

# BOOK 2 – PLAYING THE GAME

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## ABOUT THESE BOOKS

Each “Book” is 32 half-pages of material, with no art. If there is a post-beta addition, it will collect more of it into a bigger single book, reorganise it, and add art.

**Book 1 (Your Adventurer)** or the Roll20 sheet is needed to design characters.

**Book 2 (Playing the Game)** is needed to (gasp) play the game.

**Book 3 (Running the Game)** is needed by the GM to *run* the game. Players don’t need it.

**Booklet of the Land** is a small booklet describing parts of the world that might be needed when designing characters, and the GM may use when planning Scenarios.

## FUTURE BOOKS

Any additional books are optional. They provide information that is nice to have but isn’t *needed*.

**Book of the Land:** The Booklet is expanded to a full book, detailing more of the world and including travel and hex-crawl rules.

**Book of Scenarios:** a book of multiple scenarios suitable for the setting, and other tools useful when running the game.

**Book of Sorcery:** The daemon and sorcery rules are expanded. This is probably essential for GMs.

**Book of Adversity:** Details on all forms of adversity, from humans, to monsters, to the environment.

**Book of Rules:** advanced rules for using the system and for conflict, whether physical, mental, or social.

# USING THE ROLL20 SHEET

Screenshots are based on a sheet in the process of design. It might change.

Front Back Xd6

Play Mode Design Mode Show Skills Rolls to Chat No Roll Mods Clear Mods

The bar of the buttons at the top of the sheet let you set various things. The above is when Play Mode is clicked. Design Mode switches the sheet into character design mode. Show/Hide skills sets whether you only see skills you have an advance in, or whether all 30 skills are displayed.

## SKILLS

Name: Felicity Age: 37

Name	Stat	±	Score	G-E-S	Mod
<b>Astrology</b>	Psyche	1	12	6-3	○
<b>Athletics</b>	Ferocity	4	21	10-5-2	○
<b>Blather</b>	Charm	1	12	6-3	○
<b>Daemonology</b>	Psyche	1	12	6-3	○

The Skill Name is a button. When making a skill test, click here.

The rest shows you the relevant Stat, how many advances, the current score, the levels of superior success, and a place to enter a persistent modifier.

**No Roll mods:** This button at the top of the sheet lets you switch roll mode. Click that to be prompted on every skill roll for a modifier – this can be handy.

## ATTACKS

Attack	Skill	Mod	Type	DMG	Notes	Roll
<b>Horrific Axe</b>	Fighting	○	+	1	Scary, Slow	⊖

+Add Modify

You can enter a weapon or other attack. Mod is for skill modifiers.

Type is either + or -, this refers to damage: is it a weapon that uses the adventurers Might or does it have a fixed damage.

Click the button to make an attack roll; chat out will have a damage roll button.

## DERIVED STATS

Derived Stats					
Damage: 3d6			Recovery: 6		
Vigour	Power	Body			
3d	3d	10	10	21	21
Toughness: 11		Evasion: 11			

You have some derived properties calculated from Stats.

Click damage and initiative to roll

them (or fill in Attacks for damage).

Click Vigour, Power, or Body to enter damage (there can be added to Tokens), and click Recovery to heal.

## BOUND DAEMONS

**Bound Daemons**

Breather Recovery Heal

Name: Mandragor

Spirit: 10 V/P/B: 10 10 9

Boost (Fighting), Degrade (Fear), Drain Power (on hit), Move (flies to hand, wherever it is).

+Add Modify

Type: Object  
 Desire: DESIRE  
 Need: NEED  
 ENTER DESCRIPTION  
 +Add Modify

You might have one or more Bound daemons. Enter their name, abilities and Spirit score. Vitality, Power, and Body are automatically calculated.

You can mark damage to these and heal all daemons at once with Breather, Recovery, and Heal buttons.

If you click the Daemon's name, you see a hidden section (on the right, above) where you can enter more details.

## GEAR

**Gear**

Armour: Medium Limit: 4

Special Items	Slots
Scary Axe	1
	○
	○
	○

Mundane Items	Wt	#	X
Box of silks	3	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Spare Spears	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

+Add Modify

You can declare you have a number of Special Items equal to your Scout skills.

You can have any number of Mundane Items as long as it makes sense that you have them. Ick

the checkbox if you have them handy; uncheck them if they are stored somewhere you can get to, but not handy.

## THE REST OF THE SHEET

Most of the sheet should only explain itself. You need to keep track of your **Vagaries**, **Loyalty**, and **Invocations**.

Stats are calculated automatically from the skills you learn.

## DON'T PANIC!

There are a lot of things to record and use, but the rules for each are fairly simple and mostly take care of themselves.

## ABOUT THE WORLD

The world is flat, or maybe a little concave (with the sea flowing to the centre). There is one sun, the Eldritch Heart of a long dead god, which wobbles lazily around the sky. The day is considered the domain of evil and corruption.

The world is a place of daemons who try to snuff out the sun and are partially successful. As it rotates in a circle above the land, the sun's light travels only some distance before being swallowed by the night. As a result, most places in the world have roughly 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night.

The closer you are to the life-giving Inner Sea, the shorter the days, and the closer to the edge of the world, the shorter the nights.

There is *at least* one different place – the Land of Mettle, described elsewhere. This harsh, inhospitable land sees itself as a bastion of defence against daemons and threatened on all sides.

### WEATHER, AND AETHERIC FLOWS

There are storms, tornadoes, rainfall – thought to be a result of the interaction of daemonic aether and the eldritch sun. The weather is unpredictable and the worst storms bring with them the full power of daemons, and can change the nature of the world under them. Mountains might become grasslands or vice-versa, islands might be torn into the sky becoming highlands, such laws of physics as are understood are torn to shreds in an Aether Storm.

Wayfarers and some sorcerers can sense the oncoming storms, and navigate the wilds. The most settled lands have wards against the weather and such aether storms are usually diverted. A land in turmoil might become a hexland, a place where the understanding of what *can* happen is overturned. These are dangerous places, to be avoided by those with sense.

Some sorcerers seek to control and harness the weather, for their own purposes. This is generally regarded as a fools errand, and likely to bring down the wrath of fate on the hapless sorcerer and the realm she rules.

### THE SEASONS

There are growing seasons and harvesting seasons. When the sun is at its closest, it is time to grow. The earth is corrupted, and the land can give life.

The year is made of roughly 360 days (it can vary a little, some sorcerers keep track). The year is divided into four seasons of roughly equal length – a cold, lifeless season, the rebirth, the growing season, and the dying season – winter, spring, summer, and fall.

Again, the harsher seasons are longer at the edge of the world and shorter close to the inner sea. Each nation has its own annual festivals and rituals.

### VOLCANOS AND THE MISTS

The earth itself was formed from the body of the dead god. It is thought that travelling deep into the underworld brings you closer to the dead god – a risky proposition, but one promising riches.

Volcanoes are thought to be instances of The Underworld breaking through into the living world, the homes of monsters, and as time goes on and the world rushes towards its end in 500 years, they will become more common.

## NATIONS IN THIS WORLD

Most settlements larger than a homestead are governed by a sorcerer, usually a queen. Without a sorcerer to ward against the weather of Aether Flows, any settled realms become Hexlands in a short time, destroying the settlement.

In the Outlands, most communities are tribal, never settling in one place for long and able to uproot to avoid the sorcerous weather.

Nearer the Living Sea, fewer Aetheric events occur – the sea moderates the weather. But if a community grows too large, it attracts weather events and cannot avoid the inevitability of Aether Storms.

In earlier more savage times, sorcerers conducted blood sacrifices to gather the power to keep the storms at bay. This also entailed constant war to gather the necessary sacrifices from neighbouring queendoms.

Modern societies, at least those influenced by the Eternal Empire, have learned these Aether Storms – and the weather itself – are a manifestation of Spontaneous Magic, and have gained a greater understanding of how to keep daemons at bay without messy blood sacrifices and constant war.

And so, the world is divided into short-lived homesteads, bloodthirsty city citates, and more 'civilised' queendoms with established sorcery academies. The further inland you travel, the more savage and barbaric the tribes, but the knowledge of 'civilisation' slowly spreads and reach those tribes.

## EXPLORATION AND TRAVEL

When designing a character, you'll generate one of a couple dozen homelands. Most are City States – they have a central city, and the fields around are occupied by homesteads and small towns along rivers and roads. You can travel between neighbouring states safely – the wards (literal magic wards) of each protect surrounding areas. But if you leave their lands and venture into the wilds, you are at the mercy of the aether.

This means there are three main types of travel.

- **Handwaving:** The travel isn't the point of the scenario. The GM simply assumes you had a knowledgeable wayfarer and arrived where you intended to. This is most appropriate for well-travelled routes.
- **Pathfinding:** when players want to travel between two known places, and the GM decides the travel should be a significant part of the adventure, we can use the rules below. This is more appropriate for travelling between places that don't have established, well-travelled trade routes.
- **Trailblazing:** when travelling from a known area to an unknown one, such as when exploring into the wilds, we use the rules in the GM section. Anyone travelling without a Wayfarer (or who isn't one themselves) who study the aether storms and predict the weather, is asking for trouble.

The rules for each can be found in the World book, but and for now the default is *Handwaving*.

Identifying what the adventure is about is key to travel. If the evening's game will be derailed by playing out the journey, don't bother. If it will be enhanced by that journey, play it out!

Adventurers (player-characters) always have Glory – they are Legends. So, they will be at worst inconvenienced by strange weather, not killed by it. Normal people are not so lucky.

## GLORY

You always have from 0 to 10 Glory. Glory cannot go above 10 – any excess is used to recover Power (and at the GM's discretion, might simply be lost).

### WHAT IS GLORY?

Glory tells us how famous and well-loved you are. It is an abstract measure, and your fan following is fickle so it can go up and down.

The world is subject to the whims of daemons as described under *Spontaneous Magic*. Famous and well-loved adventurers can and do exploit that. If you have a strong will and a following entertained by your stories, daemons pay attention to you and respond to your heartfelt desires.

And so, adventurers push themselves to greater feats of daring and derring-do, knowing that the more dramatic their lives, the more likely that their popularity will rise and then daemons answer their wishes.

### WINNING GLORY

At the start of each Scenario, if you ended that Scenario with at least 1 Glory, that Glory becomes new Wealth, and you are given 1d6 Glory. Also:

#### **DRAMA**

Once per Scene you can gain Glory through violating social norms. Standing up to people in power when they do something disagreeable (or, for that matter, agreeable). Adventurers are seen as wild cards, and this is one of the main reasons. They are looking for ways to gain Glory, after all.

