

ARMOUR ASTIR ADVENT

BY BRIAR SOVEREIGN





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ARMOUR ASTIR: ADVENT

is a high-fantasy roleplaying game about striking back against an authority that seeks to control you.

It is a game of rival pilots clashing in steel-clad Astirs, of soldiers holding their own against the odds, and of spies and diplomats twisting the world to their ends.

It is not a game of careful preparation or pleasant truces;

It's hard to change the world without taking a *risk* .

TOUCHSTONES INCLUDE;

- *Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam, Mobile Suit Gundam ZZ, SD Gundam Gaiden, Vision Of Escaflowne, Super Dimension Fortress Macross, Armour Hunter Mellowlink*
- *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, Titanfall, Valkyria Chronicles, Final Fantasy VIII, Final Fantasy XII, XCOM 2*

WHAT DO I NEED?

You'll need some 6-sided dice (or a virtual way of rolling dice) and the rulebook you're holding right now. For additional materials, like printable character sheets or fillable online sheets, you can find links to all these at <https://weregazelle.itch.io/armour-astir>.

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QUICK SETUP

Just playing a one-shot and want to get set up as quickly as possible? Follow these steps and you're good to go!

1. Detail your Authority and Cause
2. Detail your Carrier
3. Detail Characters & Choose Playbooks
4. Start Making Stuff Up

DEFINE YOUR AUTHORITY...

The first step is to define your Authority. This should be an oppressive group that the players are interested in fighting back against, however difficult that might be. Also, unless you're feeling particularly unimaginative, they should have a better name than 'the Authority'.

If you're stuck, try thinking about the Authority's goals, why they haven't achieved them yet, and what sort of people are attracted to the Authority.

... AND YOUR CAUSE

The second is to do the same for your Cause - the group that backs and hands orders down to the player characters. As a whole, the Cause should be a group with whom the players align for the time being, even if the occasional representative is an asshole.

If you're stuck, try thinking about who would have the resources to stand up to the Authority, and whether they would do so for purely virtuous ends.

In both cases, you should also think about what their broad aesthetic is, as well as the design of any common Astirs (your Zakus, your Nemos, etc).

QUICK CARRIER

The Carrier is your shared home and the ship that takes you from place to place (think the White Base from Mobile Suit Gundam, or the Normandy from Mass Effect). Decide together what your Carrier looks like, how it moves and how you got it. It has;

- A CREW trait of +1, or +2 if someone chooses to play a Captain.
- A main gun that can shoot down other Carriers but is too slow for Astirs.
- Turrets that can be used to fight off Astirs but will barely scratch a Carrier.

DETAIL CHARACTERS & CHOOSE PLAYBOOKS

The last step is for the players to make their characters!

- Start by choosing a **playbook**—if you've never played a PBTA game before, they're like classes, or archetypes. Talk with the group what kind of action they are interested in, and what kind of playbooks might support that fiction.
- Next, assign the following values to your Traits as you wish: **+2, +1, +0, +0, -1**. Some playbooks have an extra Trait, CHANNEL, which will come with a pre-set value.
- Then, name your character, and pick out some words to describe their look from the examples—or think up your own!
- Next, choose from the gear or equipment options your playbook has. Some playbooks have more than one choice.
- Next, pick some moves from your playbook list (unless it says you don't get to).
- Finally, since you won't be building them in play, fill out a GRAVITY clock with each other player character, describing your relationship or dynamic and giving it a value of +1.

START MAKING STUFF UP

With characters made and the stage set, it's time to launch! Consult the Basic Moves when you're ready to take action or the Playbooks when you want to pull something special off. If you're the Director, the Running The Game chapter has example enemies and advice to help you get things rolling, but don't be afraid to improvise and go off script. It's a one-shot, and nobodies going to be mad if you get things a little wrong. For a little extra help, check out the *Mission Hooks* (pg. 165).

A NOTE ON WORLDBUILDING

While this game doesn't include a pre-written setting you are expected to play, that's not to say these rules are completely free of any details outside the mechanics. These are intended to establish a feel for the game that will serve as a starting point for your own world—some core elements that you can build around. 'Armour Astirs' rather than mechs, 'Channelers' rather than pilots—these things are there to inspire and set an identity, and you should feel free to change all of them if the world you and your fellow players are exploring demands something different, or if you already have a setting you're bringing these rules to.

Replacing magic itself is a little trickier, but it's doable. Astirs and Ardents are already a pretty natural parallel to mechs and other combat vehicles, and Familiars are intended as an equivalent to drones or funnels/bits. For any weapon you can think of there's probably some modern or sci-fi alternative that fulfils the same role, and you might try to convert the CHANNEL Trait into something that represents piloting skill, grit or luck instead of magic.

The artwork depicted in this book is the work of a group of artists with different ideas, experiences and histories with mecha fiction. It is my hope that it inspires and fills you with ideas about what the world in a game of Armour Astir **can** look like, not what it **has** to look like.

- Briar



CONTENTS

MAIN CONCEPTS	9	DIPLOMAT	74	MISSION HOOKS	165
Who You Are	9	ARTIFICER	76	The Grand Melee	165
Who They Are	9	SCOUT	79	Neutral Ground	166
What You're Doing	9	Cantrips	81	Escort Duty	167
Taking Action & Rolling	10	ADVANCEMENT	82	Eleventh Hour	168
Traits	11	Soldier Moves	82	Authority Attack!	169
Playbooks: Channeler & Support	11	CONFLICT & TIERS	86	THE GHOST REACHES	170
Astirs & the Carrier	11	Opposing With +CLASH	87	Overview	170
Hooks	12	Opposing With +TALK	88	The New Hunt	171
Conflict Turns & Downtime	12	Tiers	89	The Faces Of Progress	173
Clocks	12	Situations & Edge Cases	90	Example Astirs of The Ghost Reaches	174
Spotlight	13	TAGS & GEAR	91	Example Gear of The Ghost Reaches	174
GRAVITY	13	Acquiring Equipment	91	THE ACADEMY ARCANE	175
Dangers	14	Tags	92	Overview	175
Burdens	14	Tier I Equipment	95	Grand Contest Era	176
SETTING UP	15	Tier II Equipment	96	Torn Continent Era	178
Setting The Stage	15	THE CARRIER & ASTIRS	100	Example Astirs of The Academy Arcane	179
The Authority	16	The Carrier	100	Example Gear of The Academy Arcane	179
The Cause	17	Creating A Carrier	100	PALUS SOMNI	180
Creating Player Characters	18	Astirs	103	Overview	180
Ready To Play!	19	Creating An Astir	104	The Living Dead	181
BASIC & SPECIAL MOVES	20	Astir Extras	111	The Duality of Earth & Sun	183
Basic Moves Summary	20	Salvaging Astirs	111	Example Astirs of Palus Somni	184
Weather The Storm	22	The Astir Card	111	Example Gear of Palus Somni	184
Read The Room	23	Example Astirs III	113	THE ICE OF VALDEMAR	185
Dispel Uncertainties	24	THE CONFLICT TURN	127	Overview	185
Help or Hinder	25	Authority Structure	127	The Equinox	186
Weave Magic	26	Cause Structure	131	The Restoration	188
Cool Off	27	Pillars	133	Example Astirs of Valdemar	189
Exchange Blows	28	The Wayward	134	Example Creatures of Valdemar	189
Strike Decisively	29	Playing The Conflict Turn	134	APPENDIX	190
Bite The Dust	30	Conflict Outcomes	135	Risk & Peril Examples	190
Group Moves	31	Conflict Scenes	136	Glossary & Shorthands	191
Special Moves Summary	31	RUNNING THE GAME	141	Magical Objects	192
Lead A Sortie	32	Agenda	141	Magical Weapons	193
Subsystems	33	Principles	141	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	195
B-Plot	34	Director Moves	144		
DOWNTIME SCENES	36	Safety Tools	147		
Plan & Prepare	38	Starting & Ending Your Campaign	148		
PLAYBOOKS	39	Preparing & Ending Sessions	149		
ARCANIST	40	Creating Actors	150		
IMPOSTOR	43	Example Foes	151		
PARADIGM	46	Astirs & Ardents	152		
WITCH	49	People	153		
WITHER	51	Creatures & Monsters	154		
ADRIFT	54	Outsiders	155		
ADVOCATE	56	Rivals	156		
REVENANT	59	Optional Rules: Amor Astir	157		
SUMMONER	61	Optional Rules: Multi-sided	157		
ICON	64	Conflicts	160		
ATTENDANT	66	Optional Rules: Generational	162		
COMMANDER	69	Conflict	162		
CAPTAIN	71				

MAIN CONCEPTS

WHO YOU ARE

In *Armour Astir*, you're rebels, mercenaries, and revolutionaries. You might be a Channeler, someone with the ability and training to control an Astir—a humanoid construct of magic and metal, some of which stand ten times the height of their pilots. You might be a Paradigm who gained that power through devout service, a Witch who made a pact in their darkest hour, or an Impostor who seized magic for their own at a cost. You might be the kind better suited to life outside of a suit of magical armour, of course: you might be a Scout trained by the Authority who left to fight back, an Artificer who grew up keeping things working around their hometown, or a Diplomat who made a name for themselves holding factions together.

Whoever you are, you represent something. This might be a small group, a company, or simply an ideology—but whatever it is, it is referred to as the Cause, and it is from your Cause that you receive direction and instruction. There are surely other factions involved in the struggle against the Authority, and it may be in your interests to align with them—but the Cause is what you belong to.

WHO THEY ARE

The exact nature of the Authority is up to you and everyone else at your table, but the Authority is generally an authoritarian group, usually in a grand position of power, that seeks to control and subjugate people who do not fall in line. There is no need for things to be entirely black and white in regards to the motivations of individuals, but as a general whole the Authority should represent something you as players are interested in fighting back against.

As with any other tabletop game, you should discuss what kind of content and themes you want to you want to tackle or avoid during play. There are different degrees and scales of evil, after all—and fighting a simpler, less subtle Authority is just as valid as fighting back against something more real and personal.

Also, unless you're feeling particularly unimaginative, they should have a better name than the Authority.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING

In *Armour Astir*, players typically rotate between Downtime (where they spend their limited free time to repair, rest, and rendezvous) and Sorties (where they leave the Carrier together to try and achieve a goal). Sorties themselves are usually a combination of several scenes—individually framed sections of action, like scenes in a movie or TV show—after each of which the player's risks are cleared. A larger goal, referred to as a Mission, is typically achieved over the course of a few Sorties.

A SORTIE MIGHT BE;

- Venturing out to defend the Carrier against attackers.
- Stabilising or destroying a dangerous magical artifact.
- Negotiating a peace treaty between two rebel groups.
- Something that could be done in one or two sessions of play: a short-term goal.

A MISSION MIGHT BE;

- Disrupting a major military operation.
- Liberating a city from the Authority.
- Dislodging a dragon and their minions from the region.
- Something that can be clearly split into multiple Sorties: a long term goal.

TAKING ACTION & ROLLING

In *Armour Astir*, actions are resolved using ‘moves’, which are rolls consisting of 2 d6’s and a single modifier, usually a Trait: one of 6 values that represent your character’s core attributes.

Generally, actions are resolved as such;

1. The Player explains to the Director what it is they want to do (and narrates action where appropriate)
2. The Director decides what move is appropriate.
3. The Player rolls 2d6 and adds the noted Trait.
4. The Director determines and narrates the outcome. Play continues.

OUTCOMES

As a PBTA game, *Armour Astir* resolves rolls as either a 6- (failure), a 7-9 (partial success) or a 10+ (full success). By and large, moves have their own specific outcomes for a 7-9 or 10+ result, but generally speaking a 7-9 will get you what you wanted but with some drawback or cost, and a 10+ will get you what you wanted with no further consequences.

By comparison, most moves do *not* have a specific 6- outcome. For most moves, a 6- result means the Director gets to make a move of their own, and they have freedom in how soft or hard they want that move to be; but whatever happens, it will probably be bad for you.

ADVANTAGE & DISADVANTAGE

Sometimes you’ll be asked to roll with **advantage** or **disadvantage**. This means to roll 3d6 and take the highest or lowest 2 respectively. These *do* stack: if you have **advantage** from 2 sources, for example, you’d roll 4d6 and take the highest 2. Similarly, they cancel each-other out. If you have 2 **advantage** and 2 **disadvantage** on a roll, you have neither. When rolling with either, you choose kept dice after all other modifiers or alterations to the roll (like **confidence** and **desperation** below) are made.

Tags on equipment and moves are common sources of **advantage** & **disadvantage**, but your Director might also impose either where it makes sense in a situation. The most dice you may roll at a time is 4, regardless of how much **advantage** or **disadvantage** you have.

CONFIDENCE & DESPERATION

Additionally, you might also sometimes be asked to act with **confidence** or in **desperation**. When acting with **confidence**, you are almost assured of your success: treat any dice result of 1 as a 6 instead. When acting in **desperation**, you have a slim chance to claim an unexpected victory: treat any dice result of 6 as a 1 instead.

Both are applied before you keep dice when rolling with **advantage** or **disadvantage**: you might, for example, be acting with **disadvantage** and **confidence** and roll two 1’s and a 3. You’d upgrade both those 1’s into 6’s first, leaving you with the lowest two of 6, 6 and 3 (9).

When you act in **desperation** and succeed, you may *deepen* a Hook.
When you act in **confidence** and fail, you may *loosen* a Hook.

HOLD

Some moves give you ‘hold’ to spend. Typically, hold can only be spent on the move that provided it, and it will usually give one or more things you can spend that hold in exchange for. When you spend hold, you just do it—you don’t need to roll—and whatever outcome is listed on the move happens.

For example, the basic move **READ THE ROOM** gives you hold to spend on asking the Director questions about your current situation. You don’t need to roll again to ask those questions; you just spend the hold, and ask away. That hold is only for **READ THE ROOM**, though, so you can’t spend it on other moves that use hold.

TRAITS

Traits are measured from -3 to 3, and are as follows;

- DEFY, the ability to resist pressure and power through adversity.
- SENSE, the ability to read people and situations.
- CLASH, your prowess in combat, at distance or up close.
- TALK, your skill with the spoken and written word.
- KNOW, your ingenuity and cunning.

Certain playbooks also have the CHANNEL trait, representing magical abilities from various sources. CHANNEL is a special trait, in that it cannot be increased or decreased except through methods specific to your playbook. You cannot increase CHANNEL when taking an advancement.

When you make a character, you'll set your Traits as you desire, on the conditions that;

- No Trait be **higher** than +2 or **lower** than -2.
- Your Traits add up to a total of +2.

In the future, you'll get opportunities to improve your Traits as you play and earn advancements.

PLAYBOOKS: CHANNELER & SUPPORT

Like many PBTA games, in Armour Astir players choose a **playbook**: a set of moves and equipment that make up the foundation of their character and define their role in the world—or at least their role before the events of your game. You can think of playbooks as something like a class in an RPG, or a job the character has within the setting.

Armour Astir has two kinds of playbooks: **channeler** playbooks, which all revolve around characters who channel (pilot) and control Astirs (mechs) as their primary way of contributing to the conflict, and **support** playbooks, who primarily contribute in other ways. Broadly;

- **Channeler** playbooks are assumed to be able to use magic, and have the +CHANNEL trait used for **WEAVE MAGIC** and other magic-related moves.
- **Channeler** playbooks know how to move and command Astirs, and can generally control any they find unless it is particularly complex or magically locked to a specific person.
- **Channeler** playbooks can use the special move **SUBSYSTEMS** to activate parts of their Astir.
- **Support** playbooks typically cannot use magic or Astirs, unless specified otherwise.
- **Support** playbooks instead start with additional moves, and have special Quarters on the party's Carrier that provide benefits.
- **Support** playbooks can use the special move **B-PLOT** to explore and advance a side objective during a Sortie.

ASTIRS & THE CARRIER

Channeler playbooks all start with a custom Astir, and the party itself has a shared Carrier to use as both a home base and their mode of transport. Support playbooks contribute extra Quarters towards it, granting benefits for both themselves and the group. For more information on both, see *The Carrier & Astirs* (pg. 100).

HOOKS

Hooks are short phrases that define how your character acts and thinks about the world and people around them. They might be **beliefs** about the world and their allies, **goals** they personally seek to accomplish, or **duties** they have taken up. Whatever their nature, Hooks are things that colour and inform the things your character does: a Hook might pull you to something new, where another might be something your character struggles to break free of. All players should write three Hooks during character creation, but don't worry about them being perfect: Hooks can be altered during play, based on how deeply you are caught on them.

Typically, Hooks can only be altered when you are prompted to do so: this might be by Downtime Scenes (see below), **MOVES** you have access to, or so on. However, sometimes, your Hooks may be *deepened* or *loosened*. Acting in **desperation** or **confidence** and **BITING THE DUST** are the primary sources of this.

Deep Hooks cannot be re-written, forcibly or otherwise. Loose Hooks, on the other hand, can be re-written whenever you feel like it. If a loose Hook is *deepened* it returns to normal, and vice versa.

LOOSE HOOK

Change it whenever you feel like

NORMAL HOOK

Change it when prompted by a Move or Downtime Scene

DEEP HOOK

Can't change it even when prompted, act with **confidence** when you cross it off

SPENDING HOOKS

When you take action that requires you to sacrifice, outgrow or otherwise conclude one of your Hooks, cross that Hook off permanently: you may then immediately take an advancement, and act with **confidence** if the Hook was *deep*.

CONFLICT TURNS & DOWNTIME

Between sessions, the tide of battle between the Authority and the Cause doesn't freeze in place. During the Conflict Turn, players direct the broader course of their struggle through playing out Conflict Scenes together: directing Challenges to each other through role-played scenes before discerning which side gets to pick an Outcome.

Afterwards, players return to their normal characters for Downtime: resting, recuperating and repairing the damage of their Sortie in similar Downtime Scenes before they venture out into danger once again.

TOKENS

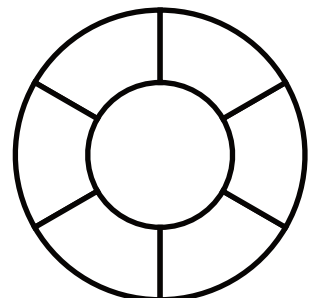
Tokens are narrative currency, gained and used during Downtime. You gain **tokens** when entering it, and lose any you don't spend at the end: so spend them!

During Downtime you'll spend your **tokens** to add to other player's Scenes and gain benefits for yourself. By default you receive **2 tokens** for each Downtime, but several playbook moves and other sources give you extra **tokens** broadly or for specific use cases. Keep an eye out for them!

CLOCKS

Clocks are a measure of progress towards a goal or some other event, and are typically measured from 4 to 8 segments long based on complexity or other factors. What causes a clock to fill might differ depending on the clock—during Downtime players can advance **project** clocks by working on them during Scenes, for example—but there is a constant: when a clock fills, something happens.

Outside of project clocks, clocks will typically be more the Director's concern than any of the other players. For them, clocks are a handy way of measuring progress against objectives, literal ticking clocks for time pressure, and so on.



SPOTLIGHT

Whenever you fail a move (that is, you roll a 6 or below), you may take a point of Spotlight. Once you have 6 Spotlight, you may spend it at any time to take centre stage and immediately gain an Advancement. Whatever you do next, you may act with **confidence** to do it right now.

GRAVITY

GRAVITY clocks represent relationships and attachments you have with people and with groups. They're not measures of how much someone loves or hates you: they are countdowns to when a relationship is challenged, confronted or addressed. What this looks like is up to you and the other party—it might be an admission that you want a different kind of relationship, a commitment to things continuing as they are, or you accepting that the relationship should be over entirely—but it should be significant. GRAVITY clocks don't have to be positive: they are for star-crossed lovers just as much as fierce rivals meeting on the battlefield time after time. If it seems like the forces of the universe are dragging two people together often, it might be GRAVITY.

GRAVITY clocks are 6 segment clocks, and start empty. They are **shared between two players or a player and the Director** (representing a Director character or a faction/group), and represent their relationship and how those characters see each-other. When the clock advances, it advances for everyone involved: they are both sharing the same clock and the same progress. You're ticking your shared clock *once*.

You don't need an GRAVITY clock for everyone you meet—you should save them for your character's relationships you want to focus on and explore in play. For this reason, you may only be part of 3 GRAVITY clocks at a time, as well as 1 for your Rival should you acquire one. When you make a GRAVITY clock with one of the Director's **actors** or a faction/group, you're showing the Director that they're someone you want to engage with often in play.

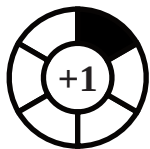
When you start a new GRAVITY clock, choose a word or short phrase that sums up the relationship, and give it a value of +1. Whenever you make a move involving the other party of a clock, you may add the clock's value instead of the normal Trait or value. If you do so, advance the clock. You can start a new clock whenever it feels appropriate.

FILLING GRAVITY CLOCKS

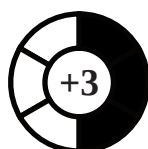
When a GRAVITY clock is filled, the relevant players have three choices;

- **Redefine** the relationship; you may take an advancement, start a new GRAVITY clock, and increase its value by 1 (to a max of +3).
- **Commit** to the relationship; increase its value by 1 (to a max of +3), and you may take an advancement. Circle the filled clock—it can't be filled any further. When you take action that ends this relationship, like sacrificing yourself for your beloved or betraying the person you're supposed to be loyal to, succeed as if you rolled a 10+ and cross out that clock forever.
- **Abandon** the relationship; you may take an advancement and erase the GRAVITY clock, freeing up a spot for a new one.

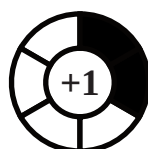
This change doesn't need to be shown the second the clock fills, but it should be represented in play either during the Sortie or during an upcoming Downtime Scene.



Nervous friends



Fated lovers



Zealous rivals



Chasing the same boy



Estranged siblings

Clocks can technically advance any number of times during a session. If you find clocks are ticking too quickly, though, or you're playing a longer game and want progression to happen more steadily, your Director might limit this; perhaps only allowing each clock to be advanced once or twice per session, or by making all clocks 8 segments instead of 6.

DANGERS

When twenty-foot-long swords and magic guns are involved, injuries tend to be the severe kind. Thankfully, characters in *Armour Astir* are plenty capable of defending themselves—up to a point. Should enough problems, distractions or *dangers* arise, you may find yourself *defenceless*.

For players, being *defenceless* means your usual methods of avoiding harm aren't available to you. Where you might usually **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **WEATHER THE STORM** to avoid a blow or dodge real consequences, that's no longer the case—your guard is down, your armour has a hole, etc. When you are *defenceless* and someone or something tries to harm you, you must roll to **BITE THE DUST**.

The *dangers* that make it harder to defend yourself come in two kinds: *risks* are temporary things that can be resolved during a Sortie (like having the low ground during a fight, being on fire, or being distracted), and *perils* are more permanent issues that must be solved during Downtime (like serious injuries to you or your Astir, being heartbroken, being exhausted). A *danger* to you is a *danger* to your Astir, and vice versa. For all intents and purposes, your Astir is an extension of yourself. Characters can be affected by a certain amount of both before they are *defenceless*:

- Players, Rivals and Main characters are *defenceless* at 3 *dangers*.
- Side characters are *defenceless* at 2 *dangers*.
- Extra characters are *defenceless* at 1 *danger*.

When a move or other effect says you take a risk or are put in *peril*, it means you're being given one of those *dangers*. Sometimes it will be specific exactly what you're gaining—e.g., 'take a *risk* (outnumbered)' means you add a *risk* named 'outnumbered' to your character sheet. If there's no brackets, it means you choose what the *risk* or *peril* is. Generally, if you're asked to take a *risk*, you decide: if you're put in *peril*, your attacker decides. Either way, you should feel free to discuss them with your Director.

If you want some examples, there's some given towards the end of this document. When someone is *defenceless*, it should be obvious—but individual *perils* and *risks* don't need to be so explicit. Sometimes, *risks* might be linked to temporary situations rather than the effects of a move. The most common example would be if you're taking someone by surprise or attacking from a stealthy position: the situation puts them at *risk*, but the second you reveal yourself that *risk* is no longer relevant. An **actor** who is an extra, vulnerable at 1 *danger*, could be **STRUCK DECISIVELY** from stealth since the situation leaves them *defenceless*. With anyone else, you won't be so lucky.

If you take a *risk* but already have 3 *dangers*, replace one with a *peril*. If you would be put in *peril* but already have 3 *dangers*, replace a *risk* with it if you have one—otherwise, **BITE THE DUST** in **desperation** until the end of the Sortie. Further *dangers* just trigger **BITE THE DUST** instead.

BURDENS

A counterpart to *risks* and *perils*, *burdens* do not inherently put you in *danger* as long as they are managed properly. When you enter Downtime, you discard one of your **tokens** (used during Downtime to take part in Scenes and gain benefits) for each *burden* you have and describe what kind of upkeep or attention it requires. If you have the misfortune to earn three *burdens*, you lose your Downtime Scene—your obligations simply take precedence. Other players may still give you **tokens** to spend as usual, if they want to.

Burdens might represent long-term injuries or illnesses, but might also represent social circumstances or other duties that require regular attention. Your Diplomat might be *burdened* with the need to report to their superiors, or your Artificer might feel the *burden* of needing to personally run maintenance for all the crew's Astirs.

Burdens are primarily gained from **BITE THE DUST** and certain playbook **MOVES**.

SETTING UP

Setting up for a game of Armour Astir: Advent is simple, and consists of defining some key elements of the world you'll be playing in, building up the player characters, and figuring out what your first mission together will be.

SETTING THE STAGE

The very first part, and arguably one of the most important parts of playing Armour Astir, is setting up the world in which your game will take place. Other than the existence of a few things, like Astirs and other magical devices (which you and your group are free to re-fluff to suit your personal tastes, of course), this game doesn't assume much of your setting—meaning as a group you have a lot of freedom when coming up with the setting you'd like to play in. There are a few important things to iron out, however.

Your first job as a group will be to shape your games Authority—the controlling force, like a ruling empire or military group that the players are aligned against. The Authority will be the central villain of your game (usually), and should be a group that the players are all interested in fighting against. It's probably a group of power-hungry, empire-minded bastards. For some examples, see: the Earth Federation / the Titans (*Mobile Suit Gundam* et al.), the Zaibach Empire (*Vision Of Escaflowne*), the Grineer (*Warframe*), the British Empire, etc.

The second will be to do the same for the Cause—the group of revolutionary factions to which the players belong, who supply them with equipment and support to further the fight against the Authority.

Finally, with the above done, players should pick the playbooks they are interested in playing, and use the ideas presented within to create their characters. Character creation doesn't happen in a vacuum - players should feel free to discuss their character ideas with each other and help flesh out an interesting cast.

You might want to also establish some more broad details about your world. Some less obvious things to consider might include;

- How is magical energy stored in your world? How effective is this storage?
- Do people move around your world often? What is the most common kind of transport?
- How common are Astirs? Would it be shocking to see one in a town or city?
- How long has it been since the last major conflict here? Are there many veterans?

"I always wanted better for you than this, Luine. When we used to train together, I could see you were made for great things. What brought you this low? Were we too good to you?"

The words stung far more than any of her myriad wounds did. What did Hymn know of her fight? What did he know of anything outside his gated home?

"Don't mock me, Hymn," she spat back. "Made for great things? Like standing guard at some gilded spire? Maybe you'd have me teach the governor's children. Your father would think those both better than listening to his people."

Hymn scowled. *"You would dare demean the spire?"*

- Excerpt from 'Spire: The Fall', Alain Week, XX32

THE AUTHORITY

As mentioned above, the Authority is the group (or coalition of groups, if that's your thing) that forms the primary antagonist for the players in *Armour Astir*. 'Authority' as opposed to 'villain' or 'foe' has a certain subtext, and that was intentional. The Authority should be a powerful, oppressive group, that as a whole cares more about stamping out opposition and furthering its own goals than doing what is best for its citizens or its neighbours. Individuals within the Authority need not entirely agree with it, and it may be more interesting for your story that in the smaller scale they operate in shades of grey, rather than being cartoon villains; but either way, it should be clear that as a group the Authority is something that the players are ready to tear down.

As with any other tabletop game, you should discuss what kind of content and themes you want to tackle or avoid during play. There are different degrees and scales of evil, after all; fighting a simpler, less subtle Authority is just as valid as fighting back against something more real and personal. When depicting fascist and imperialistic powers it is practically impossible not to also depict relatable, personal violence, and everyone at the table should be in agreement exactly where their boundaries and interests are in regards to what the Authority does.

CREATING THE AUTHORITY

While working out the exact depth and nature of the Authority and what they're up to is something your Director will need some time for, start by answering the questions below as a group to come up with the basics.

- *What do the people of the Authority value?*
- *What do the people of the Authority hate or disparage?*
- *What is hypocritical about the Authority?*
- *What is the Authority's primary goal? Why haven't they achieved it?*
- *What does the average person think of the Authority? Do they support/oppose it?*
- *How does the Authority look? What symbols and colours do they use? What materials?*
- *Does the Authority have a standard or mass-produced Astir? What is it like?*
- *What is the Authority called? Does the Cause call it something different, and if so-what?*

Functionally, the Authority is comprised of three Divisions (see Authority in the Director's section for info on how these work). As a group, you should come up with what these Divisions are and what they do. Every Division should have:

- A name, official or otherwise
- A type that determines their area of influence
- A few **actors** who lead or hold important positions within it

See The Authority for more info on the types of Divisions and what they do. These don't need to be all decided immediately, but the sooner the better. You might leave deciding the details of the Authority to the Director while the other players focus on the Cause, or all work the above out together.

If you just want to get started, you can work out a name and type but leave the **actors** until later, since they'll have plenty of time to develop during play.

If you want to work out the **actors** now, the Director should check out *Creating Actors* (pg. 150) later in the book for an idea on what kinds of info is important to figure out.

THE CAUSE

Opposed to the Authority is the Cause—a revolutionary group to which the players belong, comprised of a half-dozen or more smaller Factions. The players work directly for, and might even be in control of, one of these Factions.

The Cause has resources and information, and fights against the Authority on its own terms - but it relies on the players as its most trustworthy asset. The Cause's network of Factions provide the players and each other with assets and support, like Carriers and Astirs, and can assist them with repairing and acquiring new equipment—but there is an expectation that this aid will be repaid in turn by striking out at the Authority and furthering the Cause's aims.

As with the Authority, Factions and individuals within them might not see eye-to-eye on the Cause's goals and how they should be achieved—but as a whole, the Cause should be a group with whom the players align, even if the occasional representative is an asshole.

CREATING THE CAUSE

Again, as a group you should answer some questions to come up with the basics of who the Cause is;

- Does the Cause have aims other than opposing the Authority?
- How much of a secret is the Cause?
- Where do the Cause's resources come from?
- What do people within the Cause disagree over?
- What does the average citizen think of the Cause? Do they support/oppose it?
- How does the Cause look? What symbols and colours do they use? What materials?
- Does the Cause have a standard or mass-produced Astir? What is it like?
- What is the Cause called? Does the Authority call it something different, and if so—what?

As a group, you should decide on some basic information about the Cause. This might include answers to the above questions like a name or visual palette, but might also include a few characters who are important to the Cause at large rather than a specific Faction.

While the Director will flesh out most of the Factions (unless the group wants to do this together), the details of the one the players will belong to are up to them. Between you, you'll want to come up with a name for your Faction, official or otherwise, and choose a Faction type from the list in The Conflict Turn.

For other Factions, the type mainly determines what kind of consequences you impose on the Authority during the Conflict Turn when your attempts to oppose it succeed: for the players, it signals to the Director what kind of Sorties you're interested in playing.

For further information on Factions, see **Cause Structure** (pg. 131).



CREATING PLAYER CHARACTERS

Finally, each player needs to make their character! Making characters in *Armour Astir* is simple, and ideally something you should all do together as a group. This helps everyone get a feel for the kind of characters you're making, and lets you make characters that immediately feel a little more coherent as a group. The main part of creating your character is choosing a 'playbook', which could be thought of like a 'class' or a character archetype within the world of your game. There's a few other things you must do too, though—the steps below will lead you through the process.

During play, you might suddenly find yourself in need of a new character. This might be due to the one you were previously playing dying, but for whatever reason you do need to make a new one, you follow the below steps as usual.

CHOOSE PLAYBOOK

Look over the playbooks and decide which one you want to play. Playbooks are split widely into two categories: Channelers (playbooks that use Astirs to fight) and Support (playbooks that have expertise outside of Astirs). It's ok if two people want to play the same one, but consider mixing up the group so everyone gets to feel a little unique.

CHOOSE NAME

Every unsung hero has a name, even if nobody learns it. Write a name for your character—if you're having trouble, consider working out what kind of naming conventions the people in the area your story will take place use.

CHOOSE LOOKS

Each playbook has a few choices for clothing, your overall look, and something else playbook-appropriate, like how your magic looks or how you fight. These are just suggestions to help you think about your character's appearance, so feel free to ignore them! Channeler playbooks also ask what you say when you launch your Astir. This can say a lot about how your character feels about Astir piloting and how seriously they take it, so put some thought into it!

