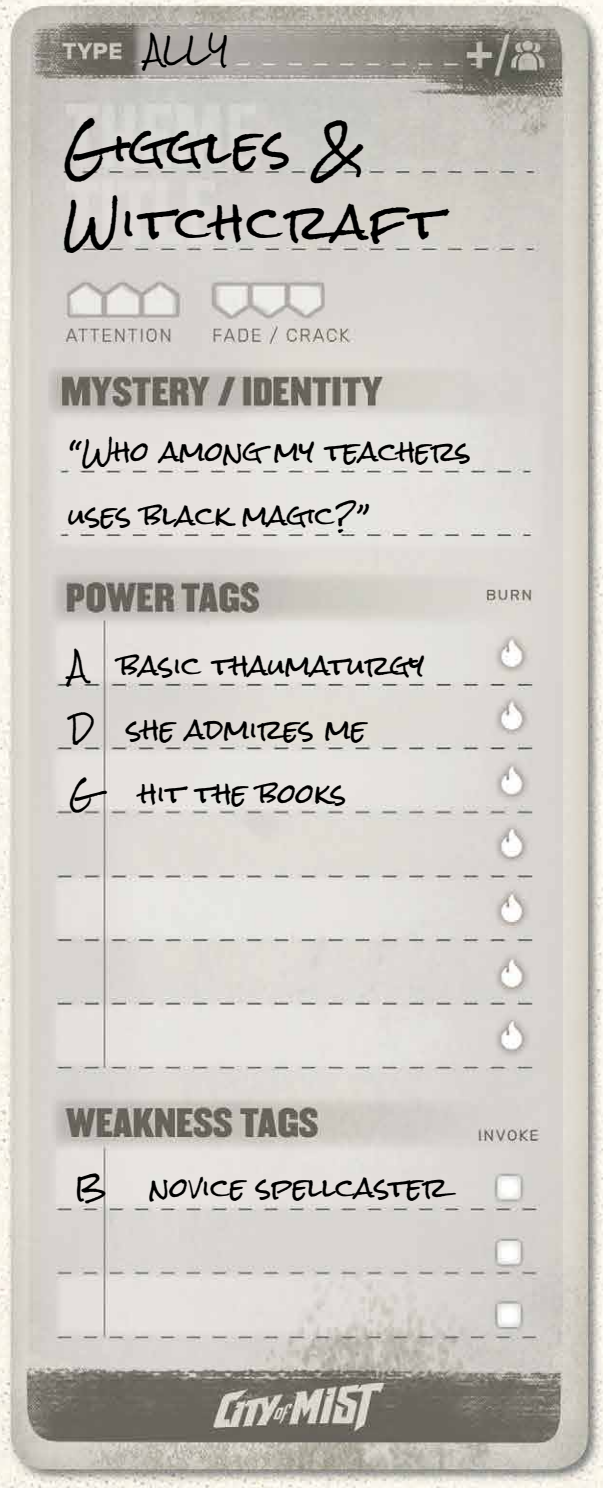
☐ **Sharing is Caring**
Choose one of your ally's power tags which describes an ability or an item. Your ally can pass it on to you. You can use this power tag yourself even when your ally is not around. You do not need to **Change the Game** to do so.

☐ **Gets Around**
Once per session, you can have your ally show up at a scene anywhere in the City, even if you're not there, if it's even remotely possible that they can get there.

☐ **Back-to-back**
Once per session, when you make a move with your ally by your side, you can trade a miss result for a 7-9.

☐ **Tag Team**
Once a session, you can choose an opponent to tag team with your ally (it may be a collective). While one of you is fighting that opponent, the other teammate cannot be harmed by that opponent, but can only take action to recover, prepare for the fight, or defend from other threats.

☐ **Serious Firepower**
Choose any improvement from any of the Mythos or Logos themebooks. You can use this improvement only when taking actions as your ally and using your ally's tags.



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EXTRA THEMEBOOK

BASE OF OPERATIONS

A PRIVATE OFFICE · AN UNDERWATER LAIR · A SECRET LAB · A FAIRY-TALE CASTLE · AN ANCIENT LIBRARY · THE MOUTH OF A VOLCANO · A TREE HOUSE · A SAFE HOUSE · A HOVEL UNDER A BRIDGE · HEADQUARTERS

The more your operation grows, the more it can use a base. Whether you're a vigilante, an investigator, a conspiracy theory madman, or a cultist, your activity needs resources, storage, and most importantly, a safe place to conduct your business away from prying eyes. Perhaps your base is the basement of a large apartment building where you tie up the crooks you capture. Maybe it is a cave full of treasures blocked by a stone wall that only slides open when the password is spoken. You could have a luxurious apartment inside the looking-glass hanging in your crummy tenement single bedroom.

Your base of operations can be any mundane facility or location in the City. It can have any sort of gear or personnel; you can also incorporate Mythos-infused items and characters in it, if it fits your story. Your base may be an Enclave, a Rift in the Mist attached to a specific location, in which case it may exist in the City or in some kind of parallel dimension, accessible only via gateways. In any case, whatever special features you want to add to your base must be backed by appropriate power tags.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's goals and how she plans to achieve them. What kind of resources does she need? Where would be a good place for her to hunker down when the going gets tough or to privately work on her projects? Alternatively, think of your character's Mythos. In the legend, was there a specific place your Mythos is associated with? Was your Mythos in possession of a homestead or a secret lair?

Based on the above, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT KIND OF PLACE WOULD BEST SERVE MY CHARACTER'S ACTIVITIES?

- It's a rather regular _____.
- It's the home / workshop / place of worship / source of power / burial place of my Mythos.
- It's a secret / public _____ in the City.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details: How did you find or acquire this place? Where is it located in the City? How can it be accessed? Who knows about this place?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT IS THE MOST USEFUL FEATURE OF YOUR BASE?

private office, no-one can hear you, cave full of treasures, through the looking-glass, impregnable security

B WHAT DEFENSES OR DEVICES PROTECT YOUR BASE FROM INTRUDERS?

silent alarm, cutting wire trap, the password stone, playing card soldiers, private SWAT team

C WHAT ADVANTAGE DO YOU GAIN WHEN WORKING IN YOUR BASE?

a good place for contemplation, interrogation light, know the cave better than anyone, seat of my power, good for business

D WHAT KIND OF SPECIAL FACILITIES DOES YOUR BASE INCLUDE?

file cabinet, torture room, forgery workshop, expansive gardens, hi-tech laboratories

E WHAT SPECIAL GEAR DO YOU STORE IN YOUR BASE?

forensics briefcase, firearms and explosives, genie lamp, size-altering mushrooms, stolen artifacts

F WHO WORKS OR LIVES IN YOUR BASE?