This is the category most open to interpretation. There must be a real risk of reprisals. It's not enough to object to someone in a position of power. You must act against them, or face their actions upon you.

#### **LUCK**

Glory (and your notoriety) are fickle. When you roll a 1 or 20 outside of combat, you can narrate how it happens, and can describe dramatic actions on your part or an opponent's part or simply dramatic events happening.

If you are still standing and able to act afterwards (not always certain if you rolled a 20!), add a Glory point.

In combat, this doesn't apply on the *first* 1 or 20 rolled, but does apply on every one after that. You roll a lot more dice in combat!

#### **VICTORY**

Whenever you are the winner of a contest with the risk of harm, or still standing after a combat capable of killing you, add a Glory. They must be witnesses other than the participants. This is often the easiest to adjudicate.

You also gain glory for defeating things, described under *Adversity* (3-55).

#### **DEFEAT**

This is a special one. When a character is defeated, captured, or similar, they *lose* 1 Glory. (If you *Avoid Consequences* (see below), you can pay 1 Glory to escape a situation on your terms. You should generally do that to avoid the ignominy of defeat on your victor's terms.

## SPENDING GLORY

Some players hoard Glory and others forget to spend it. That's okay but you can have no more than 10 Glory – more is largely wasted.

You can spend Glory to make things happen. Each is an assertion of will, forcing daemons to comply. It is a wish.

When you wish for something to happen, it might – or something else might happen! Daemons are notoriously fickle, and often misunderstand humans. In game terms that means when there is ambiguity, you, the player, choose how to interpret it and it might not always match your character's desire.

### THE SIX TYPES OF WISH

There are six categories of things you can spend Glory on, but you don't have to memorise them. Just think, "can a coincidence help me? What is it?" Describe it to the GM, she tells you how much Glory it costs, and if you pay, it happens.

1. **Wish For Advantage:** You can wish you had some kind of advantage, that means you did better at something. And lo and behold, you do!
2. **Death Curse:** When you die, you really do – and others suffer for it.
3. **Fight Fate:** When you die, maybe you don't!
4. **Dramatic Escape:** Something bad happens, and you wish it didn't. Something *else* happens to supersede it.
5. **Dramatic Contrivance:** This looks like a handy coincidence. You wish something was a little more convenient, and it is. This is very flexible.
6. **Flashback Rituals:** Every character has Vagaries, and the ability to invoke Flashback Rituals they prepared earlier. These are one-per-session benefits that each cost one Glory.

Each of these has their own rules, described below. They all need Glory.

There is also one more category to spend Glory on – Living. Since Glory is celebrity, it is also used as a form of currency. See the Living chapter.

## 1. WISH FOR ADVANTAGE

This might be the most common use of Glory. When facing an opponent, whether in combat or any kind of combat, something coincidental happens to give you an advantage or them a disadvantage, or both.

*Elsevoir faces her Nemesis, and during the duel she almost hits but his defence is too good. But then he is momentarily blinded by the glare of the sun, a VL bonus is gained, and she hits!*

When spending Glory on this way, either increase you VL by one, or decrease an opponent by one.

See also *Heroic Effort* under Passions for another way to get a bonus, but when you spend Glory, it applies on any kind of roll. You just have to narrate what gives the effect.

The benefit is never a result of your own actions. It is a situational benefit that just happens to help you.

Glory spent in this way cannot be countered. The first person to declare they are spending Glory is the one who spends it.

## 2. DEATH CURSE

See the *Death and Recovery* chapter.

### **LEGACY**

After a Death Curse, you'll be rolling up a new character. That character receives 1 Bonus Glory for every die that didn't roll a 6.

You can (and must if over 10 Glory) halve the total Glory to change any legend to any other (even a Special Legend).

## 3. FIGHTING FATE

See the *Death and Recovery* chapter.

## 4. DRAMATIC ESCAPE

Whenever defeated in combat, you lose 1 Glory. You lose fame if you do badly! The GM might apply this at other times – being humiliated by an opponent without facing them, for instance. Players should know they will lose Glory before the content is resolved.

You can instead *spend* Glory to dramatically escape some consequence. This is the same cost, but you have control over what it looks like.

*Magreth is close to death and spends a glory to escape her duel, saying the battlements crumble underfoot and she falls into a haycart below. Before she can recover, the donkey tethered to the cart panics and gallops away. When Magreth gets it under control, she is out of sight of the castle. It's a new scene!*

It doesn't have to be this dramatic. If in a social conflict, *something* happens so that you don't have to face the contest

Your character made a wish but she may not even realise this was the result of her wish. She had a lot of things on her mind!

### **COST OF ESCAPES**

The first time you do this in a Scenario, it costs 1 Glory. This increases by one each time. Your third escape costs 3 Glory. It's not very heroic or glorious to be repeatedly defeated!

### **ESCAPING OUTSIDE OF COMBAT**

This can only be used to escape situations that are likely but haven't happened yet, and it cannot be used to avert a rolled failure or succeed a task.

*Archibold has been promoted to Magistrate and Magreth is hauled before him on a trumped-up littering charge. Archibold sentences her to death. This will undoubtedly be subject to scrutiny later but that will take time, and by then he hopes Magreth will be dead! Magreth spends a Glory to escape this fate, and suggests that Archibold is suddenly suffering food poisoning so can't watch her execution. It is delayed as Archibold is taken to his bed and Magreth back to her cell. She now has time to figure a way out.*

*Later Magreth needs to swing across a chasm, and might fall – possibly to her doom. She suggests she escapes the consequence and gets across with no harm. The GM points out that Escape is always a failure, so she could describe **failing** to get across the chasm but not succeeding.*

## 5. DRAMATIC CONTRIVANCE

You can define and describe elements of the world much as the GM already can, in somewhat limited and constrained ways.

Your adventurer's history – their Legends and Events – have a big impact, and are used to justify many Contrivances.

### DEGREES OF CONTRIVANCE

#### **COSMETIC CONTRIVANCE (1PT)**

Use this to bypass tedious and unimportant things, sometimes eliminating opportunities for random rolls to mess things up.

*The characters are crossing an area of the Outlands. Before they make rolls to see if they get lost, one of the players points out their adventurer is an Explorer (Wayfarer), and declares they have travelled this way before and know the path. The GM thinks that makes sense (for 1 Glory).*

Also use this to suggest changes to the environment that make a whole lot of sense. For example, *you're fighting in a castle, and ask if there are swords displayed on the wall for you to grab. The GM doesn't have an opinion, but says, "If you spend a Glory point, this culture does do that kind of display."*

This does have some ongoing ramifications – if you are ever in any place able to afford decorations, you know there'll be swords displayed on the wall. Essentially, no one who can afford it is ever far away from a weapon here.

This cost might be disregarded if the GM thinks, "Yeah, that makes so much sense, I probably should have mentioned it in the description."

#### **MINOR CONTRIVANCE (3 PTS)**

Introduce an element to bypass a single roll for one character (usually you).

*Melodia is on guard and is attacked by assassins. Philip had mentioned his character, Neris, had gone to bed but thinks this would be a great time to be wandering the battlements. He says that Neris wasn't able to sleep. He got up to stroll around, and saw the ambush as it started.*

*This is a clear case of metagaming, which in this game is good! This is exactly the kind of thing that often happens in stories so the GM agrees.*

You can also use this level to create a character or situation element that solves or assists with the sort of problems that players will solve anyway.

*The characters are looking for passage on a ship. One of the players suggests that since they were a Buccaneer, an old Sea Dog they sailed with is here, and is looking for a crew...*

Now, the players know they could probably have found a ship with rolls of their own, but spending Glory means that they have a lot of input on what they find, and enrich their character's background at the same time.

When dealing with a Contrivance created this way, the GM defers to the creating player on that creation's nature, but carries those answers forward.

*The players encounter a rival ship, and the GM suggests that the Sea Dog tries to sneak past them. But the players want revenge on this rival and suggest instead the Sea Dog is reckless and loves fighting. Away they go!*

*Later, the PCs are trying to sneak past a guarding ship into an enemy port, but the GM points out the Sea Dog is reckless and loves to fight!*



## **MAJOR CONTRIVANCE (6 PTS)**

Create a change that bypasses an entire conflict, or a series of rolls for a group of characters. It might save a group from some danger.

*Melodia's player says, "I recognise the leader, she married my brother. When she recognises me, she will want to talk rather than attack!" This bypasses the need for a complete fight. The GM narrates how Fila, the assassin leader, introduces herself, mentions she was sent to attack the people here and can't go back empty handed. So, the players (since Philip is here too) have the opportunity to bargain with Fila and come up with a solution that satisfies her situation. It's a roleplaying opportunity.*

If Melodia had a suspicious number of married brothers already, the group might have groaned and she'd either cancel that idea or come up with something different.

## **STAGGERING CONTRIVANCE (10 PTS)**

This is for the kind of change that has a massive effect not just on a scenario but a campaign. Multiple sessions are likely to be affected by it. It might make the GMs planned scenario impractical, at least in its current form.

*The players are trying to deceive the mistress of a palace, so they can gain access to her hidden Tome of Mysteries. But Melodia's player says, "I recognise her, she is the mother of my long-lost scribe. She always loved me, and invites us in as guests, and allows us to read the Tome."*

*The GM sighs, that adventure isn't possible now. But maybe the mistress has her own problems. Time to brainstorm (and maybe ask the players)...*

Using this makes a character vulnerability, since they can't use any other Glory option (the maximum Glory anyone can have at a time is 10).

## **LIMITATIONS**

A Contrivance cannot alter anything that has already happened, and can't violate any facts already introduced into play – by the GM or by other players.

*A player says, "The viceroy is my former fiancé, and loves me, so will be working to help me behind the scenes." Another player points out, "Hadn't the GM already said the viceroy married her first love?" It turns out that this suggestion doesn't make sense and is negated.*

Contrivances are very flexible. The GM should be willing to veto anything whose justification seems iffy, but should accept those that tie into a character's Legends in a satisfying way.

## **GROUP EXPENDITURES**

In some cases, especially the 6-point "neutralise a conflict" Contrivance, multiple players might want to pool their Glory to pay for it.

This isn't possible. Each contrivance is tied to a specific character, and that character must pay for it.

## **COMBAT CONTRIVANCES**

Contrivances cannot directly affect a combat once it has begun. There are probably ways to use them to influence parts of a combat, but that's not what they are really intended for.

## 6. FLASHBACK RITUALS

*These will be expanded in the Book of Sorcery.*

Many adventurers, and quite a few NPCs, prepare a Sorcery Ritual ahead of time. At any time in play, declare you are spending one Glory, describe the desired goal (in general terms), and make an Nd6 roll (see *Invocations*).