CHOOSE GEAR

Each playbook has a list of starting equipment, as well as one or more other lists to make a few choices from (as specified by your starting list). Channeler playbooks all start with a tier III Astir (see *The Carrier & Astirs* (pg. 100)).

SET TRAITS

You may set your Traits as you desire, on the conditions that;

- No Trait be **higher** than +2 or **lower** than -2.
- Your Traits add up to a total of +2.

CHANNEL, for the playbooks that have it, start at whatever value is listed on the playbook—you don't need to assign a value to it. For some playbooks, it will fluctuate during play.

These values are added to your roll when you make certain moves. It's a good idea to look at the basic moves, as well as the starting moves for your playbook, to get an idea of what Traits might be most useful to you.

CHOOSE MOVES

Each playbook starts with a few moves (as a Channeler, one of these will be built into your Astir), some of which are pre-picked, and some of which are your choice. Each playbook will list which ones you already have, if any, and will let you know how many to pick, so make sure you check!

CHOOSE HOOKS

Finally, you should come up with up to 3 **Hooks** (pg. 12) for your character. If you're just playing a one-shot (or are playing a character you won't return to for other reasons) and won't be bothering with Advancements, you don't need them but they might still help you decide how your character acts.

If you want, some extra things to consider;

- *Did you know each other before you started working for the Cause? If so, how?*
- *How did you first come into contact with the Cause?*
- *Have you been personally suffered under the Authority? If so, how?*
- *Where did you acquire the skills of your playbook? Where did the equipment come from?*

READY TO PLAY!

Once the above is all done, you're ready to play. You might want to have some further conversation as a group to flesh out your characters and the setting you're in (starting with the questions above), but if not, it's time to all turn and look expectantly at your Director for the setup to your first Sortie.

When it's time to do things, read on for information on the Basic Moves as well as some important Special Moves—more specifically, the move **LEAD A SORTIE!** When it's time for the action to begin, whoever is in charge should roll to **LEAD A SORTIE**, establishing how well things start off. This is similar to the engagement roll in some other systems, and is rolled with a different Trait depending on who did the planning. You can find more detail under *Special Moves Summary* (pg. 31).



BASIC & SPECIAL MOVES

BASIC MOVES SUMMARY

The Basic Moves are moves everybody has access to, regardless of their chosen playbook. You use Basic moves to do most things, unless your playbook provides a move that is more specific to the situation you're in. Below is a quick summary of them, followed by some more detailed info with examples of their use.

WEATHER THE STORM

When you **WEATHER THE STORM** to do something safely under pressure, roll;

- +DEFY to dodge, tough it out or strong-arm your way through.
- +KNOW to make it through with quick thinking or the ace up your sleeve.
- +SENSE to notice quiet cues, signs of danger or bad vibes before it's too late.

On a 10+, you manage to make it to safety.

On a 7-9, you succeed but at some cost: it'll keep you occupied longer than you thought, the Director will ask you to make a difficult choice, or you'll burn a point of Spotlight as you take dramatic action.

READ THE ROOM

When you **READ THE ROOM** to get insight on your situation, roll +SENSE;

On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, and spend it 1-for-1 to ask the Director the following questions; they must answer truthfully. Your hold lasts until you leave the current situation or it changes significantly.

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Who has the upper hand here? | • What is x's approach ? |
| • What is being overlooked or obscured here? | • How is x at <i>risk</i> or in <i>peril</i> ? |
| • Where do my Hooks pull me here? | • Where can I find x? |
| • How does x really feel? | |

On a failure, you may ask one of the above questions immediately, but the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger.

Roll with **advantage** when you act on the answers to what you've asked.

DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES

When you **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** by clarifying the unknown or answering a question, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, the Director will tell you something directly useful you know about the situation or subject at hand.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you something potentially useful, but it is up to you to discern how. The Director might ask you to explain how you know that information, or where you learned it.

HELP OR HINDER

When you **HELP OR HINDER** someone to influence their attempts to do something, roll;

- +1 if you spent meaningful time together before this Sortie
- +1 if they've **HELPED OR HINDERED** you previously this Sortie
- +1 if they're part of one of your Hooks

On a 10+, they take **advantage** (help) or **disadvantage** (hinder) to their roll. On a 7-9, as above, but you become entangled in the consequences of their actions, and possibly cause them.

BASIC & SPECIAL MOVES

WEAVE MAGIC

When you **WEAVE MAGIC** to do something taxing with your power, roll +CHANNEL;

On a 10+, you manage to channel power the way you desired without ill effect.

On a 7-9, you succeed, but your invocation is twisted in an unexpected and dangerous way.

COOL OFF

When you take a moment in safety to **COOL OFF** or help someone else do the same, declare a *risk* you want to get rid of and roll whatever Trait seems most appropriate;

On a 10+, you/they erase a *risk* or untick 'overheating' from an Astir.

On a 7-9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.

EXCHANGE BLOWS

When you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with foes capable of defending themselves, roll +CLASH or +TALK, whichever is more appropriate, and advance a GRAVITY clock if you have one;

On a 10+, either your opponent takes a *risk*, or you take a *risk* and put your opponent in *peril*.

On a 7-9, both you and your target are forced to take a *risk*.

STRIKE DECISIVELY

When you **STRIKE DECISIVELY** against someone who is *defenceless*, roll +CLASH or +TALK, whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat or otherwise removed as a threat as per the fiction. Player characters should bite the dust.

On a 7-9, you succeed as above, but choose 1;

- You overreach or underestimate—take a *risk*.
- You waste ammo or words, losing use a weapon until you can re-arm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage.
- You strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations.

BITE THE DUST

When you're caught *defenceless* or risk harm so severe you might **BITE THE DUST**, roll +DEFY;

On a 10+, they miss, hesitate, or you're saved by sheer luck—you rally, and clear a *risk* if you have one.

On a 7-9, retreat from the Sortie safely, or take a *peril*.

On a fail, that strike sure was *decisive*. Decide with your Director the consequences of what has happened to you—what was damaged? What have you lost? Who and what is affected by your defeat?

If you survive, you are changed by your defeat. As well as the above, choose one;

- *Deepen* all of your Hooks, as you clutch your ideals tighter and tighter.
- *Loosen* all of your Hooks, as you lose faith in that which drives you.
- Take a *burden*, as you are saddled with some lingering injury, duty or obligation.
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and the Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.

HEAT UP

When you push your Astir to it's limits and start to **HEAT UP**, you may tick 'overheating' to retry a roll. The original results are discarded, and you must take the second roll even if it's worse.

WEATHER THE STORM

When you attempt to ignore the 'witty' barbs of ambitious politicians, try and walk across a thin wet beam as thunder booms overhead, or otherwise do something under significant pressure, you're attempting to **WEATHER THE STORM**. When you do so, roll;

- +DEFY to dodge, tough it out or strong-arm your way through.
- +KNOW to make it through with quick thinking or the ace up your sleeve.
- +SENSE to notice quiet cues, signs of danger or bad vibes before it's too late.

On a 10+, you manage to make it to safety.

On a 7-9, you succeed but at some cost: it'll keep you occupied longer than you thought, the Director will ask you to make a difficult choice, or you'll burn a point of Spotlight as you take dramatic action.

If you're doing something that doesn't fall under another more specific move and there's a chance something could go wrong for you, your Director will probably ask you to **WEATHER THE STORM**. As long as there's a 'storm', i.e something that could hurt or inconvenience you, this move should cover it if nothing else does. Just make sure you pick the correct Trait! It's easy to look at DEFY and KNOW and think they cover physical and mental resistances respectively—but you could DEFY someone's provocations just as easily as you could KNOW how to quickly reroute magic from your Astir's weapons into a defensive spell. Similarly, you might SENSE a volley of incoming missiles early enough to just step aside instead of using DEFY to dodge them once they're already headed right for you.

DIRECTOR NOTES

On a result of 7-9, they still manage to pull through—but the storm is a bit fiercer than they were ready for. It's ultimately up to you which of the three drawbacks you offer, but be willing to listen to your players if they have something in mind. Obviously, you can't ask them to burn a point of Spotlight if they don't have any.

Just remember: whatever you impose on them, it shouldn't invalidate the fact that they still succeeded at whatever they were trying to do. If they're avoiding fire, taking extra time doesn't mean they were too slow—it means there were even more attacks to dodge, etc.

In an earlier version of this game, a 7-9 had the possibility of imposing a *risk*, but I felt this too easily led to recursive situations where you were trying to avoid taking a *risk*, only to end up partially succeeding... and taking a *risk*. As such, I've taken that option off of the table.

EXAMPLES OF WEATHERING THE STORM:

Perrin the Witch is trying to cross the field of battle in his Astir, but finds himself caught in crossfire. There's dangers both magic and mundane flying through the air from all angles, but Perrin hopes he can focus on evading the bigger threats as he moves across. He rolls a 4, and I get to declare the outcome. While attempting to dodge a huge bolt from a trebuchet, he's caught by a wayward beamrifle shot. Because he's in an Astir, I decide to damage it rather than him directly, and the blast tears a chunk out of its right leg. Perrin notes that he's in *peril* (damaged leg), and grits his teeth: it'll be much harder to get anywhere now.

Prim, an Arcanist, is trying to reload his beamrifle. This normally wouldn't be any hassle at all, but he's trying to do it while a nearby squad pelt him with boltrifle fire. Not only is it distracting as their bolts fly past his vision and clatter against the Astir's plating, if one hits him in the wrong place it might actually cause some damage. He rolls an 8, and I offer him an ugly choice—does he dash into the open to reload, taking the *risk* (exposed), or does he hunker down and make the reload where he is, missing something he might've spotted otherwise?

Elias, a Scout, is being charged at by a few men armed with spears. Rather than stand there and be horribly stabbed, Elias instead decides they want to side-step the spears and vault over one of their foes. On a 7-9, I might consider having a spear snag their clothing, tearing some of their equipment onto the floor, or have them land badly after vaulting. They roll a 10 and succeed, so instead they perform the manoeuvre without a hitch and land on their feet behind the surprised footmen.

READ THE ROOM

When you're trying to figure out which side a battle is in favour of, whether or not a holding is defend-able, or are otherwise trying to get insight on your situation, you're trying to **READ THE ROOM**. When you do so, roll +SENSE;

On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, and spend it 1-for-1 to ask the Director the following questions; they must answer truthfully. Your hold lasts until you leave the current situation or it changes significantly.

- Who has the upper hand here?
- What is being overlooked or obscured here?
- Where do my Hooks pull me here?
- How does x really feel?
- What is x's **approach**?
- How is x at *risk* or in *peril*?
- Where can I find x?

On a failure, you may ask one of the above questions immediately, but the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger.

Roll with **advantage** when you act on the answers to what you've asked.

If you're trying to learn more about the situation you're in, chances are you're trying to **READ THE ROOM**. There's a lot of things this could look like—gazing stoically out onto a raging battlefield, listening closely to a pair of arguing politicians, going over a shipping manifest you've found in an Authority camp—and even if you fail, you still learn something. It's just going to get you in trouble. Unless you fail, you keep your hold as long as you stay in the current situation or scene. No need to spend it quickly.

DIRECTOR NOTES

Don't be too strict with your players on what constitutes their scene changing or ending. Respect the risk they've taken in trying to learn more about their situation, and let them put what they learn into use within reason. When in doubt, lean on letting them keep it. Whenever someone asks a question from **READ THE ROOM**, you get to advance and complicate the situation at hand, and that's probably always going to be interesting. When someone rolls a 6 or below on this move, they basically get to pick their poison. If they ask who has the upper hand, it probably isn't them. If there's anyone *defenceless* around, it might be someone they'd rather see make it through. If something is being overlooked, it's already too late. Be inventive.

EXAMPLES OF READING THE ROOM:

Anya, a Diplomat, is mediating a discussion between ambassadors from two smaller factions. She expected things to get heated, but Fran, the usually more demanding of the two, is conceding minor points at every turn. I suggest she **READ THE ROOM** to represent the attention paid to what has been said so far, and she rolls a 7-9. She decides to ask 'How does Fran really feel?'. I explain that, given what she knows about Fran, there is no way he'd accept all these concessions: it's likely he has an ulterior motive, and is here solely for appearances.

Torres, the group's Paradigm, skids to a halt on a crowded battlefield, and uses vis elevated position in an Astir to assess the situation. Ve reads the room and rolls... a 4. Ve asks 'What is being overlooked here?', and the answer strikes ver in the back: there's a squad armed with a beamrifle hiding on the ridge behind ver!

Kai, a Diplomat, has broken into a small military base, and is snooping around for useful intel. Given that he's looking for information on bigger picture things than this one camp, there are some questions that don't have obvious answers. If I had something specific in mind to reveal here, I might have him **WEATHER THE STORM** instead to find it before he is discovered. But I don't, so instead I ask him to roll as usual and interpret 'here' to mean the group's Sortie, as what he's doing is likely to give him broader information. He rolls an 11, and chooses to save his hold until he returns to his friends. While he's technically leaving this scene, the information he's gained is still pertinent outside of it, so I let him keep his hold.

DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES

When you offer an answer to a difficult question, rack your brains for what you know about a topic, or explain to everyone what mysterious thing you've encountered is, you are **DISPELLING UNCERTAINTIES**. When you do so, roll +KNOW;

On a 10+, your Director will tell you something directly useful you know about the situation or subject at hand.

On a 7-9, your Director will tell you something potentially useful, but it is up to you to discern how. Your Director might ask you to explain how you know that information, or where you learned it.

DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES is pretty straightforward as far as moves go. Confronted with something unknown that you want to clarify? **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES**. Need to see if you know about an Astir model? **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES**. On a 7-9, what you know isn't directly useful, but it's related—and still useful if you can figure out how to use it.

DIRECTOR NOTES

As above, this isn't a move you need to think too hard about. On a 10+, hand them what they wanted to know, or at least something they can clearly use. On a 7-9, go a little adjacent. Give them something close, or something they can make their own conclusions from. On a 6-, make a move as usual.

EXAMPLES OF DISPELLING UNCERTAINTIES

The group is meeting a mysterious faction for the first time, and is introduced to their leader. Scour, a Witch, asks if he recognises her. He rolls to **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES**, and gets a 10—he knows exactly who she is! It's a member of the royal family he remembers meeting some years prior.

Prim, an Arcanist, is fighting a mysterious new Astir that has turned up on the battlefield. They explain how they think back to a codex of Astir designs they looked through recently which might offer some information, and they roll. They get an 8, and I give them some potentially useful information. The new Astir wasn't in that codex, but Prim can tell from some of the design elements that it was designed by Rosegold Factoria, a faction in their campaign.

Merin, the party Artificer, is overseeing some repairs to their Cruiser, *The Planted Standard*. It wants to speed things up, so it asks me if it knows a safe way to make those repairs faster than usual. It rolls a 6, and I explain to it how it would be very safe if it re-purposed the energy channels from the *Standard's* main gun and used them to make the repairs. Or, that's what it thinks, at least.

HELP OR HINDER

When you attempt to lend aid to someone or interfere with their ability to make a roll, you are trying to **HELP OR HINDER**. When you do so, roll:

- +1 if you spent meaningful time together during Downtime
- +1 if they've **HELPED OR HINDERED** you previously this Sortie
- +1 if they're part of one of your Hooks

On a 10+, they take **advantage** (help) or **disadvantage** (hinder) on their roll. On a 7-9, as above, but you become entangled in the consequences of their actions, and possibly cause them.

If someone else is making a move, and you're trying to do something to either help them or to get in their way, your Director will probably ask you to **HELP OR HINDER**. Succeeding lets you pass them a bonus to their roll, but on a 7-9 you get caught up in the results of the move. If someone gets hurt, it's probably you, etc.

HELP OR HINDER asks you to roll without a trait, adding modifiers based on your interactions with that character. If you have a GRAVITY clock with the target character, however, you can substitute that as usual. You can assist before or after a roll has been made; though if you as a group are aiming for a grittier more dramatic feel, you might restrict offers of help to before rolls only.

DIRECTOR NOTES

This isn't a particularly complex move, so it shouldn't often cause you any trouble. If someone is clearly trying to prevent or facilitate someone else doing something, this is what they should roll. On a 7-9, involve them in what happens afterwards, and feel free to make it their fault if you want to.

Feel free to determine with your table whether you can **HELP OR HINDER** after a roll or just before it. If you want a little more depth to this decision, you might decide that players can **HELP OR HINDER** after a roll, but at the cost of still suffering a consequence on a 7-9 (even if the person they're helping gets a 10+).

The third +1 here comes from Hooks specifically, not Hooks or GRAVITY, because if they're relying on GRAVITY with someone, they should just roll the clock.

EXAMPLES OF HELP OR HINDER:

Fau, a Witch, is striding into battle alongside zir allies. Ahead of zir, Brennan is tangling with a pair of enemy Astirs. Brennan is going to **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with them, and Fau decides to help out by giving covering fire to zir friend. Ze rolls a 6, +1 for having spent a scene with Brennan during downtime, for a final result of 7. This allows zir to give **advantage** to Brennan for his roll. He succeeds, and all is well.

Seven is not so lucky, however. Having rolled a 9 to help Matrice avoid an serious blow from their would-be-rival and passed them **advantage**, Seven is in harm's way—and when Matrice rolls a 5 on their **BITE THE DUST**, I decide that their intervention puts them in the path of the blade, rather than Matrice.

Serrah, a Captain, is watching over a battle from the helm of their Carrier. Down below, Merin is making use of its Artificer abilities to quickly construct a foothold, from which it can assess the state of the fight. Serrah offers her assistance—from this high up, and with the capabilities of the Carrier, she could definitely help pick out things on the battlefield. I ask her to **HELP OR HINDER**: she adds her GRAVITY clock with Merin and rolls an 11, allowing her to offer Merin **advantage** without putting herself on the line. Merin then, unfortunately for it, rolls a 6. There will be repercussions—but Serrah won't be part of them.

WEAVE MAGIC

When you invoke your magic to crumble a bridge, attune to mystical orbs at the centre of the galaxy, or otherwise do something taxing with your power, you're attempting to weave magic. When you do so, roll +CHANNEL;

On a 10+, you manage to channel power the way you desired without ill effect.

On a 7-9, you succeed, but your invocation is twisted in an unexpected and dangerous way.

In Armour Astir, magic is typically channelled through an Astir, imbued into potions through alchemy, or forged into objects by enchanters and artificers. More direct uses, in the form of spells and such, have fallen out of use somewhat. When you try to twist your magic ability into desired results, then, you're not picking a spell from a list—you're **WEAVING MAGIC**. It's tiring to use your magic directly in this way: expect to take a *risk* or even be put in *peril* if you test yourself in this way multiple times during a Sortie.

DIRECTOR NOTES

Like some of the others, this is a pretty straightforward move. If they're trying to do something with their magic outside the usual purview of controlling their Astir, and you think it's something within their ability, they're trying to **WEAVE MAGIC**. Magic makes a lot of things possible, especially things other moves might not give you; the trade-off to this flexibility is the cost of potential *dangers*.

Overuse of **WEAVE MAGIC** should visibly exhaust characters, and make it tough for them to operate. This is the trade-off for how wide and varied the uses of this move could be.

EXAMPLES OF WEAVE MAGIC:

Lamina, an Arcanist, is on foot, trying to get back to their Astir that they have been separated from. They encounter some soldiers on the way back, and not being trained in using her magic for direct combat, Lamina decides she wants to try teleporting herself the short remaining distance to her Astir. I ask her to **WEAVE MAGIC**, and she rolls an 8. I narrate how her sudden burst of unfiltered magic is easily picked up by a sensory ritual over the area, which magically 'tags' her Astir as a target—as a result, I ask her to take a *risk*, suggesting 'targeted'. She's at her mech, but it's going to be tougher to escape now there's an ethereal bulls-eye painted on her.

Strata, the party Paradigm, wants to try and produce a magical shield to protect his allies while they make some quick repairs. This feels like something he could do, so I ask him to **WEAVE MAGIC**. He rolls a 10+, so it happens just the way he wanted. It's a little exhausting, but sure enough a white-gold sheet of magical force spreads out from his fingertips, lasting as long as he concentrates on it.

Plana is trying to collapse a bridge their group has just travelled over, to prevent anyone from following them. As an Artificer, Plana doesn't usually have a CHANNEL Trait, but they have the **ARCANE GENERATOR** move which gives them one. Plana describes how they try to send waves of magical force through the bridge to shake it apart, and I ask them to roll **WEAVE MAGIC**. On a 7-9, I might describe how their magic spills dangerously out, causing a localised earthquake that shakes more than just the bridge to pieces.

COOL OFF

When you attempt to vent heat from an Astir, to calm yourself from spiralling emotions, or to otherwise take a few minutes to fix something about your or someone else's situation, you're trying to **COOL OFF**. When you do so, declare a risk you want to get rid of and roll whatever Trait seems most appropriate;

On a 10+, you/they erase a *risk* or untick 'overheating' from an Astir.

On a 7-9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.

Doing things can be pretty stressful, especially when those things include fighting, getting hurt, or talking to people. Many actions in Armour Astir can require you to take *risks*, and while it's easy to imagine getting rid of these with many other moves (getting rid of 'outnumbered' with **EXCHANGE BLOWS**, using **READ THE ROOM** to clear 'surprised', etc) sometimes it won't always be that clear, or might be something you can't fix without a minute to breathe.

For those things, **COOL OFF** acts as a catch-all risk removal move. What using it looks like can differ a lot: it might be taking a quiet moment to centre yourself, talking an ally down from an emotional peak, or venting heat buildup from your Astir—heat represented by the 'overheating' tick gained from certain Channeler moves—which also might look different depending on how your Astir is designed. Maybe your Astir collects heat in canisters that it can eject, or maybe you have a maintenance ritual you cast that disperses excess energy from it.

DIRECTOR NOTES

The important thing about **COOL OFF** is that it takes a little time. While you make this move, you're not fighting, you're not running, and you're not paying close attention to what's going on. Maybe it's only a minute or two, but that can be a big opportunity for foes - so characters should try to make themselves some breathing room before they take a breath. You can choose what Trait you use when **COOLING OFF**, but it should match what you're doing. If you're trying to flush a hex out of your Astir's systems, it'd be +CHANNEL. If ice has frozen over the finger joints of your Astir, you can't chip it off with +TALK—it'd be +DEFY, or maybe +CLASH.

EXAMPLES OF COOL OFF:

Ray, a Scout, has just seen vis ally Luxx narrowly dodge a bolt of lightning. The close call disrupted a sensory ritual, giving them the *risk* (blinded). Ray has the Scout move **PATCH JOB**, and ve decides to move in and try to clear up the disruption for Luxx. Ve describe how ve scales up the Astir's side and sets to work replacing some shattered reagents. I ask ver to roll to **COOL OFF** with +DEFY since this is a pretty routine fix done quickly, and ve rolls a 9, attracting unwanted attention as a result. A second bolt of lightning sears overhead: they've both been spotted!

Fau has just dispatched a pair of enemy Astirs but caused zirs to overheat in the process. With zir sensory chimes picking up new contacts incoming, ze decides to do something about that heat problem. Ze describe how zir Astir has a series of pods full of frosty, alchemical liquid attached to it, and ze activate one to **COOL OFF**. Ze rolls an 11 after adding zir +CHANNEL, which is a total success. The liquid frost washes through zir system, and ze removes the 'overheating' tick.

Merin, an Artificer, currently has the *risk* (entangled) after being caught up in some magical plants. If they were in a hurry they might have tried to **WEATHER THE STORM** to escape, but they're alone and otherwise safe - so they decide to take their time cutting themselves free. They roll to **COOL OFF** with +CLASH, and unfortunately only get a 5. The more they cut, the more these vines seem to trap them, and they end up taking too long. A flying enemy ardent sweeps overhead and spots them - if they weren't in a hurry before, they sure are now.

EXCHANGE BLOWS

When you charge at a foe with your blade, engage someone in debate or try to provoke them, or otherwise act against someone able to defend themselves, you are attempting to **EXCHANGE BLOWS**. When you do so, advance a GRAVITY clock if you have one, and roll +CLASH or +TALK —whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, either your opponent takes a *risk*, or you take a *risk* and put your opponent in *peril*.

On a 7-9, both you and your target are forced to take a *risk*.

When you go toe-to-toe against someone capable of defending themselves, you're **EXCHANGING BLOWS**. This move is used to wear foes down before **STRIKING DECISIVELY** to deal with them for good - whether you're doing it with +CLASH and physical harm, or +TALK and your words. When you're actually fighting, it's important to consider what weapon you're using. You can't hit someone far away with a *melee* weapon, for example, or shoot someone close up with a *sniper* weapon. When it comes to using +TALK, it's worth keeping in mind that most conversations are probably just that: conversations. But when there is conflict or you're trying to get something, it might instead be **EXCHANGING BLOWS**.

DIRECTOR NOTES

When players are trying to **EXCHANGE BLOWS**, make sure to keep in mind the methods and weapons they are using, as well as who they're using them on. There's lots of variables that could come into play, so don't be afraid to offer adjustments to the roll based on the situation. If players are **EXCHANGING BLOWS** with +TALK, it should go without saying that their choice of weaponry probably doesn't factor in, unless they're using it to intimidate someone.

If a player is trying to harm someone who isn't trying to harm the player back but is otherwise still capable of evading or defending themselves, they still need to **EXCHANGE BLOWS**. While they're not in direct danger there's still plenty of other reasons they might need to take a *risk*—over-committing to chase an agile foe, getting mad they can't land a solid hit, and so on.

If a player wants to continue **EXCHANGING BLOWS** with someone who is *defenceless*, let them, but it should be clear they are toying with someone who is basically done. It should seem cruel.

When the move asks if you have a GRAVITY clock, it means between you and the target of the move, not someone that's fighting alongside or observing. However, if someone else involves themselves through **HELP OR HINDER** and uses your +GRAVITY, you can advance a clock with them as usual instead. These don't stack: it's one or the other (otherwise everyone would complete their clocks in the blink of an eye). If you're playing the kind of campaign where people don't come to blows often, your Director might allow both to help people keep GRAVITY clocks moving.

EXAMPLES OF EXCHANGE BLOWS:

Caryx, an Arcanist, wants to engage an enemy Astir that has rushed up to block their path. They describe pulling out the greatsword their Astir is armed with, and launching into melee. This sounds like **EXCHANGE BLOWS** to me, which they roll. They get a 10+, and take the option 'your opponent takes a *risk*'. I narrate how their foe boosts backwards suddenly to evade the blow, leaving them unsteady on their feet, and I add the *risk* 'unstable' to their sheet.

Juniper is blade-to-blade with aer Rival, Sequoia. They have already traded *risks* a few times, and Juniper's player continues the fight, rolling to **EXCHANGE BLOWS**. Ae rolls a 7, meaning both aer and Sequoia have to take another *risk*. Juniper elects to take the *risk* 'distracted', describing how ae's so focused on Sequoia that ae could miss something else. I give Sequoia the 'disarmed' *risk* as the blade is knocked from her hands.

Frankly Darling is trying to convince an engineer they've bumped into in an enemy base that they're supposed to be there. They might **WEATHER THE STORM** to avoid suspicion this once, but they want to not have to worry about this engineer for the rest of the scene, so we **EXCHANGE BLOWS**. They roll a 5 -as it turns out, they're not that good a talker.

STRIKE DECISIVELY

When you're lining up the perfect shot against an opponent who can't defend themselves, delivering a scathing dismissal of their character using irrefutable fact, or otherwise engaging someone who is *defenceless*, you are **STRIKING DECISIVELY**. When you do so, roll +CLASH or +TALK, whichever is more appropriate;

On a 10+, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat or otherwise removed as a threat as per the fiction. Player characters should **BITE THE DUST**.

On a 7-9, you succeed as above, but choose 1;

- You overreach or underestimate—take a *risk*.
- You waste ammo or words, losing use a weapon until you can re-arm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage.
- You strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations.

If you're trying to kill someone you're fighting or to otherwise do something serious enough to remove them from the situation at hand, and it's possible to do so, you're trying to **STRIKE DECISIVELY**. This doesn't necessarily need to be something that causes actual harm to the target, and in many cases, like when you're using +TALK, it's likely physical harm might not be involved. You can't call someone's shitty ideology out so hard that they die (unless your Director says you can, in which case: hell yeah).

DIRECTOR NOTES

As with **EXCHANGE BLOWS**, a player cannot **STRIKE DECISIVELY** if they aren't at the right range for the weapon they're using. It's also hard to lay into someone if they're too far away to hear you (though, it is of course possible to damage someone's reputation or assets by talking about them, rather than to them). When battling it out with +TALK, a 10+ will typically look like getting what you wanted out of the conversation rather than them being owned so hard that they burst into flame. This might be convincing them of something, intimidating them into a course of action, winning an argument, etc.

Central to this move is the target being *defenceless*. If a player is trying to finish off someone that isn't *defenceless*, they aren't making this move—they're being overconfident, and giving you a good opportunity to make a move of your own.

EXAMPLES OF STRIKING DECISIVELY;

Mura, a Scout, spots an enemy bearing down on her friend Ophelia, a large axe drawn. Mura thinks the fact that it is distracted by its fight with Ophelia makes them *defenceless* to her, and she takes aim with her marksman bow, intending to kill them. I know they aren't actually that distracted by their fight, and actually have room for another *danger*. I explain this to Mura, and describe how her target sidesteps the attack, before returning fire with a hand-crossbow. Things are going to get rough for Mura.

Cirrus the Diplomat has been trying to convince a guard to let them into a restricted area. Having already worn them down a little, Cirrus delivers the coup de grace ("You know, I could put in a good word with your superiors...") and rolls to **STRIKE DECISIVELY**. They get an 8, and choose to waste ammo or words—I describe how now none of the other guards will buy that line until you actually do put in a good word for this one, since they'll talk to the others about it. It's still a success though, so the guard is removed as a threat, which in this case just means they'll stand aside and let Cirrus through. The guard doesn't suddenly die or anything. But they might've.

Damocles, a Scout, is working in tandem with his friend Erin to take out a service ardent. Damocles climbed onto its back while Erin distracted it, and wants to try and destroy it with a bomb. The ardent's pilot is *defenceless*, but Damocles only rolls a 6. I decide the charge is faulty, and that it goes off early, sending him flying back down to the floor painfully, giving him the *peril* (burned).

BITE THE DUST

When something dangerous slips through your defences, you're caught off-guard, or someone delivers those perfect words to tear you down, you're at risk of biting the dust. When you do so, roll +DEFY;

On a 10+, they miss, hesitate, or you're saved by sheer luck—you rally, and clear a *risk* if you have one.

On a 7-9, retreat from the Sortie safely, or be put in *peril*.

On a fail, that strike sure was decisive. Decide with your Director the consequences of what has happened to you—what was damaged? What have you lost? Who and what is changed by your defeat? If you survive, you are changed by your defeat. As well as the above, choose one;

- *Deepen* all of your Hooks, as you clutch your ideals tighter and tighter.
- *Loosen* all of your Hooks, as you lose faith in that which drives you.
- Take a *burden*, as you are saddled with some lingering injury, duty or obligation.
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and your Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.

DIRECTOR NOTES

When a player is *defenceless* as a result of having three *risks* or *perils*, they're in real danger. When someone threatens them with the intent to finish them off—i.e, when they would fictionally be **STRIKING DECISIVELY** rather than **EXCHANGING BLOWS**—that player should **BITE THE DUST** in response. You still have agency to make moves (you could **EXCHANGE BLOWS** as the aggressor, for example, potentially incurring the penalty for having more than 3 *dangers*), but any time someone specifically 'attacks' you this move is triggered.

Failure on this move should be a conversation between you and the player, but you shouldn't feel the need to have this conversation there and then. Feel free to go with something ambiguous in the short term—a pair of Astirs dashing out of sight but only one returning, a bloody trail left leading off somewhere unseen, an escape pod landing heavily—and determine the outcome once the action of the Sortie dies down.

EXAMPLES OF BITE THE DUST:

Min-seo, a Captain, is commanding the crew of her Carrier against a huge elder dragon. Things are going badly: covered with burns, streaked by talon-marks and gripped by fear, Min-seo and her crew are *defenceless*. The dragon cuts them off, and launches one last burst of flame towards the Carrier's bridge. It's time to **BITE THE DUST**, but lucky for Min-seo (and her crew) she rolls a 10. She describes how the crew pulls off a miraculous manoeuvre, dropping the Carrier out of the sky for a moment to evade the attack, and she removes the *risk* (afraid) as everyone cheers.

Aidah, eir group's Paradigm, was ambushed by a group of Astirs. Between being outnumbered and taking a few extra *risks* while trying to even the odds, e is *defenceless*. It's too late to **WEATHER THE STORM**: If Aidah wants to get out, e needs to make sure e doesn't **BITE THE DUST**. E rolls an 8, and I give em the choice: retreat safely from the Sortie, or be put in *peril*. E decides to take the *peril*, so while e escapes to regroup, e does it under fire and a rayrifle shot shears through eir right shoulder joint, replacing one of eir *risks* with the *peril* (destroyed arm).