Adam – my secretary, a vicious hound, forty thieves, the king of hearts, "Control"

G WHAT KIND OF SUPERNATURAL POWERS DOES YOUR BASE POSSESS?

so normal it weakens magic, the walls echo lies with truth, generate gold, I can decapitate anyone by saying "off with her head!", weird science

H WHAT IS USEFUL ABOUT THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR BASE?

half-way decent, outwardly inconspicuous, threatening entrance, guests get lost for hours, seems like an ordinary skyscraper

I WHAT IS UNDER YOUR BASE, OR BEYOND IT?

Luigi's Ristorante, secret burial ground, the subway tunnels, wonderland, the corporate safe

J WHAT SPECIAL MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION OR ACCESS DOES YOUR BASE OFFER?

fire escape stairs, truck in the garage, the "other" entrance, transport to any mirror in the City, private helicopter

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT CONDITION OR NEGATIVE ASPECT OF YOUR BASE MAKES IT HARDER TO USE?

damn termites!, watched by the police, attracts greed, overgrown, corporate regulations

B WHAT IS THE MOST SUBSTANTIAL WEAKNESS IN THE SECURITY OF YOUR BASE?

cheap locks, traces of blood, well-known location, unreliable guards, vulnerable to hacking

C WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU SPEND TOO MUCH TIME IN YOUR BASE?

worked through the night, the aggressiveness rubs off you, the forty thieves, my evil reflections, expenses audit

D WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE MYTHOS ASPECTS OF YOUR BASE?

misplaced items disappear, lose control, locked outside, laws of physics don't apply, dangerous artifacts

MYSTERY OR IDENTITY

Choose a Mystery or an Identity for this theme. For example:

- (Private investigations office) "I'll take any case that comes through this door."
- (Cave of Ali Baba) "What other treasures can I add to my collection?"
- (Castle of the Queen of Hearts) "OFF WITH HER HEAD!"

You can try exploring the following options:

- An attitude or commitment that befits your operation (Identity)
- A question related to the Mythos in this location (Mystery)
- Fears (Identity) or doubts (Mystery) about your base

Write your Mystery or Identity on your extra theme card.

TITLE

Name your Base of Operations theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write it on your extra theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Private investigations office) Eclipse Investigations
- (Cave of Ali Baba) My Own Fort Knox
- (Castle of the Queen of Hearts) The Castle In The Looking-Glass

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BASE OF OPERATIONS THEME IMPROVEMENTS

Whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

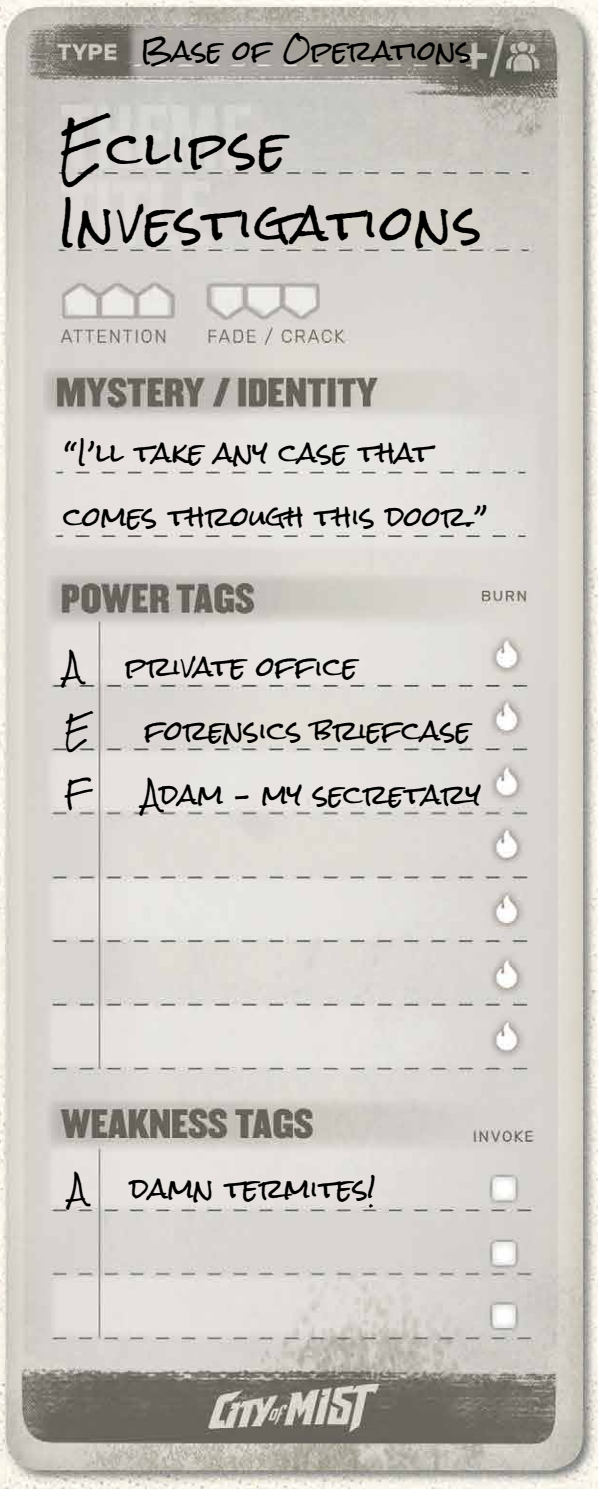
☐ **Storage Space**
Once per session, you can reach into a storage space in your base of operations and pull out a useful object. You gain an appropriate temporary story tag.

☐ **Boobytraps**
Decide on a status that can be inflicted by the security measures in your base. Its tier is equal to two plus your Power (based on any relevant tags you or your base have). Every time someone tries to enter your base uninvited, they take that status once, unless they found a way to circumvent those security measures. They can **Face Danger**.

☐ **Away From Prying Eyes**
When you **Sneak Around** with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **An Ancient Place**
When you make the moves **Look Beyond the Mist** or **Stop. Holding. Back.** in your base, increase your final score by one.

☐ **Peace of Mind**
Whenever you **Investigate** in your base and score 7-9, pick one of the MC's options in the **Investigate** move. The MC can't choose this option this time.