You made a bargain with a daemon to do *something* at a *specified time* or under a *specific trigger*. You don't need to declare those things ahead of time. Your character did, but you as a player don't need to.

Attacking a sorcerer or adventurer is risky – they may have a ritual prepared to strike the first person who attacks them! Sorcerers might have several such pacts, but you have exactly one.

Once used, it's gone until after your next Downtime (see GM book).

### VAGARIES

A Vagary is a special case of Flashback Ritual. Everyone born in a specific region can use that region's Vagary as a Flashback Ritual. Vagaries can be a little more reliable and even powerful, because they are more constrained.

### FLASHBACK EFFECT

The Nd6 determines the Sorcery Rank of the Flashback. There is no Power cost – we assume you already spent that when the ritual was prepared.

Use the Daemon Abilities on 2-28 as a guide, but don't be limited to those.

*Melodia's feast is interrupted by armed bandits. She declares her Flashback ritual was to ready for battle, and her weapons and armour instantly fly to her and dress her. This event is visible to everyone. She is now armed and ready.*

*Later, she is sleeping when an enemy stabs her. She declares her flashback was when she is attacked in her sleep, her attacker's weapon will turn on them. So, the attacker now rolls damage on themselves (up to the Nd6 roll) and the action wakes her up. Now the scene continues with her now scared attacker.*

Some rituals demand a minimum rank to work. If you roll less than that, the Glory is lost but the Flashback is not – you can try again later.

### SORCERY LIMITS

Some things are appropriate for sorcery, and some are not.

- **No Teleportation:** Daemons as ethereal beings can vanish from one place and appear in another, but humans and material objects cannot. They can be levitated, though.
- **No Fireballs:** This is not a setting where humans can unleash magic from their hands, but daemons can unleash elemental effects. So, storms, earthquakes, lightning bolts, fire from existing flames, etc., are fair game.
- **Nothing From Nothing:** any sorcery effect uses materials in the location or gathers them from nearby, and combines them as needed.
- **Time Limits:** a daemon can create or destroy things based on the time it would take a reasonable force of labourers. Want a new ship or castle?

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Time	1 hr	6 hrs	1 day	1 week	1 month	1 season	1 year	5 years	25 years	100 years
Equip	-	Weapon	Weapons	Armour	Full Outfit					
Building	Hole	Grave	Hut	Wood House	Stone House	Manor	Fort	Castle	Palace	Cathedral

## LOYALTY

*Sword & Sorcerer* characters are competitive, but form strong bonds.

### INTRODUCTIONS

When a character is first designed, usually during Session 0, roll an Introduction with every other adventurer. For each adventurer, pick a skill, and you both roll. The loser owes the victor a number of points of Loyalty equal to Victory Levels. If you draw, both each other a point of Loyalty.

Describe how this played out. It doesn't have to be direct opposition.

*Manator and Elrish are introduced. Manator is a warrior through and through, and describes a scene where he encountered Elrish attacked by bandits and leapt in to help. They both roll and Manatar rolls 1 VL better. Elrish survived because of Manatar's intervention and now owes Manator a point of Loyalty.*

*Later, they are both caught somewhere they shouldn't be, and attempt to Bluff their way out of it. (That's the introduction Elrish's player chose.) Elrish wins this contest by 2VLs, and so Manator adds 2 points of Loyalty towards Elrish – if not for her smooth talking, he'd have been in trouble.*

*These don't cancel out – it's possible for people to owe each other loyalty.*

Whenever a new character is created, go through the same Loyalty procedure. The adventurers have met before.

### RECORDING LOYALTY

The person to whom Loyalty is owed is the one who writes it down. Malador is indebted to Elrish. Since Elrish can call on Malador with loyalty, Elrish's player writes it down.

That way Elrish's player she can see at a glance who she can call on for help.

The GM should make a note of this too, to help avoid accidents. (Seriously – this is not about cheating players – hopefully you have players better than that! But it's easy to make mistakes – and don't try to rely just on memory!). It's also handy knowing what Loyalty is out there.

The GM should remind players to look at their Loyalties when in a pickle.

### GAINING NEW LOYALTY

You gain loyalty in two main ways:

At the end of every scene where you or your allies risked significant hardship (vigour damage, exile, etc.), the GM will ask you to pick any adventurer who was involved, other than yourself, and they add 1 point of Loyalty to you.

This happens even if you soared through a situation without needing any assistance. You nevertheless *feel* something for someone – it may even be someone you helped. Loyalty doesn't have to be a debt – it can be camaraderie, friendship, or even just a desire to protect someone.

The GM should make a habit of asking everyone who they grant loyalty to at the end of each action scene.

The second method is in helping someone. Once per scene, when you devote your action that places yourself at risk and can reduce their risk (without spending Loyalty), they gain a point of Loyalty – even if they don't want to! You can do this deliberately – *making* people feel loyalty for you.

## SPENDING LOYALTY

When you help someone to whom you feel loyalty, and they agree with that help, you can reduce that Loyalty *and* gain a bonus VL to the roll.

People can ask for your help, but you might choose not to give it! But if you do give it, you gain that benefit.

Each time they ask for help, or each time you give help and they agree, you gain this benefit.

*Elrish is wounded by the two minions who attacked her and asks Malador for help. He dices to ignore his opponents, takes an Interrupt attack and rushes to attack her enemies.*

*Later, Elrish asks malador to treat her wounds while he is being attacked, and his player says, "Nope" – he is dealing with being attacked after all.*

*In the next action, Elrish's player asks Malador to carry er to safety. So that she'll be safe – she isn't dependent on Malador winning. Malador's player thinks that is something he can do, and scoops her up and runs, and even though no attack roll was made, Elrish marks off one Loyalty.*

*The player has acted in a way they probably weren't inclined to – Malador wat to keep fighting! Players might try to game this system – and that is encouraged.*

A player can ask for help even when their adventurer can't or won't.

Players should use this liberally – it's a free bonus, and encourages them to work together.

## COMPELLING LOYALTY

Someone can spend 3 Loyalty owed to **demand** help. The recipient can not refuse and *must* act on it, ignoring any personal danger to do so.

The effect is the same as spending 1 Loyalty, but the recipient cannot refuse.

The player should find a way to rationalise this in a way that makes sense – it's not mind control.

## ROLEPLAYING LOYALTY

The feelings inspired by Loyalty are very real, but they don't have to be nice. You choose what they mean. You might feel indebted to someone (and not like it!), a sense of camaraderie or friendship, a grudging but unwilling sense of respect, and so on. It's up to you how you feel about it.

While players aren't required to note it down, they should know to whom their adventurers feel loyalty so they can roleplay it appropriately.

## LOYALTY AND NPCs

NOPCs are not immune to feelings of gratitude or debt. While Loyalty is intended for roleplay between PCs, NPCs can get it too.

The help an NPC can grant is according to their abilities and situation. Helping a Queen or a sorcerer can be very beneficial at times!

If an NPC maintains their life, power, or status due to player activity, and it is obvious that's the reason, the GM might grant loyalty. Since the person owed is the one who writes it down, players will know about it.

## SKILL TESTS

### SKILL SCORES: WHAT THEY MEAN

Once play begins, it's the score that matters, not the number of advances.

1. **Unskilled (4-7):** A score rarely possessed by adventurers; you have very little experience and ability, but you're not (quite) totally incompetent.
2. **Novice (8-11):** You struggle with hard tasks but manage simple tasks.
3. **Competent (12-15):** You might be an apprentice, hobbyist, or someone who has just used the skill a fair amount without intense training.
4. **Professional (16-19):** You have some years or training and experience with the skill, and can make a good living with it.
5. **Expert (20-23):** You are noticeable accomplished, becoming renowned. You probably have innate talent to get this good. You never fumble.
6. **Elite (24+):** You're on your way to true mastery and might be renowned.

### PAGES SKILL ROLLS

Whenever you are asked to make roll, roll d20 and compare to your score:

- **Poor:** If you roll higher than your Score, it's at best a marginal success and often a failure. A natural 20 is always a Poor result (often Terrible).
- **Average:** Rolling equal or under your Score grants a success – nothing special, and easily overcome by decent opposition.
- **Good:** Rolling half your Score (round down) or less grants a better success, one which is harder to stop and often has a minor bonus.
- **Excellent:** Rolling one-quarter your Score or less grants the best success possible under normal circumstances.
- **Spectacular:** If skill is 20+, rolling 1/8<sup>th</sup> grants a Spectacular success.

For the grades above Average, each is half the rank before it, so skill scores can be recorded like 12 (6/3), 15 (7/3), or even 23 (11/5/2).

### TESTS AND CONTESTS

A Test is a simple roll as described above. A Contest is an opposed roll – you roll vs an opponent who also rolls. Then compare success qualities and count the ranks of difference. A Good vs a Poor roll is 2 ranks of victory.

**Conflicted:** If both get the same quality (which can happen a lot), there is no clear victor. Treat as similar to a normal hit in AW/DW games. In some cases, this means another contest is required; in others, the GM narrates some effect. This will not usually be *Nothing happens*.

**Counting Victories:** Sometimes you choose between victory options, and buy something for each victory rank. Many combat rolls are like this. In other situations, the GM simply narrates a victory appropriate to victory.

**Counting rolls:** Sometimes you count victories over multiple times. The winner of a race might be the first to get 5 Athletics victories. Both Tests and Contests can be Counting rolls.

**Attack and Defence:** In combat, and in conflict of various kinds, we alternate between attacker and defender Contests. A victorious attacker can harm the defender and/or do fancy things. A defender stops the attack, and then has those same options. A Conflicted roll means the attacker gets something like a Glancing Blow or Partial Success, a weaker victory.

## SPECIFIC SKILLS

Some Skills have special uses, effects, or restrictions.

### ASTROLOGY

You can read omens.

At the start of each session, make an unopposed *Astrology* roll and record the Victory Levels.

Then at any time, you can replace a roll you just made with this and describe how you saw this event.

You can do this once per session.

### BATTLE

You are a strategist and can lead men in battle. But you can also influence a combat in progress.

Once per combat scene, you can roll to assist another and use your Battle roll in place of their roll by offering strategic and tactical advice.

You can make this roll *after* seeing their roll, and need the recipient's agreement. The roll must be kept.

If your roll is equal or better, gain Loyalty. If worse, grant Loyalty...

### CHANGELING

If an Abomination, use this skill to control your shape shifts. Each shift takes Nd6 Power (see *Invocations*).

### CONTRAPTIONS

Scientific understanding is unusual in a world where daemons can be summoned for unscientific actions.