Scour is in a bad way. His Astir is damaged, disarmed, and he's *defenceless*. His opponent, channelling a mysterious prototype Astir, isn't interested in giving him mercy, but Scour's not backing down. He rushes back in and risks **BITING THE DUST**. He rolls the dice: it's a 3. It's early in the campaign and Scour's player still has things they want to explore with them in play, so we agree that they manage to eject from their Astir before their foe gets a decisive slash in, destroying it completely. They're alive, but shaken, and will need rescuing from the battlefield. They decide to *loosen* all of their Hooks, representing their courage and confidence taking a major hit.

GROUP MOVES

When everyone would be performing the same move (like all **WEATHERING THE STORM** to get away from a big blast of magic), or if multiple people want to help out with something (since usually only one person can **HELP OR HINDER** a move), you should instead make it a group move.

When performing a group move, the person participating with the lowest relevant trait makes the roll, but anybody participating counts as doing so—thus, any bonuses to rolls they have, like **advantage** or hold they can spend, apply to the group move. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, but good teamwork can shore up any weaknesses.

Everyone participating in a group move may advance GRAVITY clocks with other participants if they have them.

SPECIAL MOVES SUMMARY

There are a few other moves that don't fit into the above categories. These are **LEAD A SORTIE**, which is rolled once at the beginning of each Sortie to determine how the initial engagement goes, **SUBSYSTEMS** which is a move usable by any Channeler playbook, and **B-PLOT** which is a move usable by any Support playbook.

LEAD A SORTIE

When it's time for action and you **LEAD A SORTIE**, decide who planned the mission and roll;

- +KNOW, if you're leading with wits or following a clever plan.
- +CREW, if it was someone else aboard.
- +DEFY, if you're heading into danger blind.

On a 10+, you make it to the action unscathed. On a 7-9, the crew stumbles, misses something important, or is unprepared for what they meet.

SUBSYSTEMS

When you activate your Astir's **SUBSYSTEMS**, spend 1 Power to re-activate an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.

B-Plot

When you take part in the **B-PLOT** rather than be involved in a Sortie, name one or two Director characters that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player **confidence** on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny a Director character from appearing during the Sortie—they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and take a Downtime move.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

LEAD A SORTIE

When you lead the group into battle, get in the robot when you're not supposed to, or otherwise take action that would move the game from Downtime to a Sortie, you're **LEADING A SORTIE**. When you lead, roll;

- +KNOW, if you're leading with wits or following a clever plan.
- +CREW, if success hinges on someone else aboard.
- +DEFY, if you're heading into danger carelessly.

On a 10+, you make it to the action unscathed. On a 7-9, the crew stumbles, misses something important, or is unprepared for what they meet.

While most moves have certain triggers or can be used whenever you want, **LEAD A SORTIE** is a little different. At the beginning of every Sortie, when everyone leaps into action (whatever that action may be), the players should figure out which Trait is appropriate and have someone roll for the move. **LEAD A SORTIE** establishes on what footing the crew finds itself once they get to their first obstacle.

DIRECTOR NOTES

You should always have someone roll to **LEAD A SORTIE** once the action starts, but if you forget, it's OK to do it retroactively and carry the results forward as you continue playing. When rolling with +CREW, it doesn't matter who makes the roll, since those attributes don't belong to any one player. When rolling +KNOW or +DEFY however, the roll should be made by whoever's trait is being used. If you're all going along with a plan thought up by the player with a -2 in KNOW, you don't get to have the +3 KNOW player make the roll on their behalf—that doesn't make any sense. There being a plan doesn't prevent someone from rolling with +DEFY if they want to rush off and ignore it.

EXAMPLES OF LEAD A SORTIE:

The crew of the *Ouroboros* has drawn up a plan to assault a prison ran by their campaign's Authority, the Zonel Empire. However, Dimir, the crew's Impostor, hotheadedly rushes into action so everyone else can benefit from their **DON'T FOLLOW ME** move. So, they roll to **LEAD A SORTIE** with +DEFY. It's a 7-9, and I decide the crew missed something important—they missed Dimir leaving! They'll have to catch up, and Dimir will be alone until they can.

The *Coarse, Correct* is heading into battle alongside a Carrier sent by one of their allied Factions, the Atteri Guild. Vetter, the group's Captain, has a GRAVITY clock with the Atteri Guild, and decides to **LEAD A SORTIE** with the value of that Clock since they're helping out. It's +2, and she gets lucky—the result is a 12! The *Coarse, Correct* and the Atteri ship both make it into battle safely, positioned to carry out the Sortie.

Serrah, a Captain, is leading the crew of her Carrier, the *New Serpent*. They're on a mission to deactivate an ancient magical relic their foes have unearthed, and having made the plan, Serrah rolls to **LEAD A SORTIE**. She rolls a 5, which leaves the crew on an unfortunate footing. All around the ship, sensors light up in worrying shades: they won't be making it anywhere without a fight.

SUBSYSTEMS

When you activate your Astir's **SUBSYSTEMS**, spend 1 Power to re-activate an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.

All Channeler playbooks may use the **SUBSYSTEMS** move. This allows them to spend Power, a resource that is part of their Astir, to re-use its [Active] parts. Some Astirs have 0 Power, but most have between 1 and 4 depending on the choices made creating it. You start every Sortie with your Astir's full amount of Power, and do not usually regain spent Power between scenes.

DIRECTOR NOTES

The **SUBSYSTEMS** move gives players a quick way of resolving a variety of problems. It's risk-free and many Astirs offer the opportunity to do it more than once, so don't be afraid to remind your players if they find themselves in a tough spot and have Power to spend. As long as they're piloting their Astir and it's not deactivated or shut down, they can activate **SUBSYSTEMS**.

EXAMPLES OF SUBSYSTEMS:

Aidah is fighting eir Rival, and has just tried to **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with them. E described how they tried to circle around them, laying into them with a rayrifle, but then e rolled a pair of 2s. Not happy with this result, e decides to spend a point of Power on **SUBSYSTEMS** to reuse their 'Afterburners' Artifact and roll with **advantage**. E rolls an extra dice for the **advantage**, which is a 6! Taking eir two highest results (the 6 and a 2), combined with eir +CLASH of +1, brings the total from 5 to 8, making the move a partial success instead of failure.

Strata, the party Paradigm is snooping through a strange labyrinth, clearly built to be explored by something even larger than their Astir. He's been lost in there for a little while without finding anything, but he doesn't want to risk something bad happening if he **READS THE ROOM**. Instead, he spends Power on **SUBSYSTEMS** to use his Divination Codex and safely ask one question from the read the room list. He asks 'what is being overlooked here?'.
Strata, the party Paradigm is snooping through a strange labyrinth, clearly built to be explored by something even larger than their Astir. He's been lost in there for a little while without finding anything, but he doesn't want to risk something bad happening if he **READS THE ROOM**. Instead, he spends Power on **SUBSYSTEMS** to use his Divination Codex and safely ask one question from the read the room list. He asks 'what is being overlooked here?'.

Prim, an Arcanist, is attempting to outrun a rampaging magma worm. He's pulling out all the stops, and his Astir is overheating after he used the **OVERRIDES** move to **WEATHER THE STORM** with +CHANNEL instead of +DEFY. Since his CHANNEL is +2, much better than his DEFY of -1, Prim decides to spend Power on **SUBSYSTEMS** to use his Heat Condensers and remove the overheating tick, meaning he can safely use **OVERRIDES** again.

B-PLOT

When you head out for some solitary revenge, leave to take part in negotiations, or otherwise take part in a secondary narrative thread to the players involved in the Sortie, you're in the **B-PLOT**. Name one or two Director characters that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player **confidence** on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny an **actor** from appearing during the Sortie—they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and frame a Downtime Scene.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

All Support playbooks may use the **B-PLOT** move. If the Sortie looks like it's going to involve Astir combat and you want to help out in an indirect way, or you have a plot thread you want to follow alone, you can use the **B-PLOT** to do that: it lets you be elsewhere, effectively in a Sortie of your own, while still having some agency over the main one.

DIRECTOR NOTES

The **B-PLOT** move provides people playing a Support playbook an easy way of always being able to apply their skill-set, even if the Sortie calls for something else entirely. Artificers can be off fixing things, Diplomats can be taking part in negotiations, and so on. This means that players can place themselves in somewhere interesting for their character, rather than sitting around on the Cruiser idly, or putting themselves in grave danger fighting Astirs on foot if they're the lone Support in a group full of Channelers.

If there's a **B-PLOT** to a Sortie, it should be established when **LEAD A SORTIE** is rolled, or earlier if possible. If the **B-PLOT** takes a player far away from the Carrier and the rest of their group, they should be prepared to explain how that happened. Since Sorties follow a period of Downtime, they might have travelled beforehand, or maybe they used some kind of magical method like a teleportation circle. **B-PLOT** by itself isn't magic, but the game's full of it elsewhere, so don't hold them to anything too rigid here.

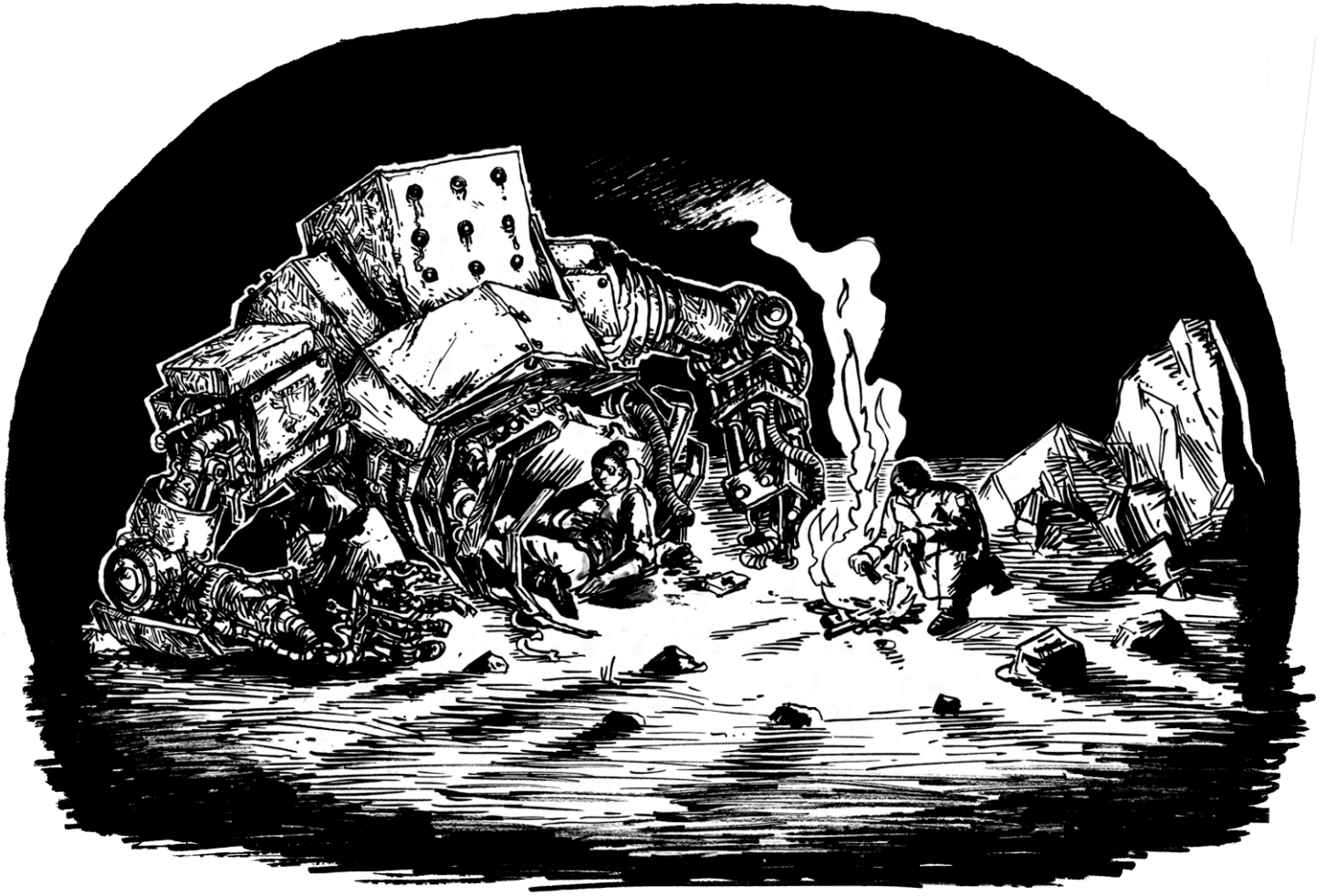
A key thing to remember is that using **B-PLOT** enforces a level of narrative separation from the rest of the Sortie. You could, on a physical level, be very close to the events of the Sortie: but the effects of it cannot touch you until you run out of hold, at which point the two plots can come together whenever it feels appropriate.

EXAMPLES OF B-PLOT:

Captain Brightline has left to meet with other members of their Cause at a star castle. The rest of the crew is busy dealing with an errant god during the Sortie, so Brightline's meeting is a **B-PLOT**. They have 3 hold to help out though, and later when the fighting gets tough they spend 1 to let their ally Teasel act with **confidence** when she tries to commune with a space orb.

Kai, a Diplomat, is using the **B-PLOT** to sneak around a military encampment. Back in the Sortie, their allies are handling things ok, and the other players suggest Kai use his last hold to play a Downtime Scene. They do so, choosing the **HALLWAYS OR LISTENING POST** scene, representing them eavesdropping and gathering info earlier. They tick up some progress on a project they had earlier established that seems relevant, and play continues.

Mura, a Scout, is aiding one of their allied Factions by helping break the siege on a neutral city. Since everyone else is working to broker a peace treaty between two other Factions this Sortie, Mura's taking part in the **B-PLOT**. The group has been worried an Authority agent named Prose will show up to disrupt the treaty meeting, so Mura decides to spend hold to deny Prose from appearing during the Sortie. This'll certainly stop Prose from interfering with the meeting, but it also opens them up to being a problem for Mura.



"Rocky sat in the frame all night 'cus it was the warmest place I could put him outta the wind, with the engine still hot, even busted. I wanted him comfortable, just when I woke up he was gone some time during the night, and Three-by, old Three-by was gone too, oil leaks all down her front plate like she was cryin' fierce..."

- Excerpt from 'Our Year In The Dust', Anonymous,
Founding Year Of The Empty Throne Era

DOWNTIME SCENES

Between Sorties, characters have time to themselves on the Carrier to rest, recuperate, and do their own thing. This is referred to as Downtime, and during it Downtime Scenes are played out—each focused on a different location on your Carrier. Downtime Scenes are similar to Conflict Scenes, but each is led by a single player who may invite others into it. Downtime Scenes don't need to be elaborate or long—they can be as simple as describing some actions you take. They may continue to invite other characters into the Scene as it plays out: other players may force a character into the Scene, at the cost of one of their **tokens**.

Every player gets to lead a Scene each, and also gets **2 tokens** to spend during any player's Scene for further benefits. The Director also takes **1 token** per other player: when they spend theirs, they may refocus the Scene for a moment and spend them on behalf of the Authority, to show members of it having their own 'downtime' (imposing the opposite of an option's benefit onto the players where appropriate). Additionally, you may choose to frame your Scene as a failure and not take the benefit described: if you do so, you may choose another player to gain an extra token for this Downtime. First, though, everyone should take a moment to...

CHECK IN

When you finish a Sortie and return to the Carrier to figure out what's next, it's time to **CHECK IN** with each-other not as your characters, but as players. Is everyone happy with how the game has gone since the last downtime? Has everyone remembered to clear any *risks* they gained during the last Sortie? Does anyone want to discuss the safety tools you're using, and maybe amend any lines/veils etc? Does anyone have thoughts or comments on how the game is progressing, and what they might want to see more or less of?

After you've **CHECKED IN**, everyone can choose and play their Downtime Scene.

COMMAND DECK OR BRIEFING ROOM

The leading player helps plan for the upcoming Sortie: adding a d6 to the upcoming **PLAN & PREPARE**. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Contribute to the **PLAN & PREPARE**, as above.
- Report on aid they've given to a Faction, *untapping* it.
- Report on intel they've gathered: the Director will reveal something useful about the Sortie.
- Volunteer to take point: you'll **LEAD A SORTIE** in **confidence**.

SOCIAL SPACE OR PRIVATE QUARTERS

The leading player talks it out with another character and clears a *peril* of emotional or social origin from them, or they spend time with someone they have GRAVITY with, advancing it. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Talk it out and clear someone else's *peril*, as above.
- Encourage/demoralise someone: they'll make their first move during the Sortie at **advantage/disadvantage**.
- Spend time with someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Rewrite a Hook, or press someone else to do the same.

FADE

The leading player describes somewhere on the Carrier or nearby that they pass time, gaining a point of Spotlight and advancing a GRAVITY clock if they have one with someone that joins them. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Pass time, as above.

DOWNTIME MOVES

INFIRMARY OR HANGAR

The leading player clears a *peril* of mechanical or physical origin from a character or construct, or swaps an Astir part out for another you already have. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Clear a *peril* or swap a part, as above.
- Help someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Start or advance a long-term project: describe what your work looks like.
- Take their Astir and rush ahead: you'll **LEAD A SORTIE** with +DEFY & **advantage**.

When you rush ahead, this doesn't end the Downtime: other Scenes can be played chronologically before this one, and the crew might also just not spring into action in your wake.

HALLWAYS OR LISTENING POST

The leading player overhears something: they may start or advance a long-term project to learn more, or take **advantage** during the next Sortie acting on what they learned. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Overhear something, as above.
- Discuss how this info will factor into the Sortie: add a d6 to your **PLAN & PREPARE**.
- Have a heated conversation with someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Barge in on whoever was overheard, causing trouble for someone involved.

SOMEWHERE NEARBY

The leading player rolls a d4 to see what resources they can muster, and acquires gear or equipment with a total value up to the result. They may spend extra **tokens** or *tap* Factions to increase the result by another d4, or trade objects with the *valuable* or *treasure* tags for +2 or +4 respectively. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Buy or trade for something of value, as above.
- Start or advance a long-term project: describe what your work looks like.
- Spend time working or in the field with someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Run into trouble: resolve it with moves as usual, and see what you learn.

As a reminder: smaller equipment like weapons and Astir parts have a basic cost equal to their Tier. Larger things, like Astirs and Ardents, have a basic cost equal to their Tier squared (Tier III things cost 9, etc). Gear with *tags* must have their values balance out to 0; see **Tags & Gear (pg. 91)** for more.

WORKSHOP OR LAB

The leading player straps on their protective gear (or not) and gets to work on something. They may start or advance a long-term project to build something, run an experiment, salvage the leftover wreckage from a recent battle, attempt to figure out how a mechanism or spell works, etc.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Start or advance a long-term project, as above.
- Spend time tinkering or working with someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Produce something of trade value or strip spoils of battle for useful salvage, acquiring:
 - Supplies I (*valuable, bulky OR fragile*).
- Make something that directly aids a Faction, *untapping* it.

Remind your players: every Conflict Turn requires at least one Faction per Division to be tapped. With your baseline three Divisions, that's three Factions per Downtime, not including any optionally tapped to ensure success. When they're considering their Downtime Scenes and what they'll earn each Sortie through **PLAN & PREPARE**, they might want to keep that number in mind.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

PLAN & PREPARE

Once everyone has taken their Downtime Scene, finish off the Downtime period by setting up the next Sortie. Everyone describes what they are doing to help prepare for what is to come, and rolls **PLAN & PREPARE**.

PLAN & PREPARE

When you review orders for the next Sortie, go over scouting reports and maps, or otherwise attempt to prepare the crew for what comes next, you're trying to **PLAN & PREPARE**. Roll a d6, plus any extra dice earned during Downtime Scenes, and compare the results to the **Strength** of the Division that your next Sortie will target.

For every result that is equal to or above the Division's **Strength**, choose one:

- During the Sortie, you will have an opportunity to;
 - Untap a Faction of the Cause—securing supplies, freeing captives, etc
 - Reduce a Division's Strength by 1 during the next Conflict Turn—interfering with supply routes, undermining their operations, etc
 - Reduce the GRIP on a Faction or Pillar by 1—rooting out agents, destroying fortifications, etc
 - Expose or make vulnerable an **asset** or **actor**
- During the Sortie, you will have a risky opportunity to;
 - Fell a Pillar with 0 GRIP—winning a decisive battle, capturing a position, etc
 - Destroy or capture an exposed **asset** or **actor**
 - Reduce a Division's Strength by 2 during the next Conflict Turn—disrupting a key shipment, assassinating important staff, etc
- The next **LEAD A SORTIE** roll is made with **advantage**.
- All players hold 1. You may spend your hold during the next Sortie as if it were hold gained through one of your basic or playbook moves.

Options can be picked multiple times, and their effects stack; you could, for example, reduce a Division's Strength multiple times, reducing it heavily during the next Conflict Turn, or you could reduce multiple Division Strengths by just 1. Similarly, you could reduce the GRIP on a Pillar multiple times, and so on.

Many of the benefits of **PLAN & PREPARE** are *opportunities*, not guarantees. During your next Sortie, you'll be able to pursue them in addition to your primary objective (bug your Director if it seems like they've forgotten), but doing so might take you time or make the mission even more dangerous than it might have been already. But hey; risk and reward go hand in hand, right?

By the time the party is about to roll **PLAN & PREPARE**, they should have a good idea of what the upcoming Sortie is, and who those opportunities available might affect. If not, don't be afraid to lay this on the table for them; there's nothing wrong with simply telling them "hey, you could help x Faction during this Sortie if you chose that," or "well, the Pillar you'd be able to fell is this one."

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

PLAYBOOKS

All players in Armour Astir create a character using a 'playbook', which is a mechanical framework similar to classes or archetypes in other games. Playbooks offer choices for starting equipment, moves, and aesthetics like clothing or style. They also offer some narrative background for your character to root them into the world you're playing in, as well as some questions to help you further develop what it means to be that playbook in your setting.

Playbooks are split into two kinds: Channelers, who are Astir pilots primarily, and Supports, who are not. Each kind has a specific extra move attached to it. For Channelers, it's **SUBSYSTEMS**. For Supports, it's **B-PLOT**.

CHANNELERS

Channelers are magic-users who stride into battle while piloting Astirs, making them best equipped to deal with Sorties that involve physical conflict. While they have their differences, all Channelers are more than capable in a fight. They're also all capable of diverting magic to their Astir's **SUBSYSTEMS** with the move below.

ARCANIST IMPOSTOR PARADIGM WITCH
WITHER ADRIFT ADVOCATE REVENANT SUMMONER

SUBSYSTEMS

When you activate your Astir's **SUBSYSTEMS**, spend 1 Power to re-activate an expended [Active] Astir part and use it again.

SUPPORTS

Supports are a varied group, but are generally people with less of a direct combat focus than Channelers. While they're all capable of holding a sword, most Support playbooks have an area of expertise best put into practice off the battlefield. When a Sortie doesn't call for their skill-set, they can instead take part in the **B-PLOT** with the move below.

SCOUT CAPTAIN ARTIFICER DIPLOMAT
ICON ATTENDANT COMMANDER

B-PLOT

When you take part in the **B-PLOT** rather than be involved in a Sortie, name one or two **actors** that accompany you and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Give another player **confidence** on their next move, but complicate things for yourself.
- Deny an **actor** from appearing during the Sortie—they're busy, possibly with the same thing as you.
- Spend some time and frame a Downtime Scene.
- Cut away from the Sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.

ARCANIST

Disciplined students of arcane magic, who practice their talents for years before graduating to the cockpit of an Astir.

+CHANNEL (+2)

LOOK

You look: *smart, bookish, wily, anxious or imposing*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, fancy robes*

Your magic is like: *roaring elements, bright and neon, abstract and formless, formulaic and defined*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **arcane** or **elemental** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Touch Spells I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Arcanist Gear
- Clothes that match your look

ARCANIST GEAR

- Telescoping Staff I (*melee / impact*)
- Reagent Knife I (*melee / **mundane***)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Arcanists are careful, prepared magic-users. This is most apparent in their use of 'rituals' — magical tactics and enhancements preemptively cast before they embark onto the battlefield. Arcanists typically attain the magical mastery they have through formal study, and while good at making plans and full of useful knowledge, they often don't deal well with surprises.

Playing an Arcanist often means calling your shot, either through your choice of rituals or through plans you make in the heat of action. Once you have advanced and can take new ones, other moves like **EXPEND RITUALS** and **RESHAPE** make it easier to respond to situations you haven't prepared for. Consider;

- What does formal magical study look like in your world?
- Is this something open and public, like an academy, or private, like training passed down through a family lineage? Was it tied to military service?
- Do you have a familiar or bonded item you use to focus your magic?
- What does performing your rituals entail?
- Where did you get your Astir? Is it stolen from a military force? A family heirloom? Does it belong to the Cause?
- Do all Arcanists study where you did, or are there multiple schools of thought?
- Are people like you openly referred to as Arcanists? If not, is there another name for what you are?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you declare your plan to solve a problem and it works, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who doubted you.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **PREPARE RITUALS** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

PREPARE RITUALS

Before every Sortie, you prepare a set of complex **RITUALS** to bolster your magical potential. When someone **LEADS A SORTIE**, describe to your Director 3 magical rituals you prepare, and choose an effect for each from below. Any remaining **RITUALS** expire when you prepare new ones.

- You may spend the **RITUAL** to make a specified move in **confidence**.
- Your Astir's **approach** becomes a different one of your choosing for this Sortie.
- Hold 2: you may spend this 1-for-1 to ignore a **disadvantage**.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

ADAPTIVE RITUALS

When you fail a move on a 6-, you may re-choose any **RITUALS** you have remaining.

PRE-ORDAINED

When you make a move with **advantage** or **disadvantage**, you may hold onto one unkept d6 for the rest of the Scene. During that Scene, you may replace any rolled d6 with that kept one. You may only keep one d6 at a time in this way, and must use it before you can keep another.

CONSULT LITERATURE

You have a store of books and scrolls on various subjects that you can consult for information when given time. Choose 1 subject you have almost perfect records of, and 2 you have extensive information on;

- Construct models and design
- Magical beasts and monsters
- Enchantment and spell-craft
- Mundane craft and building
- Natural flora and fauna
- Military tactics
- A specific nation/faction
- General world history

Your Director might offer you opportunities during Sorties and Downtime to expand your knowledge, adding new subjects you have records on. Occasionally, people might lean on you for the information that you hold.

TACTICAL ILLUSIONS

When you distract your foes with magic, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1, but your illusions also distract an unintended audience.

- The illusions last until you stop sustaining them (otherwise they last up to a minute).
- Your illusions affect anyone you intend to perceive them, rather than a single person.
- You can create illusions that affect all the senses, rather than just sight.

IDENTIFY

You may spend 1 hold from **READ THE ROOM** to identify an Astir, learning its **approach**, source and general capabilities. When attempting to recreate elements of an identified Astir or help someone else do the same, take **advantage**.

RESHAPE

When you **WEAVE MAGIC** to reshape a battlefield to your liking, hold 2. The usual consequence of a 7-9 still applies. You may spend your hold 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Prevent a foe from leaving the battlefield
- Delay others from joining the battle
- Provide someone with the cover they need to **COOL OFF**
- Create a spectacle that will be difficult to suppress or cover up

TRANSMUTE SELF

Arcanists are well-educated in many things, and the good ones learn to augment their natural abilities to better suit different situations—or just to pursue different interests. You may select two more sets of Trait values, using the same conditions used during character creation. With a magical flourish you swap between any of these sets of Traits—though doing it under pressure or unnoticed might require a move.

When you increase a Trait as an advancement, apply this to your **TRANSMUTE SELF** Traits too.

NEW PERSPECTIVE

When you are put in *peril*, you may **READ THE ROOM** with **confidence** & **advantage** in response.



THE ARCANIST



THE IMPOSTOR

IMPOSTOR

Through magic, medicine, or sheer force of will, you took control of your body and made it ideal. This is who you were meant to be, and they'll never take it away from you.

+CHANNEL (+1)

LOOK

You look: *wild, cold, sharp, cocky or brash*

You wear: *custom-made jumpsuit, modified uniform, ill-suited dress, casual attire*

Your magic is like: *smoke and industry, neon beams, fiery outbursts, arcing bolts*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **profane** or **elemental** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Augments I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Impostor Gear
- Clothes that match your look

IMPOSTOR GEAR

- Power Focus I (*ranged / blitz*)
- Nullblade I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

You have no magic of your own, and control an Astir through enchanted augmentations or alterations to your body. They say what you do is fake. They call you an Impostor—but what you do is real, and you've made yourself exactly who you needed to be. The Impostor has a diverse skill set with lots of ability to play with *risks* and *perils*.

To play an Impostor is to, depending on what your **ARCANE AUGMENTS** are and why you got them, invite questions about the body: about disability, transhumanism, being transgender, loss of bodily autonomy to the Authority or otherwise and so on. It might not be the focus of your campaign or even your character to tackle this in-depth, but you should be actively thinking about the place of these things and the people affected by them in your world. It's also the playbook most indulged in mecha anime tropes, with moves like **FACE TO FACE**, **RESONANCE**, **BULLHEADED** and **LET LOOSE** all lending themselves to various kinds of hot-blooded action. Consider;

- Where and how did you get your augments?
- How are they made, and of what material? How rare are such things in your world? How noticeable are they?
- Do people use a word other than 'augment'?
- Why did you choose to undergo augmentation? Did you choose?
- How does the existence of Impostors relate to disability in your world?
- How do your augments impact your daily life and routines?
- What kind of reactions do people have to your augments?
- Are your augments heavy or uncomfortable? Can they be removed?
- How do your augments help your control an Astir? Do you use controls with them like usual, or do they interface directly into it somehow?
- How often is the term Impostor used, if at all? Is it formal or informal? Do you have another word for yourself? Are there others who control Astirs in a similar way?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When someone you have GRAVITY with sees you be put in *peril*, advance it.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **ARCANE AUGMENTS** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

ARCANE AUGMENTS

Impostors control their Astir using magical augmentations, like artificial limbs or organs. These augmentations allow a non-magic user to power and control an Astir, but otherwise do not interfere with your life unless you (the player) decide so. Being bonded to magic in this way often leads to it affecting the body and vice versa, irreversibly tying their magic to their emotional and physical state.

Your CHANNEL is increased by 1 for each *danger* you have (up-to a max of +3).

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

HOT-BLOODED

When you **HEAT UP**, hold 1. You may spend 3 hold gained in this way to;

- Succeed at a move as if you had rolled a 10+.
- Attempt something uncanny, superhuman, or unbelievable.

TROUBLEMAKER

Whenever you fail a Downtime Scene, you may give yourself 2 **tokens** instead of passing 1 to another player.

DON'T FOLLOW ME

During any Downtime Scene, you may do the below without spending a **token**:

- Take your Astir and rush ahead: you'll **LEAD A SORTIE** with +DEFY & **advantage**.

RESONANCE

When you would **WEAVE MAGIC** to form a clear empathetic bond with another, sharing your true feelings and clearly communicating your Hooks, choose 1 instead of rolling;

- Your connection lasts a single, precious moment—time for little more than a short exchange.
- They or someone else view it as a breach of trust or some kind of trick, and will hold it against you.
- You miss something important while you're together.

LET LOOSE

For every *burden* you have, you may increase one of your Traits by +1. The usual max of +3 does not apply to increases earned through **LET LOOSE**.

BULLHEADED

You may take a *risk* to take **advantage** on your next roll. People know that you are brash and liable to put yourself—and maybe them—in danger to get the job done.

FACE TO FACE

When you leave your Astir in the hopes another will do the same to meet you **FACE TO FACE**, roll +TALK.

On a 10+, They will leave their Astir to face you. Player characters may **WEATHER THE STORM** to refuse.

On a 7-9, They will leave their Astir to face you, but choose one;

- Take the *risk* (entangled).
- You have **disadvantage** to moves against the other Channeler.
- You are separated from your Astirs temporarily.

Player characters may choose whether to leave their Astir or not—if they do, they pick one of the above for you.

REALIGNMENT

You undergo deeper alteration and adjustments to your body. Discuss what it is with your Director, and either choose a move from another playbook to represent its effects, or work with your Director to create a new one.

Mecha fiction is typically, whether it intends to be or not, about bodies. Mechs are a projection of the self—something huge and powerful, but draped in the visual language and shorthand we use for ourselves. By extension, mecha fiction often asks complex (and sometimes ill-considered) questions about disability and the place of disabled people in times of conflict. What does it feel like—and what does it mean—to take control of another body when that body is a war machine? Less often interrogated is how they are kept out of and forgotten by oppressive structures of power, and far less so is how movements that set out to disrupt those structures often replicate the same exclusion: both of disabled people, as well as other marginalised groups.