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EXTRA THEMEBOOK

RIDE

A MOTORBIKE FROM HELL · A BLACK VAN · A FEATHERED SERPENT · A SUBMARINE · A PEGASUS · A VESPA WITH A SIDECAR · A SEMI-TRAILER · A PRIVATE JET · A WITCH'S BROOM

It's not about where you go; it's how you get there that matters. When you show up at the scene, it's your ride that sets the tone for your entrance. When you navigate the intricacies of a tenuous encounter, it's your ride that will get you through, whether elegantly or with brute force. And when it's time to leave the party, it's your ride that will get you the hell outta Dodge. A hot ride is always a handy thing to have. Whether you are a federal agent sporting an old-school Ford, a ninja assassin crawling your way through the City on a giant spider, or a curious kid paddling energetically on your trusty bicycle, you depend on your ride.

Your ride can be any modern-day vehicle or a legendary one, such as a peddler's wagon or Elijah's chariot of fire. It can also be a riding beast, mundane or legendary (in which case it is a Familiar, an animal Rift). It may be associated with your Mythos or have its own Mythos.

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CONCEPT

Think about your character's activities and the City locations she needs to visit, as well as the threats she normally faces. What kind of transportation would best serve her? What would suit her style? Alternatively, think of your character's Mythos. In the legend, was there a specific beast or vehicle your Mythos used in order to get around? Was there a device that helped your Mythos get from place to place?

Based on the above, think about the answer to the question below:

? WHAT VEHICLE OR RIDING BEAST DOES MY CHARACTER USE FOR TRAVEL?

- It's a car / motorbike / bicycle / skateboard / boat / jetski / plane / helicopter / glider / etc.
- It's my Mythos' steed.
- It's a legendary beast or item, the _____.
- It's a modern vehicle imbued with the Mythos of _____.

Next, flesh out your idea with some details about your ride: How fast can it go? Where do you keep it? How did you obtain it? What does it use for fuel?

POWER TAG QUESTIONS

Answer the first question; then choose two more questions to answer. Answer each question with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will be useful to your character during the game. Each answer becomes a power tag. Write it on your theme card under POWER TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A HOW DOES YOUR RIDE ENABLE YOU TO TRAVEL?

old-school federal Ford car, *wall climbing*, *paddle harder*, *flying mortar & pestle*, *fast swimmer*, *semi-trailer*

B WHAT MAKES YOUR RIDE FAST OR ALLOWS IT TO GO EVEN FASTER?

100 HP, *long legs*, *fastest downhill*, *in pursuit of my victim*, *the lighter the load the faster I go*, *fuel-injection system*

C WHAT ALLOWS YOUR RIDE TO CARRY MORE?

a spacious trunk, *giant spider*, *bicycle basket*, *strangely deep*, *hold onto my fin*, *trailer container*

D WHAT MANEUVERS CAN YOU DO WITH YOUR RIDE?

block the road, *squeeze into small spaces*, *bike stunts*, *swoop down*, *evasive swimming*, *ram*

E WHAT IMPRESSION DOES YOUR RIDE MAKE ON ONLOOKERS?

here on formal business, *hair-raising monstrosity*, *innocuous*, *terror-inspiring screech*, *friendly critter*, *blue-collar camaraderie*

F WHAT WEAPONS ARE STORED IN, MOUNTED ON, OR ARE A PART OF YOUR RIDE?

machine-gun hidden in grill, *shoots a sticky web*, *watergun*, *pestle made of stone*, *tailfin smack*, *two giant bullhorns*

G WHAT SPECIAL FEATURE DOES YOUR RIDE HAVE THANKS TO ITS MYTHOS?

dashboard lights warn me of danger, *vanish into shadow*, *impossible jump*, *summon at will*, *communicate with other oceanic life*, *incredible strength*

H WHAT HELPS YOUR RIDE AVOID OR SURVIVE PUNISHMENT?

sturdy chassis, *uncanny reflexes*, *easily fixed*, *made of stone*, *persevering little creature*, *impenetrable hide*

I WHAT SURVEILLANCE OR RECONNAISSANCE ABILITIES DOES YOUR RIDE HAVE?

listen to police frequencies, *sense movement on surface*, *dynamo flashlight*, *bird's eye view*, *sonar*, *trailer full of surveillance equipment*

J HOW DOES YOUR RIDE AVOID DETECTION?

drive with lights out, *the color of darkness*, *makes no sound*, *invisibility spell*, *can dive for one hour*, *fake license plates*

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WEAKNESS TAG QUESTIONS

Choose one question to answer. Answer it with a single description no more than a few words long. In your answer, you should describe something that will impede your character's actions during the game. Your answer becomes a weakness tag. Write it on your theme card under WEAKNESS TAGS along with the letter of the question.

A WHAT COULD SLOW DOWN OR IMPEDE YOUR RIDE?

flat tire, exposed in open spaces, no traction, flight path obstructions, water-dependent, guzzler

B WHAT IS YOUR RIDE'S MOST PROMINENT VULNERABILITY?

body of tin, soft underbelly, broken chain, hallowed ground, gullible, weak trailer connector

C UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS DOES YOUR RIDE BECOME UNRESPONSIVE?

locked steering wheel, fear of bright light, bad brakes, poor maneuverability, blood in the water, takes long to slow down

D HOW DOES YOUR RIDE'S MYTHOS OR BACKSTORY GET YOU INTO TROUBLE?

bureaucracy, hungry for blood, stolen bike, reluctant to swoop on hard-working victims, poachers, stuck in a labyrinth

MYSTERY OR IDENTITY

Choose a Mystery or an Identity for this theme. For example:

- (Old-school federal agent car) "I'll be asking the questions today."
- (Ninja spider riding beast) "Shadows are my armor."
- (Baba Yaga's flying mortar) "Who is brave enough to face me?"

You can try exploring the following options:

- A style or approach that you adopt while on your Ride (Identity)
- Musings about what you can accomplish with your Ride (Mystery)
- Inhibitions and limitations that you or your Ride have about what it can do (Identity)

Write your Mystery or Identity on your extra theme card.

TITLE

Name your Ride theme in a way that encapsulates its nature and style. Write it on your extra theme card under TITLE. For example:

- (Old-school federal agent car) This Is How We Roll
- (Ninja spider riding beast) Jorōgumo Spawn
- (Baba Yaga's flying mortar) Flying Mortar

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RIDE THEME IMPROVEMENTS

Whenever you gain an improvement for this theme, you can choose one of the following:

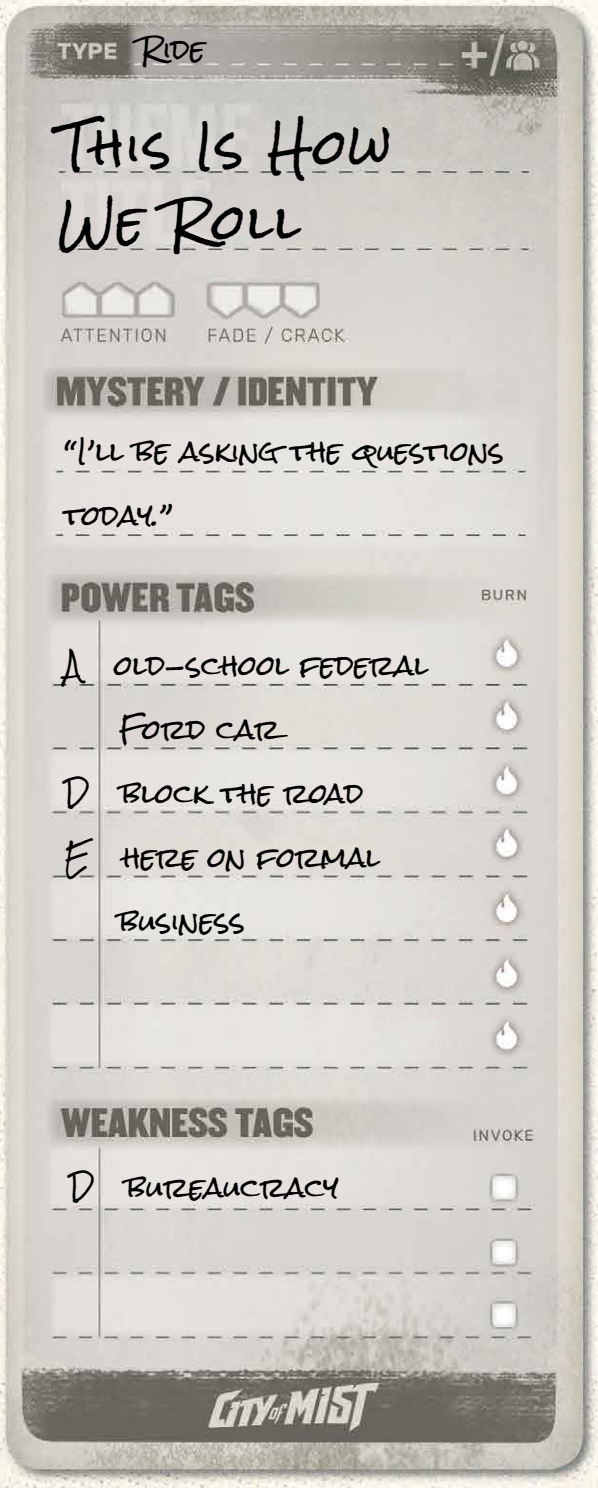
☐ **Showoff**
When you **Take the Risk** with tags from this theme, it's *Dynamite!*

☐ **Rev Up**
Once per session, if you can ready yourself for an action involving your ride, you can choose to receive an appropriate tier-2 status.

☐ **Protective**
Once per session, when you're in or on your ride, you can choose to transfer a status you take to your ride (if it can reasonably protect you). You do not **Face Danger** using your own tags; you can **Face Danger** for your ride instead, if possible, with its relevant tags.

☐ **Loyal Steed**
When anyone tries to mount, drive, or pilot your ride without your permission, your Ride takes an instant ongoing tier-5 status of your choice, such as *stubborn-beast-5* or *lockdown-5*. You can remove this status at will.

☐ **Getaway**
Once per session, you can have your ride waiting for you conveniently where you need it (if it can reasonably get there or if you could have left it there in advance).



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CITY OF MIST

PLAYER MOVES

CONVINCE

When you use your abilities **to talk, threaten, or seduce someone into doing something,** roll+Power. On a hit, choose a relevant status with tier=Power. Your target can choose either to take the status or:

- on a 7-9, to give in a little, but protect their own agenda.
- on a 10+, to change their agenda to include yours, at least for the time being.

CHANGE THE GAME

When you use your abilities **to give yourself or your allies an advantage**, roll+Power. On a hit, you get Juice=Power. Spend your Juice to gain the following effects, one-to-one:

- Create a story tag
- Burn a power tag or a story tag
- Give or reduce a status (one tier per point of Juice)

On a 10+, you get a minimum of 2 Juice, and you can also use your Juice to choose:

- Scale up the effect (greater area or more targets)
- Prolong the effect (make it ongoing)
- Hide the effect
- Any other improvement you and the MC agree on

FACE DANGER

When you use your abilities **to avoid an incoming hit, endure harm, resist a malign influence, or hold it together,** the MC (or player) will name a status with its tag and tier. Roll+Power. On a 10+, you fend off the effect and take no status at all. On a 7-9, you take the status, but with -1 tier. On a miss, you take the full status.

GO TOE TO TOE

When you use your abilities **to overcome someone or something in a struggle for control**, state what your goal is. Your opponent can describe how they respond, at their option. Roll+Power. On a 7-9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2:

- You manage to achieve your goal, e.g., take something they hold.
- You get them good, giving your opponent a status with tier=Power.
- You block, dodge, or counter their best attempts. If you don't choose this, they can impose a status on you. If they are a PC, its tier=their Power.

HIT WITH ALL YOU'VE GOT

When you **have a clear shot** and you use your abilities **to hit someone or something with all you've got**, roll+Power. On a hit, you give the target an appropriate status of your choice with tier=Power. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- You take cover or secure a superior position. If you don't choose this, they can impose a status on you. If they are a PC, its tier=their Power.
- You get them good or get many of them (+1 tier).
- You control the collateral damage.
- You hold the target's attention, if possible.
- You gain the upper hand. Take 1 Juice.

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INVESTIGATE

When you use your abilities **to seek answers to burning questions,** roll+Power. On a hit, you get Clues=Power. Spend your Clues one-to-one to ask the MC a question about the subject of your investigation or ask another player a relevant question about their character. They must give you either a straight answer or a solid lead. On a 7-9, they can also choose 1:

- Your investigation exposes you to danger.
- The clues you get are fuzzy, incomplete, or part-true part-false.
- Whoever or whatever you are asking the question(s) can ask you one question as well. You answer on the same terms.

SNEAK AROUND

When you use your abilities **to act secretly or deceptively**, roll+Power. On a hit, everyone that should fall for it falls for it. On a 7-9, it's complicated. The MC chooses 1:

- Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?
- You are perceived only by a secondary sense (someone picks up your scent while you're stalking them; you're seen whispering a message but the message is not heard).
- You must leave something important behind – or be discovered.

TAKE THE RISK

When you **perform a daring, risky, or outright stupid feat**, roll+Power. On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

City of Mist

FINALLY, SOME ANSWERS

When **you find answers to your Mystery**, choose one, two, or all three:

You gain a deeper understanding of your Mythos, of the subject of your Mystery, or of the link between your Mystery and your Mythos. Mark Attention on the theme to which this Mystery belongs.