Roll to understand strange writing, or to figure out puzzles and strange machinery. Given time and people willing to follow your instructions, you can build things you can copy, if they are scientifically possible. This skill can make you an engineer.

### DAEMONOLOGY

The study of daemons and sorcery. This skill will be more important in the Book of Sorcery.

### ETIQUETTE

This limits most social skills (like *Carousing*, *Blather*, and *Parley*) when dealing with people of noble or similar status in formal situations.

### HEALING

Once per day, or per Scene if longer, you can Heal someone.

1. Breather
2. Refresh
3. Full Heal

Roll Healing

unopposed and compare Victory levels for the quality of healing.

If in combat, sacrifice your action and Interruption, and the healed sacrifices their Interruption.

### INVOCATIONS

You have one or more *Invocations* and can use them as a free action. This is described in its own chapter.

### SCOUT

Use this for all manner of activities related to the outdoors and nature. It might be combined with other skills: for instance, riding an animal uses the lowest of Athletics and Scout.

### SECOND SIGHT

When you have time and calm (not in combat) you can open your mind to daemonic influence once per scene.

This is described more in the *Book of Sorcery*.

### WEIRD

This skill represents a sensitivity to supernatural forces in general. It can be rolled whenever the GM feels it is appropriate.

If you acquire any unusual special abilities, this is the skill you'd roll for them. It is also always rolled when using a Vagary.

## COMBAT

The basic idea: choose a skill, your opponent chooses an appropriate skill to defend, each rolls the die and compares results. The winner spends Victory Levels after the first to buy extra effects.

A draw (which will be common) is a conflicted result in favour of the attacker. This is usually a lesser result, possibly with some sort of blowback.

### DERIVED STATS

Write these on the character sheet (the Roll sheet does this automatically).

**Damage:** (Might/4) d6; **Vigour:** Stamina x2; **Body:** Psyche + Ferocity (special);  
**Power:** Spirit; **Evasion:** Athletics/4 + Reflexes/4; **Toughness:** Might/4 + Stamina/4;  
**Recovery:** best of Spirit/4 or Stamina/4; **Move & Load:** Not used, for now.

### CHARACTERS – LEADS AND MOBS

A Lead, or leading character, is anyone significant, and often named. You care what happens to each of these.

A Mob is a group of unimportant characters, often named. You don't care what happens to these.

At the start of an action scene, the GM groups the unimportant characters into mobs. There can be multiple mobs (though they should rarely exceed the number of players), and mobs can reform and regroup as an action.

Mobs are treated as a single character, but if they get to roll damage, add 1d6 per extra member (to a maximum of double damage for a single character).

It's easiest to group Mobs of the same type together. All damage against a mob is applied to a single character, until that character takes enough to remove them. Tany excess damage is applied to the next character in a mob.

As a Guide, the GM should try to avoid having more than twice as many actions as the players. Mobs don't use *Invocations* or *Interruptions*.

### INITIATIVE – POPCORN VARIANT

We use a variant of what has been called Popcorn Initiative.

First, figure out who goes first t the start of a scene. This might be decided by a skill roll, or the situation may suggest someone.

Then whenever anyone acts, there is an exchange – they roll against someone else. The winning player chooses who acts next (they can choose themselves).

Pick from those who haven't taken action yet (and count true actions, not Interruptions). The last person to act is also the first person to act next turn.

### ACTIONS

On your turn you *do something*, which often involves movement and a roll.

When it's *not* your turn, you can spend a Power point to *Interrupt* another, *once per turn*. If you haven't taken an Interruption by the end of the turn, **take a Breather** – you'll recover some Vigour and 1 Power.

An Interruption should be something you *could* interrupt in the way you describe. Taking a Breather is automatic –describe it as a momentary reprieve.

The GM might apply penalties on any skill roll, usually in multiples of -4.

## ATTACKS AND DEFENCES

Choose a skill appropriate the situation, related to your action. When fighting, you might use *Fighting*, *Fencing*, *Shooting*, *Might* (if making unarmed attacks or bashing with something heavy and not moving much), *Provoke* (to taunt or intimidate), *Blather* (to trick or deceive), *Stealth* to get into an advantageous position, even *Battle* to execute a prepared plan.

If in combat, actions must be quick and hectic. There isn't enough time for a detailed *Parley* or *Carousing* action, so they automatically fail.

If you win, inflict a valid result, and choose another move for each extra Victory Level. You aren't limited to just fighting skills to win at fighting.

When someone attacks you, defend with a skill appropriate to the attack. If someone swings a sword, you can't blather or provoke them – you have to stop yourself getting hit and then maybe blather or provoke on your turn.

**Defending against Attacks:** *Fighting*, *Reflexes* to not be there, *Fencing* if using a sword, *Might* (if you have something to use as a shield, or you are grabbing something a human can reasonably grab – don't grab a Bear!).

**Defending against Social Attacks:** Use the skill used to attack you, *Spirit* if stubbornness will help (like intimidation), or *Insight* if spotting a deception or ruse will help.

On your turn, you might perform other actions, like *Athletics* to get past someone, *Stealth* to sneak into position (if the situation allows it), and so on.

You can combine an *Invocation* with an Attack, Defence, or *Interruption*; these take no time but remember they cost Nd6 Power (see *Invocations*).

## DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

You have Vigour and Body stats for taking damage. Vigour never drops below 0 – any excess goes to Body. If Body drops to zero, **you die**. (See *Glory*.)

### STUNNED

Whenever you take any Body damage, or over half Vigour, you are Stunned, and choose one of these:

- **Knockdown:** Thrown the ground, but keep hold of anything in hand.
- **Disarmed:** Reel from the impact and drop anything held in both hands.

### SURVIVAL ROLL

Whenever you take Body damage, roll Stamina.

- **Poor:** you die, that's it. See *Fight Fate* and *Dead God's Bargain*.
- **Average:** you survive but are Stunned (see below)
- **Good or better:** Shake off the blow with no effects.

### RECOVERY

**Breather:** At the end of a turn in combat, if you didn't take an Interruption, heal 1 Power and REC in Vigour. If players try to use this too much, you can declare that adventurers can only take 1 Breather per Stamina Rank.

**Refresh:** At the end of each Scene in which none of your three damage stats were reduced, recover all Vigour. REC in Power, and 1 Body.

**Heal:** If *successfully* treated by a Healer (1/week), recover all Vigour, and your REC in both Body and Power) plus their VLs in the Healing roll.



# ATTACK AND DEFENCE

## COMBAT MOVES

When attacking, state your goal (which *will* happen on success), and what skill you're using (which must match what you're trying to do).

For each VL, pick one of the following moves, and add the VLs effect. A partial success has the effect of one move, but the target has a roll to resist it (except for damage, which is lower).

The options chosen must make sense for the attack taken. If you shoot someone with a bow or crossbow, it makes sense for the arrow to pin them in place. If you want to do that with a sword, you have to surrender the sword.

- **Cleave:** you repeat one move below to an adjacent target; no roll.
- **Damage:** The most boring but consistent result. The base damage is Might/4 D6, plus a weapon bonus, then add 1d6 per VL. You can't take this on a defence, but it's a common attack especially with multiple VLs.
- **Disarm:** Your target is separated from their weapon. It can affect a shield or whatever a target is blocking with. Their next success is reduced by your VLs if they try to use that weapon or shield (the effort to recover it).
- **Grab:** You grab and hold the target. If they move, you move with them (and they might not be able to move). The Grab persists over turns and justifies other moves like Shove, Restraint, or Slam.
- **Knockdown:** the target is knocked prone with the appropriate effects. On 1 VL, the target is off-balance, on 2 VLs, prone, and 3 VLs, drop all items.
- **Pin in Place:** the target must be adjacent to a surface, and cannot move unless they escape that Pin.
- **Pin Weapon:** Instead of disarming a target, you tie up their weapon at the cost of committing yours. Neither can be used until they escape or you release the Pin.
- **Restraint:** requires a Grab and target can not take no actions you do not allow, except to attempt escape (needing to overcome your VLs).
- **Shove:** target is moved by 5' per VL, and if appropriate you can move with them. You can push a target up to a ledge but not over it! See Slam.
- **Slam:** Inflict damage based on the target's Might or some other amount. Ideal for martial arts throws, directing a target into solid objects, or throwing them off cliffs. Usually require another move first (like Grab or Shove) and gains no VL damage bonus.
- **Splash:** increase area of an explosive effect by 5' per VL (and makes the evasion harder).
- **Stab:** The target is penetrated, and takes 1 Body damage per die, bypassing all defences. Requires 3 VLs and a Damage move.
- **Stunned:** target is rattled and is stunned their next turn, and must overcome the VLs of the stun. If they do not get more VLs, they do not act.
- **Feint:** You get an advantage *against this target* which may be passed on to others, equal to 1 VL per VL (neutralised if opponent wins a roll).
- **Move:** take a separate move, independent of your attack or defence.
- **Defend:** obviously, only use this on a defence roll, and you avoid the hit.
- **Escape:** use this vs any effect, like a knockdown, grab, pin, etc. Reduce by your VLs. Rolls might be unopposed if attacker is doing other things.

## SPECIAL ACTIONS

### **INTERRUPTIONS**

There are no Attack of Opportunity style rules. You can move freely through someone's space – though they might use an *Interruption* to react (or declare they are Guarding a space, losing their action to attack anyone who passes).

The effort of an *Interruption* costs 1 Power.

An Interruption is exactly like a normal action. Move and roll; the target rolls an appropriate defence. If you win, the Interruption occurs just before the attack you interrupted. If you lose, it is after – if that makes sense.

Interruptions cannot be used in place of a defence, but can be used for special kinds of defence (e.g., leaping out of the path of a giant boulder).

### **BATTLE**

If you have any advances in Battle, you can perform an *Interruption* with Battle vs the target's Battle or Insight. If you win, tell an ally what to do, and if they do it, *they* gain a Feint and any extra benefits.

If your target wins, their first bonus VL is a Feint (seeing through an attack thanks to your "guidance"), and apply benefits to whoever you tried to help.

### **BLATHER & PROVOKE**

When attacking with these, your target defends with the same skill or Spirit. On victory, your first move must be Feint, but extra moves can be anything. You can distract someone with your blather, and then stab them.

You can't easily use them on defence. If you try, your opponent gains +1VL.

They might be penalised after the first attempt. Provoke is an attempt to intimidate, and if you never land a blow against them, they won't fear you!

### **FENCING & FIGHTING**

*Fencing* covers fighting with swords and knives, while *Fighting* covers fighting with heavier weapons – hammers, axes, spears, and so on.