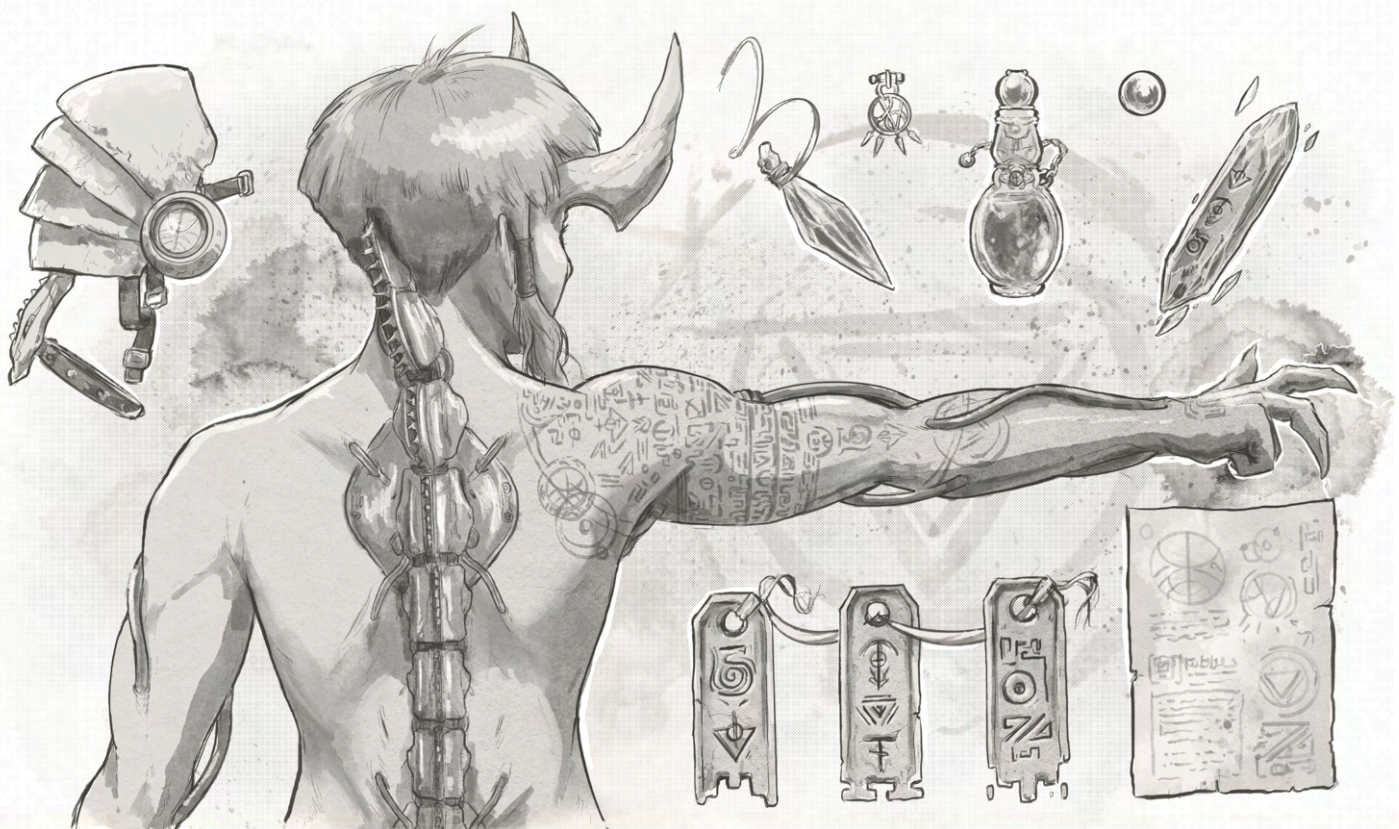
These issues are often just as front and centre, if not more so, in genres like cyberpunk that deal with human augmentation or ‘enhancement’: where alteration or realignment of the human form is easily doable, but often inextricably linked to new avenues of capitalist exploitation and new masks on old prejudices.

The Impostor, then, is a collision of these things. When playing one or running a game where they exist, I urge you not to forget disabled people in the places and conflicts you depict, and to consider their relationship and accessibility to the kind of body modification that is explicitly already in reach of the Impostor. Make room for the disabled players at your table to take authorship on these subjects when they come up in your game if they want to, and make sure to elevate their thoughts and feelings on how you and others handle them if you yourself are not disabled.

Furthermore, extend that same concern to those living with gender dysphoria, chronic illness, substance abuse or other issues to which relief and treatment (and often even sympathy) are actively controlled and restricted by those in power today.

The core concept of the Impostor is that you have been changed so that you can power and pilot an Astir: it is important to consider which is the prize and which is the price for your character. Did they change you so that you could fight, or do you fight so that they would change you?

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



PARADIGM

Adherents of the gods who channel sacred power into their Astir to control them. The devout know to respect their faith's tenets, lest their Astir fail beneath them in the line of duty.

+CHANNEL (+3)

LOOK

You look: *serious, haughty, caring, wise or zealous*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, religious garb*

Your magic is like: *angelic choirs, blinding lights, warm embraces, blazing icons*

When you launch your Astir, you say: -----

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **divine** or **profane** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Divine Touch I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Paradigm Gear
- Clothes that match your look

PARADIGM GEAR

- Holy Symbol I (*ranged / area*)
- Sacred Weapon I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Paradigms channel their divine power from a deity, and must adhere to its tenets in order to maintain that power. These tenets, as well as what upholding them looks like, might vary between members of a faith as well as just between different faiths. Paradigms have something to uphold outside of the Cause's goals, and naturally bring a religious element to the game that might not be present otherwise - of course, there doesn't need to be Paradigms in a world for faith to be important.

While playing a Paradigm, you have lots of moves that let you aid and protect other players, like **SAFEGUARD** and **BLESS**. Your high natural CHANNEL of +3 also gives you a great chance of success on moves like **WEAVE MAGIC** and **FIREBRAND**, but making good use of it will require you to always keep your **TENETS** in mind. Broadly speaking, playing a Paradigm also means you have an important voice in what the role of faith and religion is in your setting. Consider;

- Is your deity really divine in the supernatural sense, or just a godlike figure?
- How formal is your religion/connection to your deity?
- How well known is your deity?
- How common are people like yourself? Are they called Paradigms, or something else?
- What is the Cause's relationship to faith?
- What is the Authority's relationship to faith?
- What is your deity like? What do they demand, and what do they request?
- What does giving service or worship to your deity look like?
- What was your life like before the Cause?
- How were you introduced to your deity?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you discuss your faith with someone or learn something about how they personally relate to faith and spirituality, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **TENETS** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

TENETS

Instead of Hooks, write three **TENETS** that represent your deity's will. When you break or lose faith in a **TENET**, your deity will ask something of you. Roll +CHANNEL with **desperation** until you resolve this: once you have, take an Advancement and replace that **TENET** with a Hook representing how your faith has changed or grown.

If you refuse or resolve it in a way that angers or disappoints the divine, reduce your CHANNEL by 1 permanently. If your CHANNEL reaches 0 in this way, immediately change playbooks and take an additional Advancement.

Example **TENETS** might be:

- Violence is a road taken when all others are closed.
- Share your faith freely, that it might spread.
- Scepticism is an affront to the divine.
- From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.

Additionally, you are in service of a deity or faith and are responsible for the spiritual well-being of your Carrier's crew. You may perform an extra **SOCIAL SPACE OR PRIVATE QUARTERS** Scene during Downtime, as you discuss your faith with another or give religious service of some kind.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

DIVINE GUIDANCE

When you consult your deity for information or guidance, you may **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** with +CHANNEL. If you do so, on a 7-9 the information is still directly useful, but it is difficult to discern if your answer came from the intended deity. People know you can *literally* contact the divine.

AVENGER

When an ally or yourself is put in *peril*, you may declare the responsible party (you are the judge of who is responsible in this context) your target. You may freely ignore any *risks* you would be forced to take in direct pursuit of your target during a Sortie. If you do so, the extra Scene from **TENETS** is lost during your next Downtime: you must use it to tend to yourself instead.

INSPIRE FOCUS

Once per Sortie, you may take a visible position over the battlefield and inspire confidence and clarity in your allies that see you: they each clear a *risk* and take **advantage** to their next roll.

SAFEGUARD

When you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and someone **HELPS OR HINDERS** you, you can protect them from any harm they might suffer as a result. When you **HELP OR HINDER** someone who is **EXCHANGING BLOWS**, you can suffer any harm taken in their place.

TURN UNEARTHLY

You may **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** using +CHANNEL against creatures and entities that are not of our mortal plane. You can sense such creatures, and make them uncomfortable.

FIREBRAND

When you openly and loudly advocate for something related to one of your tenets, roll the highest of +TALK or +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1.

- Your words reach people far beyond where your voice is heard.
- Even those not of your faith connect to your message.
- You are not targeted immediately for what you preach.

On a 6 or below, your words are misinterpreted, co-opted, or misrepresented in a terrible way.

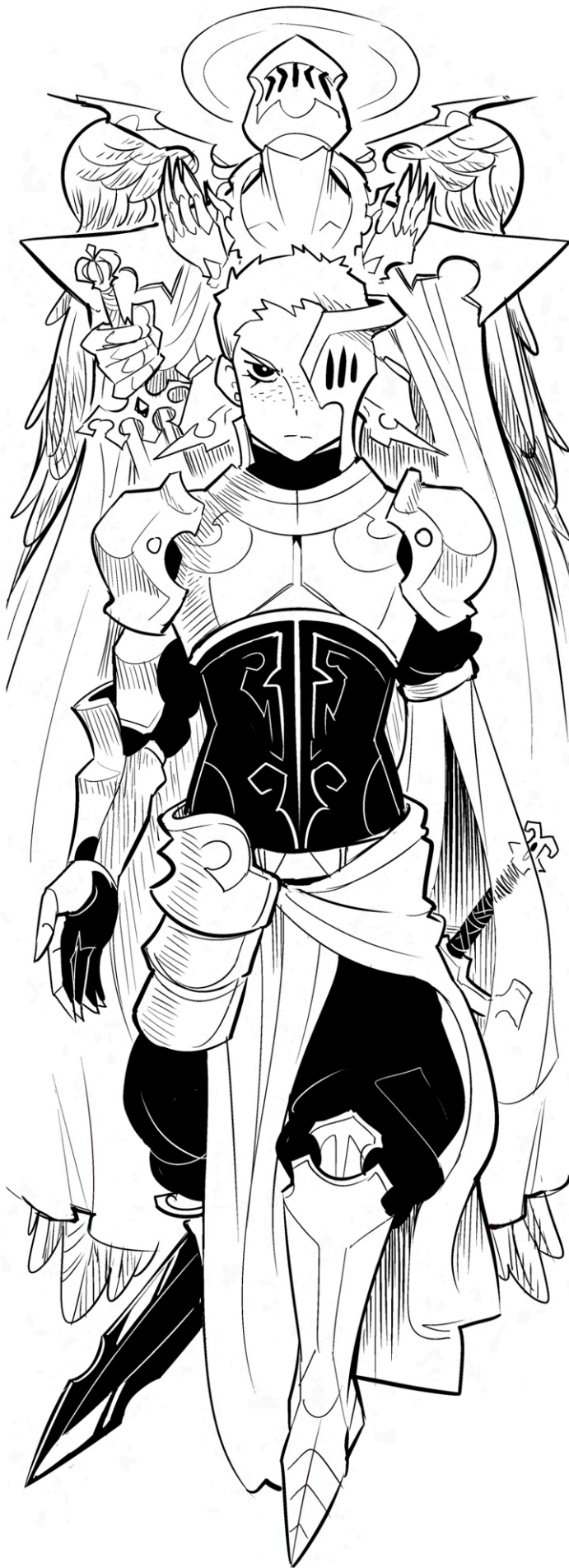
CONSECRATE GROUND

When you attempt to imbue an area or building with your divine power and presence, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1;

- Creatures opposed by your deity or faith cannot enter the consecrated area.
- Creatures within your consecrated area cannot take violent action against each other.
- Creatures within the consecrated area **COOL OFF** with **advantage**.
- Creatures within your consecrated area cannot knowingly lie.

ASCENSION

By divine decree you become something beyond the person you were. You may **BITE THE DUST** with +CHANNEL, and you clear all *risks* on a 10+ rather than one.



THE PARADIGM



THE WITCH

WITCH

Witches seize power through pacts with powerful creatures, knowingly or otherwise. This power fuels and binds an Astir as well as any other, but its sources can be demanding... and mischievous.

+CHANNEL (+2)

LOOK

You look: *dark, mysterious, shrouded, unsure or haunted*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, occult robes*

Your magic is like: *smothering darkness, roiling chaos, striking bolts, withering curses*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **arcane** or **profane** (choose one)

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Pact Weapon I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Witch Gear
- Clothes that match your look

WITCH GEAR

- Patron's Icon I (*ranged / concealable*)
- Ritual Dagger I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Witches receive their magic from an otherworldly patron or benefactor, whose motivations are rarely discernible to mortal folk. Many kinds of being might be a **PATRON**, and their grip on a Witch might be visible in a lot of different ways—but they all have one thing in common. **PATRONS** trade in Influence: a resource they can spend to make sure you hold up your end of the bargain.

While playing a Witch, you trade Influence to your **PATRON** to activate a variety of moves, like **REWEAVE REALITY** and **BORROWED POWER**. These moves let you break the rules a little: altering weapon tags, messing with dice results, and even using moves from other playbooks. **RECEIVE BOONS** gives you two moves at random per Sortie, but both **WHIMS** and **BORROWED POWER** give you some control over what you end up with. Consider;

- What and who is your patron? Are they supernatural, or just powerful enough to seem so?
- What is the nature of your relationship with your patron?
- Are there other Witches serving your patron? Are there other Witches at all?
- Do people refer to you as a Witch? Is there another term they or you use?
- Is your bond with your patron forever, or will it expire?
- What other kinds of beings exist that could be patrons?
- Did forming this bond cost you anything now, or will it in the future?
- Is there a recognisable symbol of your patronage? An associated familiar?
- Does your patron have a direct connection to you, or do they act through agents?
- Are your boons an informal collection of helpful magics, or something more defined? If so, what do you call them?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

You have an extra GRAVITY clock with your **PATRON**, representing the tenuous bond between you: whenever they spend Influence, advance your GRAVITY clock with them.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **PATRON** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

PATRON

Your **PATRON** offers you two **BOONS** at random whenever someone **LEADS A SORTIE**. Additionally, they may spend Influence 1-for-1 to do the following;

- **HELP OR HINDER** you, succeeding as if they had rolled a 10+.
- Attempt to force you to do something; you may **WEATHER THE STORM** to resist.
- Re-roll your **BOONS** for the day.

As long as you Patron has at least 1 Influence, your CHANNEL is increased by 1. The more Influence on you a Patron holds, the clearer their mark is upon you.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

OCCULT LORE

When you consult your patron for information, you may **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** with +CHANNEL. If you do so, on a 7-9 the information is still directly useful, but using it would cause some unforeseen complication entertaining or beneficial to your **PATRON**.

WHIMS

Your patron is unfathomable, and their interests obscure. Your Director should, once per Sortie, give you some minor goal or abstract requirement your patron demands of you—it should be doable within the session. If you complete it, you may choose your **BOONS** instead of rolling next time. If you don't, give your patron 1 Influence.

EMBRACE CHAOS

Whenever you roll a 10+, you may opt to instead take a partial success as if you had rolled a 7-9. If you do so, hold 1, which you may spend at any point before the end of the Sortie to do one of the following;

- Convert a **disadvantage** into an **advantage**.
- Upgrade a result of 7-9 to a 10+.

RE-WEAVE REALITY

When you use a piece of equipment to make a move, e.g using a weapon to **STRIKE DECISIVELY**, you can ignore one of its tags OR act as if it had an additional one of your choice. When you do so, give your patron 1 Influence.

RELINQUISH

If a part of your Astir is damaged or destroyed and you take a *peril* as a result, you may relinquish your **BOONS**; losing them until you receive **BOONS** again but fixing that part and losing the *peril*. You cannot re-roll relinquished **BOONS**.

BEARER OF CURSES

When you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with someone for the first time in a Scene, choose 1;

- They cannot use **SUBSYSTEMS** for the rest of the Scene.
- You leave a difficult to remove brand or mark on them, according to your **PATRON**.
- They suffer misfortune in the future: the next move against them is made with **advantage**.

BORROWED POWER

When you request help from your patron, roll +CHANNEL and give your patron 1 Influence. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1, or be in *peril* and hold 3. You may spend your hold at any point during the Sortie 1-for-1 to use any **BOON** you don't currently have, or you may spend 2 hold to make any move from another playbook.

BOONS

- 1 **EMPOWERING BOON:** You may give your **PATRON** 1 Influence to make the **SUBSYSTEMS** move for free. When you do so, describe what mark your patron's power leaves on the situation.
- 2 **TENACIOUS BOON:** When you **COOL OFF** you may choose to succeed as if you had rolled a 10+. If you do so, give your patron 1 Influence.
- 3 **MASKING BOON:** You can mask yourself or an Astir you are attuned to against detection. When you do so, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, you are disguised or cloaked in a fashion appropriate to your **PATRON**. On a 7-9, the Director will tell you a flaw with your disguise.
- 4 **SHIELDING BOON:** You may give your **PATRON** 1 Influence to avoid taking a *risk*.
- 5 **SHIFTING BOON:** You may swap two of your Traits for this Sortie.
- 6 **TRICKSTER'S BOON:** Whenever you roll doubles, something helpful but unexpected happens.

WITHER

*You wield something they'd soon forget, to save what they hold dear,
and though they call you comrade now, they won't forget their fear.*

+CHANNEL (+3)

LOOK

You look: *obscured, sinister, cunning, desperate or defiant*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, handmade garb*

Your magic is like: *sanguine currents, gripping shadows, haunting verses, weeping wounds*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **profane**

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Withering Grip I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Wither Gear
- Clothes that match your look

WITHER GEAR

- Carved Wand I (*ranged*)
- Wicked Blade I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Wither wield magic outside of that which has become accepted and rote. Though their arts are often taboo or forbidden, feeding on the life force of the Wither, they power an Astir as well as any other kind of magic—and as one, you have brought your skills to bear against the Authority. You know all too well that movements like the Cause are often ridden with prejudices of their own, and yet here you are: you fight because it is what must be done, and you will drag anyone afraid of you kicking and screaming to a better future if that's what it takes.

Playing a Wither is to employ magic that shocks and frightens friend and foe alike, and to take *risks* and *perils* in order to give yourself an advantage. Moves like **BORN TO DIE** allow you to fuel your Astir by putting yourself at risk, while **FRESH HELLS** and **WRETCHED VISAGE** focus on the fear your magic inspires.

Consider;

- Where did you acquire your magic?
- Have you been shunned from parts of the Cause in the past?
- Do you hide or obscure your magic in some way?
- Do you know of *other* kinds of forgotten or forbidden magic?
- Who around you welcomes and accepts your talents?
- Name someone who cut ties with you in the past.
- In what way does your strange magic affect your Astir?
- Is there an aspect of your magic that unsettles even you?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you use your **BORN TO DIE** move, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who fears or mistrusts your magic.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **BORN TO DIE** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

BORN TO DIE

You may use the **SUBSYSTEMS** move by taking a *risk* instead of spending Power.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

DARK REBIRTH

If you are forced to **BITE THE DUST** and have no *perils*, you may put yourself in *peril* to succeed as if you rolled a 10+. Say what dark rite or power saves you from the death that was surely headed your way.

NUMBER OF THE BEAST

Whenever you roll a 6, roll an additional die and add it to the total for that roll. If you ever roll three 6's during one move, you are killed in a spectacular fashion at nearest suitable moment and are claimed by whatever terrible power would be most interested in your soul/magical energy/unliving servitude, etc.

COLD COMPANY

You are constantly followed by one or more spectres, ghosts or ghouls from your past. Their presence is distracting and difficult: make all rolls with **disadvantage** until you succeed on a move with a 10+. This dispels them for a short time: roll with **advantage** until you fail a move with a 6-, at which point your ghostly retinue (and **disadvantage**) return and the cycle begins anew.

THE OLD BLOOD

If you are outside your Astir and fighting on foot, you can **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** with +CHANNEL when attempting to cause physical harm. When appropriate, you will obtain a tier I *melee* weapon with *bane* and one of the following tags of your choice: *concealable*, *area*, *impact*, *blitz*, *ruin/reloading*.

WRETCHED VISAGE

Nobody can look directly at you without taking a *risk*, friend or foe. People shy from your presence, and turn to avoid your gaze.

FRESH HELLS

When you **WEAVE MAGIC** to terrify, sicken or disgust, you can affect even the most jaded or strong-willed individuals, regardless of their experience with the profane.

ABYSSAL SUMMONS

When you **WEAVE MAGIC**, you are capable of disrupting that which anchors us in place and time, and can reach out to wrest a person free of their current location and conjure them to yours, regardless of distance. To do so, you must either have a strong bond with them (i.e a GRAVITY clock), possession of something of deep personal importance to them, or for them to have a *peril* you have inflicted.

DARK GUARANTEES

When you use **BORN TO DIE**, you may take a *peril* instead of a *risk*. If you do, act with **confidence** and **advantage** on that move.



THE WITHER



THE ADRIFT

ADRIFT

*This isn't your world and this isn't your fight,
but how can you flee when there's wrongs to make right?*

+HOME (+1)

LOOK

You look: *lost, naïve, playful, soft or brash*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, otherworldly attire*

Your magic is like: *reality distortions, what you saw on tv, glowing runes, simple force*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Strange Touch I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Adrift Curios
- Clothes that match your look

ADRIFT CURIOS

- It like, shoots? You know? I (*ranged*)
- For hitting people with I (*melee / arcane*)
- Hard to explain I (*ranged / defensive*)
- This? It's just a keepsake I (*ward*)

Whether from another place or another time, you've been pulled into a life and a struggle that isn't yours. You are Adrift, disconnected from those you hold dear, searching for a way back. But this world isn't like yours: here, magic is real and strange, and some stranger power still grants you control over Astirs despite never even having heard the word before.

To play an Adrift is to play a character torn from one world and thrust into the conflict of this one. It is a common trope—one that is broadly its own genre in anime—but doesn't need to be supernatural in origin. The Adrift could be from another country, a traitor from the Authority, or even just a civilian who lived a life distant from magic and fighting before being drawn into conflict (see: a lot of mecha anime). Your starting move, **LOVE, LOVE, LOVE**, details your ties to your home, and moves like **IF I GO THERE WILL BE TROUBLE** and **IF I STAY IT WILL BE DOUBLE** revolve around your place in this strange new world.

Consider;

- Are you literally from another world, or just metaphorically?
- How did you end up in this world?
- What might getting home entail for you?
- What kind of technology (or lack thereof) are you used to?
- Did you bring any keepsakes or reminders of your home with you?
- How do you feel about suddenly being able to pilot Astirs?
- How did you run into the Cause?
- How were you introduced to the Authority?
- How did you get your Astir and gear?
- In what major ways is this world different to yours? In what ways is it similar?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

Whenever you use your +HOME clock from **LOVE, LOVE, LOVE**, advance it.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **LOVE, LOVE, LOVE** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Instead of a +CHANNEL trait, you have a additional GRAVITY clock with wherever (and/or whenever) you came from. It is treated as your +CHANNEL trait in all circumstances, and referred to as +HOME. It starts at +1.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

SNAKES IN THE GRASS

When you are cowed or guilted into something you have no stake in, hold 1 and make your next move with **advantage**. Once you have 3 hold, the Authority or another third party will soon reach out to you with an unexpected offer or request.

WALK-ON PART IN THE WAR

You can **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** with +HOME when attempting to cause physical harm while piloting your Astir. On a 6-, tick 'overheating' on your Astir in addition to any other consequences.

LEAD ROLE IN A CAGE

When you're pressured into **LEADING A SORTIE**, roll with +HOME instead of the listed traits.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

You may spend **SOCIAL SPACE OR PRIVATE QUARTERS** scenes alone during Downtime, contemplating your home and the people you left behind. When you do so, you may clear a *peril* from yourself instead of another, and advance your HOME clock.

IF I GO THERE WILL BE TROUBLE

You have decided to stay, no matter what. Swap to a new playbook, and take an extra move in addition to those you should start with. You may also rewrite as many of your Hooks as you want.

IF I STAY IT WILL BE DOUBLE

You are resigned to leaving, no matter what. When you act selfishly in pursuit of your permanent return home, do so with **confidence**.

DRAW YOUR BATH AND LOAD YOUR GUN

You have some method of travelling or returning back to where you came from temporarily. You may spend your Downtimes there, away from the party.

When you do so, also roll +HOME. On a 10+, you are able to keep up with any obligations or duties from your old life smoothly: gain +1 Spotlight. On a 7-9, you are able to keep up, but people grow more suspicious about your strange absences: start or advance a 6-step clock titled 'Someone Else Gets Involved'.

HOPE SO BAD THAT YOU'LL BATHE AND HUNT

When you clear a *peril* from another character or their Astir, they make their next **BITE THE DUST** with either **confidence** or **desperation**: their choice, at the time.

ADVOCATE

*One of us, always welcome; part of us, always home.
Afar, afield, our constant ally; never distant, always known.*

+CHANNEL (+2)

LOOK

You look: *gnarled, fresh, spritely, venerable or bold*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, handmade attire*

Your magic is like: *swarming creatures, rays of light, toxic miasma, blooming flora*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **elemental**

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Withertouch I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Advocate Gear
- Clothes that match your look

ADVOCATE GEAR

- Oaken Staff I (*ranged*)
- Sharp Sickle I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Unlike others, who draw their magic from divine sources or unlikely patrons, pore over arcane tomes or study forbidden rites, your magic is of the natural kind. It is drawn from and returned to the land: a power as old and familiar as life itself. Your Astir, then, may be of similar origin: grown or conjured from the natural realm, cast from the artistic palettes of flora and fauna, or you may even take the form of it yourself. In fantasy fiction, shape-shifting is often tied to 'natural' magic, but consider: you might just be a twenty-foot tall tree person. It's allowed.

To play an Advocate, then, is to play a character with deep ties to nature and environmental concerns. It tells your group that you are interested in tackling how conflict and its effects (both short and longer term) damage the environment, and in turn, threaten lives in ever more unforeseen ways. Your choice of starting moves, **EARTHLY ALLY** or **TITANIC** outline exactly what kind of being you are, while moves like **ALL THINGS GREAT AND SMALL** and **A GREENER WORLD** make specific your connection to different aspects of the environment.

Consider;

- Where are you from?
- How did you get so close to nature?
- What's your favourite animal?
- What's your favourite plant?
- How do you feel about fungus, broadly?
- Do you belong to any kind of order or group of people like yourself?
- Where did your Astir come from? If you don't have one, what is your other form like?
- Name a place of natural beauty that has been scarred by the conflict.
- Name a place of natural beauty that you still hope to preserve.

GRAVITY TRIGGER

You have a specific GRAVITY trigger depending on your starting move.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **EARTHLY ALLY** OR **TITANIC** move. Your Astir also begins with a move of your choice from your Additional Moves or the Cantrips list (see *Creating An Astir* (pg. 104)).

EARTHLY ALLY

You are person-sized, and pilot an Astir as usual—though your Astir is likely a natural work, grown through magical rituals or built using sustainable materials. Your CHANNEL is treated as +1 in areas where nature has been destroyed, and +3 in areas of unmarked natural beauty. When you teach someone a truth about the natural world, advance a GRAVITY clock if you have one with them.

TITANIC

You yourself are a force of nature, capable of taking a form as mighty as any dragon, giant or war machine. Your Astir is this secondary form, and you may shift between it and whatever your usual appearance is at will. You may use **SUBSYSTEMS** even while not in your Astir form, temporarily manifesting parts of its power.

When you destroy something that threatens nature directly, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone surprised by your power.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

WOODLAND WHISPERS

When the world is suffering, it whispers to you. You know where it is hurting, and who is to blame.

ALL THINGS GREAT AND SMALL

You have a deep and broad knowledge of all living creatures (either through study or your magic) and can easily identify their habitats, natural predators, food sources and common illnesses among other things.

A GREENER WORLD

When you roll +CHANNEL and get a result of 12+, new flora and fauna starts to spring to life in the area, even in ruined places. Wildlife that had been forced out begins to return, and infertile ground is made fertile once again.

BUILT DIFFERENT (REQUIRES TITANIC)

Your Astir-sized form is your only one: you have no other shape you can take. This is inconvenient in many situations, on account of you being very very large. As a trade-off, you become tier IV.

NATURE'S BOUNTY

When you imbue a place with life, using your connections to the natural world to support and bolster it, roll +CHANNEL. On a 10+, everyone gains an additional **token** during the next Downtime if they spend it here. On a 7-9, as above, but you must either give up;

- Leading a Scene yourself.
- Your usual 2 **tokens**.

You may freely roll this before Downtime begins if you don't get chance to during the Sortie, though your Director might impose **disadvantage**, **desperation**, or even rule that the move is impossible based on your location. It's hard to invoke the life and force of nature in the middle of a completely man-made structure, for example.

CHIMAERIC

You are able to freely invoke and weave together the power of different parts of nature. If you have **EARTHLY ALLY**, you may temporarily take the form of any creature you have seen (though you must **WEAVE MAGIC** to turn into something notably larger than yourself). Being put in *peril* undoes your shapeshifting. If you have **TITANIC**, your secondary form becomes mutable: you may choose a Part or Weapon to take as an Extra every Sortie. You may choose a different one every time.

LAY DOWN ROOTS (REQUIRES NATURE'S BOUNTY)

When you die, you become one with the earth. Life springs forth in the brightest of hues, flourishing in your wake: **NATURE'S BOUNTY** applies permanently here, and can never be undone or removed.



THE ADVOCATE



THE REVENANT

REVENANT

*Clad in black they cried for you, hearts heavy from the grieving;
and though death found you good and true, it seems you aren't quite leaving.*

+CHANNEL (+3)

LOOK

You look: *maimed, ethereal, stoic, tired or cruel*

Your Astir is marked with: *ethereal vapours, creeping mold, dark stains, deep wounds*

Your magic is like: *haunted echoes, chilling winds, ominous whispers, bad vibes*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **profane** or **divine**

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Deathly Grip I (*melee / bane*)
- 1 Spectral Aspect
- A keepsake or souvenir

SPECTRAL ASPECTS

- Ethereal Form (*Your spirit may separate itself from the Astir, and float freely*)
- Kinship (*Other ghosts regard you as a friend*)
- Puppeteer (*You can possess corpses*)

For most, the heel of empire grinds you to dust once—and only once. But when you died, your spirit didn't leave. It is stuck here, bound to the very machine you died in, until it too crumbles into dust: or until your work is done. Revenants are unliving echoes of Channelers, bound still to the machines they piloted in life, until their work is done.

To play a Revenant is to play the spectre of a fallen Channeler, haunting the Astir they died in. You are bound to it, holding it together and powering it even in death. If your body remains, it is entombed within it. **UNFETTERED** outlines some of the benefits of being deceased, while moves like **I KNOW YOU** and **ANCIENT RECALL** allow you to explore your old life.

Consider;

- How did you die?
- What family did you leave behind, if any?
- Do you know what caused you to persist?
- Did you have any previous relationship with death?
- Who or what are you holding on for?
- What do you think passing on looks like?
- What kind of bodily autonomy have you been left with?
- What earthly pleasures can you still feel?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you use your **NEVER QUITE FREE** move, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who doesn't want you to move on.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **NEVER QUITE FREE** and **UNFETTERED** moves. Your Astir does not have an Astir move: whatever powered that died when you did.

NEVER QUITE FREE

This move replaces **BITE THE DUST** for you. You have already died once, and it is incredibly difficult to vanquish what has remained of you: when you are *defenceless* or risk harm so severe it might destroy you outright, roll +CHANNEL:

On a 10+, your spirit lashes out at those that would try to strike you down: they are forced to take a risk and you may clear one if you have any.

On a 7-9, you struggle to keep it together: take **disadvantage** on your next move.

On a 6-, you survive at the cost of weakening your remaining tie to this world. Reduce your CHANNEL by 1—if this would reduce it below 0, you are no longer able to hold yourself and your Astir together. You pass on, leaving it and this world behind.

UNFETTERED

You are, broadly speaking, unaffected by toxins, diseases, hunger, thirst, or any other typical biological or material concerns you were bound by in life. Ignore them entirely. Additionally, any magic or device that tracks or detects the living does not function on you, and any magic that would specifically *kill* rather than causing harm that might result in death is ineffective on you also. You're already dead.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

JOYRIDE

You may transfer your spectral being into another Astir. Take **disadvantage** if there is already a Channeler controlling it, and roll +CHANNEL;

On a 10+, your old Astir falls quiet and you take control of this one instead. Your mark transfers to it, also. On a 7-9, as above, but you struggle to control this new form: act in **desperation** until you roll a 10+.

KNOWER OF RUIN

When you look over the remains of a battle, you can easily piece together how it went and who took part. You can bring forth the spirits of anyone who perished there for a short time to talk to them, though they remember little beyond the battle itself.

AIN'T NO GRAVE

When you make a move (other than **NEVER QUITE FREE**) and roll a 6-, you may roll **NEVER QUITE FREE** in **desperation** to, regardless of outcome, upgrade that result to a 10+.

RAVENOUS SPECTRE

When you cause a living being to be in *peril*, take **advantage** when you next **COOL OFF** as you draw momentum or vigour from them.

I KNOW YOU

At any time, you or the Director may declare that a character had some familiarity with you before you died. Roll +3;

On a 10+, they were intimately familiar with you: choose one of your Hooks that you still share. They will help you follow it where they can, unless forced to do otherwise. Reduce the amount you add to this roll in the future by 1.