You are shocked by the discovery to the point of rejecting your Mythos or an aspect of your ordinary life. Mark Fade or Crack on any theme.

Your questions are answered. Choose a new Mystery for this theme.

END OF THE ROAD

If your Identity ever becomes resolved, rephrase it in the same spirit to describe a new goal, a greater scope, a new angle, etc. Alternatively, if this aspect of your life truly ended, you may replace this Identity's theme.

MAKE A HARD CHOICE

When **answers to your Mystery are within reach, but you forego them**, mark Fade on that Mystery's theme.

When **your Identity demands you act or speak in a given way and you don't**, mark Crack on that Identity's theme.

When **you sacrifice something you truly want in order to abide by your Identity**, mark Attention on that Identity's theme.

MONTAGE (DOWNTIME)

Whenever your character has some downtime, choose one way to spend it:

- **Give attention** to one of your Logos (or extra) themes. Tell everyone at the table how you do it and mark Attention on that theme.
- **Work the case**. Tell everyone at the table how you do it, and gain 3 Clues with a method and a source based on your description.
- **Explore your Mythos**. Tell everyone at the table which Mystery you explore and how you do it. You gain 1 Clue with a method and a source based on your description. Mark Attention on that Mystery's theme.
- **Prepare for your next activity**. Tell everyone at the table how you prepare and choose one: recover all your burnt power tags OR gain 3 Juice with a method based on your description. You can choose from the effect improvements under **Change the Game**.
- **Recover from you last activity.** For each ongoing status still affecting you, the MC will tell you if and how it can be reduced during your downtime and by how many tiers. Alternatively, the MC can allow you to reduce any or some of your statuses by one tier for each relevant tag you have.

The MC can cue into any of the montage events and continue them as scenes.

FLASHBACK

Once per session, when you have the spotlight, choose 1:

Describe an action carried out by your character in the past and make a move for that action. The outcome of the move affects the current scene.

Describe events from your character's backstory that become relevant now. The MC can award you with 1 Juice or 1 Clue based on your description.

STOP. HOLDING. BACK.

When you **use your powers in a new and never-before-seen way or scale**, tell the MC what you hope to achieve. The MC will tell you the sacrifice it will take from you. Then roll+Logos. On a hit, you achieve exactly what you wanted to achieve and pay the price:

Significant: On a 7-9, mark Fade/Crack and burn all the power tags on one theme. On a 10+, mark Fade/Crack on one theme.

No Return: On a 7-9, replace one theme. On a 10+, mark Fade/Crack and burn all the power tags on one theme.

Ultimate: On a 7-9, you are killed, destroyed, or transformed forever (for now). Take a tier-6 status. You cannot **Face Danger**. On a 10+, replace one theme

On a 6 or less, you pay the price given for 7-9, but you also lose control over your powers or fail to use them as planned. The MC will decide how, and what the consequences are.

GEEK OUT DURING CREDITS

At the end of the session, when the credits roll, go around the table. Each player can answer one or more of the following questions:

- **How has the crew grown this session?**
  Recover a burnt crew power tag or mark Attention on a crew theme.
- **Which character had the most meaningful interaction with your character this session?**
  Add one Help point or one Hurt point next to their name on your character card.
- **Which of your themes is under the most strain? If it collapses, what new aspect will show up in its place?**
  Write down the answer under FLIPSIDE on that theme's card.

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CITY OF MIST

TRACKING CARDS

TRACKING CARD

1 2 3 4 OUT 5 MC 6

TAG

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TRACKING CARD

1 2 3 4 OUT 5 MC 6

TAG

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1 2 3 4 OUT 5 MC 6

TAG

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TRACKING CARD

1 2 3 4 OUT 5 MC 6

TAG

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CHARACTER SHEET

CHARACTER CARD

CHARACTER NAME

PLAYER

MYTHOS

LOGOS

CREW HELP HURT

STORY TAGS

CITY OF MIST

CHARACTER CARD

BUILD-UP

MOMENTS OF EVOLUTION

- Choose another broad power tag
- Gain an extra theme: Ally
- Gain an extra theme: Base of Operations
- Gain an extra theme: Ride
- Get closure from your Nemeses
- Go through a transformation
- Leave the City
- Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- Make one Core Move permanently *Dynamite!*
- See through the Mist

NEMESES

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TYPE +/

THEME TITLE

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

POWER TAGS BURN

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

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CREW OR EXTRA THEME CARD +/

IMPROVEMENTS

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THEME CARDS SHEET (FRONT)

TYPE

THEME TITLE

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

POWER TAGS BURN

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

CITY OF MIST

TYPE

THEME TITLE

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

POWER TAGS BURN

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

CITY OF MIST

TYPE

THEME TITLE

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

POWER TAGS BURN

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

CITY OF MIST

TYPE

THEME TITLE

ATTENTION FADE / CRACK

MYSTERY / IDENTITY

POWER TAGS BURN

WEAKNESS TAGS INVOKE

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THEME CARDS SHEET (BACK)

THEME CARD

IMPROVEMENTS

FLIPSIDE

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THEME CARD

IMPROVEMENTS

FLIPSIDE

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THEME CARD

IMPROVEMENTS

FLIPSIDE

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THEME CARD

IMPROVEMENTS

FLIPSIDE

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SAMPLE PLAYTHROUGH

Jake is playing Salamander. An all around good guy and serious heartthrob, Salamander was just a City Water Worker before he started having dreams about a burning lizard-like creature made of a substance which was both fire and water at the same time. He became capable of producing this substance as a nimbus of primordial plasma and, having realized its potential, started his activity as an up-and-coming crime fighter.

Dani is playing Flicker. All her life, Flicker was engrossed in her hipster lifestyle and her mad hacker skills: who to be, what music to listen to, how to crack the digital world. It wasn't until she literally stumbled into a vision of the horrible future of the City while walking down the street that she realized she is part of something greater. She doesn't know where her expanding senses and space-time warping abilities will take her next, but she intends to follow.

MC: So, it looks like you have enough information on this fella, Lars Erickson, to assume he is behind the attempt to trick you into stealing that crate. What do you do?

Jake: I think we will head to the Blue Oyster restaurant, where we know he's been hanging out. It's time to confront him.

Dani: Right. I look forward to figuring out *what* exactly this guy is.

MC: Super. You two take Salamander's City Waterworks Department van and drive down to the light industry district where the Blue Oyster is situated. It's a drab and rainy afternoon. You drive by factories, warehouses, and red-brick office buildings with soot-covered windows. You eventually spot the big sign of the Blue Oyster tucked in a back alley between two factories. It's noisy outside and steam rolls in front of you on the road as you turn into the alleyway. The restaurant is on the second floor of a converted warehouse. You take the elevator, which opens up to a small waiting area with a large open double door. There's a hostess standing there with a tablet device. She spots you as soon as you emerge from the elevator. Wafts of seafood and oyster sauce welcome you to the Blue Oyster. Jazz music is heard from within.