You can use either for attacks *and* defences against appropriate attacks (you can't use fighting to defend against a Blather attack, for example) as long as you have an appropriate weapon in your hand.

Disarm results are very common, so a spare weapon is handy.

### **MIGHT**

Might's main value is setting how much damage you roll. But you can also use it for unarmed grappling attacks and defending with a shield or object.

### **REFLEXES**

You can always use Reflexes in defence, essentially dodging the attack, whether the attack is melee or ranged. You can never use it on attacks.

### **STAMINA**

Once per scene you can throw yourself into the path of a blow meant for another, defending on their behalf. This is a heroic effort, taking Nd6 Power (see *Invocations*).

If they have made their defence roll already, that takes precedent.

## CONFLICTED RESULTS

When an attacker and defender both get the same number of Victory Levels it is a draw, a conflicted result. The attacker still succeeds, with drawbacks.

If rolling damage, halve the amount after armour. If performing another move, require an opposed roll to confirm it – this should be a different skill from the attack roll.

*Melody rolls Fighting when trying to disarm the opponent but ties. The GM asks for an opposed Might roll to see if she disarms her target.*

Or it might be a success at a cost. You roll full damage, but the opponent rolls full damage against you. You try to disarm, and both your weapons go flying. The *defender* chooses whether it is a *success at cost* or *reduced cost*.

A success at cost doesn't necessarily mean both get the same success, that's just the easiest to apply. The key thing: the attacker always does what they were trying to do, and suffer a drawback of some sort (at least equivalent to an attack success).

*Feint* and *Move* aren't easy to adjudicate here. It's probably best to treat them as a failure (though *Move* probably shouldn't be a primary action).

## TEAMWORK

Remember that Mobs are treated as a single character.

If several people attack you (separate leads and mobs), defend against each separately. Defences are always free actions, but can be overwhelmed.

Each extra Defend roll you make in a turn after the first gets a cumulative -4 penalty. The *type* of defence doesn't matter.

### **TEAMING UP**

You can assist an ally by picking the Feint move. You don't have to be directly involved in the same action – think of a way you can help, and the if it makes sense, the GM picks a skill.

### **NPC ABILITY**

The GM decides the skill in any relative situation. That's why the skill scores have a competency level listed. Very few characters are masters!

Some NPCs are fully rounded characters with a bunch of separate skills and stats, and the GM can spend glory for *Leads*.

**General difficulty:** Easy 7 (3/1), Standard 13 (6/3), Challenging 19 (9/4).

## SEPARATE ACTIONS

On your action, you might do something that isn't an attack and isn't directly opposed by another participant. For example, maybe you try to unlock a mysterious door or climb a tree to escape the boar.

Someone can use an *Interruption* to try to stop you, or hit you while you are distracted. If the action is something that takes concentration, then anyone using an *Interruption* might make your action impossible or halve your skill. These are things the GM is going to have to decide in the moment.

## DEATH AND REBIRTH

When you *die* (suffer any fate that would render you unplayable or take you out of the campaign), go through this checklist:

- **Death Curse:** Roll 1d6 per Glory, and count the 6s. That is the strength of your death curse. If you refuse a death curse:
- **Dead Gods Bargain:** You 'see' the Dead God, and are offered a bargain. If you accept, you are saved from death.
- **Fight Fate:** If you refuse the *Dead God's Bargain*, you are pulled back from the brink of death. You have too much of a following to die yet...

### DEATH CURSE

In the brief instant of your death, you lash out in pain, and daemons here you, making your last anguished wish a reality.

Choose 1 NPC per 6 rolled, 1 organisation per pair of sizes, and one entire nation for four sixes. Narrate how they die or are destroyed. This happens – nothing, not even the GM, can change that.

*A week after Melodia was killed, her Nemesis is gloating over his memorial – when the statue built in honour of the victory falls and kills him outright.*

This is an opportunity to make a real and lasting change to the game setting. If the GM approves, your desired changes can be positive.

### THE DEAD GOD'S BARGAIN

You are visited on the edge of death by the Dead God, the power of corruption. Details on this are in the GM's book, under *Corruption*.

If you refuse the Dead God's Bargain...

### FIGHT FATE

You decide you aren't ready to die yet. Spend **all** of your Glory.

You're out of that scene and the GM chooses your new situation, based on the category of Dramatic Contrivance your Glory *could* have bought (see *Glory*).

**1 Drawback:** You are alive, but have (temporarily) lost all your equipment, access to your bound daemons, and might be imprisoned.

*Melodia wakes after her fight in the cells of the local prison. She was imprisoned for her recent attack on a palace guard. Now to find a way out...*

**2-3 Minor:** Start the next scene with a minor drawback. You lose an important item or daemon of the GM's choice (temporarily), or have actions to perform.

*Melodia wakes as a 'guest' of the local magistrate. She points out how she can neutralise Melodia's coming trial, if Melodia will do one thing for her...*

**4-7 Major:** You have all your equipment, and a minor advantage.

*You find yourself waking up in the home of your ally, Garson of Lima. Your wounds have been tended to, and he offers to assist in a some specific way.*

**8+ Staggering:** You are in an excellent position. Make suggestions to the GM.

*Melodia wakes in the palace of Princess Ghara. She says she has been following Melodia's adventures and wants to help. What can she do?*

Your character is out of the scene and cannot suffer any further 'damage' until the next scene. Player and GM should work this into the narrative.

## LOCK AND LOAD

Equipment grants permission to do certain things. If you want to climb that cliff wall, you can try it, but you need climbing gear (or it'll be a lot harder without it). If you want to pick that lock, you might need a lockpicking kit.

At the start of each Scenario, adventurers are given a Wealth rating, which equals the Glory they had at the end of the last scenario. This is how many slots they have for *noteworthy* equipment. Don't count mundane items like rope or a hand weapon – any Adventurer can freely have mundane equipment. Just make a note of them when we find you have them.

Not all items are mundane. See the next page for examples of Special Items. These are things that you either have or you don't – they aren't available in typical stores. They can often be acquired, but it takes effort.

In any given Scenario, you can declare, "I have this," a number of times equal to your Wealth. Any acquired in previous Downtime Turns do take up slots.

You don't have to keep any items. Their slots might be empty next scenario.

### WEAPON CONSTRUCTION KIT

You can have one Light and one Medium weapon for free; additional weapons cost a slot each. Weapons are one of:

- **Fencing:** swords. Only swords. Often Fast or Fancy.
- **Fighting:** other melee weapons (Axes, maces, spears, etc.). Often Scary or Slow (Crushing).

They are Light, Medium or Heavy.

- **Light (+0d6):** small and concealable; knives, clubs, etc.
- **Medium (+1d6):** typical sidearms – swords, axes, etc.
- **Heavy (+2d6):** big, conspicuous (might be refused in many places) and usually two-handed.

Ranged weapons have their own rules; see next page. For each melee weapon, pick a single trait.

Trait	Description
Improvised	Breakable. Often -1d6
Fancy	Good for Etiquette
Fast (Elegant)	+1d6 vs Evasion
Long (Spears)	Special Initiative
Scary	Good for intimidation
Slow (Crushing)	+1d6 vs Toughness
Smashing †	+1d6 vs Blocks

Some have two traits (for an extra slot, and are never Fast *and* Slow).

### WEAPON BREAKAGE

On a 20 on a defence roll, the weapon breaks if the attacking weapon is sturdier (positioned lower in chart).

*Smashing* weapons can break shield bonus, and if so, the victim must repair their armour to get it back.

### LONG WEAPON INITIATIVE

*Long* weapons have better initiative *until* an enemy attack succeeds, then the attacker has the bonus. Until the long weapon hits them. Etc...

### ABOUT RANGED WEAPONS

Ignore reload times and on attack 20, run out of ammo; no more attacks.

The target defends with Reflexes (halve in Heavy armour), but can block with Might in Heavy armour.

**Bows** are common in the Outlands; treat as Medium (+1d6) and Fast.

**Crossbows** are common in civilised lands. They can be Light (concealable repeating crossbows), Medium, or Heavy (fixed arbalests, can't be moved in the action they attack).

Crossbows can be 6d6 (arbalest 8d6), but can't be reloaded in scene.

## ARMOUR

You wear Light, Medium, or Heavy.

**Evasion:** use this to reduce damage when you tried to dodge (Reflexes)

**Toughness:** reduce damage for all other attacks. Block, parry, deflect.

**Light** represents clothing, such as linens and silks. *Only* defend with Reflexes (and use Evasion).

**Medium** (1 slot) might be fancy clothing with mail underlay or heavy padding. Add +4 to both scores.

**Heavy** (2 slots) conspicuous armour and shield, ready for war. Treat as Medium, but *only* use Toughness to defend, and can block using Might (add an extra +4 armour on success).

Armour includes each grade lower, and you can wear that instead.

## INITIATIVE

Roll d6 + *Battle* + *Reflexes* ranks. Light: add *Scout*; Heavy: no *Reflexes*.

Optionally, add one rank (score/4) of *Athletics*, *Fencing*, *Fighting*, *Insight*, *Invocations*, *Search*, *Shooting*, *Stealth*, or *Trickery*.

## MOVEMENT

Movement is abstract (for now), but heavier armour is slower.

## OTHER GEAR

You can have any mundane item you want. These might be fine quality but don't give a bonus. Better items like those below cost a slot.

They are made by skilled artisans, or even a medieval steampunk inventor or sorcerer with daemon help.

They might violate physical laws in a limited way, and can grant the ability to do something you normally can't do if it fits the tone of the game.

Unusual items have a reason why they aren't more common. High cost, limited use, only works here (and is common here), is dangerous either in use or just to possess, etc.

## EXAMPLE ITEMS

**Craftsmanship:** A better quality item or toolkit. Typically grants +4 to one skill (not weapons), possibly in specific situations. Might give something other benefit.

**Evidence:** You can prove you belong to some organisation or profession, especially if you actually do.

**Fine Clothes:** An outfit that makes you look richer than you are, made with very uncommon materials.

**Firepowder Pistol or Rifle:** appeared first in *Mettle*. Require *Contraptions* roll after every shot to reload (free action). On success, next shot does +1d6 per VL. First shot is +2d6. On failure, take next action to reload. On 20, it explodes: roll damage (+1/die) against user.

Damage: Long Pistol 4d6, Rifle 6d6.

**Glider:** You can create anything technically possible with low-tech, so some inventor created the Glider. It takes to the air by being pulled by several mounted animals. It is small and has a fixed capacity (usually one but might be up to a four-person model) has no motive power and slowly loses altitude once in the air, but intrepid adventures find uses. Takes up 2 slots.