On a 7-9, they were loosely familiar with you: choose one of your Hooks that they are still undecided about. They might not help you, but they will not stop you following it unless forced to.

ANCIENT RECALL

Hold 3. You may spend a point of this hold to succeed on a **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** or a **READ THE ROOM** as per a 10+, describing how your past life gave you familiarity with the situation or subject at hand. When you run out of hold, you lose this move.

RIOTING SOULS

Wherever you go, vengeful spirits of the deceased rise up to join you. They can do little by their own, but their presence is very capable of drowning out magic used to communicate or observe/listen from a distance. They can also be directed to act as a distraction, though they cannot do both at the same time.

SUMMONER

*The lonely mage was caught at last / her foes they gathered 'round ♪
Caught by surprise they found themselves / by spirits she had bound ♪*

+CHANNEL (+0)

LOOK

You look: *noble, naive, wizened, bizarre or friendly*

You wear: *pilot jumpsuit, military uniform, dress uniform, traditional robes*

Your magic is like: *distant chimes, fireside embers, yawning portals, rushing winds*

When you launch your Astir, you say: _____

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **elemental** or **profane**

GEAR

- 1 Astir III
- Conjured Blade I (*melee / bane*)
- 2 Summoner Gear
- Clothes that match your look

SUMMONER GEAR

- Ribboned Staff I (*ranged*)
- Gifted Dagger I (*melee / mundane*)
- Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)
- Shield Broach I (*ward*)

Allies are an important thing, both in life and in warfare. Few kinds of Channeler embody this ethos better than Summoners: those capable of not just forming strong bonds with magical creatures and spirits, but also conjuring them forth in times of need to gain their aid. Such expertise can leave individuals vulnerable and unprotected if they have no time to conjure a powerful ally—but more than a match for numerous foes when they do.

To play a Summoner is to make allies of the powerful and strange, and to involve them in your conflict.

EIDOLON DRIVE and **BINDING** form your core skillset, and moves like **ENDURING SUPPORT** and **HELPING HANDS** let you get other forms of aid from your summoned allies.

Consider;

- Does your family have a history of being Summoners?
- Do you consider summoning something ordered and hermetic, or more loose and spiritual?
- Who or what was the first ally you ever bound?
- Do you call yourself a Summoner, or something else?
- What was your place in your community before the conflict began?
- Do you have any kind of traditional outfit or pieces of clothing?
- Is there a region in the world most associated with Summoners?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you part ways with an ally from **BINDING**, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who will remember them fondly.

STARTING MOVES

You start with **EIDOLON DRIVE** as your Astir Move, and the **BINDING** move.

EIDOLON DRIVE

This is your Astir Move—if you ever get a new Astir, it can be transferred into the new one during Downtime, replacing any Astir Move it might have had. Once per Scene, you may power up your **EIDOLON DRIVE** to summon an ally from **BINDING**. When you do so, you may immediately make a move using their **approach** and trait at +3. They remain by your side for the rest of the Scene, giving you access to their trait at +1. Their tier is equal to your Astir's.

BINDING

You may magically bind powerful creatures (or groups of weaker ones) to you, allowing you to draw them through time and space to your location to aid you temporarily. You might do this through force, or you might acquire willing aid through other means. However you do it, give them an amount of your Astir's Power to perform the **BINDING**.

This Power is returned 1 point at a time each time that ally is summoned via **EIDOLON DRIVE**, or all at once if they are released or leave your service otherwise. Write down your ally's name, their **approach**, and a trait.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

ENDURING SUPPORT

After you summon an ally with your **EIDOLON DRIVE**, you may use their **approach** instead of your own for the rest of the Sortie.

BONDED IN BLOOD

You may voluntarily take a *peril* as part of **BINDING** an ally: this counts as an extra 1 Power's worth of **BINDING**, on top of any you choose to give. If you do so, make your first move after summoning them with **advantage**. Allies bound with **BONDED IN BLOOD** won't (or can't) abandon your service until all their Power is returned point-by-point.

SPRITECRAFT

You may magically create allies for yourself during Downtime as long-term projects, requiring a 4-step clock to be filled. They can only sustain themselves for a single Sortie's worth of aid, but you may choose what **approach** they are, and they reserve none of your Astir's Power.

DYNAMIC ENTRY

When you summon an ally and immediately **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY** via them, that attack is considered to have the *bane* tag.

HELPING HANDS

You may also bind an ally to help you in Downtime instead of on Sorties. When you do so, instead of writing a trait and their **approach**, take +1 **token** during Downtime. You may only have one ally bound to you for Downtimes, but 1 Power's worth of **BINDING** will sustain them for as long as they are in your service.

CONVEYANCE

When another Channeler lays a hand on your **EIDOLON DRIVE**, they may link their Astir to yours. During Downtime, or when you **WEAVE MAGIC**, you may open a portal between your Astirs. If you **WOVE MAGIC** to do this, it closes at the end of the Scene or potentially earlier as a consequence of another move.

LIVING DRIVE

You are your **EIDOLON DRIVE**. You may use it outside of an Astir, and your **BINDING** allies are still considered to be the same tier as your Astir: though you yourself are tier I as usual. If you have the **CONVEYANCE** move, you may open a portal between an Astir and you.



THE SUMMONER



THE ICON

ICON

*Step up, show off, let 'em know what you're here for,
take to the stage, leave 'em screamin' out for more ♪*

LOOK

You look: *stylish, confusing, transgressive, glamorous or naive*

You wear: *cutting-edge fashions, your own designs, dress uniform, experimental looks*

Your medium is: *music, poetry or literature, public speech, modelling, acting*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- A magical instrument or other artistic tool
- 2 Iconic Perks
- Multiple sets of clothes that match your look

ICONIC PERKS

- Bodyguards I (*melee / area, ward*)
- Broad Appeal (Everybody recognises you)
- Personal Fortune (Act with **advantage** anywhere money makes a difference)
- Influencer (Nobody turns down your counsel or input on the basis of position/rank)
- Personalised Sidearm I (*ranged / defensive*)

Icons come in all kinds: from visionary artists, to firebrand public speakers, to groundbreaking performers. They stoke the people and drive culture, becoming rally points for public opinion and focus: especially during divisive times.

Moves like **BARDIC INSPIRATION** and **POWER** let you support your team, whilst **MECHANICAL ARIA** lets you step from stage to battlefield in an Astir of your own.

Consider;

- What do you do for a living?
- Do you have a brand or stage name people know more readily than your real one?
- What compelled you to throw in with the Cause?
- Are you still actively famous, or did you leave that life behind?
- What kind of colours and iconography do people associate with you?
- Has the Cause adopted any of the above?
- What do you want out of your role in the Cause?
- Do you have fans within the Authority?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

Whenever you act against one of your Hooks, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who sees you as inspirational or expects highly from you.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **PERFORMANCE** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

PERFORMANCE

This move replaces **B-PLOT** for you. When you lead a grand **PERFORMANCE** rather than be involved in a Sortie, broadcasting it far and wide through magical means, name one or two **actors** that attend in person and hold 3. During the Sortie, you may spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Increase another players level of success on a move one step before or after they roll, as you push yourself for a killer performance.
- Name an **actor** present: they are deeply affected by your performance, either taking one of your Hooks to heart or taking the direct opposite (your choice).
- Hit a crescendo that *literally* gives time for your allies to think, as everyone listening is distracted and interrupted by your performance.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

POWER

When someone does something notable and dangerous on your behalf, whether you ordered them to or not, they gain a point of Spotlight.

BARDIC INSPIRATION

At the beginning of a Sortie, hold 3. You may spend this hold 1-for-1 to add a d4 to any roll, before or after it is made.

CHANGE OF HEART

Whenever you give a **PERFORMANCE**, other players may *loosen* or *deepen* any of their Hooks as they please.

TOUCHSTONE

You have your finger on the pulse of the Carrier and the people on it. You understand them as well as the Captain, and have a good feel for how they might view any given situation.

YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN A CROWN [REQUIRES: TOUCHSTONE]

When you talk, people listen. Unless someone already intends to harm you (or you're actively putting them in danger), people will *always* at least stop and consider your words. You do not need to roll to convince people to do something that is in their best interests or that you have a convincing case for, and your attempts to do anything beyond that are made in **confidence**.

MECHANICAL ARIA

You acquire an Astir III that is specially designed and calibrated to be piloted by you. Build it as per the usual custom Astir rules (see **Creating An Astir (pg. 104)**). It is likely equipped with equipment that is very flashy and loud. You cannot pilot other Astirs, and do not have a +CHANNEL trait: though you may use **SUBSYSTEMS**.

SHOWSTOPPER [REQUIRES: BARDIC INSPIRATION]

When you use **BARDIC INSPIRATION**, you may increase a roll by a d6 instead of a d4. When you use **BARDIC INSPIRATION** on a roll made by someone you have a GRAVITY clock with, advance it.

PERSPECTIVE

When you look at an incomplete work, whether it's a piece of art or something far more simple, you can always envision what was intended to complete it, and exactly what would be needed to finish the work: and also something grander and far more difficult.

ATTENDANT

*Manners, style, and the skills to please kings,
how could a butler not be capable of such things?*

LOOK

You look: *refined, sinister, ageing, forgettable or panicked*

You wear: *exactly what the master demands of you*

Your expertise is in: *cooking, housekeeping, entertaining, cleaning, security*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Defensive Weapon
- 2 Retinue Staff
- Clothing that matches your look

DEFENSIVE WEAPONS

- Sword Cane I (*melee / defensive, concealable*)
- Fan Of Knives (*ranged / defensive, area*)
- Wand-rifle I (*sniper / defensive, impact*)

RETINUE STAFF

- Artificers (+1 **token** towards repairs & magic or mechanical long-term projects)
- Maids (Everything is kept clean and orderly: anything lost or hidden is *always* found)
- Cooks (Everyone makes their first roll during a Sortie in **confidence** after a good meal)
- Watchdogs (Never surprised by attackers on foot, +ward)

Those of high society, birth or wealth often find themselves in need of good staff. Of all their servants, though, one holds a truly notable position: their head butler. You're responsible for seeing to their every need, organising the rest of their staff, and if it comes to it, laying down your life for them. Anything less would simply be bad service, after all.

All your moves come with a little extra: a good Attendant is seen but not heard, and a better Attendant can see what is demanded of them with a mere glance. Moves like **SIGNED & SEALED** allow you to play an Attendant with slightly different contractual obligations, whilst moves like **DILETTANTE** and **MAN OF MANY MANNERS** showcase your diverse capabilities.

Consider;

- Do you come from any kind of formal schooling?
- Do you use your real name as an Attendant, or a pseudonym?
- Are you proud of the work you do, or is it just a job?
- How do you feel about your Employer? How long have you served them?
- Do you wear any specific colour or emblem of your Employer?
- Has the Cause adopted any of the above?
- Are you a believer in the Cause, or just here to serve?
- Do you consider yourself an equal with those around you, or simply furniture?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

Whenever you put protecting your Employer ahead of the Sortie's goals, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who disagrees with your actions.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **MASTER & SERVANT** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

MASTER & SERVANT

You are the head butler and servant to someone of prestige, possibly another member of the party: you are responsible for attending to their every need, from their dress to their security. Any guests of theirs also fall under your purview, of course.

If your Employer—as they are referred to—ever releases you from your service, you must find a new one as quickly as possible. To be unemployed would imply your services are not worthwhile, after all.

Whenever you **HELP OR HINDER** or **COOL OFF** your Employer or a guest of theirs, do so with **advantage**. Additionally, you gain +1 **token** during Downtime: though you must spend your **tokens** on your Employer's needs and whims where asked (or demanded).

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

A DRINK, SIR?

If you can gain access to a kitchen, you can slip anything you want into anyone's meal or drink without being caught, no rolls required. If you get the blame after they drop dead (or when magic reveals the poison, etc), any attempt to shift the blame or escape the scene is done in **confidence**.

At a glance, you can tell what someone's beverage of choice is.

SIGNED & SEALED

Your contract is one signed in darker stuff than ink. Your **approach** on foot becomes **profane**, and any weapon you wield gains the *messy* and *decisive* tags.

At a glance, you can tell someone's darkest desire.

IN BLOOD & TERROR [REQUIRES: SIGNED & SEALED]

When you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** you may opt to roll with **disadvantage**: if you do, on a 7-9 or 10+ result you also cause any other foes who witness it to immediately take a *risk*.

At a glance, you can tell someone's deepest fear.

SMILING POLITELY

Whenever you suggest a course of action or a solution to something and your Employer forbids it, hold 1. Nothing bad will ever happen to you as a direct consequence of not taking action your Employer forbade you from. You may spend 10 hold to kill your Employer, no questions asked.

At a glance, you can tell if someone is hiding something.

MAN OF MANY MANNERS

You have a deep knowledge of the manners and etiquette required wherever you go, and any attempts to cover for the missteps or failings of your Employer or their guests in matters of etiquette are done in **confidence**.

At a glance, you can tell someone's social standing.

DILETTANTE

Your Employer has ever-changing needs, and your skills must change to meet them. During Downtime, you may spend your Scene dedicating yourself to learning a new skill. At the end of it, you are skilled enough to perform it at an average level: more advanced tasks that might require a roll come to you at **disadvantage**, however. For every additional **token** you spend when playing a **DILETTANTE** Scene, you can ignore this **disadvantage** once.

At a glance, you can tell someone's most honed skill.

THE UTMOST CARE

The Carrier and anywhere your Employer and their guests spend the night are completely under your scrutiny. You **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** and **READ THE ROOM** with **advantage** when overhearing gossip, observing the movement and events of servant quarters and kitchens, etc—anything that might happen in earshot of a talented butler.

At a glance, you can tell someone's greatest comfort.

ON YOUR FEET

Once per Sortie, you may **COOL OFF** to reduce a *peril* another player has taken to a *risk*.

At a glance, you can tell if someone is prepared to die.



THE ATTENDANT



THE COMMANDER

COMMANDER

*The Channelers they venture forth, their Astirs brightly gleaming,
and in the muck we push our luck—of going home, we're dreaming ♪*

LOOK

You look: *scarred, formal, out of your depth, decorated or wry*

You wear: *lightweight clothing, military uniform, officer's dress, tough overalls*

Your squad is: *fresh rookies, getting too old for this, a motley crew, the rank-and-file*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your approach is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Custom Ardent II
- Saber & Sidearm I (*ranged / versatile*)
- 3 Ardent Features
- Clothes that match your look

ARDENT FEATURES

- Antipersonnel Turret II (*ranged / defensive*)
- Armour Plating II (*+ward*)
- Bane Reserves II (*+bane / upgrade to ruin 3x per Sortie*)
- Bolt Sigils II (*melee / bane*)
- Blasting Stave II (*sniper / messy, limited, area, impact*)
- Brimstone Pods (*ranged / limited, area*)
- Chromatic Reserves II (*change Approach 3x per Sortie*)
- Internal Seals II (*+adapted*)
- Lancing Stave II (*sniper / reload, decisive*)

Not everyone on the battlefield is lucky enough to have enough magic at their fingertips to pilot an Astir, or to have the time and training to be a Scout. The rest of you wade through the mud and dirt, clutching spark-rifles, or spears, or whatever you're given, hoping you don't get stepped on. If you do find yourself a little sliver of that luck though, you might find yourself part of an Ardent crew. Prove yourself, and you might even end up in charge.

To play the Commander is to draw into the spotlight those not fortunate enough to be Channelers, and to look into the bureaucracy and logistics of military operation. **ACE CREW** provides you with your squad, and moves like **RETROFIT** and **SUPPORT COMPANY** allow you to reinforce them with a little extra firepower.

Consider;

- Does your custom Ardent have a name?
- What is your squad or the part of the military you belong to called?
- Are you a formally trained soldier, or something more informal?
- Were you always part of the Cause, or did you defect?
- What's your relationship like with those that pilot Astirs?
- Have you always fought in Ardents?
- When was the first time you saw an Astir?
- What kind of vehicle exactly is your Ardent?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

Whenever you or your crew are physically injured in service of someone else, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **ACE CREW** and **DEBRIEF** moves as well as one other from your Additional Moves.

ACE CREW

You have a team of 3-5 well-trained individuals who work with you as a coordinated team. Give each of them a name, and an adjective or two to describe them.

Your tier **and** that of whatever weaponry you use counts as one higher than whatever it would normally be for your situation: on foot together you count as tier II, crewing an Ardent you count as tier III, and so on. You can pilot separate Ardents if desired, but *must* be acting together as one consistent unit to gain these benefits, and are always treated as a single unit rather than individual actors.

DEBRIEF

You exist within a structure, and must report up. During Downtime, instead of leading a Scene as usual, you must report to your superiors, marking a point of Spotlight. Additionally, you have a total of 4 **tokens** to spend instead of 2, as your **ACE CREW** works hard to support you.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

WITHDRAW

You may retreat with your crew safely from any situation. When you do so, roll +TALK; on a 10+, you manage to justify your actions. On a 7-9, give up 1 **token** next Downtime as you are reprimanded for your 'cowardice'. On a 6-, start or advance a 4-step clock titled 'court-martialled'.

RETROFIT

During Downtime, your crew may spend 1 **token** to swap out one of your Ardent Features for another from the list. Alternatively, you may spend 2 **tokens** to swap all of them.

REQUISITIONS

Choose an additional 2 Ardent Features, as your Custom Ardent is upgraded with new weaponry and equipment. If any members of your **ACE CREW** have died, you may also replace them.

WATCH THIS

You may spend 3 Spotlight to quickly manoeuvre your crew or an Ardent they are crewing to any location within sight, even if the path there would be dangerous or difficult. If your Director insists that it would be impossible or completely deadly, take **advantage** on the **WEATHER THE STORM** required to prove them wrong.

BAIL OUT

You may, at any point, declare that your Custom Ardent is about to explode. Replace all your current *dangers* with one *peril* (Bailed Out) as everyone escapes just in time, leaving you without it until you repair it during Downtime (costing 3 **tokens**, and removing the 'bailed out' *peril*). At the Director's discretion, the explosion might also affect other things in the Scene.

TACTICAL ENTRY

When you drive or fly your Custom Ardent through the side of a building, you can be certain it will remain structurally sound for exactly as long as you need it to be.

SUPPORT COMPANY

You also have a squad of footsoldiers that you lead into battle. The exact amount of men depends on the scale of your campaign. Treat them as a Tier I squad under your command, with one *danger* slot and melee weapons by default.

They are also kitted out with an additional two of the following tags per Sortie: *bane, ranged, sniper, blitz, defensive, decisive, adapted*.

CAPTAIN

Even the best of teams need guidance. Overlooking sorties from the Carrier's helm, the Captain commands the crew and ensures those in the field get the help they need.

LOOK

You look: *noble, upright, callow, eager or intimidating*

You wear: *immaculate uniform, casual clothes, armoured clothing, officer's coat*

You lead with: *gut feelings, well-informed advice, stoic instruction, tested experience*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Ornate Gear
- 2 Crew/Carrier Bonuses
- Clothes that match your look

ORNATE GEAR

- Gilded Sidearm I (*ranged / versatile*)
- Ruinlock I (*ranged / reload, ruin, **profane***)
- Duelist's Blade I (*melee / bane, decisive*)
- Arcane Mantle I (*ranged / defensive, **arcane***)

CREW/CARRIER BONUSES

- Marine Infantry (they'll fight tooth and nail to defend the Carrier)
- Civilian Quarters (Can safely accommodate refugees)
- Construct Bay (Steed Ardents for everyone)
- Cloaking Rituals (Can hide the Carrier from sight)

Responsible for the crew and their mission, the Captain provides support on missions by leading the crew and harnessing the Carrier's equipment and weaponry. Captains can even provide temporary upgrades and refits for Constructs deployed on a sortie, or level their tactical know-how into better positioning on the battlefield.

While playing a Captain, you're **IN COMMAND** of the group's Carrier and its crew. This lets you roll several moves with the Carrier's +CREW trait instead of your own when commanding it—which is either a blessing or a curse, depending on what that CREW value is. Additionally, while at the helm of your Carrier you can take 4 *dangers* rather than 3 before you're *defenceless*, meaning you're tough to take down in a straight fight. All those hands on deck add up, after all. Many of your other moves revolve around supporting other players, like **SURPRISE REQUISITION** and **FIRE SUPPORT**. Consider;

- Were you formally schooled as a Captain? How exclusive are such schools?
- Who appointed you Captain of this Carrier?
- Have you served with another crew before?
- Are you used to helming ships this big?
- Have you served with a military before? Are you a commissioned officer?
- What exactly is your place on the Carrier's bridge?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When anyone rolls a 6 or below while rolling +CREW, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who has put their trust in you.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **IN COMMAND** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

IN COMMAND

You are the Carrier's captain, and naturally have command of its crew. While at the helm of the Carrier, you may order the crew to perform moves on your behalf: unlike when other playbooks use +CREW, you may do this any number of times. Increase your Carrier's +CREW by 1.

When you do so, explain how the crew helps you do this thing—they share in the consequences of your move, good and bad. You are responsible for their lives. If things go bad rolling your Traits, things go bad for you. If things go bad rolling +CREW, you endanger *everyone*.

Additionally, both Carrier and crew are part of your character as far as *risks* and *perils* are concerned, just like an Astir is an extension of its channeler. To reflect the many minds and hands at work for you, you are *defenceless* at 4 *dangers* while at the helm of your Carrier, rather than 3. You go down with it, and it goes down with you.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

TACTICAL GENIUS

When you're supervising allies from afar during a Sortie, you can lever your tactical know-how into better positioning. Take 1+KNOW hold at the start of a Sortie, and spend it 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Remove one *risk* from an ally.
- Give an ally **advantage** to their next move, describing how you advise or support them.
- Have an ally appear somehow in a place they are needed.

FORCE MULTIPLIER

You acquire something—a tool, ship upgrade, a caged malevolent sentience, etc—that allows the Carrier and it's staff to operate far better than usual, but it has a downside. For each of the below drawbacks you give it, once per Sortie you may act with **confidence**.

- It whispers in your ear—change one of your Hooks to represent its demands.
- It's *fragile* and needs protecting. It grants no benefit while damaged or destroyed.
- It is physically taxing or requires upkeep of some kind: gain a *burden*. If you gain this move at the same time as you would gain a burden from another source, you take this one instead.

SURPRISE REQUISITION

When you dispatch supplies to another character or reveal something extra you had them deployed with all along, roll +CREW. On a 10+, choose 1 for free. On a 7-9, you had to requisition that gear personally; *tap* a Faction as they spread themselves thin to help you.

- A weapon rendered unusable by damage or lack of ammo is replaced/rearmed (clearing a related *peril*, if applicable).
- A weapon gains the *bane* tag until the end of the scene.
- A weapon gains the *ruin* tag for one shot or strike.
- An Astir changes it's **approach** until the end of the scene.

FIRE SUPPORT

When you provide instruction and call shots for the Carrier's crew, you may **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** using +KNOW and the Carrier's weaponry.

INFORMATION NETWORK

When you contact your superiors or an appropriate source for relevant intel, you may **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** with +TALK.

Take +1 **token** during Downtime to spend on any info-gathering efforts or projects.

BORN LEADER

You **LEAD A SORTIE** with **advantage** and give the crew **confidence** when they **PLAN & PREPARE**. Figures within the Cause lean on you for strategic advice: to some degree, their successes and failures during the Conflict Turn can be attributed to your guidance.

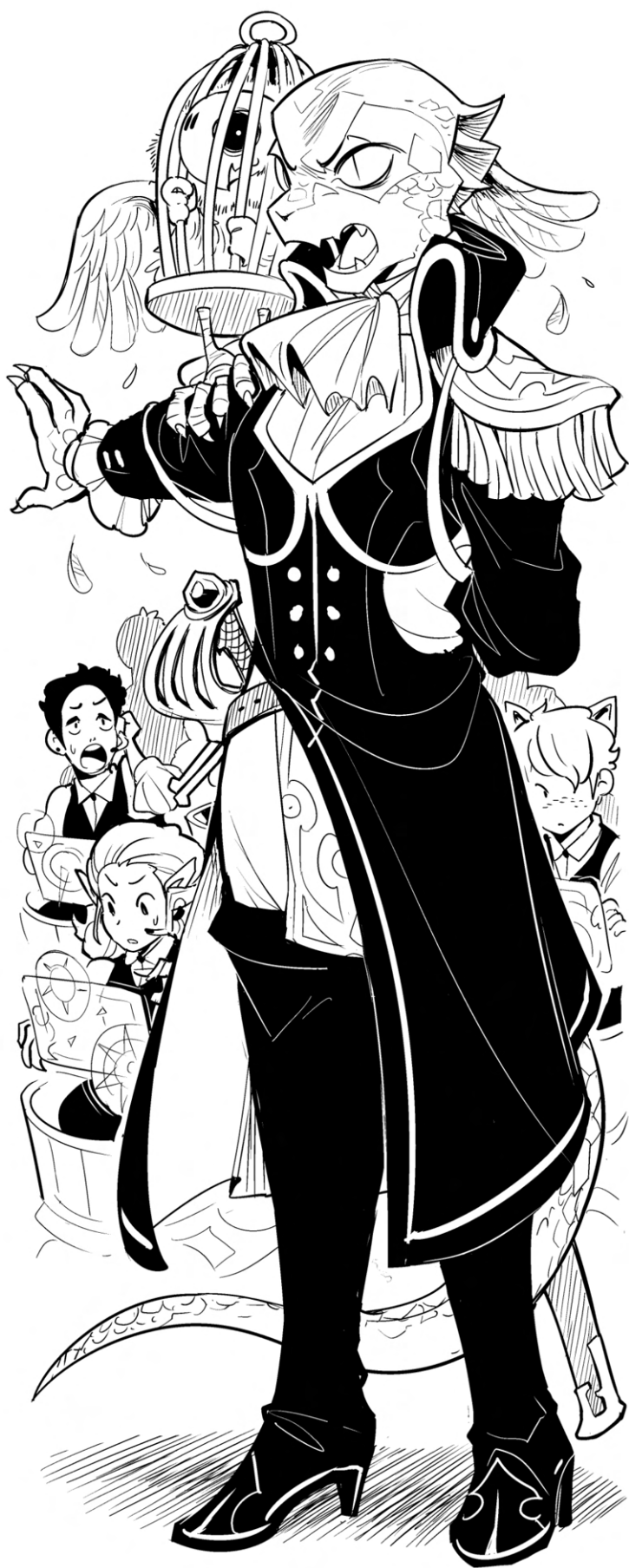
HUMAN RESOURCES

When you **READ THE ROOM**, you may also choose from the following questions;

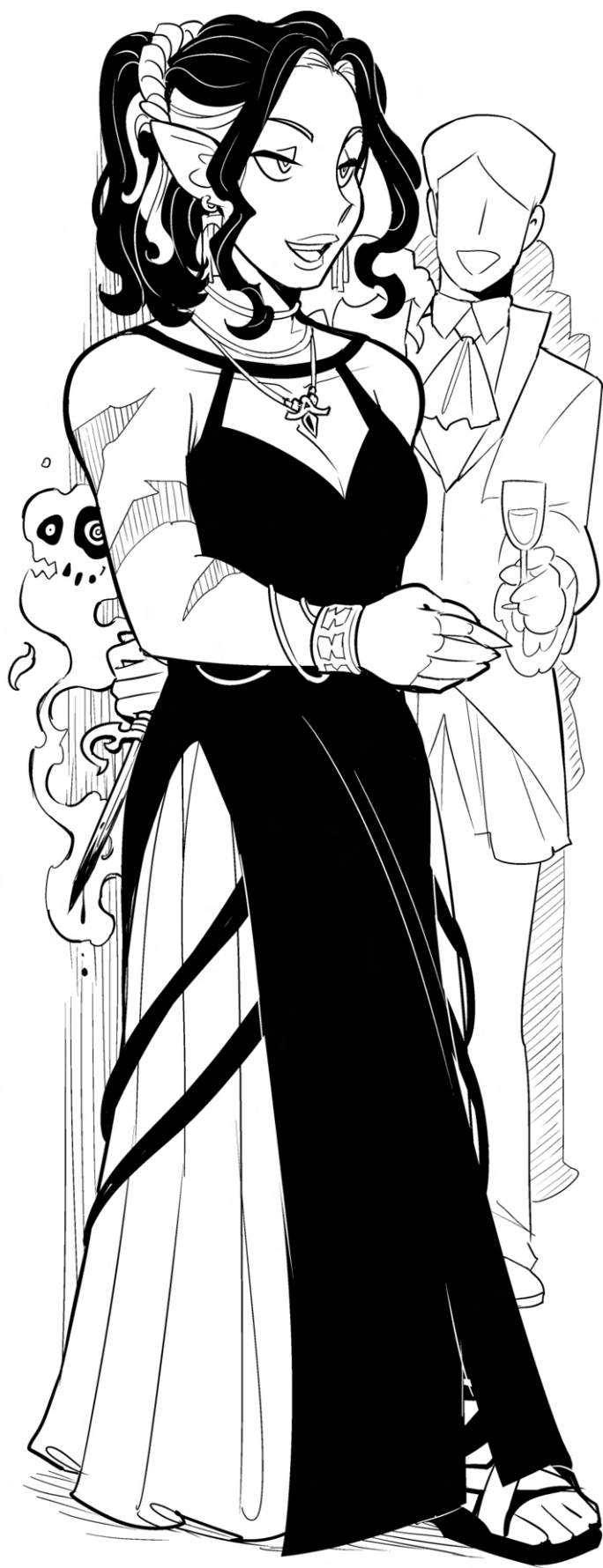
- What is the crew's mood like?
- Who is responsible for a problem on-board the Carrier?
- What could be a problem for the crew in the immediate future?

COORDINATOR

When you roll a 10+ to **HELP OR HINDER** and choose to help, your ally may act with **confidence** in addition to **advantage**.



THE CAPTAIN



THE DIPLOMAT

DIPLOMAT

Not every war is fought with weapons. For a Diplomat, the battlefield is a boardroom, the landmines are a host's hospitality and the only weapon you need is a winning smile.

LOOK

You look: *noble, refined, experienced, naive or slick*

You wear: *military dress, mostly disguises, luxury fashion, recognisable uniform*

You have a reputation for being: *fair and trustworthy, sly and wily, unpredictable, bold and pushy*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Diplomacy 'Tool'
- 3 'Diplomacy' Tools
- Clothing that matches your look

DIPLOMACY 'TOOLS'

- Spyglass Ray I (*sniper / bane, elemental*)
- Fencing Blade I (*melee / defensive, blitz*)
- Arcane Dagger I (*melee / ruin, intimate, arcane*)

'DIPLOMACY' TOOLS

- Listenbugs (overhear anyone during Downtime near a bug you've hidden—they're *fragile*)
- Lockpicks (Useful for picking locks, unsurprisingly)
- Silencing Matrix (Removes all noise from a tier I weapon)
- Shimmershape Clothing (Clothing can magically change colour and design)
- Agents (Does the below once per Downtime)
 - Report on intel they've gathered: the Director will reveal something useful about the Sortie.
- Transport (You have a mount or vehicle that's fast and quiet—probably something tier II)

Diplomats are the kind of people that bring factions together and negotiate the impossible. They definitely never ever spy on anybody; instead, they meet with other important people face to face to achieve with words the kind of things that a legion of men couldn't with blades. The pen is their sword, and none of them have ever knocked a man out before stealing his uniform to pass as a guard.

While playing a Diplomat, you have a lot of power to set the rules of a social situation with moves like **FACILITATOR** and **BUREAUCRAT**. You're also very good at subterfuge, both by manipulating people and by stabbing them when they aren't looking, with a suite of moves including **SHARP TONGUE** and **SHARPER KNIVES**. Consider;

- Are you actually a diplomat? Do you hold any official office?
- How long have you been with the Cause? Were you part of it before joining this crew?
- What's your stance on violence?
- What is your network of connections like? Do you have one?
- What motivates you during this conflict? What are your goals?
- What's the most danger you've been in before?
- What does diplomacy mean to you? How do you go about it?
- Have you ever negotiated with the Authority before?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you successfully negotiate or advocate for something important to you, advance a **GRAVITY** clock of your choice.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **FACILITATOR** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

FACILITATOR

You may **READ THE ROOM** with +TALK when mediating or taking part in a conversation/discussion. When you set up a clandestine meeting, choose 2;

- There's no risk of an ambush or interference.
- Third parties aren't privy to the contents of the meeting.
- All parties are willing to discuss in good faith.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

SHARP TONGUE

When you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with +TALK, on a roll of 12+ your opponent is put in *peril*.

SHARPER KNIVES

You're trained in the arts of assassination and stealth. Take **advantage** while attempting to remain undetected or unseen, and being unaware of your presence counts as two *risks*.

STIR THE CROWD

When you attempt to inspire dissent against the Authority, roll +TALK. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2, or let your Director choose 1.

- It takes a tragedy to truly galvanise people.
- In doing so, you become known and targeted.
- You have no control or influence over any acts of protest.
- You are unable to spark wider resistance than the local area.