Jake: Salamander is a typical heroic male and he's overprotective of Flicker, so he'll say: "Now, watch your step here. We don't know who this guy is, or what's his *story*. Let me do the talking."

Dani: Flicker just shrugs and pulls out her phone. I'm gonna hang back while Salamander does his thing and try to hack into the hostess's tablet. I'm looking for the name Lars Erickson.

MC: Great, that would be an **Investigate** move. Which tags are you going to include?

Dani: I have *computers*, *network communications*, and *data mining*. Hacking is really Flicker's deal. That's three power tags, so a Power of 3. Are we using any weakness tags?

MC: No weakness tag. Roll away: 2d6 as always and add your Power.

Dani: I rolled a 7, plus 3. That's a 10, so it's in the category of 10+.

MC: Great! The **Investigate** move gives you three Clues which you can spend as you wish. For each clue, ask me any question you want and I will give a you a clue about it. You rolled 10+ so there are no complications this time.

Dani: Awesome. So Flicker is hanging back in the waiting area, chewing on gum, and seems to be playing with her phone. She quickly taps into the hostess's tablet and starts running a search on her data. So for my first Clue, I want to ask, *has Lars Erickson been here?*

MC: Very quickly your search yields a reservation for Lars Erickson, daily at this time. It's for two people, at the same table every day. In fact, he should be here right now.

Dani: Perfect. I also want to ask *What does he look like?* and *Who is he with*?

MC: You can get a map of the restaurant and figure out where he's sitting. In fact, you can see him through the double door, at the far end of the restaurant. You see a man in his mid-40s, mostly blonde with some gray hair on the sides, wearing a gray suit. There's a hulk of a man standing next to him in a black suit, like a waiter or a bodyguard, you're not sure. And of course,

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you have no way of knowing if this really is Lars Erickson, but that's his table. Salamander, what do you do?

Jake: Still unaware of everything wonder-hacker here has been up to, Salamander walks up to the hostess and asks: "Good afternoon, I'm here to meet my associate, Lars Erickson." I wait to see her response.

MC: She flicks through lists on her iPad for a moment and then responds with a fake smile: "I'm sorry, sir, there is no one under that name here today."

Jake: Huh? I look back at Flicker, confused.

Dani: I nod my head to indicate she's lying.

Jake: I turn back to the hostess and say, "Look, there must have been a mistake. He's supposed to be here. Do you mind if I just pop in for a minute and see if he's inside?"

MC: She moves uneasily. "I'm sorry, sir, but this is a respectable establishment. Our customers' privacy is important to us."

Jake: We'll see about that. I'm going to try to charm her into letting me in. I've got the tags *charming* and *handsome*, if that works.

MC: That works. That's a **Convince** move. You're rolling with two power tags, so your Power is 2.

Jake: I say: "Just a quick look. You'd be helping me out." and I smile my dashing heartthrob smile. I roll a 5. That's a total of 7, so that goes into 7-9.

MC: For **Convince**, you give her a choice: take a status or do as you say. You rolled 7-9, so she can still protect her agenda if she chooses to do as you say. What status would you give her if she refuses? You rolled with a Power of 2, so the tier of this status would be 2 as well.

Jake: Salamander isn't a bad guy. He doesn't want to make her feel bad but he *is* flirting. Let's say, if she resists, it will only make him more appealing and she will take a status of *soft-spot-2*. It's her choice now whether to help me or not, right?

MC: Yup. She looks you up and down, trying to weigh whether she should even get into this. Then she looks into the restaurant as if looking for her boss. "All right, but make it quick. And if anyone asks, tell them you're here to fix the pipes or something." She motions you to get in.

Jake: "Wouldn't be the first time..." I go in.

Dani: I spring up and walk in right after him, blurting: "I'm with him."

MC: The hostess gives you a confused look, but she stands back.

Dani: I quickly fill in Salamander about Erickson as we walk into the restaurant.

MC: Sure. The restaurant is a wide space divided into semi-circular booths facing each other in different angles. The walls and fixtures are decorated with art-deco designs. There is a loud chatter of people talking as they are having their lunch, almost too loud to hear the jazz band playing on the left hand side. Far on the right, there is a swinging double door with two circular windows next to a hatch where waiters are queueing to pick up trays with steaming dishes. With a napkin tucked in his collar, the person you identified as Lars Erickson is having his meal on his own in one of the farthest booths, which is slightly elevated and overlooks the restaurant. As you approach, his manservant, who is standing in front of the booth, says something in a low voice and Lars raises his head to look right at you.

Jake: I walk right up to the table.

MC: The manservant blocks your way. You get a closer look at him — he's a six-foot-four walking mass of muscle, with sallow skin, short cropped dark hair, and a Roman nose. "You've got the wrong table. Piss off before you get burned."

Jake: Get burned! I chuckle and say: "We'll see who will get burned."

Dani: While the boys are measuring each other up, Flicker steps up. "Lars Erickson, right? We're the team you sent to steal that crate for you. It wasn't easy to find you, you know? You seem to slip people's minds quite easily. Mind telling us what was so important about that crate? And who the hell are you working for?"

MC: Are you investigating?

Dani: Nah. For now, I just wait to see how he reacts to being called out.

MC: Okay. You see it in his eyes, he did not expect you to find him, and that confirms a little bit that he is indeed who you think he is. As he's chewing up a morsel of oys-

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ter meat, he sets the shell down on the plate — and flips the table over!

Jake: Son of a….

MC: Salamander, you've got other problems to worry about. The manservant's eyes start welling up with something like burning red lava. As he opens his mouth, fumes start rising from his nostrils and his slightly open maw is illuminated by what seems to be lightning and fire down his throat. And, as if that's not enough, his skin starts going very dark and metallic, like wrought iron.

Jake: "What. The hell. Are you?"

MC: Through the cloud of flashing smoke brewing up around his mouth, he says "Vul-can".

Jake: Okay. I light up my nimbus of primordial plasma. This guy is going down.

MC: Upon seeing the firework display of you two, the people at the restaurant start panicking, screaming, hiding behind tables, or running for the door.

Dani: Where is Erickson?

MC: You lost sight of him for just a second as he overturned the big round table. Now, as the table falls over, he's not there anymore.

Dani: Darn. I want to find him so I'm going to **Investigate.** I'll use my expanding senses this time: I got one power tag, *perfect spatial sense*, so that's a Power of 1. I will try to sense where he is rather than look at where I expect him to be. I roll a 6, so that's 7-9. For my one clue, I want to ask: *Where is he*?