**Grenade:** A single use firepowder device that can affect an entire room for 8d6 (including self if careless). It might go off when carried, or be set off by an enemy...

**Potion:** Pick an emotional state that can reasonably be created herbally. Now just find a way to affect someone with it.

This can be used against multiple victims – it might just be a crafting method.

**Theatrical Tools:** make-up kit, costumery, etc. – you can disguise yourself as a type of person.

**Trained Pet:** An animal trained in a specific role, e.g., hunting cat, a crow designed to bring jangly items, etc.

**Spyglass:** a rare, portable telescope, whose glass was created with the help of daemon smithing or an unusual artificer.

**Sword Cane:** A concealable sword or other weapon. Build a weapon as normal and add the concealable trait, and describe how it is hidden.

**Unusual Weapon:** something not usually used as weapon but in your hands it becomes deadly. A metal fan, whip, etc.

## INVOCATIONS

The language of daemons is the language of reality. Humans can only hold a few of its words in their minds, and those words sometimes wriggle free. It takes effort to hold them in the mind. When pronounced loudly and clearly, with correct stress and intonation, these words create changes in the world. *Klaatu barada nikto!*

Invocations give extra options, but won't solve all problems with magic. They are quick to cast but are draining and the effects are usually over quickly. Some effects vary with success, and any roll of 20 is an entertaining (for the GM) Mishap and causes you to forget the word (for now)

### AVAILABLE INVOCATIONS

You start with one Word of Power per Invocations Skill Rank over 1 (Score/4). A score of 8 is the default, granting one Invocation.

Roll	1 Of Body	2 Of Sun	3 Of Mind	4 Of Wind	5 Of Man	6 Of Earth
1	DOUBLE	Chill	Babble	Becalm	Cleave	Barrel
2	Fade	DOUBLE	Counter	Drench	Jangle	Blight
3	Itch	Cremate	DOUBLE	Gust	Obfuscate	Dust
4	Leapfrog	Dazzle	Fascinate	DOUBLE	Stick	Growth
5	Spider	Scry	Rage	Lightning	DOUBLE	Quickland
6	Twitch	Snuff	Truth	Thunder	Surge	DOUBLE

Roll 2d6 for each, and assign either die on the chart to Column or Row.

*Bilbette rolls 1 and 4, so she can choose Leapfrog or Becalm.*

If you roll a double, roll again and get both Invocations. (If roll a Double on the reroll, change your dice to any values.)

*Bilbette rolls 2 and 2, then she rerolls a 3 and 3. So she can now change the dice to any values and sets the dice to 2 and 5 and gets Scry and Jangle.*

### INVOCATIONS IN COMBAT

You can perform a Power Word in combat as a free action, even when defending, for Nd6 Power. If the quality is higher than the attacker, the Invocation happens first, which can disrupt the attack if that's the intention.

**Nd6 Power Cost:** roll 1d6 per use, including this one, and take the highest die. Each 6 after the first is +1 to cost. *A roll of 3, 2, 5 becomes a 5.*

**Effective Rank:** Add *effective* success quality to Power Cost, so if something has a Power Cost of 4, beats defence by 2 victories (+2 VLs), it has 6 ranks. The GM then decides if that is enough – look at Flashback Rituals as a guide.

**Damage Dice:** Use the effective rank for the number of damage dice, when appropriate. Apply *Toughness* or *Evasion*, for defender's avoidance method.

### INVOCATIONS OUTSIDE OF COMBAT

If creating a special effect, like using Gust to propel a ship for hours or days on end, roll once to see if how well works, then use that roll throughout.

More grandiose events might use the worst of *Daemonology* and *Invocations* – you have to figure out *how* to do it.

If you have the *Obfuscate Invocation*, you can try to create another effect secretly or disguise its effects. This costs 1d6 Power for each *Invocation*. This might be more appropriate for attempts outside of combat.

# INVOCATIONS KNOWN

Invocations are deliberately vague. They are meant to be limited effects, usually instant or short-term combat effects usually against a single target. Outside of combat they might have a greater scope. Use your imagination.

## OF THE BALEFUL SUN

Manipulate heat and light.

**Chill:** drop temperature, create slippery ice on floor or weapon grip.

**Cremate:** breathe in and consume fire, and breathe it out in gout. Set things on fire (including weapons), amplify flames.

**Dazzle:** create light, for illumination or blinding. Create visible illusions that are obviously illusions to entertain or attract.

**Scry:** Commune with the Eldritch Sun and ask about something under its gaze.

**Snuff:** extinguish an ongoing invocation of the sun, mind, or body. Dim the light, creating shadows or obscuring someone.

## OF THE HAND

These must be targeted on an object.

**Cleave:** weaken, break, or shatter an object by touch, from shield to door.

**Jangle:** move an object – summon to hand, throw it.

**Obfuscate:** hide something normally visible or render it meaningless – ruin a book, map, tapestry.

**Stick:** repair and fortify an object so it absorbs greater damage; a fragile bridge supports more; stick two inanimate objects together (door and frame).

**Surge:** amplify the force transmitted by an object, usually a weapon, having up to double effect (add effect to damage up to double dice, *if that attack lands!*).

## OF THE MIND

**Babble:** confuse a target, who speaks in tongues and can't be understood. Speak another tongue, clear communication.

**Counter:** interrupt a word of power, neutralise it, and maybe turn it back on its caster.

**Fascinate:** fill a target with an emotion, maybe sadness, despair, despondency, or childlike wonder fascinating them.

**Rage:** act recklessly, better attacks, poor defences. Can target others, making their attacks more dangerous but defences weaker, and their tactics easier to predict.

**Truth:** target must speak truth. You cannot lie while using it.

## OF THE BODY

**Fade:** intangible – avoid a blow, walk through wall. Can fade an enemy.

**Itch:** cause distracting irritation at lesser effects, up to blistering flesh, scarring, and ruptures. Inflict wounds.

**Leapfrog:** Move incredible distances, reach places you shouldn't be able to reach, and bypass obstacles.

**Spider:** Climb physical surfaces, stick to walls and ceilings.

**Twitch:** muscle spasm – target drops a sword, stumbles, temporarily paralysed.

## OF WIND AND WATER

Some of these effects require exceptional success.

**Becalm:** soothe elements and the soul – reduce rain, snow, wind, even quakes if strong enough. Also calm emotions.

**Drench:** drench a target, cause rain or flooding, fill a room with water.

**Gust:** blast of air or water, blow off balance, push a boat or break a fall, choke a target.

**Lightning:** A sudden loud electric shock accompanied by a spark from a stormy origin (which can be you). Mainly used for a ranged attack that ignores armour.

**Thunder:** Control sound, create auditory illusions – obviously artificial. Throw your voice, deafen someone or a room.

## OF THE LIVING EARTH

**Barrel:** break loose a boulder of rock and roll at a target. (Ability to move chunks of rock can have many utilities!)

**Blight:** rot plants and organic material, like clothing and wooden objects; befoul water supplies, ponds, even a lake.

**Dust:** create a cloud of dust, blow it in someone's eyes and obscure events in a room; reduce objects to dust.

**Growth:** undergrowth tangles to cause someone to trip, or grapple them, or create a vine to carry up a wall.

**Quickland:** turn rock and earth to quicksand, usually for yourself. You can walk through earth or rock, temporarily hide by sinking into the earth, etc. It's usually too slow to affect others



# DAEMONS

While the game engine doesn't need daemons to work, they are fundamental to the supplied setting (*World of Zhindar*) and have many ramifications.

A common idea is that demons (notice the absence of the 'a') are evil, serve Satan, and are out to corrupt humanity. Every wish they grant is a trick designed to corrupt you further.

That is **not** the case in this setting. Daemons are not serving a lower, more evil power, and their goal is not to tempt humans into evil. In fact, humans owe their freedom from a monstrous, eldritch power to daemons.

They are a source of easy power that can be used in a variety of ways, but they have a fundamental different mental nature to humanity. This can (and should) present problems.

## DAEMONIC NATURE

Are daemons real? Are they manifestations of human desires given form? Are they a form of spirit with an existence separate from humanity? Do they live in a spiritual space to be summoned here for a sorcerer's whim? Is the world real to them? Are the bodies they are given when summoned real? Can they suffer when those bodies are hurt? Do they have desires of their own?

The best philosophers of the world do not know the answers to questions like these. Some have theories or opinions, but they do not *know*.

The rules for daemons presented here operate fine whatever the answer.

## APPARENT DAEMON DESIRES

Whether or not they are real, each Daemon acts as if it is and has a single desire, a class of things it is interested in. It does not care about anything else. *At all*. It tries to turn all conversions back to its desires.

It does care about remaining in the world (as a bound daemon), so it kind of cares about its owner. It wants them to survive so they can continue helping the daemon to satisfy its desires.

Here's a sample list of Desires you can roll on.

Roll	Desire	Description
1	Artistry	Admiration of things well-made, or enjoying performances.
2	Competition	Duels, contests, directly proving who is better
3	Confusion	Creating and enjoying confusion and chaos.
4	Corruption	Twisting desires and goals into a dysfunctional version
5	Death	Glorying in death, and perhaps helping it along
6	Doom	Enjoying despair, defeat, and things going wrong.
7	Fertility	Enjoying new life or growth, whether human, plant, animal.
8	Glory	Fame, being celebrated, being seen
9	Honour	Interest in morality and codes of honour, and upholding them
10	Identity	Desire and Need change periodically, causing a new Binding roll.
11	Intercourse	Bargaining, dealmaking, social interactions of all sorts
12	Joy	Seeing others happy (the source of happiness might not matter)
13	Justice	Righting wrongs, avenging tiny slights (vengeance is justice!)
14	Mayhem	Chaos, fighting, brawls, cities burning, riots, etc.
15	Mischief	Outsmarting and outwitting others, especially involving deceit
16	Mysteries	Acquiring, learning, and studying new information
17	Power	Having and using authority or control over others
18	Sensuality	Seeking pleasure in some or all ways (e.g. gluttony)
19	Violence	Different from Competition & Mayhem, which might be non-violent
20	Two desires!	Roll twice to find the Desires, and pick a Need for each.

## DAEMON ENCOUNTERS

Daemons are very common, but their existence is often subtle background. But you might often encounter one of these:

1. **Ritual:** Daemons are summoned into the world, usually just before being bound or to 'cast' a spell. The *Book of Sorcery* has more on this.
2. **Bound:** Most daemons you encounter are probably bound into another's service. If you kill the owner, you can attempt to bind the daemon yourself. This is *only* time a Binding can be attempted – and it runs the risk of releasing the daemon and turning it in a Rogue Daemon.
3. **Wild:** Some daemons are independent and have their own purpose. Such daemons cannot *ever* be bound and are outlaws – anyone can kill them (and usually should if they can prove they are actually daemons; Wild Daemons are always up to no good. They are why Scourge Legends exist).