BUREAUCRAT

When you would **EXCHANGE BLOWS** with +TALK to slow someone down or distract them with regulations, bylaws, or whatever piece of red tape you can think of, you also choose two from the below even on a fail.

- You're not lying—they'll really be in trouble if they don't listen to you.
- They're invested in what you're saying: act in **confidence** against them for the rest of the Scene.
- They won't remember or recognise you.
- You don't need to take a *risk*.

IRREFUTABLE

When you argue or advocate for something and back up your point of view with hard evidence or facts, hold 1. When you reach 3 hold, you may spend them to **STRIKE DECISIVELY** with +TALK against someone who isn't *defenceless*.

CONNECTED

When you meet someone of note, roll +TALK. On a 10+, you're familiar with them, and you may choose whether their view of you is positive or negative. On a 7-9, as previous, but the Director decides how they think of you. On a 6-, things are bad: act in **desperation** against them for the rest of the Scene.

SHREE KLIME

During Downtime, you may also prepare an alias or disguise. Most people will believe you are who you say you are, unless you're disguised as someone they're very familiar with, or they are given reason to thoroughly check your person or any identification. During Downtime, instead of the usual benefit for a Scene, you may secure 2 of the following;

- You have ID that is either legitimate or so well faked it is impossible for anyone short of an expert to tell the difference.
- There's a reason or expectation for someone fitting your disguise to show up.
- You've had something useful planted ahead of time—select a weapon or piece of equipment (one you have access to) to be hidden just where you'll need it.

ARTIFICER

Between necessary repairs and wholly unnecessary tinkering, Artificers do their best to keep their allies equipped and their Astirs functioning.

LOOK

You look: *tough, filthy, punky, weary or wise*

You wear: *pristine overalls, casual clothes, patched jumpsuits, homemade armour*

You handiwork looks: *clean and utilitarian, fancy and artistic, like it barely holds together, unremarkable*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 2 Artificer Tools
- 1 Transport or Service Ardent II
- Construct Manuals (**DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** regarding construct & Astir design with **advantage**)
- Clothing that matches your look

ARTIFICER TOOLS

- Heavy Wrench I (*melee / bane, impact*)
- Beam Cutter I (*melee / reload, ruin, decisive*)
- Steelfuser I (*ranged / restraining, **elemental***)
- Alchemical Gel I (**advantage** when **COOLING OFF** to repair something)

Artificers ensure that the Carrier and the Constructs it carries are in top condition, repairing and tinkering with them whenever the chance arises. While talented at putting new things together, an Artificer's expertise is just as easily applied to taking something apart. Artificers might be professionals, trained in the construction and repair of Astirs, or natural tinkerers who grew up making jury-rigged improvements to their town.

While playing an Artificer, **EXPERTISE** lets you give everyone else room to breathe during Downtime, and **EXPERIMENTER** lets you occasionally give others the chance to tweak their Traits. Aside from that, you have some very versatile options: **ARCANE GENERATOR** and **JURY-RIGGER** let you control Astirs and quick construct things, and **COMBAT ENGINEER** even lets you branch out into the Scout playbook easily. Consider;

- Where and how did you learn your craft?
- Are there others as skilled at working with Astirs as you in the Cause? What about the Authority?
- How did you get involved with the Cause?
- What was your life like before the Cause?
- Have you always worked on Astirs, or did you hone your craft making something else?
- Do you have a certain material or style that is considered tell-tale of your work?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you tend to someone's body or Astir, advance a GRAVITY clock with them if you have one.

STARTING MOVES

You start with the **EXPERTISE** move as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

EXPERTISE

You're an expert at making and mending, and may perform an extra **INFIRMARY OR HANGAR** Scene during Downtime, as you repair and mend the things around you. Whenever you advance a long-term project to build, dismantle or modify something, advance it twice.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

FIELD TESTING

You're used to testing out new equipment, and can easily get to grips with new tech. You have **advantage** when trying to use, analyse, or figure out something about unfamiliar equipment, constructs, or similar magical machinery.

EXPERIMENTER

When you fail a Downtime Scene, you may pass 2 **tokens** to other players instead of 1.

When you remove a *peril* from someone, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6, they may adjust one of their Traits by +1 and another by -1 if they wish, to a maximum of +3 and minimum of -2.

COMBAT ENGINEER

You supplement your Artificer expertise with advanced combat training: for all purposes related to physical conflict, you are considered tier II rather than I. This includes wielding weapons, fighting, avoiding harm, and so on. Take a Custom Scout Weapon: it is tier II, and is either too heavy or requires too specific training for other people to use without taking **disadvantage**.

JURY-RIGGER

When you take random parts or objects and attempt to create something useful out of them, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2;

- It fits the purpose you had in mind.
- It stops working after hours, not minutes.
- It doesn't explode when it stops working.
- It doesn't look like garbage stuck together.

REFINED RITUALS

When someone **LEADS A SORTIE**, hold 3. You may spend this hold 1-for-1 to let an ally make the **SUBSYSTEMS** move for free.

ARCANE GENERATOR

You've built a remarkable artifact, small enough to be worn on your back or at your hip, that generates and sustains it's own magical energy. You may power and control an Astir while it is working: you effectively have a CHANNEL of +1.

Additionally, when you tap into it to create something long-lasting, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, you can create a single object as large as it is simple (i.e small and complex like a clock, or large and simple like a wall), and it takes but a few minutes of work. On a 7-9, choose 1;

- What you create is *fragile* and will not stand up to attack well.
- Your device creates an unnatural magical feedback: the next person to roll +CHANNEL does so with **disadvantage**.
- The work is taxing—take the *peril* (exhausted).

IT'S A PROTOTYPE

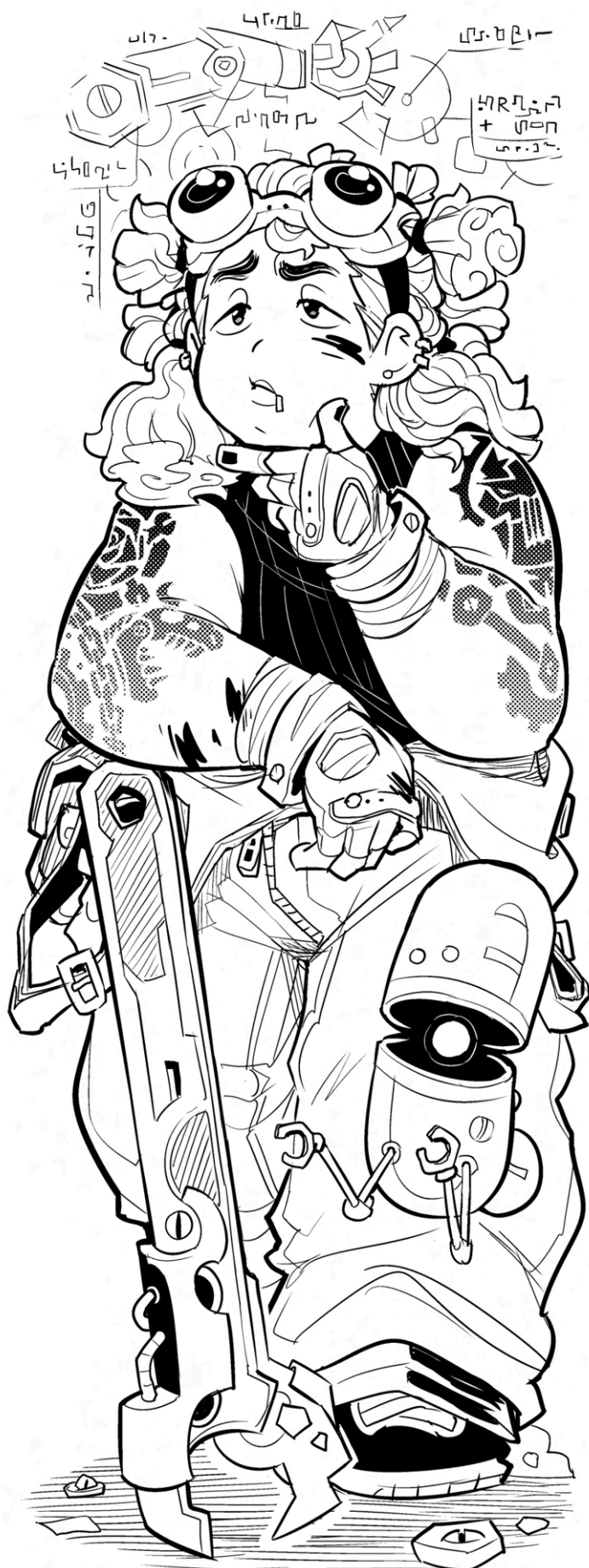
Once per Sortie, you may reveal what prototype upgrade you've made to a Astir that you reasonably had access to recently. When you do so, choose 2;

- You didn't have to disassemble anything else for parts.
- Your invention doesn't draw unwanted attention to you.
- The upgrade burns out at the end of the Sortie, rather than after one use.
- Using the upgrade isn't dangerous in any way.

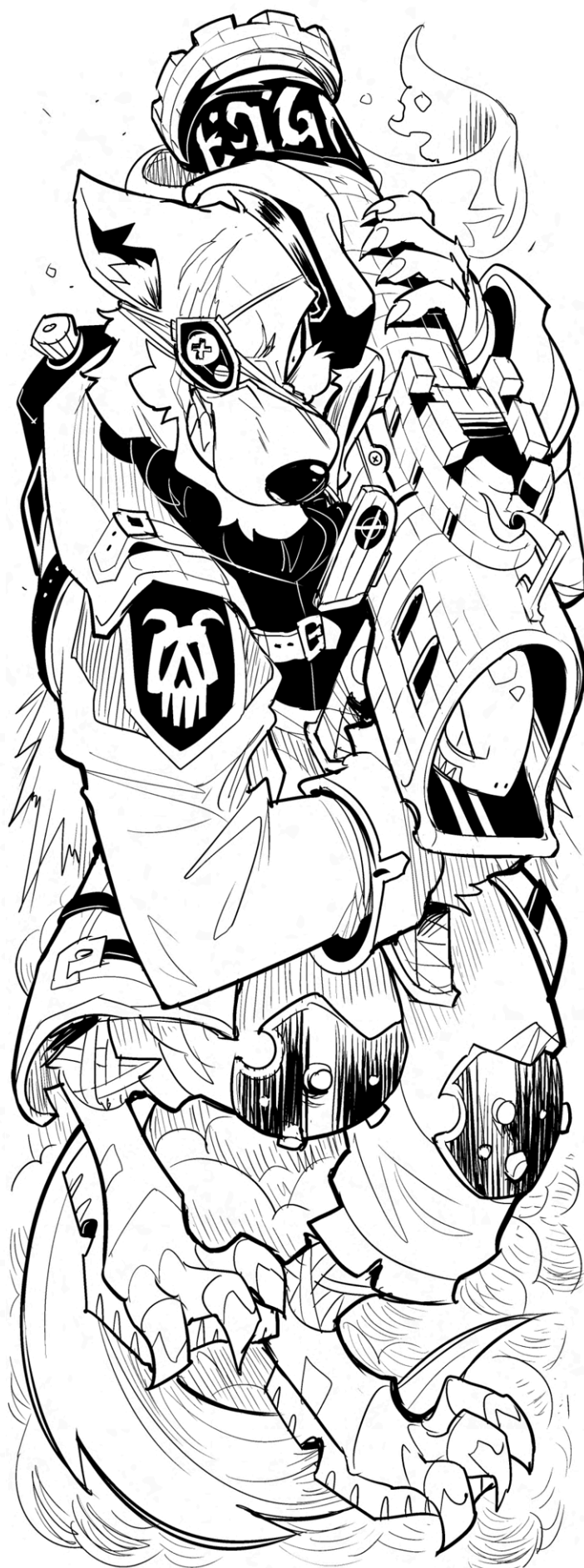
COUNTERSPELL

When you get close and use your expertise in magical machinery to try and disrupt or damage a magical ritual, enchantment or construct, you may **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** with +KNOW using the following profile;

- Counterspell III (*melee / set-up, slow, ruin*)



THE ARTIFICER



THE SCOUT

SCOUT

Scouts are straightforward people. Trained in navigating any terrain and path-finding for less mobile troops, scouts are often the eyes and ears for their Astir allies.

LOOK

You look: *wild, cold, sharp, cocky or brash*

You wear: *gleaming plate, well-worn uniform, survivalist's gear or rugged leathers*

You fight with: *brute strength, dexterous moves, practised discipline, raw tenacity*

APPROACH

When fighting on foot, your **approach** is: **mundane**

GEAR

- 1 Custom Scout Weapon
- 2 Scout Equipment
- Any tier I weapons that feel appropriate
- Clothes that match your look

CUSTOM SCOUT WEAPON

Design a +2 total cost weapon using *tags* of your choice from the list in the Equipment chapter. Describe its appearance and where you got it to the group, and tell them it's name if it has one.

Scouts are more than the rank-and-file soldier. Trained to be fast, strong and capable, Scouts are the trailblazers and survivors that make it possible for everyone else to do their job. From sneaking into enemy territory to gather information to performing patch repairs on Astirs damaged in the field, a good Scout can work wonders.

While playing a Scout, your choice of starting moves let you stand toe-to-toe with things higher tier than you, even Astirs if you choose, more easily. Depending on the moves you take, a Scout can be a dangerous solo agent, leaning on moves like **IMPROVISATION** and **MOBILITY**, or a powerful team player with moves like **NATURAL LEADER** and **PATCH JOB**.

Consider;

- Are Scouts common, or are you an exception?
- Do you have a tool or ability that helps you be mobile, or are you just agile?
- What kind of reputation do Scouts have? Is fighting an Astir considered risky for you?
- Who didn't want you to fight?
- Who encouraged you to fight?
- How long have you been a soldier?
- Were you trained or are you a natural fighter?
- Where did you get your equipment?
- What drives you to work on foot in a world of mechs?
- Do you have a better relationship with regular soldiers due to not being a pilot?

GRAVITY TRIGGER

When you hold your own against something bigger than you or help someone in an Astir out of a tight spot, advance a GRAVITY clock with someone who sees you and is impressed.

STARTING MOVES

Pick either the **FIELD SCOUT** or **GIANT SLAYER** move, as well as two others from your Additional Moves.

FIELD SCOUT

You're an expert at managing operations in the field and supporting your allies. You're agile and strong, you tend to notice things those in Astirs don't, and your size allows you access to spaces too small for them. **READ THE ROOM** with **confidence**, always.

Your skill at combat is above and beyond that of other fighters, too: for all purposes related to physical conflict, you are considered tier II rather than I. This includes wielding weapons, fighting, avoiding harm, and so on. Your custom weapon is tier II, and is either too heavy or requires too specific training for other people to use without taking **disadvantage**.

GIANT SLAYER

You have trained and honed your fighting skill to the point that you can easily go toe-to-toe with giants, Astirs and other huge creatures: for all purposes related to physical conflict, you are considered tier III rather than I. This includes wielding weapons, fighting, avoiding harm, and so on, though Astir-sized weapons might still present you some difficulty (given their sheer weight and size) unless the Astir was particularly small or you have a clever solution for leverage.

Your custom weapon is tier III, and is a huge, unique armament that you alone can wield as easily as any other. No other person can hope to use it well with just their mere hands.

ADDITIONAL MOVES

When you take a new move from your playbook as an advancement, choose from the list below.

TEAM PLAYER

When you **READ THE ROOM**, you may pass the information you gain along and allow an ally to act with **advantage** instead of you. This counts as them making a move involving you, and they may roll with +GRAVITY as appropriate.

MOBILITY

When you're fighting somewhere with the room to be acrobatic and mobile, roll +DEFY. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. You can spend 1 hold at any time to do one of the following;

- Escape from something that binds, traps or impedes you
- Acquire high ground or a defensible position
- Get to somewhere or something before others can
- Avoid an incoming source of physical harm

IMPROVISATION

At the beginning of a Sortie, hold 3. You may spend 1 hold to change your **approach** for a single move. Explain to your Director what you did or used to do this.

NATURAL LEADER

When participating in a group move, you can always make the roll in place of whoever has the lowest relevant trait.

PATCH JOB

When you **COOL OFF** to remove a *risk* or the 'overheating' tick from an Astir, you can do it in a few moments rather than minutes, even while the Astir is still moving. Instead of the usual result, on a 7-9 you attract unwanted attention.

GUERRILLA

When you attempt to evade detection or sneak past others, roll +KNOW. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1, or choose 2 and take a risk.

- You avoid detection.
- You find something hidden or forgotten.
- You can set up for an ambush.
- You find a way to allow others to follow you without being detected.

PATH-FINDING

When you're leading a group that is travelling a long distance, hold 3, and spend it 1-for-1 on the following options while you travel;

- You lead the group past an area of difficult terrain without issue.
- You find a comfortable, sheltered place to set up camp.
- You're familiar with the area; **DISPEL UNCERTAINTIES** regarding it or the things in it with **advantage** during the journey.
- You find a shortcut, reducing the length of your journey but adding complications.

CANTRIPS

Cantrips are moves not assigned to a particular playbook. Whenever you choose a move, including those chosen when picking a playbook, you make instead choose from the Cantrips list. Cantrips count as playbook moves for the purposes of moves like **BORROWED TIME**.

If you don't have a CHANNEL trait, you may still pick a Cantrip that is rolled with +CHANNEL. When using it, explain what device, enchanted item, or otherwise allows you to wield magic in this way and act as if you had a CHANNEL of +1.

CANTRIPS

CLASSICAL SPELLCASTING

Choose a Basic Move: while out of your Astir, you may roll it with +CHANNEL instead of the usual Trait. If things go wrong, your magic backfires. Using magic to exploit people's emotions and minds is as bad as using magic to hurt them, and will be remembered as such. If you do use magic violently, use the following profile:

- Hand-casting II (*ranged / area*)

ADVANCED EVOCATION (REQUIRES: CLASSICAL SPELLCASTING)

Choose one of the following tags (*defensive, decisive, restraining, impact*); when you use **CLASSICAL SPELLCASTING** violently, add that tag to the above profile. At your Director's discretion, you may choose a tag not on the above list or create a new one entirely.

DON'T DIE YET

When you enter battle with a group of allies, give up to four people (including yourself) **advantage** when they next **BITE THE DUST**.

SEEK ALLIES

Once per Sortie, you may summon a cadre of creatures, spirits, elementals or otherwise to assist you in combat. When you do so, you may act as a squad until the end of the scene.

HASTE

If there is a question of who acts first in a situation, the answer is you. If multiple characters with **HASTE** are all attempting to be the quickest, they act simultaneously.

DENY

When you use magic to temporarily restrict the actions of another, roll +CHANNEL.

On a 10+, you prevent them from taking a single action or move.

On a 7-9, as above, but you or someone else rushes to act against them in **desperation**.

FIRE-EATER

You may take a *peril* (seared, volatile, overcharged) to untick 'overheating' from your Astir and act with **confidence**.

ALL IN

When you have **advantage** on a move, you may take an additional **advantage** at the cost of also acting in **desperation**.

LIFESENSE

You have a keen sense of where all living creatures around you up to *sniper* distance are, as well as roughly how strong their life force is—living things close to death, for example, seem more faint and difficult to conceive of in this way.

TRUTH-MAKING

When you **READ THE ROOM**, on a 12+ you may answer one of your questions yourself—though your answer must be within the relative realm of possibility.

PERSONAL FAMILIAR

You have a small familiar that aids you, like an animal companion or spirit or summoned creature. Once per Sortie, you can ignore a single **disadvantage** as they help you out of trouble. Once per Downtime, they can report back to you about the events of a Scene you weren't present for.

ADVANCEMENT

In Armour Astir, characters earn advancements in three ways;

- Completing a GRAVITY clock
- Compromising, sacrificing or outgrowing a Hook
- Spending 6 Spotlight, earned on a 6-

Advancements can be spent on the following options, once each;

- Choose an Additional Move from your playbook or from the Cantrips list.
- Choose an Additional Move from your playbook or from the Cantrips list.
- Choose an Additional Move from your playbook or from the Cantrips list.
- Choose an Additional Move from another playbook or from the Cantrips list.
- Increase a Trait by 1, to a max of +3.
- Increase a Trait by 1, to a max of +3.

After you have advanced and chosen from the above options 3 times, you may also choose from the following additional options.

- Choose a new Move from the Soldier Moves.
- Choose a new Move from the Soldier Moves.
- Choose a new playbook. Keep what moves you and your Director agree are truly part of your character, and discard the others. Replace them with the starting moves for your new playbook. You do not gain its starting equipment.
- Choose a new character: your old one retires from play according to their Hooks, and passes one of their Moves onto your new one.

SOLDIER MOVES

GET OUT OF MY WAY!

When you come to blows with your Rival, see someone you have a GRAVITY clock with die, or witness the Authority commit a truly terrible act, hold 3.

You may spend this hold 1-for-1 to **STRIKE DECISIVELY** against non-Rival or Main foes, even if they aren't *defenceless*, and treat any result of 6 or below as a 7-9.

RED COMET

Any Astir you channel gains an extra Artifact part called 'Uncanny Speed', and its Power capacity is increased by 1.

FLASH

You may communicate with other Channelers instantly over great distances in times of urgent need, sending words or even feelings and sensations to **HELP OR HINDER** faster than anyone or anything else can act: so quickly, in fact, that you may do it after a roll has been made.

Additionally, dead characters may still **HELP OR HINDER** you, their spirit able to speak with you from beyond.

SELFLESS

You may put yourself in *peril* to completely defend another from one source of incoming harm, like a blade or a challenging statement, however severe it is.

You may put yourself in *peril* to attempt something uncanny, superhuman, or unbelievable.

INDOMITABLE

Whenever you make a move, on a result of 12+ you may clear a *risk*.

WHITE DEVIL

Stories of your talent and your Astir have spread far and wide among your enemies: anyone other than your Rival who would act against you whilst piloting your Astir must take the *risk* (intimidated) to do so. This *risk* is cleared if they witness your Astir be seriously damaged, if you flee from fighting, or if they have reason to believe you aren't piloting it.

NIGHTMARE OF SOLOMON

You have acquired a weapon of horrific potential. When you deploy it to destroy your enemy with overwhelming force, you succeed. Resolve all your GRAVITY clocks as if you had filled them, even ones that have been previously committed to and locked. No advancements are gained for clocks resolved in this manner. In the future, no matter how noble your intent or just the results, your actions will be used to justify further violence.

THE ARITY METHOD

Once per Sortie, when you would **BITE THE DUST**, succeed as if you'd rolled a 10+. Act with **confidence** and **advantage** the next time you would **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY**.

ORIGINAL VIDEO EPISODE

During Downtime, you may lead a raid or operation against the Authority to disrupt their activities as your Downtime Scene. Tell the Director what you set out to do, and who comes with you. If it's anyone you have GRAVITY with, advance it. During the next Conflict Turn, the Cause may start a Conflict Scene of their choice with one success already.

ONCE THE WAR'S OVER

When you talk about what's waiting for you after the fighting's over, hold 3.

You may spend your hold 1-for-1 to automatically succeed on any move as if you had rolled a 10+.

Whether or not you spend your hold, you will perish before the beginning of your next Downtime. Don't roll to **BITE THE DUST** as usual—instead, let your Director know when you think it's time.

THAT'S DIALECTICS

You take over another Faction of the Cause, and steer them towards something impressive. Start an 6-step long-term project clock. Once it's filled, on your next **PLAN AND PREPARE**, every d6 rolled counts as a result of 6. You also may then **LEAD A SORTIE** in **confidence** for as long as the Faction remains in the Cause, as they fight alongside you.

You must work on this project at least once per Downtime when possible: otherwise your influence over the other Faction dwindles, and the clock is reduced 1 step.

MIDSEASON UPGRADE

The opportunity to acquire something of immense power and value will present itself to you. It might be a tier IV Astir, a legendary Ardent, some other kind of powerful magical artifact or something of more mundane importance.

FISHER OF MEN

When you **STRIKE DECISIVELY** and succeed, you may impose one of your Hooks on the other party if they survive. If that character belongs to a player, it does not count against their usual limit of three Hooks.

CHANGED FOR GOOD

Select a **committed** Gravity clock. Replace one of your Traits with its value, describing how that relationship bettered you in one aspect.

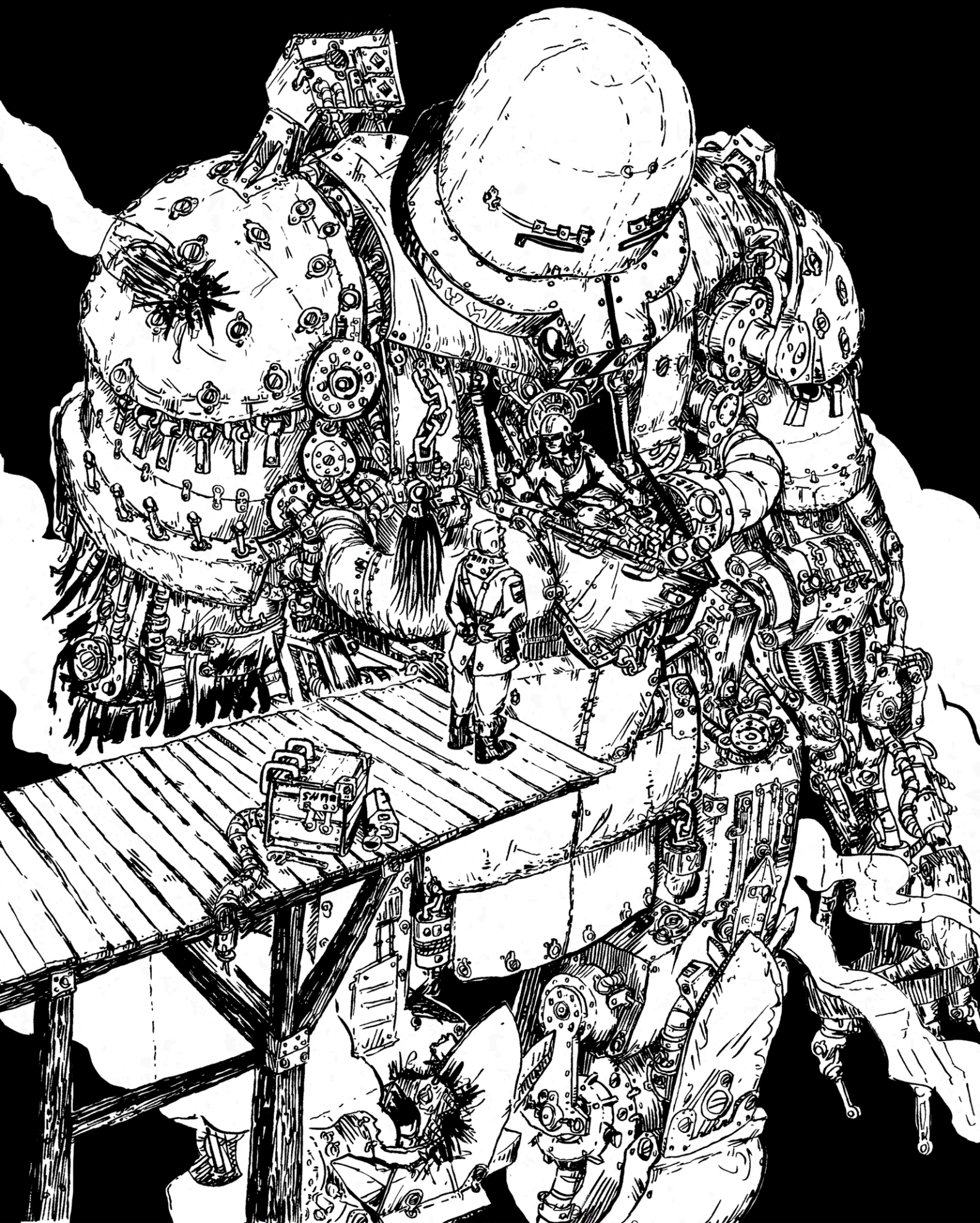
According to Irion (1Y Dimitri, p.173), Astirs used in regions of the Western Reaches (his studies focusing on Jennehill and Locaster primarily), even smaller ardents used for simple labour work, would “encounter what is colloquially known in the area as ‘rust monsters’ (but recognisable through simple observation as a common oxide-dog, *canis lupus ferrugo*) on a near-daily basis.” Irion detailed further how these encounters would affect constructs whose designs incorporated iron plating or frames, noting that “even when guards posted nearby were able to chase away the creatures quickly from idle Astirs, repeated cases of even minor contact would result in a build-up of rust so severe that most were no longer functional after two to five weeks of deployment.” In my own observations, extending from Jennehill and Locaster into the current western front in the Dragonspine Mountains, I found this estimate of two to five weeks to be charitable.

At three military forts in the region of Dragonspine, all constructed within the last five years, quartermasters reported to me an operational lifespan of, at most, three weeks for Astirs whose designs featured iron heavily. Furthermore, Astirs whose designs used iron in a more reduced role—just as armour plating, as joints, or as is commonly used in radiator grilles—would still require much heavier maintenance over their typical operational lifespan.

Why, then, are the troops deployed to the Western Reaches so often supported by newer and more expensive Astir designs that are still constructed on iron frames?

- Excerpt from ‘A Treatise On Endemic Rust Monsters & Their Effects On Astir Deployment In The Western Reaches’, Artificer-Knight Cecil Knowles, Third Year Of Emperor Dimitri’s Reign





CONFLICT & TIERS

As a game largely about getting into magical mechs and fighting fascism, much of the interaction between players and other characters (during Sorties at least) will involve them in various kinds of conflict or negotiation. In Armour Astir, much of this will largely fall under the purview of two moves: from friendly duels to fights to the death, from lying to avoid suspicion to addressing a nation.

In the fiction, players will **EXCHANGE BLOWS** to set opponents up, wear them down, give an argument strength or cast doubt, then **STRIKE DECISIVELY** to land a killing blow, dismiss an argument entirely, or otherwise follow through on opportunities opened up by their earlier exchanges.

Mechanically, players will **EXCHANGE BLOWS** to make an opponent *defenceless* by giving them a number of *risks* or *perils*, then **STRIKE DECISIVELY** to remove them as a threat according to the fiction.

Of course, there are many factors at play that might affect how the rolls behind these moves go down. Physical conflicts are affected most obviously by physical things: by the weapons being used as well as what kind of protection those involved have to rely on. The terrain, relationships, weather, and so on might also come into play. Anything settled with words is likely to be affected on a more circumstantial basis: by what is being said, who it is being said to, and countless other little factors.

What this largely boils down to is having one or more levels of **advantage** or **disadvantage**, or if you're particularly lucky (or unlucky) the ability to act with **confidence** (or **desperation**). See Opposing With +CLASH and Opposing With +TALK below for specifics on things that might affect these rolls.

Affecting both equally are Tiers, the embodiment of what kinds of creature or object something can, broadly speaking, be considered in the same league as. Fighting something below your tier is far easier (see: an Astir stomping on a man), whilst fighting something above your tier is far harder (see: a man trying to stomp on an Astir). See Tiers below for more information.

Just as complex spells often require intricate rituals and awkward somatic gestures, the magic used to power an Astir can be augmented by intentionally complicating its design. 'Flourish components', as they are referred to, sometimes take the form of odd, restrictive design choices, and sometimes look like compact rube-goldberg-esque contraptions that contribute somatic components to an Astir's spells.

Regardless of their differences, they can largely be described as additions to an Astir that serve no true function, their lack of purpose providing a supplementary source of magical energy. I am told that new Channelers, at schools abreast of such advancements, are given a stern warning: be wary of Astirs with capes.

- Excerpt from 'Efficient Inefficiency: Practical Applications of the Flourish Theory', Prof. Keller June, ERA3/1 (Lilac)

OPPOSING WITH +CLASH

When it comes to literal combat, weapon ranges and **approaches** are the primary thing to consider. Many *tags* also offer benefits when using certain moves or fighting in certain situations.

RANGES

Weapon ranges, largely, define if you can trigger moves like **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY**. They might also have relevance in attempts to intimidate or threaten: a smart foe might know full well that you're bluffing with a weapon they have little to fear from.

- *Melee*: This weapon is used to physically hit targets at close range.
- *Ranged*: This weapon is used to hit targets from a medium distance or close up.
- *Sniper*: This weapon is used to shoot at targets from a long or medium distance.

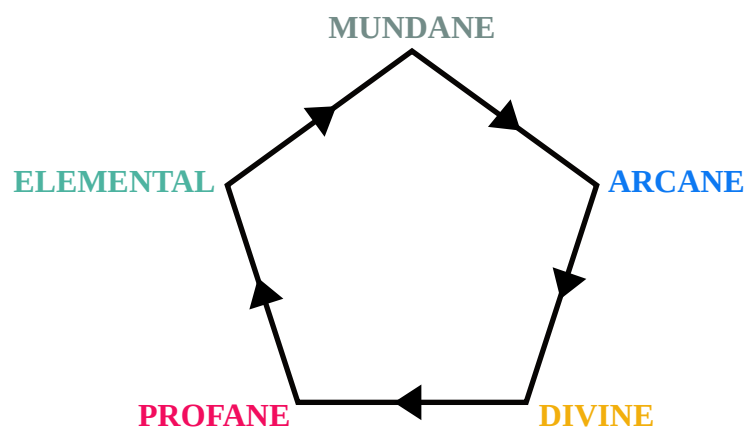
Range tags are relative to the tier of the weapon—an Astir-sized sword with *melee* range can strike something a lot further away than a sword wielded by a person, for example. *Ranged* and *sniper* weapons mounted on something higher tier than them are re-tuned so that their range bands are relative to their new housing.