MC: Great. You see him sprinting towards the swinging door of the kitchen, pushing away waiters and customers in his path. You're not quite sure how he got from behind the table in the elevated booth to the floor, but he's there. However, at 7-9, I as the MC get to choose a complication from the list. I choose *Your investigation exposes you to danger*. While you are focusing on your spatial sense, Vulcan starts spewing a jet of burning lava at you two. Salamander, you are standing nearby so this affects you too. You can avoid the jet easily enough but if it even just brushes you, it will give you a status of *nasty-burn-2.* You both get to roll **Face Danger.**

Dani: Yikes! I'm going to use *super speed* and *act just before it happens* to get out of the way. I roll a 6 plus a Power of 2. That's an 8! So at 7-9, I take the status but with one tier down.

MC: Indeed. So it will be tier 1 instead of 2. Grab a tracking card and put down *itchy-burn-1*.

Jake: I'm going to use *plasma barrier* and *dodge*.

MC: Are you blocking or dodging then?

Jake: Good point. Can I say I leap out of the way and use the barrier to deflect any nearby heat?

MC: That sounds feasible, in this case. You got two power tags then.

Jake: Awesome. I rolled an 11! So a total of 13. That's 10+. According to the move, I don't get hit at all and I take no status. I'd say Salamander is used to being around fire so he pivots, using footwork to avoid Vulcan's jet while using his hands to manipulate the plasma to deflect the heat.

MC: Nice! Vulcan seems caught up in wreaking havoc around him at the moment, which gives you a momentary opening. What do you do next?

Jake: I'm going to destroy this guy. Just as I turn, I fling half a dozen burning whips out of my nimbus right at him and at the same time I lunge at him, trying to knock him back. I have a clear shot, so that's **Hit with All You've Got,** I presume? I'll put in *burning whips* and *brawl* for a Power of 2.

MC: Unfortunately for you, all this fire has dried up the air quite badly. I'm invoking your weakness tag, *weaker in dry conditions*. This gives you -1 Power but you also get to mark 1 Attention on this theme.

Jake: Shoot! I guess my nimbus is guttering out in this dryness. So I roll with a Power of 1 then, instead of 2. I roll an 8, for a total of 9. So, I can choose one option out of the list. I choose to *Get him good* and bump up the tier of the status I inflict by 1. The base tier is the same as my Power, which is 1, so I do a tier-2 status, let's say *disoriented-2*.

The MC looks at the stats for Vulcan. He has a *hurt:4* status spectrum, which means he will go down if he takes a tier 4 status of physical injury. However, he also has a custom move, *Metal skin,* allowing him to reduce incoming statuses of physical hits

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by 1. He reveals the custom move to the players and continues.

MC: You hit him hard. He keels over and falls on his back, making a loud din like an empty cauldron, but it doesn't have the effect you expected — he seems surprised but not quite disoriented. He takes a *dizzy-1* status instead. As he gets up to his feet, you see several burn holes in his suit where your burning whips got him. Underneath, the black metal turned red-hot. Flicker, Lars is putting serious distance between his scorched manservant and himself. He's almost at the door — what do you do?

Dani: I dash after Lars! I want to speed up ahead of him and catch his foot like a baseball using my timespace bending so he trips over. I'll use *super speed* and *good catcher* for that, for a Power of 2.

MC: Since this is a competition between you two, you'll be **Going Toe to Toe**. However, you do have an *itchy-burn-1* status that is bugging you when you run... That will take its tier off your Power, so that's -1 Power for a total Power of 1.

Dani: Sure. I roll a 6 — so that's a 7. On 7-9, I choose one of three: reach my goal — that's to trip him, I guess — protect myself, or give him a status. I choose the first: Flicker zips up to where he's about to pass through the door and trips him!

MC: Ouch! Mr. Erickson comes crashing through the swinging kitchen door and slips on the greasy floor of the kitchen. He lands flat on his face but he quickly rolls over his back and stares at you with a cold icy stare. Since you did not choose to protect yourself, he will throw a status at you. He fumbles in his suit jacket and produces a crooked wooden stick and points it at you. For a moment, it looks rather ridiculous and seems to have no effect. But the more you look at it, the more you feel like you're not sure if he's actually Lars Erickson. In fact, you don't know who this man is and what you came here for. You are about to be hit by the status *forgetful-3*.

Dani: No way! Who is this guy?! Flicker screams, "Get out of my head!" Can I use my tag *free thinker* to resist it? I also have a status of *itchy-burn-1*.

MC: *Free thinker* sounds very appropriate! But I don't think the burn is relevant, so ignore it.

Dani: Okay, I roll **Face Danger** to resist this status with a Power of 1. Oh no! I roll a 3, so that's a 4, which is 6 or less. I take the full status of *forgetful-3*… Jake, hand me another tracking card.

MC: That's right. You struggle to remember who this man is and why you are after him, but it's slipping your mind. Any actions trying to catch him from now on will incur -3 to your Power.

Dani: "Salamander! Help!"

MC: He's got his own problems…

Jake: I don't like where this is going. I need to take this Vulcan dude down so I can help Flicker. I want to **Change the Game** so that things are in my favor. There's a sprinkler system in this restaurant, right? I'm going to heat up the sprinklers and turn it on. I use *burning whips* again but the conditions are still dry so I will invoke my own weakness tag again and take the Attention. I have a power of zero then. I rolled a 10!

MC: Lucky! At 10+, you get a minimum of 2 Juice. You can spend your Juice on creating tags and conditions or removing them. Normally, it's *temporary* so it works for one action only, but since you rolled 10+ you can spend some Juice to make it *ongoing*.

Jake: That's it — I want to add the tag *soaked* to my immediate area and make it ongoing. That's my 2 Juice spent.

MC: The screams of panic are muffled by the heavy shower unleashed from the sprinklers, and now everyone who was still hiding scrambles for the door, leaving the place abandoned. You feel relief as you become drenched in water. You and Vulcan face each other off in a ring of damp charred carpet and scorched furniture. He towers over you, and a loud rumble from his belly lets you know he is about to spew hell out. Emboldened by surviving your last attack, he puffs out his chest with pride, as if waiting for your next strike.

Jake: He's not the sharpest tool in the shed, huh? This is my chance to take him out. I concentrate my burning whips into a single, focused blast. I'm going to **burn a tag** for this. Bye bye, *burning whips*, I'm scratching you out. So I don't have to roll and I get a Power of 3 and a roll of 10. This is a **Hit with All You've Got** move, of course. At 10+, I get to choose two op-

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tions. First, I choose to *Get him good*, for +1 tier. I start with the base tier of my Power 3, so that final tier is 4. Let's say *blasted-to-smithereens-4*. Second, I choose to gain an advantage and get Juice like in **Change the Game**, and I give him a temporary status of *molten-1*.