Bound daemons might be simply weapons, armour, or opponents to defeat. They might be advisors, bodyguards, or anything you can imagine.

Each is (by definition) bound by someone, but the act of binding is unbreakable by anything less than the death of the person who bound them.

But once that person is dead, you can re-bind the daemon to your own service.

(Exception: Scourges can sometimes exorcise a daemon and thus break the binding pact, but those daemons can't be rebound – they are dismissed.)

### BINDING A DAEMON

So, you have the opportunity to bind a demon. Maybe its owner has been (conveniently) killed or you summoned the daemon, what then?

First, negotiation. You learn the Daemon's Need and commit to satisfying it.

Second, you make a Spirit roll vs the Spirit of the daemon. If you win, the daemon is bound. The pact is made. It now serves you and is subject to all the magic of binding. Make a note of how many VLS you won the roll by – that is the Binding Strength.

If you lose, though, one of two things happen:

- If you summoned the daemon, the daemon is still bound (it *wants* to exist in the world), but make a note of how much it won the roll. The Binding Strength favours it!
- If you are trying to bind a daemon that someone else summoned (like, say, the objects of a fallen sorcerer), it resists your binding attempt and someone else may try. Make note of its VLS.

On an Ordinary success you can try again, or pass it to someone else.

If a resisting daemon reaches 3 VLS, it escapes – becoming a Rogue Daemon. It is no longer bound by anyone and always escapes this scene. You wake up to find it gone. The *Book of Sorcery* will have more in Rogue Daemons.

### DAEMON NEEDS

Each Daemon has a Need which is a focus of their Desire. While Desires are general and kind of vague, a Need is very specific and states exactly what the owner is agreeing to when they bind the daemon.

You choose the Need of your first, free daemon, but the GM chooses all other Needs – so they'll be discussed in the GM book.

An important fact: you always know what a Need is before you agree to it.

# DESIGNING DAEMONS

## WHAT IS THE DAEMON'S TYPE?

1. Is it an **Object** that you carry, wear, or wield?
2. Is it an **Independent** daemon with a living body, whether humanoid or bestial, and sent on errands. Has a binding object like other daemons.
3. Is it **Contained** in its binding, taking physical form to act on your specific commands for short durations when invoked?
4. Is it a **Possessor** which has taken over the body of a person or beast, and which can move to and possess another when the host dies?
5. Is it a **Passenger** which lives on or inside someone (maybe you) and does not control the host but bestows abilities on them?
6. Is it an **Ephemeral** daemon that cannot be interacted with except when taking action, like a spirit or shadow or sentient swarm of ants?

## WHAT IS THE TELLTALE?

Each daemon has something unnatural in its appearance, behaviour, or environment due to its daemoniac nature. It can be subtle (speaking in a creepy style or a mark hidden on its body), or obvious (cloven hooves and wings).

## WHAT IS THE DAEMON'S RANK?

The greater the rank, the more powerful the daemon, and the harder it is to control. Your starting daemon can be any Rank from 2-5.

Daemons have 1 Ability per Rank. Abilities are detailed on the next page. For **Object** and **Ephemeral** daemons, choose the User of each Ability (who the ability applies to, and activates it) – it might be the daemon or the master.

**Contained**, **Independent**, and **Possessor** daemons are always the user, and Possessors may not have Boost. For **Passengers**, the Host is the user.

Note: a rebellious daemon often switches abilities off, even if it's not the user.

## WHAT ARE ITS ATTRIBUTE SCORES?

Daemons have a Spirit score equalling their Rank x4 (possibly plus 1d6-2).

They may *appear* to have other Stats and Skills as befits the needs of their 'body'. If their abilities require skills, treat as equal to Spirit.

Derived stats when needed are calculated as if every stat was equal to Spirit (if using the no-roll system for Body, it is half Spirit).

## WHAT ARE THE DAEMON'S DESIRES?

Each daemon has a Want, which it *really* likes doing, and can grow rebellious if denied too often, but is more likely to just grumble a lot.

It also has a Need, which *must* be satisfied regularly. If not, it suffers pain and weakens in power, and will definitely rebel if unsatisfied.

When you bind a daemon, you know the Needs. The binding is a contract to satisfy the Need. (You can't be tricked into a Need you didn't agree to.)

## FINAL POINTS

What is its apparent name, appearance, and general behaviour?

## NOTE

A daemon cannot be 'killed' while its binding remains. If its body is killed, it can return, recreating its body, in 1d6 days.

## DAEMON ABILITIES

Each daemon has one ability per Rank, and its first ability is based on Type: **Object:** Armour (self); **Contained** or **Independent:** Cover; **Passenger:** Vigour (confer on user); **Possessor:** Derange; **Ephemeral:** Cloak.

For each Ability, define exactly what it does (and whether it must be used with another). Abilities need activation and maintenance, costing the daemon Nd6 Power.

Powers cost Nd6 Spirit on first use in a Scene, and +1 Power each extra use.

<b>1 Armour</b>	Protection against physical attacks, but not special damage like acid or lightning. Can be defined as solid armour, force field, rubbery hide, being partially insubstantial, healing rapidly, etc. Add Rank to armour.
<b>2 Attack</b>	An unusual attack or set of attacks that does damage, like Poison Stinger, Acid Vomit, Freezing Breath, even Tooth & Claw, in forms that do not have them. Mundane attacks inherent to the daemon's form are not bought and don't cost Power to use.
<b>3 Boost</b>	Add Spirit rank x2 to a Skill or Stat (max of double score), or boost another ability in some way.
<b>4 Carry</b>	Can carry several people (handy for Move). Number = Rank.
<b>5 Cloak</b>	Grants exceptional stealth for an ability or activity. Make the victim unaware of an attack or power (though its effect still applies).
<b>6 Command</b>	Control a non-human creature type (rats, wolves, etc.) in some way.
<b>7 Cover</b>	Choose a role, like a bodyguard, hunter, scholar; the daemon has the skills needed by that role (equal to Spirit). The GM can give a Legend.
<b>8 Derange</b>	Mental or physical attack restricting the target, limiting actions. Ranged – blinding, befuddling, convulsions, entangling, etc. Roll to resist (default: Spirit vs daemon Spirit) Target immune once overcome.
<b>9 Drain</b>	Drain Power on success, 1d6/victory (use highest). Touch or Ranged.
<b>10 Fast</b>	Do something fast. Go first, move faster, ready something instantly, affect an extra target (or attack small group, if appropriate), etc.
<b>11 Immunity</b>	Complete protection from a single source of damage (poison, fire, etc.).
<b>12 Move</b>	Unusual movement – flight (wings or levitating carpet), walk on walls, walk through walls, burrowing, etc.
<b>13 Possess</b>	Possessor only. Can change hosts freely (with a mental attack). Touch required. Visible while talking a new host (unless also take Cloak).
<b>14 Ranged</b>	Make an attack or ability useful at range. Usually Sight, but can design powers that work indirectly based on some condition.
<b>15 Revelation</b>	Daemon is <i>gone</i> for 1 hour per Power cost. Roll daemon's <i>original</i> Spirit. Answers 1 yes/no question per Victory, and <i>permanently</i> loses 1 Spirit per answer. Can answer any questions the daemon has the senses to perceive. Might need to be forced since it <i>hurts</i> .
<b>16 Sense</b>	Heightened Sight or Hearing, or supernatural sense like <i>See the Past of an Object, Detect Gold, etc.</i>
<b>17 Shape</b>	The daemon can be anything from a mouse to a warhorse; each extra shape is an Ability with its own Abilities (must have same #Shapes).
<b>18 Shapeshift</b>	Change into a specific other shape (or set of related shapes) for some minutes (if necessary, 1d6). Can have different abilities in each form.
<b>19 Transform</b>	transform non-living matter in a minute or so – create and repair simple objects, leave messages engraved in walls, etc. Or manipulate the local environment – create shadows, rain, etc.
<b>20 Vigour</b>	Increased vigour and recovery, and general health. Add Rank to Stamina and Body; during recovery, can heal 1d6 Body for 1d6 Power.

With powers, a daemon does 1d6+1 damage per Rank. If its power *adds* to damage, add the bonus (so 5d6+5 equals +5). If the daemon *uses* a weapon, treat its rank as Might rank then add any weapon bonuses.

The daemon has a base armour equal to Rank x2, and is usually treated as wearing medium armour. If armour *power* confers to it, add its rank when active. Each hit counts as a use; likewise, don't spend Power on Boost and Attack unless they succeed.

## EXAMPLE STARTER DAEMONS

Some Rank 4 Daemons for ideas. Any Covers needed are listed. The derived abilities are Spirit 16, Damage: 4d6+4; Body 8, Stamina 16, Evasion 8, Initiative 4, Move 9.

Needs and Desires must be created, and should complement the daemon's purpose.

Each has 3 bought Abilities. Pick one extra, for Rank 4.

### **BEASTLY HOUND (INDEPENDENT)**

Rank 4, Independent; large scaly mastiff, with boar-like snout.

*Cover (free):* Bodyguard, *Armour:* Scales (T12+4), *Derange:* daemonic eyes freeze a target; *Sense:* Ambushes.

*Natural Attack:* Tooth & Claw (4d6+4)

### **BLADE OF FIRE (OBJECT)**

Rank 4, Form of Sword-shaped fire.

*Attack:* Fire (blade burns on command, grant illumination and set things on fire; add +4 damage), *Boost:* Fighting (+8), *Shapeshift:* take form of any curved sword, from dagger to great sword (spend Power on change, not to maintain form).

### **CLOAK OF EYES (OBJECT)**

Rank 4, Suit of Fine Silk, light enough to be worn under armour.

*Armour* (wearer, everywhere that a cloak covers), *Derange* (mesmerise one target), *Sense* (eyes all over it, 360 degree vision).

### **WAR MOUNT (CONTAINED)**

Rank 4, Contained in scarab brooch; Form of Giant Beetle

*Cover:* War Beast, *Size:* Tiger-sized, *Derange:* Terrifying Roar (paralysing fear in one target), *Move:* Enhanced Running and Leaping (move 13, and can leap greater than usual).

### **CUNNING ADVISOR (INDEPENDENT)**

Rank 4, Independent, form of a kindly old man.

*Cover:* Scholar; *Command* Owls (send them as messengers and scouts), *Revelations*, *Sense* (see through a controlled owl's eyes)

### **CREEP (EPHEMERAL)**

Rank 4, Independent, shadow form.