APPROACHES

There are, in the broadest of senses, five **approaches** to combat. Each is particularly effective against another, but in turn vulnerable in the same way. You act with **confidence** when facing an **approach** yours is strong against, and **desperation** when facing an **approach** that is strong against yours. They are:

- **Mundane**, the **approach** of those with blades, bows and shields, which cuts easily through **arcane** defences meant to protect against magic with simple steel.
- **Arcane**, the **approach** of those who weave pure unsuspected magic, which pierces the domains of the **divine** well, having long since been stolen from them.
- **Divine**, the **approach** of those with a godly sponsor, which scours the **profane** from our world quite readily, holy powers being anathema to those of the dark.
- **Profane**, the **approach** of those who consort with the unkind and the forgotten, which is effective against the natural forces of our world, and as such easily smothers **elemental** magic.
- **Elemental**, the **approach** of those wielding fire and frost, which easily subverts **mundane** defences that rely on materials that warp, conduct and shatter under the elements.

You might work on a long-term project to change the damage type of something, or frame a Downtime Scene **SOMEWHERE ELSE** to find a quick way do it temporarily.



On foot, your **approach** is typically defined by your playbook. Ardents, Astirs, Carriers and other magical constructs have their own **approaches** which override yours when you're fighting in them.

OPPOSING WITH +TALK

When trying to achieve things with words, the tags on your gear and weapons tend to be less important (though if intimidation is your chosen avenue, this might not be the case). What matters more is what is being said, who it is being said to, what kind of person they are, and so on.

DEBATE ME

When you're using **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY** to persuade, intimidate, deceive, inspire and otherwise use words get your way, it's very important to keep the facts of your fiction in mind. Rugged mercenaries are less likely to cower under intimidation than shy scholars, and it's harder to negotiate with an expert merchant than someone with barely a sale to their name: situations like these are where **advantage** and **disadvantage** might often come from when using +TALK. You should feel free to suggest these to your Director when they arise.

When opposing someone with +TALK, **approach** doesn't matter. Unless you decide it does for some reason, in which case: refer to the above +CLASH rules for a reminder on that.

STRIKE DECISIVELY notes that on a success your foe is removed as a threat according to the fiction. When rolling with +TALK, the fiction will typically be that they truly believe what you've said, are willing to carry out some instruction or bow under threat, etc. As such, **STRIKING DECISIVELY** in this manner means the character will do what you wanted and then cease being a threat to you. This might mean they stand aside, retreat, are so well-convinced of your disguise they no longer suspect you at all, or so on: whatever it is you wanted, you get it for the rest of the Sortie.

Characters must still be made *defenceless* for this to happen. In social circumstances, the *risks* and *perils* you inflict to do so are likely to be very different to the ones you inflict in actual combat. You might mention a name that makes someone *uneasy*, imply violence that leaves someone *scared*, or speak with courage that inspires *confidence* in someone you're trying to instruct. That's not to say *dangers* of a more physical nature don't effect social engagements and vice-versa: someone already hurt could be easy to intimidate, just as someone who is scared might falter in battle.

Additionally, *risks* and *perils* might be a way to get what you want temporarily or to a smaller effect: you might **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and make someone *fooled* or *charmed*, but remember that this is never going to be as reliable or permanent as securing a result with **STRIKE DECISIVELY**.

TALKING TO GOD

While weapon tags like *bane* and *ruin* provide an avenue of overcoming tier differences (see Tiers on the next page), those differences also apply when you're **EXCHANGING BLOWS** or **STRIKING DECISIVELY** with +TALK. If you're just one person, it can be hard to sway the entire crew of a Carrier, intimidate someone in an Astir, or lie to a deity. There are, of course, plenty of situations where those differences break down though. If you are someone in a position of authority over them that crew might listen to you immediately; if you know the trigger word for an explosive rune etched onto that Astir, you have leverage behind your threat.

For that reason, when rolling with +TALK, you may treat words as having the *bane* or *ruin* tags where appropriate, or even ignore the tier rules altogether if the situation calls for it.

TIERS

In Armour Astir, there are five tiers things usually come in when it comes to conflict, reaching from tier I (characters) to tier V (carriers). Weaponry within each of these categories is described relatively—that is to say, in general, a Carrier-sized weapon with *area* has a much larger effective radius than a person-sized weapon with *area*—because close range between two people is a lot smaller than close range between two Carriers.

- Tier I covers any creature of around vaguely human strength and resilience.
- Tier II covers simple magical constructs and people particularly talented in combat. Monsters that might threaten two or three people alone could be tier II.
- Tiers III and IV are Armour Astirs; large, magically-animated suits of armour that are piloted by someone with magical ability, referred to here as a Channeler. Monsters with tough hides or magical protection might be one of these tiers.
- Tier V is the realm of vessels and vehicles on a grander scale than any single construct - ships, trains, or other interesting creations, that often carry and deploy constructs or Astirs into battle. Carriers, like the one the players have, are tier V. Immense creatures, like krakens or really big dragons could be considered tier V.
- Tier VI covers things beyond Carriers or Astirs. They are things men might call unfathomable, or unknowable—but men designed them, men lifted the timbers, and men guided them until they could walk. It is not the shape or definition of the divine that makes them beyond us.

You should feel free to include exceptions to the above in your game. Ardents of a higher tier that can go toe-to-toe with Astirs more readily, smaller Carriers or ships that are only tier III/IV, and other things can be interesting to think about: what does a tier V person look like?

Typically, you can only use things of the same tier as you unless a move specifies otherwise, or unless you're 'inside' of something that is a higher tier: a construct, an Astir, a defensive emplacement, etc. Using equipment that is lower tier than you does not bring it up to level: if a tier III Astir picks up a tier I dagger in it's big stone fingers and tries to stab another Astir with it, the only thing that's going to break there is the dagger.

LOWER VS HIGHER TIER

People, monsters, weapons and so on have a tier—typically the same as its intended users. These tiers reflect what they are typically effective against: tier III weapons are built to fight tier III things, and so on.

When using moves like **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY** to attack something a tier above you, make that move with **disadvantage**. If your opponent is two or more tiers above you, you simply don't pose a reasonable threat to them: your move fails, and you must **BITE THE DUST**. An exception to these rules can be made if there's a reason your foe would be left vulnerable to you despite their advantage: an open Astir cockpit, a personal connection, an unguarded back, etc.

Another exception to this rule are weapons with the *bane* and *ruin* tags, which make up for tier differences of one and two steps respectively. These still kick in if it's not enough to make up the full gap: if your foe is two tiers above you, *bane* still puts you in **disadvantage** territory by letting you act one higher.

HIGHER VS LOWER TIER

Working the other way around basically works in the opposite direction. Take **advantage** when acting against something of one tier lower than you; if they're two or more below, skip **EXCHANGING BLOWS** and go right to **STRIKING DECISIVELY**.

Bane and *ruin* only make up for being lower tier than your foe: they don't actually increase it. For example, if you're wielding a tier III weapon with *bane*, and your opponent is tier III, you don't take **advantage** attacking them: your tier is still III, not IV.

If all this is a bit much at first, the important thing to remember is that if you want to hurt something one step tougher than you, you need *bane* on your weapon. If you want to hurt something two steps tougher than you, you need *ruin*. If you want to hurt something three or more steps tougher than you, you need a plan.

SITUATIONS & EDGE CASES

OUTNUMBERED

When **actors** or players use their numbers to even the odds—either by attacking as a coordinated squad, or by just attacking en masse—they can threaten to overwhelm a foe. When you're outnumbered heavily, two-to-one at least, you have the *risk* (outnumbered). The same goes for **actors** when they are overwhelmed in the same way. This is a very situational *risk*, and there's lots of ways you might get rid of it or negate it entirely. For example;

- Dispatching enough foes that they simply don't outnumber you anymore
- Having a weapon tag like *area* that would reasonably let you hold your own against multiple foes
- Fleeing the area, either to find allies or just to get away from the fight

DEFENCELESS VS DEFENCELESS

If you find yourself in a situation where two *defenceless* characters are still continuing to fight, lead with the player character if one is involved. Let them **STRIKE DECISIVELY**, and then have them **BITE THE DUST** if they fail. If there's no player characters involved, just decide who is able to strike a desperate blow first. If both parties involved are player characters, skip straight to rolling a **BITE THE DUST** each at the same time to resolve the fight; keeping in mind there's a good chance this ends in mutual destruction.

ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD

If you have time and aren't under threat, it's easier to deal some serious damage to things that you otherwise might struggle with. Someone on foot would stand practically no chance against a tier III Astir during a fight; but give them a sledgehammer and a few minutes, and I bet they can break something important. Even if you don't have weaponry that would usually suffice to make up for a tier difference, like things that have the *bane* tag, you can also make up for it with volume of attempts.

In situations where you have the opportunity to cause harm but no chance of failure, or where failure does not matter—like taking potshots at a launching and fleeing ship, wrecking a stationary Astir with mundane equipment, etc—take the tier difference between yourself and your target, and roll a d6. The result is the amount of minutes of uninterrupted work (in those circumstances) you'd need to inflict a *peril*. It is, of course, up to your Director whether you actually have that much time.

For example, say you (tier I) are loose in the guts of an Authority carrier (tier V), with decent cover and a box of tools. The tier difference is 4, and your die result is 5; it would take you 20 minutes of uninterrupted work damaging the ship's internals to inflict a *peril*. Is that the kind of time you have running around an enemy ship, unquestioned and uninterrupted? Maybe, but it doesn't seem likely.

Either way, doing damage in this way is never going to be subtle. The price of inflicting harm without rolling in this way, and exposing yourself to the potential of failure, is that it is always noticeable; it's loud, obvious and noisy.

TAGS & GEAR

Equipment in Armour Astir is distinguished by a few things. While weaponry has specific ranges and types of damage, all equipment also has tags. These tags help define an object in terms of narrative effects as well as more specific mechanical ones. Feel free to the lists below with options of your own to better suit your campaign and setting, as well as the tastes of you and your players. Neither list is by any means exhaustive.

Some tags offer a specific mechanical effect, whilst others are simply descriptive. Don't let this convince you narrative-focused tags cannot have a mechanical effect, though: consider the effects on your story their descriptive nature might lend! They might make triggering moves possible, provide vectors for other action, or give you a good excuse to give your Director a wink and a smile and say "wouldn't x give me **advantage** here, don't you think?". Though, keep in mind, your Director is well within their rights to use them to impose **disadvantage** on you instead. Trying to, say, enact careful and precise violence with something that's messy might be a little harder than you'd like.

UNARMED COMBAT & TIER

Generally speaking, your fists (or whatever other part of your body you want to hit people with) are the same tier as you. You, Dear Reader I, have Fists I. When a carrier, the Little Flourish V, crashes into something, it is hitting it with Several Hundred Tonnes Of Steel and Ceramic V. When a move changes your tier—for example, the **GIANT SLAYER** move making a Scout count as tier III—this also changes the tier you are fighting at without a weapon.

This does not necessarily mean you can punch clean through an Astir, though: fists are fists, and bringing your hands to a swordfight means your Director is likely to impose some limits or negative modifiers to your moves unless you have some way of making up for your reduced reach and the fact that punching metal sucks really bad.

ACQUIRING EQUIPMENT

Typically, there isn't anything for sale on board your Carrier. Okay, there's probably a quartermaster you could requisition things from, if you're willing to wait for it to be shipped out, and maybe you could persuade a private merchant to tag along—but in general, when you want to buy something you need to go and find it. The **SOMEWHERE NEARBY** Downtime Scene is generally how this is done, with options for finding things available locally whether they're common or difficult to find.

Objects have a value that determines how costly to acquire they will be. Generally speaking, the higher an object's value, the richer a place you'll need to go to find it: small farming towns do not sell legendary artifacts, usually. Value is provided for all example equipment below, and determined as follows:

- Equipment like weapons, Astir parts, and so on have a starting **value** equal to their Tier—a Tier III object has a starting **value** of 3, etc. The *valuable* and *treasure* tags then increase this by a further +2 or +4 respectively.
- Ardents, Astirs and Carriers have a **value** equal to their Tier squared (a Tier III Astir is 9, while a Tier V Carrier is a whopping 25), and are made using the same creation rules as those developed during character creation. Additions beyond that must be bought separately.

As a remind, **SOMEWHERE NEARBY** functions as follows:

SOMEWHERE NEARBY

The leading player rolls a d4 to see what resources they can muster, and acquires gear or equipment with a total **value** upto the result. They may spend extra **tokens** or *tap* Factions to increase the result by another d4, or trade objects with the *valuable* or *treasure* tags for +2 or +4 respectively. They frame a short scene around this, either alone, or with invited characters.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Buy or trade for something of value, as above.
- Start or advance a long-term project: describe what your work looks like.
- Spend time working or in the field with someone you have GRAVITY with, advancing it.
- Run into trouble: resolve it with moves as usual, and see what you learn.

TAGS

Gear *tags* have a cost (+1, etc) that denotes roughly how beneficial or powerful the effect is. These tags must balance out to 0 overall: meaning positive *tags* must be paired up with negative ones. Feel free to combine *tags* and rewrite them as something that represents multiple effects, or create new ones wherever it suits your campaign. Many playbooks start with gear that ignores these restrictions: that equipment is special! Hold onto it.

Some things don't have *tags* at all, because they do something specific it's easier to just explain.

-2 TAGS

Heavy drawbacks that largely restrict an objects usefulness or availability.

- *Cursed*: You cannot wield anything else once you raise a *cursed* weapon, and it becomes bound to you until the curse is broken. When you die it will consume your essence, probably.
- *Dangerous*: Volatile or difficult to use safely, *dangerous* objects invite dire consequences if not used carefully. Once per Sortie, the director may upgrade a *risk* you acquire while using something dangerous to a *peril*.
- *Dreaded*: This weapon has a history and a reputation that stains it, and stains you as long as you're carrying it. People will treat you with fear and apprehension.
- *Huge*: Basically impossible to move around without help. Absolutely not something you are ever going to hide, either.
- *Junk*: In such a terrible condition it cannot be used. You may remove this tag with a 6-step long-term project.
- *One-Use*: Can only be used a single time per Sortie—perhaps it needs time to recharge, or uses rare ammo, or explodes.
- *Treasure*: Highly valuable—and a gold, glittering target on your back. Increases **value** by +4.

-1 TAGS

Almost entirely negative tags that make an object less useful, more dangerous to have on your person, prone to damage or failure, and so on.

- *2H*: Takes both hands to use properly, though not necessarily just to carry.
- *Bulky*: Large (relative to tier) and difficult or awkward to move around.
- *Drain*: This object draws excessive power from an Astir, and reduces the Astir's **Power** by 1 while equipped. Objects can have this tag multiple times, increasing the reduction.
- *Distinct*: Impressive, loud, or just particularly memorable, *distinct* equipment is hard to be subtle with. Might make you easy to track or follow, or ruin your attempts at stealth.
- *Slow*: There is a delay involved in this objects use, like the travel time of a projectile, or the low speed of a construct. Might, for example, impose **disadvantage** where speed matters.
- *Limited*: You have a particularly *limited* supply or use of this thing—it always seems to run out at the most perilous moments.
- *Messy*: Something messy is imprecise (or indiscriminate), and could have excessive (or intimidating), unwanted results.
- *Intimate*: Requires you to get to get up close and personal, making it hard to use against anyone wielding something with better reach—or anyone just trying to keep their distance.
- *Fragile*: Easily broken, either by shoddy design or frail materials.
- *Forbidden*: Forbidden objects are banned by the Authority, and possession of them or suspicion of such carries a heavy price.
- *Set-Up*: Make moves using this item at **disadvantage** unless you spend time prepare or arm it in some way. In battle this might only be a few moments, but it can make all the difference.
- *Reload*: After firing, this weapon requires you to manually reload it or perform some other action to ready it for use.
- *Unreliable*: This object is prone to failure and breakdowns—make your first move with it each Scene in **desperation**.
- *Weak*: Lacking in physical impact, and generally useless for piercing armour or cover.
- *Valuable*: Expensive to acquire, and fairly sought-after. Increases **value** by +2.

+1 TAGS

These tags have strong beneficial effect. You'll likely need to balance them out with -1 tags, unless you're intentionally making something uncommonly powerful and valuable.

- *Adapted*: This object has been modified or designed to let it overcome the difficulties of certain environments—it might be an amphibious Astir with an air supply, an Ardent designed to keep it's occupants cool in searing-hot terrains, etc.
- **Arcane/Divine/Elemental/Mundane/Profane**: This tag changes your approach to the listed one while you're actively using it.
- *Area*: This weapon affects a large area: while any melee weapon might hit multiple people stood right next to each-other, an area weapon might slice through an entire crowd or several spread-out foes.
- *Bane*: You suffer no penalty against opponents one tier above you when attacking with *bane*.
- *Blitz*: You may spend this tag once per Scene to make a move with **confidence**.
- *Concealable*: Easily hidden—a casual inspection will rarely if ever find it.
- *Decisive*: *Decisive* weaponry is precise and powerful, excellent for ending fights. Once per Scene, you may reroll a failed **STRIKE DECISIVELY** when using it.
- *Defensive*: *Defensive* weaponry is excellent for keeping foes at a distance, parrying their blows, or suppressing them. Once per Scene, you may reroll a failed **EXCHANGE BLOWS** when using it.
- *Impact*: This weapon packs a heavy physical punch, capable of knocking foes down or away easily, and will dent or break through surfaces.
- *Infinite*: This thing either doesn't use ammo or power to function, or uses such small amounts relative to your supply that it is practically endless. You're never in danger of running out as a result of a roll.
- *Guided*: This weapon has guided strikes or projectiles, allowing you to take a 7-9 result when you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** rather than rolling if you wish. Guided projectiles are reliable, but leave little room for finesse.
- *Mounted*: This weapon is mounted or worn in some way that frees up the hands of the user for other tasks. As a result, it's also difficult to disarm a target of without breaking it.
- *Restraining*: Can restrict or slow targets down in some way, making it hard for them to escape or move without expending a lot of effort.
- *Refresh*: Objects that *refresh* can only be used once per Scene, but automatically replenish or restore themselves even if they are destroyed or wasted (they cannot be taken away from you by a *peril*).
- *Ward*: You may use this tag once per Sortie to reduce an incoming source of harm from a *peril* to a *risk*, or from a *risk* to nothing.

+2 TAGS

The big deal. These tags have a clear, strong effect, and as a result are going to be uncommon on all but the strongest or most drawback-laden equipment.

- *Ruin*: As per *bane*, but up to two tiers higher rather than one.
- *Versatile*: This tag combines the effects of *decisive* and *defensive*.
- *Vorpal*: *Vorpal* weaponry is exceedingly lethal: you may use this tag once per Sortie to upgrade a *risk* you'd inflict to a *peril* instead.

REGARDING VALUABLE AND TREASURE

Valuable and *treasure* are a pair of tags that make equipment more expensive to acquire. They are -1 and -2 cost tags respectively since this increase in difficulty should be represented as a balancing factor when it comes to tag costs.

On equipment you don't pay for—i.e, equipment you or your Astir etc starts with—these tags can look like a 'free' way of balancing out positive tags. They are not. People like having expensive things, and many people will go to great lengths to acquire them without paying. If your players are carrying around *valuable* or *treasured* equipment often, look for opportunities to redistribute their wealth.

Additionally, if the players are looking to buy something EXPENSIVE, hoarding *valuable* and *treasure*-tagged items are effectively the best way to do it. So when they do so, remind them that they're filling their Carrier with chests of gold whilst people go hungry.

TAGS & GEAR

“Magic weapons and towering constructs will win a war, for sure... but a blacksmith cannot reforge magic any better than an Astir can pull a plough. And who will buy them from you, but the next lot to raise their flags? Think of your future, lords and ladies, and think only of armouries that can be smelted down one day.”

- Excerpt from Rhaz-an-Reer Court Records, hearing the plea of an unnamed worker, 5/4—0031—Mithril Century



TIER I EQUIPMENT

Tier I equipment is intended for use by people, like humans, elves, whatever brand of furry lives in your setting or other similarly scaled characters. It is generally easier to find than higher tier equipment, and often cheaper too. Since the focus of this game is largely on combat between Astirs, tier I equipment is largely abstracted.

A tier I weapon will typically have a range and possibly one or two tags from above. All playbooks receive a weapon, but some additional examples can be found below.

To some degree, feel free to just wholesale make up what tier I weapons exist in your world, because unless you're doing it to try and gain a large advantage on a roll or to try and deus-ex-machina your way out of a bad situation, you probably can't break anything badly enough that it matters. Take that fire sword. It's cool.

EXAMPLE TIER I WEAPONS

Infantry Weapon I (melee)

Simple, sturdy weapons like blades and clubs.

Dagger I (melee / intimate, concealable)

A concealable dagger, easily worn beneath clothing and thrown if needed.

Greatsword I (melee / area, 2H)

A large weapon, with good reach and weight, perfect for taking heads. Praxis.

Armourbane I (melee / fragile, decisive)

A thin, pretty blade, good for slipping between armour plates.

Enchanted Blade I (melee / distinct, bane)

What was once simple steel now carries the unmistakable sheen of ritual.

Partisan I (melee / defensive, 2H)

A long spear, perfect for keeping your friends safe and your enemies at a very specific distance, as the saying goes.

Bow I (ranged / decisive, 2H)

For when you don't need anything fancy, a bow is perfectly capable of doing the job for as long as you have arrows.

Sidearm I (ranged / defensive, weak)

The typical protections afforded to Astir pilots: a reliable tool capable of firing bursts of light arcane energy.

Raypistol I (ranged / limited, bane)

A powerful but short-lived firebolt wand, fitted with a comfortable grip.

Boltrifle I (ranged / blitz, 2H)

Effectively repeating crossbows fed by lightweight 'barrels' of ammunition, bolt rifles are a common sight among troops of any real armed force.

Rayrifle I (sniper / reload, ruin, 2H)

A heavy rifle, often using magical crystals or wands as charge for a single shot. Their bulk, heavy recoil and cost makes them highly uncommon, but not overly so: after all, little else hand-held will put a hole through an Astir.

Ashstaff I (ranged / area, bane, unreliable, 2H)

A large, shoulder-carried staff charged with incendiary magic. A little lighter and easier to use than a rayrifle, but still fairly bulky and lacking in the ability to pierce the protective wards of Astirs.

EXAMPLE TIER I GEAR

Luxury Gift I

For good first impressions, making up for bad ones, or just plain bribery.

Farspeech Stone I

Stones of Farspeech allow you to communicate over great distances with the holder of a linked stone. Most are enchanted to be linked only to one other stone, but more expensive versions can be linked to as many as the owner requires.

Construct Sensor I

Circular tables with a surface constructed of an array of enchanted steel pins. The pins independently slide up and down when unregistered Constructs are detected in a certain radius, creating a rough three-dimensional relief of oncoming forces. The height of raised pins correspond to the size of a detected constructs, and larger tables with denser arrays allow for more precise reliefs.

Latch I

Basically handles enchanted to lock into place when pushed against something magical, Latches are typically used by ground forces to hitch a ride on constructs that don't have room for them to ride inside of. Also available as a pair of weaker Latches, built into a glove and boot, so that the wearer may simply hold a hand and foot against a construct to attach to it.

Grappling Hook I (Allows you to climb or grapple)

A small sturdy grip attached to a barrel loaded with an steel hook, which is propelled by forceful magic. An attached cord can then be reeled in, allowing the holder to quickly relocate.

Invisibility Cloak I (fragile, valuable, lets you be invisible)

Generally speaking, doing just about anything is cooler whilst invisible.

Arcane Charge I (ruin, one-use)

A destructive spell delayed by a wax timer. Stick it on an Astir, light the wick, and run for your life.

TIER II EQUIPMENT

The most common way players and other characters might make themselves tier II is by piloting an ardent: a sort of magical vehicle or construct. There are some examples of ardents on the following page, but here's some examples of tier II weapons that might be used by a player with the Scout playbook, or might be found as emplaced weapons mounted in a fortress or some other defensive position. To create an Ardent, choose an **approach** and two Parts or Weapons from the Astir creation rules that do not cost **Power**, or make up your own. Ardents and their weapons are tier II.

Baneblade II (melee / bane, 2H)

Most Astir pilots do not concern themselves with the scrambling of foot-soldiers. Some of these pilots meet very unexpected ends.

Might also be: **Blowtorch**, **Enchanted Broadsword**, **Bolt Gauntlets**

Warp-Slinger II (ranged / blitz, infinite, huge)

An emplaced device incorporating multiple wands linked to a simple firing ritual that can be triggered by even those not gifted with magic.

Might also be: **MG Turret**, **Point Laser**, **Multi-Crossbow**

Ardent Rifle II (ranged / bane, 2H)

A large two-handed tool that fires searing bolts of light, capable of burning through even an Astir's defences. Typically used by ardents, due to its weight.

Might also be: **Arbalest**, **Flame Staff**, **Greatbow**

Seeker Cluster II (ranged / guided, defensive, reload, messy)

Guided by a faint magical intelligence, this device lets loose a swarm of small magical crystals to hound a particular target. Though they struggle to pierce armour, these crystals shatter on impact, resulting in sharp shrapnel.

Might also be: **Orbiting Motes**, **Shock Rod**, **Command Bracelets & Drone**

--BEGIN PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT--

KEEPER 02: ...in te food trough. Et was, much kind of [unintelligible]

KEEPER 01 (interrupting): --Sabe Graces, wie gets et? (shouting) Baron! Wass griber tha, hein?

GRF-B41 'BARON' (150 decibel emanation from the obelisk, sufficient to dispel the recording daemon for approximately two seconds): A KNIFE.

KEEPER 02: (shouting) NIE! KOLP SIE OBER EN DROPPIT!

--END PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT--

- Excerpt from untitled ritual recording, Aesefyreth, 23 Cropquart Y8.34

ARDENT NAMES / TAGS

Steed Ardent II *mundane*

- Iron Hooves II (melee/ intimate, blitz)
- Steel Plating II (+ward)

A large, horse-shaped mechanism driven by simple magic. Steed Ardents are no faster than a normal horse, but never tire or want for food, making them much easier to maintain.

Might also be: Armoured Horse, Motorbike, Personal Shuttle

Transport Ardent II *mundane*

- Cargo Hold II (spacious)
- Standardised Parts II

For moving things from point A to point B - just make sure you have an escort.

Might also be: Van, Trader Caravan, Cargo Shuttle

Service Ardent II *arcane*

- Ardent Fists II (melee / intimate, blitz)
- Condenser Stave II (ranged / infinite, 2H)

Service Ardents are large, roughly humanoid constructs, designed to perform heavy lifting and assist infantry forces without impacting their resupply costs much.

Might also be: Loader Frame, Exo-suit, Industrial Drone

Tank Ardent II *arcane*

- Salvo Stave II (sniper / area, bane, messy, reload)
- Hexplate II (+ward)

Protected by heavy metal plating and carried by large, flexible legs, Tank Ardents are capable of launching explosive magical spells over a long distance.

Might also be: Tank, Fighter Jet, Artillery Platform



ACT II

SCENE III. Gatehouse above the Battle of Almafwyrr

Enter MYTHRY and ROMERE

ROMERE

Beloved! What a gift you have given to appear before me now.
We were fated to meet, surely?

MYTHRY

You truly think our fates are bound? It is by your lord's will
you are sent to die today, not by mine.

MYTHRY and ROMERE clash, as do their ASTIRS.

ROMERE

To die? Would you not mourn our love?

MYTHRY

Fool! I will mourn neither your love nor your life. Stand aside
or perish, an example for your lord to follow.

ROMERE

Ha! You would not kill me.

ROMERE is killed.

MYTHRY

[To AUDIENCE] Pity this man! Even at death's door he could
not see I strike not him, but his master. A fatal mistake, to think
I yearn more for love than for justice.

- Excerpt from 'MYTHRY', Promise Apparent, YA223





THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

THE CARRIER

Your Carrier is the place you call home—it's the base of operations you return to between the fighting to rest, recuperate, and hopefully not fight with your friends instead. Your Carrier might be a large ship, flying fortress or other huge vehicle, and is probably powered by a complex blend of magic, alchemy and simple human ingenuity—most importantly, meaning it doesn't require a Channeler to helm it, freeing them up for active service. It is in many ways your most valuable asset.

Your Carrier typically has enough room to store an Astir (or another 'vehicle', like an ardent, a magical carriage, or a horse I guess) per player, and room for any Director characters who journey with them to store their own. It's also assumed to have enough room for each player character who lives there to have their own space—though how large or comfortable this is might vary. The ship's regular crew might not be so lucky. Your Carrier is your home, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's a safe place. Players should be prepared to defend it, and should think about how best to do so. At the very least, it contains a small armoury so that all crew members have access to a simple blade, crossbow, or whatever passes for self-defence in your setting.

MECHANICALLY SPEAKING...

A Carrier is made up of a few things:

- A CREW Trait, starting at +1. Like other traits, it has a maximum of +3. You can also work on a long-term project to increase CREW by 1—it's a 6-step clock, and could represent training, developing new equipment, or something else. CREW might also be lowered should staff be killed or hurt, or if the Carrier is damaged heavily. When the crew acts in your defense or covers for you, you may make a move using +CREW instead of the usual value: they'll do this an amount of times per Sortie equal to the Trait (two times at +2, etc).
- Weapons (for knocking Authority ships out of the sky).
- Quarters, which provide various benefits. You'll start with some of these if some of your players are playing Support playbooks, and choose what benefit they provide.

CREATING A CARRIER

Creating the Carrier, in at least these first few steps, is a group task. Players will decide what kind of craft their Carrier is (and the Director should take this into account when deciding what kinds of Carriers and similar crafts the Authority uses). Once that's out of the way, you have a few initial choices to make between you.

CARRIER TYPE

Firstly, you'll want to decide broadly what kind of craft or vehicle your Carrier is. This is mostly a fiction decision, and will inform where it can go and what kind of places it might take you to—things that, naturally, should tell your Director what types of places you're interested in going to.

- Flying: Lifted through the sky by magic, levitating crystals, lighter-than-air gases or something else entirely, a craft that soars through the air is capable of taking you practically anywhere above ground. You might dramatically take it down between narrow canyon walls, make emergency landings in an arid desert, or explore islands floating above the clouds.
- Ground: Either a single vehicle or a convoy of them, ground Carriers are bound to the earth but might be equipped to explore very particular environments: train wheels that restrict your movements to tracks, big thick wheels for splashing through muddy marshland, mechanical drills for exploring hidden caverns, etc.
- Aquatic: Whether floating on the surface or plumbing the deepest depths, an aquatic Carrier is built for the sea. It, naturally, probably doesn't perform to its fullest once it hits the shore.
- Combination: Your Carrier does some or all of the above! It's just flexible like that. What magic or artifice lets it do this? Is it better in some environments than others? Is this functionality part of its design or something it's been altered for?

WEAPONRY

A Carrier typically has weapons built into it: tier V weaponry to be precise, perfect for taking on Carriers, krakens, elder dragons and fascists (the really big ones). Firstly, you should together decide on your Carrier's **approach**. It may use any of the **approaches**, and that might colour how its weaponry works. Then, figure out;

- A tier V weapon: this is likely of *ranged* or *sniper* range (though if you want a *melee* one, I'm definitely not going to stop you). This is probably positioned or mounted in such a way that it'd be inconvenient to use it smaller targets: it's for taking out things as big as you, after all.
 - Take *tags* that add up to a total cost of +2: describe what kind of weapon you have, and why it has those tags.
 - Take *set-up* and *mounted*: describe what restricts your primary weapon from being useful against all targets and in any situation.
- A tier III weapon: again, likely *ranged* or *sniper*. This is a support weapon of some kind, designed for tackling Astirs that come too close and giving covering fire to your allies in battle.
 - Take *tags* that add up to a total cost of +1: describe what kind of secondary weapon you have, and what makes it suited for defending the Carrier closer up.
 - Take *mounted*: describe where on your Carrier these weapons are installed and how they are controlled. Are they manually crewed, guided by magic, or controlled remotely?

QUARTERS

Finally, Quarters are the facilities, features and upgrades that make your Carrier more than just a box you all sit in to move from one place to the next. Your Carrier starts with everything you'd need to perform the various Downtime Scenes: whatever you decide those things look like.

Additionally, anyone playing a Support playbook gets to add new Quarters to the Carrier. It might be a room or feature that you added to the Carrier anew, a part of your life before the Cause that has been put here to help you do what you do best, or something that has always been part of it and just happens to suit your needs.

Each person playing a Support character should describe what their Quarters are and where they can be found on the ship, as well as what it fictionally provides to them and the crew. Finally, choose two benefits it offers them;

- Take an extra **token** when you enter Downtime.
- You may spend 5 Spotlight rather than 6 to earn an advancement.
- Increase the Carrier's CREW by 1. In the future, when you work on a long-term project to increase it, reduce the size of the Clock by 1 (to a minimum of 4).
- Add +1 to a Trait of your choice (max +3).