MC: Wow! In this case, I will rule that the *molten-1* status prevents him from using his custom move to reduce your status from tier 4 to tier 3. He takes the full power of your concentrated blast and his metal skin turns white-hot and starts dripping off him to the floor. Unable to resist, he gets knocked back into the wall, and drops to the floor unconscious.

The MC reviews Vulcan's stats. He has already taken a tier-1 status on the *hurt:4* spectrum. Because the new tier-4 status is greater, it will supercede the tier-1 status. At tier 4, this spectrum has maxed out, which means this Danger is vanquished. However, Vulcan has another custom move…

MC: However, this Danger has a custom move, that reads as follows: *When you defeat Vulcan, if you broke his metal skin, he erupts like a volcano.*

Jake: Whaaaaaaat?! I'd say I broke it all right!

MC: You start hearing a rumble from the limp body of the manservant. Fumes start rising where you broke his metal hide and his normal skin underneath seems translucent, glowing in orange-red as it starts swelling… Flicker, in the kitchen, the sprinklers are on and the neon light is flickering and flashing. Lars Erickson gets up to his feet and looks at you warily to see what you'd do. He's still holding that crooked wooden stick.

Dani: I'm losing touch with what I need from him, so I'm gonna fake it. I'll try to distract him with chit-chat while I grab this stick he's holding. That's another **Go Toe to Toe**, but I'm going to burn my *sarcastic remarks* tag. I get a Power of 3 and a total roll of 10. Do my statuses apply here?

MC: They do. I would say both the *itchy-burn-1* and the *forgetful-3* will get in the way of you trying to act cool, but only the one with the higher tier applies. You have -3 then, so it's like you rolled 7 with a Power of zero.

Dani: That's cool, so I choose to achieve my goal and snatch his stick. I say: "A wooden stick, really? Isn't that a little hippie for a gent in an Armani suit?"

MC: Thrown off, he lowers the stick for a moment, just in time for you to super speed it out of him. However, once again you did not choose to protect yourself. You have the stick, but he was able to wiggle it one more time before you snatched it. Roll **Face Danger** against another *forgetful-3*.

Dani: Yeah, I figured as much. I use *free thinker* again but the existing status is -3, so I have a power of -2. Dang it! I rolled an 8 for a total of 6. I'm screwed! I take the full status of *forgetful-3*. That's on the same spectrum as my existing *forgetful-3*, so I mark 3 more boxes on the same tracking card, right? That brings me to tier 4.

MC: So you are now *grasping-at-straws-of-memory-4*. You have nothing but a vague recollection of why you are chasing this man. If you reach tier 5, you will forget completely.

Dani: Flicker stutters, "Who… who are you?"

MC: "It doesn't matter," says Erickson in a deep calm voice amidst sprinkler rain and flickering neons, "I'm here to tell you about a very serious event in the future of our City. An event that you have seen in your visions. I'm here to tell you about the Riot."

Dani: Crap! He's activating my **Mystery**! My character wants to know "*What is the Riot?*"

MC: At this point a massive explosion erupts in the restaurant, knocking all of you off your feet. Flames seem to engulf everything and Flicker, when you regain your bearings you see spatter of lava-like substance dripping on the circular glass windows of the swinging doors, melting the glass as it runs down. In the chaos around you, you see Lars Erickson heading to the back exit. "Let's get out of here and I will tell you what I know about the Riot." While you can't remember who this guy is, you do remember your friend is in that inferno in the restaurant and may need your help. What do you do?

Dani: That definitely qualifies as a hard choice. What to do? I really want to know what information he has and I don't suspect him much more than the usual because I almost completely forgot why I'm after him.

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On the other hand, I'm not going to let my buddy die.

Jake: I'm not dead yet!

Dani: Yeah, but Flicker doesn't know it. To hell with it, I'm gonna go against the Mystery and try to save Salamander. That's **Making a Hard Choice**! I guess she takes a big breath, sighs, and says, "I have to help my friend." She's about to turn her back on Lars and go the swinging door.

MC: Great. You mark **Fade** to indicate you acted against your Mystery.

Dani: However… before I go, I want to make one final attempt to stop this man. I barely remember who he is and why I am doing it, but something deep inside me tells me he is not to be trusted. I guess I can find plastic wrap in the kitchen? I'm going to restrain him with that by wrapping it around him at super-speed. **Hit with All You've Got** requires a clear shot — do I have it?

MC: Yes, he seems to think you'll be rushing to help your friend first.

Jake: Oh, really? Why would he think that? Ha ha.

Dani: Shush! I'll get to that, I'm super fast. Great, so I have a Power of 3 from *super speed*, *good catcher*, and *act just before it happens*, but my tier-4 status brings it down to -1. Oh no, I rolled a 5. Eek! Six or less.

For all core moves (except Face Danger), on a 6 or less, the MC gets to make his own move. He scans the MC moves list and chooses "Deny them something they want," which seems apt.

MC: You're super fast, but the Mist is faster. By the time you make it to the plastic wrap on the stainless steel worktop, you forget why you even picked it up. A man in a grey suit who you've never seen before stands at the back exit looking rather edgy. He blurts out, "The Restaurant is going to collapse, your friend is in trouble!" just before he bolts through the door and disappears.

Dani: Shucks. I'm running to help Salamander.

MC: We're going to cut it here, saying you both narrowly escaped the burning building. The firefighters, police, and several ambulances arrive at the scene. If you hang around long enough, you'd hear the customers give reports of what happened to cops going around. Some of them mention you, Salamander, as either the person who started the fire or the person who helped put it out by holding a torch burner to the sprinkler system. None of them, however, mention Lars Erickson. If you have no further business here, it's time for your **Montage (Downtime)** moves.

Jake: Awesome! I will spend the afternoon swimming in the deep parts of the park lake, where I go to contemplate the Salamander within me. I choose to spend my time *exploring my Mythos*, so I get one more Attention on my nimbus theme. That brings me up to three, so I can buy an improvement! I think the new power tag *heat resistance* seems very appropriate!

Dani: Flicker will spend the afternoon at her apartment, on the sofa with a mug of hot chocolate, fiddling with the stick she snactched from Lars. I choose the option *recover from my last activity*. Can recover from all my statuses?

MC: You sure can.

Dani: Cool, so Flicker treated that burn and that's fine, but as she is sitting on the sofa playing with that — I guess it's a wand? — she suddenly stops and whispers to herself:
"I remember. I remember everything."

MC: To be continued!

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