*Cover:* Spy (can be sent to gather information), *Move* (Insustantial, can move through walls), *Carry* (can take someone or something through walls).

### **EXTRA HEART (PASSENGER)**

Rank 4, Contained in hosts body!

*Boost:* Reflexes, *Boost:* Stamina, *Vigour*, All confer on host for a scene (+4).

### **A PIRATE'S GLASS EYE (OBJECT)**

Rank 4, form of Glass Eye.

*Sense* (night vision), *Entangle* (cling to eye socket, cannot use if already in a socket), *Cloak* (silent movement in shadow) all confer to wearer.

### **PORTABLE HOLE (OBJECT)**

Rank 4, form of a hole...

*Manipulate* (create temporary holes in inanimate walls and doors), *Quick* (make holes instantly, or single turn's action) *Shapeshift* (change size, within reason)

### **LEVITATING CARPET (OBJECT)**

Rank 4, form of a carpet.

*Move* (Flight), *Carry* (carry number of people = Rank), *Vigour* (self) – never tires!

## YOUR FIRST DEMON

You can start with a free Bound Daemon of up to rank 5 (Spirit 20, 5 abilities), but it can be lower power (hence the examples are Rank 4).

Make a Spirit vs Spirit roll to find the strength of the Binding. But for this first daemon, the daemon can never win – the worst possible result is +0.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Needs need not be negative, just as long as they can create complications.

A Need must be a specific need to do or get something (drink human blood, get ears scratched, start fights, examine types of items, observe and follow certain types of people, meditate, etc.).

A Desire is something the daemon *wants* while a Need is something the daemon *must* do. It cannot avoid the opportunity.

An owner and a daemon can conflict, but this isn't the default. After all, daemons are the system's primary magic system.

### **RANDOM ABILITIES**

If rolling Random Abilities, a roll of 13 is meaningful only for Possessor Daemons. For others, choose or roll d6:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Armour	Attack	Boost	Derange	Fast	Ranged

## CARE AND FEEDING OF DAEMONS

Adventurers frequently encounter daemons during their adventures. Many significant enemies control one or more daemons, typically of rank 3-5.

### **CONTROLLING BOUND DAEMONS**

You are limited in how many Daemons you can bind (see the *Book of Sorcery*). When binding too many daemons, they get fractious and overwhelming; sooner or later you lose your mind and *they* control *you*.

At every moment, one of your daemons is dominant, and all bound daemons share its Needs and Desires. (This makes them easier to manage and highlights that they aren't people!). The dominant daemon can change on a scene-by-scene basis. Either use opposed Spirit rolls, make a random roll, or the GM decides on a whim.

If you try to bind daemons above your limit, they have their own needs and desires, and all add +1 to Spirit per Rank over the limit for control rolls.

### **BINDING NEW DAEMONS**

This has already been described.

### **DAEMON REBELLION**

A daemon's abilities are used *by the daemon*, not by the owner of the daemon. A rebellious daemon whose Needs aren't being met will choose not to use abilities at inconvenient moments.

The owner can inflict pain on the daemon by winning Spirit vs Spirit control contests (applying the binding strength as bonus VLs), inflicting 1d6 Power per Victory. This takes time and focus – a wise daemon chooses its moments carefully.

If a daemon's Power drops below zero, it is inactive (it cannot affect the world in any way) and can take permanent damage. Each full 4 points below zero reduces Spirit by 1d6 permanently; each lost Rank reduces Abilities by one.

For each day that passes without satisfying its Need, the daemon suffers 1d6 Power loss. It will start to pester its owner to fulfil its contract (and start to deny its abilities).

Each ability use costs the daemon 1d6 Power. Each scene (or day) in which a daemon's Need is satisfied recovers 1d6 Power.

Daemons are not people, or characters. They do have personalities of a sort (see their Desires). They do usually want to avoid permanent losses, and will relent if their Needs are satisfied.

### **RESURRECTION**

When a bound daemon is physically killed (not from Spirit loss), it is only temporarily inconvenienced and will reincarnate in 1d6 days. It's physical body is simply an experience, that it may or may not find interesting.

### **FINAL STATEMENT**

Daemons are meant to be an interesting way to handle magic items and minions. They are not meant to be a total Monkey Paw mechanic. It's fine to forget about their personalities – but the dominant daemon system makes them easier for the harried GM to manage them.

## ADVANCEMENT

There is a list of things work XP. The first time a thing on the list happens each session, mark XP.

### XP LIST

- Did we complete a Scenario (easy award when it happens)
- Did I deny or oppose someone in a position of power?
- Did I do something heroic, reckless, or notable while facing danger?
- Did I challenge myself or another in a novel way? (Glory is gained for doing things better than others – win a challenge you haven't won before and make the telling of your story more interesting)
- Did I accept a Passion Complication?
- Did I deal with a Legend Intervention?

Each time you mark XP, add 1 Glory point immediately. At the end of a session, total up the XP marks, and add that number to your XP Total.

Players unable to attend a session still get the first award.

### ADVANCES

Each skill has a cost to advance. This equals the number of advances the skill *will* have, or 5 XP, whichever is highest. To be skilled costs more XP.

Increasing a skill from 6 to 7 advances costs 7 XP. In the beginning, adventurers often add an advance per session, but it can later get slower.

A skill Advance should make sense in terms of your actions in play and your downtime activities (the things you describe doing between sessions).

### STATS AND THEIR SKILLS

The number of advances can increase Stats. Count the advances on skills governed by each stat. The stat equals:

Advances	0	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-20	21-27	28-35	36-44	45+
Stat Score	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

There are six Skills grouped into each Attribute (or Stat). The skills likely to be picked together are *mostly* under the same Stat.

- **Charm:** Blather, Carousing, Insight, Parley, Provoke, Theatrics
- **Ferocity:** Athletics, Changeling, Fighting, Handiwork, Might, Stamina
- **Psyche:** Astrology, Daemonology, Invocations, Second Sight, Spirit, Weird
- **Savvy:** Battle, Contraptions, Etiquette, Healing, Lore, Scout
- **Sharp:** Fencing, Reflexes, Search, Shooting, Stealth, Trickery

### NEW DAEMONS AND INVOCATIONS

Acquiring things like Invocations and Daemons are not *strictly* tied to XP. They are in-game benefits but they are often limited by your skill rank. How you get them is covered later.

### RECOVERY

Long-term healing occurs after each Scenario. See the Downtime rules in book 3. You can heal Body, acquire unusual equipment, gain new Invocations, regain the use of Vagaries and any similar special abilities, and so on.

## BASIC OPPONENTS

A sampling of enemy stats. Most opponents will be human, but you never know when a noble's pet Manticore will escape from their zoo.

Critter	V P B	DMG	E T A	I M R	Ability	Notes
Weak Thug	16 8 8	4d6	6 4 +0	5 8 2	Weapon 10	Breakable weapons
Bandit	20 10 9	5d6	7 5 +2	6 7 3	Weapon 12	Move and shoot a lot.
Soldier	24 12 10	5d6	6 6 +3	4 6 3	Weapon 14	Team fighting tactics.
Captain	28 14 11	6d6	7 7 +4	5 7 4	Weapon 16	Lead units of soldiers.
Bodyguard	32 16 12	6d6	8 8 +5	6 8 4	Weapon 18	Individual, very capable
Wolf	24 6 10	5d6	8 6 +2	9 12 3	Bite 14	Team tactics
Bear & Ape	36 12 14	6d6	8 10 +4	8 12 5	Slap 14	Climb & run, grab & tear
Big Cat	30 18 12	6d6	10 8 +4	11 15 4	Gash 16	Grab & Multi-attack
Boar & Rhino	40 16 16	7d6	9 12 +6	10 12 5	Gore 14	Gore, knockback, tough
Mammoth	60 20 18	8d6+	8 15 +8	7 10 7	Bash 12	Attacks bash an area.
Swarm	(Special)	1d6†	-	- 5 -	Swarm 14	Can't be fought.

### ABBREVIATIONS

**V/P/B: Vigour, Power, Body.** Most foes fee or die if they take any Body damage. Listed scores are half actual Body for simpler tracking. Dead at 0.

**Damage:** Includes 1h weapon bonus.

**E/T/A: Evasion, Toughness, Armour+**

**I/M/R: Initiative, Move, Recovery.** Move isn't used at the moment.

**Defence skill:** as per attack, usually.

### HUMAN OPPONENTS

- **Thug:** Random gangs of ruffians with improvised breakable weapons.
- **Bandit:** Ditto, but can fight. Rely on moving and shooting a lot.
- **Soldier:** Groups of trained soldiers or mercenaries. Decent tactics, some will use crossbows and the like,
- **Captain:** Elite units or a leader of troops. More personality and tactics.
- **Bodyguard:** Individual elite warriors, have their own agenda and don't work well with others.

### "MUNDANE" OPPONENTS

The dividing line between animals and "monsters" is blurry. Possibly give a special ability and reskin into monsters.

Animals prefer not to fight, but if they do, they are *aggressive*. Apply -4 to defence rolls (theirs and foes, not cumulative).

They don't share a language or sentience with humans, but can be intimidated and do use tactics (like intimidate).

In their natural environment, all these creatures have Scout and Stealth.

**Wolf:** 4-legged horde animals; use team techniques; usually in packs

Add 1d6 damage per extra in the attack. Some might grab a target to pin them.

**Bears & Apes:** Bipedal critters with fur and muscle. Can tear a human limb from limb. Might climb, swing, and roar.

Attack then Grab if extra Victories. Each grab adds +2d damage to 8d6. Escape!

**Big Cat:** Clever hunters, might be found in pairs working together.

Sometimes have sword-like tusks.

Will Grab after attack; future attacks are bite and claw – roll damage twice.

**Boars & Rhinos:** Large heavy critters that charge and gore. Also covers Bulls.

Charge and gore opponents; try to stay mobile & knock foes down.

Larger instances might do 1-2d6 extra damage and have as much as 2x Vigour.

**Mammoth:** Chunky animals much bigger than most others, sprouting tentacles or trunks and thick hides. Might stomp, slap, or entangle & squeeze or throw.

**Swarm:** bees, locusts, or something *else* that attacks all in a group. Once a target is swarmed, take damage every turn until they somehow escape the swarm. No Interrupts or Breathers while harmed.

Target can try to outrun swarm or may try another means to avoid them.

Swarm can't be harmed by weapons – drive away with fire or escape by leaping in water or leaving the area they guard.

**Templates:** Every critter might have +1-2 to a stat, and as much as +50% vigour.