THE CREW

This isn't a required mechanical step, but it's in many ways as important as the others. Together, you should think of some people that crew the Carrier! This thing doesn't steer itself (it *could*, I guess, if your players are particularly unsociable), and it's much more colourful to have a support staff of artificers, soldiers, doctors and so on around to make the Carrier a busier place.

If someone is playing as a Captain, this is extra important. If you don't have a crew, whose Captain are you? It'd be a good idea to have a few names on deck for when you make your moves and need to tell people what to do.

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

DIRECTING THE CARRIER

During play, it's likely you'll want the Carrier and its crew to do things. This is, arguably, what they're for. If nobody is playing the Captain playbook, your Carrier and its crew are effectively Director **actors**. They're on your side, but you're not in charge—you're part of a larger effort represented by the Cause, and if you want the Carrier to be used in a certain way you might need to do some convincing. You can expect things like fire support and transport during Sorties, obviously—after all, you're the best Astir team they have—but convincing them to break orders from above or take more drastic courses of action might be difficult.

If you're playing the Captain, forget all of the above. You're in charge! Fly it into the ground if you want to. Okay, maybe don't do that: that's probably not the kind of damage easily repaired even with magic. But as the Captain, you have authority over the Carrier's crew and can give them orders which they will, broadly speaking, follow to the best of their ability. This is why the Captain has moves like **IN COMMAND** and **INFORMATION NETWORK** that use the Carrier's CREW Trait, as well as an extra box for *dangers*: you're not just responsible for your character, you're also playing the Carrier. Just like a Channeler playbook might take a *risk* or be put in *peril* to represent damage to their Astir, the Captain is responsible for anything that happens to the Carrier.



ASTIRS

Astirs are, in simple terms, magical mechs. They are piloted (and powered) by a Channeler (someone with magical ability that is trained to control one), and given their magical nature are not bound in their designs to how we might think of mechs in a typical setting. Materials are much more flexible—sturdy materials can be enchanted to be lightweight, and vice versa—so don't feel tied to heavy metals and so on.

Depending on your setting and who built them, an Astir's design might include wood, stone, ceramics, glass, or even organic matter like bone, natural fabrics or still-living plants. Your Astir with armour made of glass and structure made of monster bones can match one made of twice-forged steel blow for blow if you want it to, because *magic*.

The same goes for its design. Things don't need to look mechanical, or even make logical sense outside of what limits you establish at the table for your game. Your Astir could be a typical humanoid design, or it could be giant cursed monolith with arms that glides everywhere, humming. If everyone's cool with that, Astirs could be closer to planes or other vehicles than mechs if that's what you're interested in.

Talk between yourselves about what is appropriate for your setting, and how far from the norm you want to get with designs. Go with whatever feels right for what you want an Astir's look to say about it and its pilot, but be prepared to have a discussion with the other players in your game about what, broadly speaking, Astirs in your setting look like, as well as where they come from. Are they constructed, or grown, or summoned from elsewhere? Do different factions and groups have their own aesthetics and designs, or even methods they use to get them?

You might also want to discuss control mechanisms. Does your magic allow you to control an Astir with 1:1 body movements, your mech being a true extension of self, or do you still need to guide it through more conventional means? Again, is this different depending on where the Astir came from, or what faction developed it?

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Regardless of the design or model you choose, we assume by default all Astirs are at least capable of the below;

- Free flight when not weighed down by gravity (the natural phenomenon, not the game mechanic)—short, limited flight otherwise.
- Providing a magical source of oxygen, at least for a limited time (some Astirs might be designed to provide something more reliable)
- Facilitating communication between friendly, willing pilots within line of sight (external factors might make this ineffective at long distances, like areas where the ambient magic in the air isn't dense enough)
- Facilitating communication between any pilots when in physical contact.

If the above doesn't work for your game, feel free to change them. It won't break anything!

MECHANICALLY SPEAKING...

When it comes to the actual mechanics of using or creating one, Astirs are made up of the following;

- A core, which determines the **approach** of your Astir.
- Two parts, which offer a variety of bonuses and abilities.
- Weapons, which are used to destroy fascists, imperialists, god, etc.
- A move, which is inherent and unique to that model of Astir.

All Astirs also have a pool of Power. This begins at **4**, and is spent on choosing Parts and Weapons. The remainder becomes the amount you have to spend on the **SUBSYSTEMS** move in play, and you return to this amount every time you start a Sortie.

CREATING AN ARDENT

To create an Ardent, choose an **approach** and two Parts or Weapons from the Astir creation rules that do not cost **Power**, or make up your own. Ardents and their weapons are tier II.

CREATING AN ASTIR

When creating a custom Astir, there are a few simple steps to follow. First, you pick your Astir's core, determining its **approach**. Then, you'll spend some of your Power (**starting with 4**) on Parts and Weapons, before creating a unique move that defines your Astir. As above, your leftover Power then becomes the pool available to you for the **SUBSYSTEMS** move, so you don't need to spend all of it—in fact, it's a good idea to leave yourself some left over!

1) CORES

An Astir's core determines what it's **approach** to combat is. Consider this a broad summary of the kinds of spells and rituals used by your Astir to protect itself and attack your foes. You may freely swap which of your Core's **approaches** is currently in use during Downtime.

Alchemical

An alchemical core, that uses magical substances and mechanisms to amplify the power of a Channeler and allow them to move an Astir.

- Mundane or Arcane

Crystalline

A simple core that uses a large magic-rich crystal or gemstone as a focus for a Channeler's own magic.

- Arcane or Profane

Natural

A gift of the wilds: a living core, of bark, briar or bramble, imbued with all the life and grace of nature. Installed into a war machine.

- Divine or Elemental

Ancient

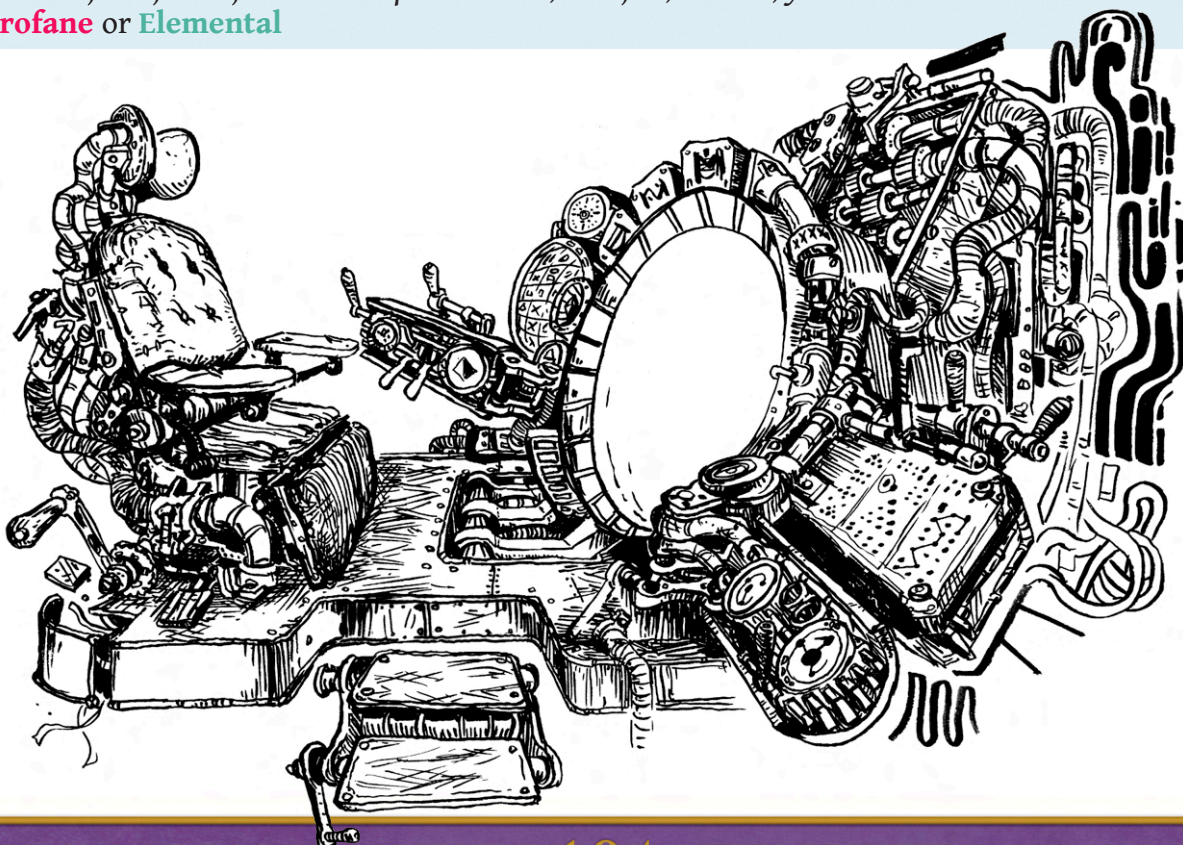
An ancient magical artifact, handed down by the gods to mankind long ago. While once a hero might have borne this into battle, it now fuels an Astir.

- Mundane or Divine

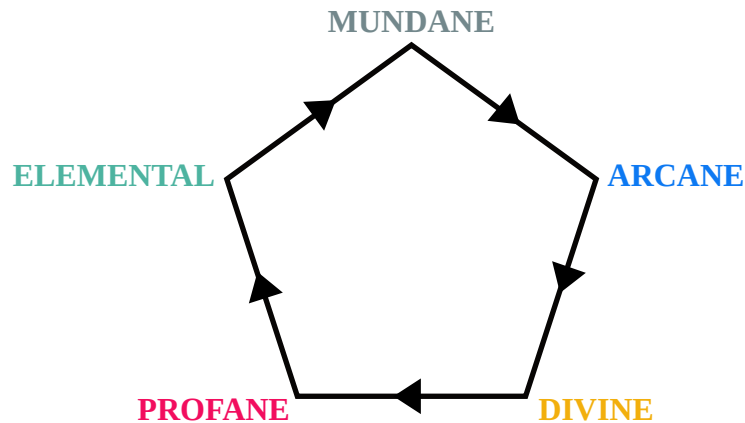
Occult

A core made from false life and stolen power. Blood, sacrifice, demons, you know.

- Profane or Elemental



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS



As a reminder, you act with **confidence** when facing an **approach** yours is strong against, and **desperation** when facing an **approach** that is strong against yours. Don't worry too much that you're giving your Astir a huge weak spot here: all your foes will have one too, and there are ways of permanently or temporarily changing your Astir's **approach**.

You might work on a long-term project to change it, or frame a **SOMEWHERE NEARBY** Downtime Scene to find temporary protection or weaponry of a different kind.

An Astir's **approach** also typically leads the fiction of how they fight and protect themselves. For example:

- A **mundane** Astir might rely on thick armour or speed for protection. At range, it might use weapons that magically propel physical projectiles like metal bolts or pellets. Up close, its melee weapons likely rely on sharp blades or weighted heads to pierce the protections of other Astirs.
- An **arcane** Astir might rely on charms and rituals that cast magical shields or provide limited bursts of invincibility for protection. At range, it might cast destructive bolts of eldritch energy or barrage foes with magical force. Up close, its melee weapons might be enchanted to cut clean through armour or wrapped in arcane energy that lets it pass through shields or barriers.
- A **divine** Astir might rely on blessings or small miracles for protection. At range, it might sear away foes with divine light or undo them with the power of the gods. Up close, its melee weapons might channel the power of a deity through symbols and blessings to smite the Channeler's enemies.
- A **profane** Astir might rely on cloaking itself in shadow or impeding foes with hexes and curses for protection. At range, it might shower other Astirs in acid or poison, or use ignoble magic that harms an Astir's pilot directly. Up close, its melee weapons might use dangerous or forbidden materials for cruel results, or project blades of psychic or shadowy energy that passes through armour easily.
- An **elemental** Astir might rely on bolts of lightning that strike down projectiles or weapon-melting mantles of flame for protection. At range, it might use artifacts that bring about localised storms or flash-freeze enemy Astirs. Up close, its melee weapons could carve apart armour with super-heated blades or discharge a powerful shock on impact.

When adding weapons to your Astir, you should feel free to tweak their names and fiction to better fit the **approach** it uses.

2) PARTS

The charms, rituals and other magical enhancements built into an Astir are what make it truly special. While most of these are free, some are particularly demanding of an Astir's core. Choosing these requires you to spend **Power**, but remember: the more you spend on Astir parts, the less you have during play for **SUBSYSTEMS**.

Some parts are marked as **[Passive]**, indicating their benefit is effective all the time. **[Active]** parts have an effect that can be used once per Sortie (unless specified otherwise) and is then expended. **[Active]** parts may be re-used once expended with the **SUBSYSTEMS** move.

Extra Arms [Passive] (-1 Power) <i>While adding extra arms to an Astir is child's play, properly coordinating them is much more complex.</i>	Two extra arms & hands
Weapon Conduit [Passive] <i>A magical conduit that compensates for the heavy magical load of certain weaponry, trading utility for output.</i>	+2 Power towards weapons only
Divination Codex [Active] <i>A cross-referenced record of countless common omens, signs and prophecies, easily perused by an attuned Channeler in a flash.</i>	Ask 1 question from the READ THE ROOM list
Arcane Forge [Passive] <i>A magically-powered forge, capable of casting common Astir supplies and munitions from magical energy and a local stock of raw materials.</i>	You may COOL OFF to resupply an expended weapon
Flourish Component [Passive] (-1 Power) <i>Like traditional spellcasting relies on strange gestures, chanting and complex foci to provide power, an Astir's design can be complicated in similar ways to achieve much the same.</i>	Regain 1 Power when you roll doubles (1/p roll)
Spell Routines [Passive] (-1 Power) <i>The battlefield is a busy place, full of countless distractions. It can be helpful to let the magic take over sometimes.</i>	Choose to take a result of 7-9 on a move of your choice (before the roll)
Familiar Matrix [Passive] (-2 Power) <i>Matrices store and coordinate Familiars, making it possible for one Channeler to guide many at a time.</i>	Holds and comes with one set of Familiars of your choice
Chromatic Focus [Active] <i>A device capable of twisting and re-aspecting magic. For Channelers that don't like to ever be at a disadvantage.</i>	Swap to any other approach for a single Scene
Alchemical Suite [Passive] (-2 Power) <i>A selection of alchemical equipment, capable of storing and mixing useful potions before venting them into the cockpit as a vapour to save time.</i> Potions; • Red: Remove a peril related to physical injury or wounds. Metallic. • Blue: Take advantage when you next WEAVE MAGIC. Fruity. • Yellow: Take a risk. Act with confidence when you next EXCHANGE BLOWS or STRIKE DECISIVELY. Tangy and sharp.	Take 1 of each Potion when someone LEADS A SORTIE
Input Channel [Passive] <i>Conduit channels running directly from a component to the Channeler allow them to assert more direct magical control over it in times of need.</i>	Make a chosen MOVE with +CHANNEL

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

Chameleon Cloak [Active]

They can't hit what they can't see.

Become invisible for a Scene. The next risk you take is 'revealed'.

Standardised Parts [Passive]

This Astir uses a large amount of common, easy-to-find parts shared with similar models. This makes it easy to repair, lightening the load on everyone else.

Gain +1 **token** during Downtime to spend on repairs only

Warding [Active]

Anything that helps an Astir not explode is a worthwhile investment.

+ward

Transmutation Link [Passive]

A frame endowed with the ability to shift between two forms quickly, making for a versatile Astir.

+aerial OR +aquatic

Resistance Charms [Passive]

While it is difficult to offer a broad blanket of protection against damage and difficulty, more specific avenues of harm are relatively simple to protect an Astir against.

Examples:

- Replication Rituals (Lowers dangers from limb loss)
Crawl. Climb. Rip. Tear. Many hands make light work.
- Failsafe Channels (Lowers dangers from comms disruption)
Hear you loud and clear, 9th. Everyone else went quiet.
- Lightningrod Spines (Lowers dangers from electricity)
Don't be the fool caught out in a storm. Plan ahead.

Lowers dangers from one source.
Peril > Risk
Risk > Nothing

Artifact [Active]

High-quality artifice provides an edge when it is needed most.

Example:

- Familiar Sync Rituals

Co-ordination rituals allow a Channeler to better direct their familiars, cutting down on the 'attunement drift' common in most matrices.

- Dragonscales

For decades before Astirs became a possibility, craftsmen put bartered dragon scales to work as a protective material, never understanding why it seemed less durable wrapped around a man than it did around a dragon. Those profitable wyrms never let slip quite how much magic ran in their blood.

- Afterburners

An injection of volatile alchemical substances paired with a burst of magic can provide a substantial, if short lived, increase in speed. Not for those on a shoestring alchemicals budget.

Grants **advantage** towards tasks the Artifact is designed for (before or after the roll)

Heat Condensers [Active]

Stopping to vent heat during a fight can make you a sitting duck—it makes sense then, that many Channelers who could care less about managing it carefully opt to invest in heat condensers.

Untick 'overheating' from your Astir

Complex Spellwork [Passive] (-1/2/3/4 Power)

Sometimes, the key magical functions of an Astir require sacrifice, their complex enchantments or rituals taking up power and space.

Your Director might ask you to take Complex Spellwork to offset a particularly powerful or rule-bending Astir Move.

3) WEAPONS & ARMS

Astirs can use as many weapons as they can carry. Unless you took extra arms from the previous step, an Astir is assumed to be able to carry and use two weapons, or one with the 2H (two-handed) tag. When you add weapons to your Astir past this initial capacity, you should decide whether they are mounted to your Astir for hands-free use (add *+mounted* and *+drain*) or carried in a holster or sheathe (which costs nothing, but naturally the weapons aren't usable whilst stored). It should go without saying that covering your Astir in dozens of sheathed weapons will come with some narrative drawbacks.

There are both ranged and melee weapons available for Astirs: some of these have the *drain* tag, which causes a weapon to cost **Power**. For convenience, these have been separated out into their own lists. There are also familiars, which can only be chosen if your Astir has a Familiar Matrix (chosen from Astir parts). If you're making a tier IV Astir instead of a tier III one, just replace the tier number and rename the weapon if you want.

The weapon listed below are just examples; re-imagine them to suit you and your Astir however you please. Many of the example Astirs use altered versions of the weapons from these tables!

— Basic Weapons —

Astir Fists III (*melee / intimate, blitz*)

Every Astir can fall back on its fists, but they don't make for graceful brawlers.

Might also be: **Concealed Blades**, **Close-Range Vulcans**, **Mining Drill**

Sword/Mace/Axe & Shield III (*melee / defensive, 2H*)

An Astir-sized melee weapon paired with a shield makes for a reliable combination. Bones and forelimbs of monstrous creatures are often used as sturdy, cheap parts.

Might also be: **Flame Jets**, **Shielded Gauntlets**, **Energy Field**

Forceknife III (*melee / bane, intimate*)

Short (for an Astir) blades jacketed in a layer of magical energy, forceblades are good for when you find yourself up close and personal.

Might also be: **Throwing Glaive**, **Charged Hatchet**, **Enchanted Daggers**

Greatarm III (*melee / area, 2H*)

Often almost as tall as the Astirs wielding them, 'greatarms' are the Astir equivalent of greatswords, battleaxes, and any other kind of large, simple, 2-handed weapon.

Might also be: **Godbuster**, **Laser Flail**, **Industrial Saw**

Force Repeater III (*ranged / defensive, weak*)

A simple mechanism that rapidly fires short blasts of magical energy, serving as an effective reserve weapon.

Might also be: **Powerpistol**, **Mining Laser**, **Point-Defense Turret**

Autoballista III (*ranged / area, blitz, bulky, 2H*)

One of the few non-magical weapons in active use among Channelers. Autoballistae are popular for their fire rate, which allows for fending off groups with a spray of bolts as well as overwhelming a single Astir with a flurry of shots.

Might also be: **Heavy Bowgun**, **Assault Cannon**, **Flechette Launcher**

Rayrifle III (*ranged / infinite, 2H*)

Rayrifles are the workhorse of most armies when it comes to arming Astirs. A highly efficient charging cycle means every cast uses an almost meaningless amount of magical energy.

Might also be: **Machine Gun**, **Arc Staff**, **Recycler Rifle**

Magic-Missile Array III (*sniper / guided, weak*)

Often mounted on an Astir's shoulder to leave their hands free, magic-missile arrays fire a dizzying cluster of magical darts that can be guided by an Astir rather than its Channeler.

Might also be: **Chaser Missiles**, **Lock-On Beam**, **Automortar**

Titan Bow III (*sniper / ruin, reload, 2H*)

Immense, heavily-reinforced longbows, taller than even some Astirs. While some baulk at taking a bulky single-shot weapon into the field, others point to the ability to sink an arrow through Carrier hulls as a valuable upside.

Might also be: **Single-Cast Rifle**, **Beam Sniper**, **Abyss Gun**

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

— Drain Weapons (-1 Power) —

Ardentpiercer III (melee / impact, decisive, set-up, drain)

Immense lances designed to punch through armour plating, ardentpiercers are heavy enough that they must be held in place and used as a charging weapon—just swinging one around is unlikely to deliver results.

Might also be: Ceremonial Pike, Heavy Estoc, Pile Bunker

Forceblade III (melee / bane, drain)

Your typical, garden-variety sword made out of projected magical force. It cuts well and won't explode - what else do you want?

Might also be: Beam Saber, Thermal Cutter, Pneumatic Hammer

Basilisk Lance III (ranged / bane, restraining, drain, 2H)

An uncommon weapon, basilisk lances house a lens composed of dozens of magically preserved basilisk eyes. When a certain energy is passed through this lens, a petrifying beam is produced.

Might also be: Chemical Jet, Beam Rifle, Plasma Repeater

Blazewands III (ranged / versatile, reload, drain)

Arranged in paired racks and crafted using subdued motes of elemental fire, short-range wands are a common and potent weapon when it comes to arming Astirs.

Might also be: Grenade Launchers, Acid Pods, Plasma Mortar

Burstcaster III (ranged / area, bane, 2H)

Burstcasters launch a projectile that discharge a spell on impact—typically some kind of dramatic fireball. The wand projectile only arms past a certain distance, to prevent a Channeler from being caught in their own fireball.

Might also be: Rocket Launcher, Fireball Cannon, Reactor Rifle

Novawhip III (melee / area, vorpai, dangerous, drain)

Concentrated motes of fire slumber at equal lengths along this whip, and violently detonate on impact. A devastating weapon in skilled hands that know how to recharge the motes mid-battle.

Might also be: Chain Mines, Plasma Cable, Storm Gauntlet

— Drain 2 Weapons (-2 Power) —

Ruinblade III (melee / ruin, decisive, fragile, drain 2)

Long, slender, and fragile—ruinblades are long swords edged with arcane-charged crystal, allowing them to cut through even Carrier hulls. Just try not to break it.

Might also be: Decay Lance, Null-space Projector, Hi-Beam Saber

Overcharged Bolts III (sniper / ruin, drain 2)

If in need of something punchier, you can take very standard Astir equipment—a simple lightning bolt spell, for example—and simply feed it far, far more magical energy than expected.

Might also be: Gatling Gun, Gauss Rifle, Beam Rifle

Spellcannon III (ranged / versatile, blitz, drain 2, 2H)

A heavy, devastating weapon. Though it demands magic such that few Channelers can muster more than a handful of shots, the results are easily worth the expense.

Might also be: Assault Cannon, Heavy Beam Rifle, Anti-Materiel Rifle

Chaos Revolver III (ranged / ruin, drain 2, messy, *profane*)

A thick, metal wand with a pistol-style grip. The rotating chambers are filled with overcharged and desecrated crystals, the magical output of which is immense (and volatile).

Might also be: Fusion Pistol, Acid Thrower, Planar Displacer

Storm Axe III (melee / vorpai, drain 2)

A handheld hatchet, insulated to protect its user and engraved with sigils that perpetuate a constant flow of thunderous magic.

Might also be: Plasma Blade, Chainsword, Powered Hammer

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

— Familiars —

Familiars are small autonomous constructs, typically launched from an Astir, that assist a Channeler in battle. They are small, expendable and easily replaced—any *perils* you take as a result of your Familiars being lost or destroyed are automatically removed during Downtime. You don't need to spend resources or Downtime to regain or repair lost Familiars: this is part of the upside of them requiring a Familiar Matrix, at that hefty 2 **Power** cost.

Additionally, when you **EXCHANGE BLOWS** or **STRIKE DECISIVELY** with Familiars, you roll with +CHANNEL instead. All Familiars are *ranged* or *sniper* to reflect either ranged attacks or the fact they can move independently of you.

Wisp Familiar III (*ranged / area, limited*)

Wisps are by far the most common familiar, and for most people are synonymous with the word. Small floating constructs that pack a surprising punch for their size, wisps are limited by the short lifespan on their magic.

Might also be: **Assault Funnel**, **Fire Spirits**, **Attack Drones**

Mote Familiar III (*sniper / impact, bane, dangerous*)

Motes are primed with conflagration magic, and detonate in a fiery blaze when impacted against a target. Channelers tend to use them only when needed, since if shot the explosions tend to set off other nearby motes.

Might also be: **Remote Bombs**, **Volatile Elements**, **Lev-Grenades**

Needle Familiar III (*ranged / restraining, weak*)

Needle Familiars pin their targets in place with thin, iron spikes. While lacking when it comes to decisive blows, they excel at restraining and harassing foes.

Might also be: **Glue Turret**, **Labour Drones**, **Medusa Heads**

Claw Familiar III (*ranged / defensive, distinct*)

Sharp-clawed contraptions of magic and stone, in the familiar shape of a crow.

Might also be: **Trained Wolves**, **Raven Ghosts**, **Saw Drones**

4) ASTIR MOVE

Finally, every Astir has a move attached to it, which is unique to that model of Astir's design and doesn't cost any Power. For this, you may choose from your playbook's Additional Moves or from the **Cantrips (pg. 81)** list: explain how this move is inherent to the design of your Astir, and what artifact, ritual, spell or otherwise it relies on. Additionally, if you so desire, you might take your Astir move from one of the example Astirs (all of which have custom moves) or work with your Director to create a new one that suits whatever specific concept you had for it's abilities.

It would probably be easier to acquire a new Astir than modify or rebuild one to have a different Astir move, but nobody is stopping you from trying. It would likely be separate projects to create whatever embodies the new move and to fit it into your Astir in place of the old one.



ASTIR EXTRAS

Sometimes, you know a Sortie is going to involve certain kinds of danger or problems. To combat them, you can add an Extra to your Astir: a temporary Part or Weapon that is useful for one Sortie. Extras might be things like heavy armour (Warding), special lenses for seeing in the dark (Resistance Charm), or a mantle mounted with a weapon (Weapon Conduit).

To acquire an Extra, you might have a Downtime Scene **SOMEWHERE NEARBY** or build one yourself in the **HANGAR**. Extras only ever last for the Sortie they are made or bought for. Extra weapons are expended or blown up, equipment is tossed aside to make your Astir lighter, armour is dramatically destroyed to reveal your Astir spotless beneath it, etc.

Extra parts don't need to necessarily be those from the example list! Feel free to work with your players to build unique extras to meet the situations and circumstances of your campaign and the Sorties they go on.

If you find players making the same Extras multiple times, you might consider offering them some way of acquiring that extra more efficiently or without cost at all in the future. They might be able to invest **tokens** in a production facility on the Carrier, might come up with a more streamlined method through repeated builds, and so on.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

SALVAGING ASTIRS

If you capture intact enemy Astirs in the field, you might want to re-purpose or salvage them for your own needs. Channelers often bond with or magically lock their Astirs in some way, though, meaning doing so is often a complicated task. Refitting an Astir to be used regularly by one of your Channelers would be a long-term project, with a length chosen based on its condition and how advanced its magical protections are—most likely a 6 or 8 step clock, if not multiple smaller ones.

Astirs that can be salvaged after a battle are rarely in such a usable state, however. If the party wishes, they might sift through the wreckage of a recent battle with the **WORKSHOP OR LAB** Downtime Scene to acquire useful supplies or work on their own projects. If a particularly lucrative battlefield is available, the Director might hand out additional **tokens** for that Scene as a reward.

THE ASTIR CARD

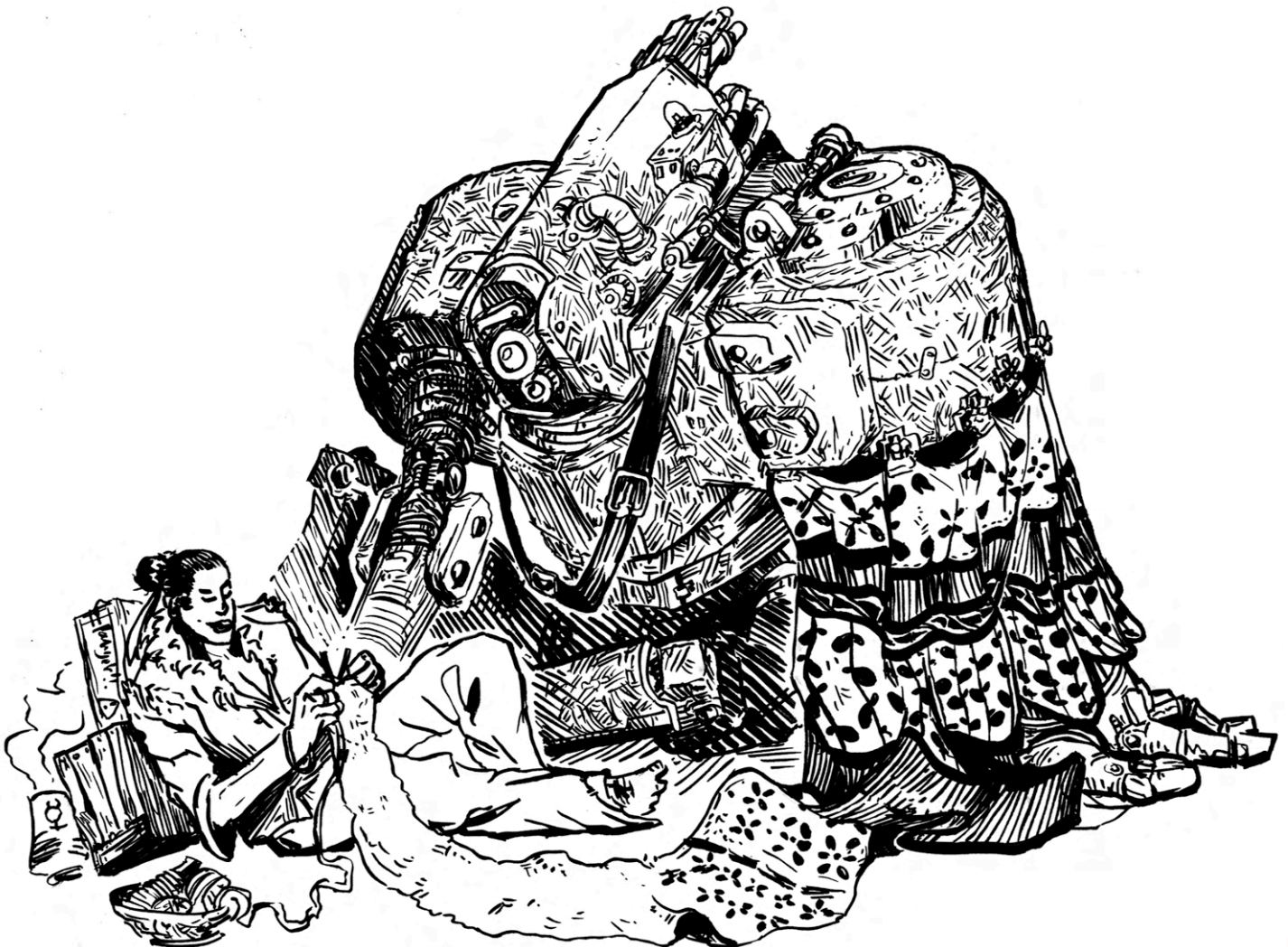
You'll record your choices and the stats of your Astir on small sheets like these, which have space to record all of its component Parts as well as its Power capacity (used to make the **SUBSYSTEMS** move) and a tickbox for overheating. As a Channeler, certain moves might ask you to tick or mark 'overheating'—that's this box. If you're asked to tick this box but it's already ticked, the building heat destroys one of your Parts, putting you in *peril*.

EXAMPLE III		APPROACH	CORE	POWER	OVERHEATING ☐
PART A		PART B			
Description of Astir part		Description of Astir part			
Description of Astir.				MV: ASTIR MOVE A unique move that defines your model of Astir.	
CARRIED	Weapon Name III (range / tags)				
SHEATHED, ETC	Weapon Name III (range / tags)				

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

“When I was fourteen, see, my bearer took me aside one night and showed me the thing they'd made. It was this heavy black and white blanket, patterned all over with the big old lumps of Reach cactus, which I hated for the prickles, and the diamond dashes of the tattoos we gave ourselves, which I loved for how brave they made you look. Sometimes I would see them brush it with horsehair to remove dust, or wash it with a pump-vack, just an inch at a time, and then fold it and put it back in the closet. I asked them then, if it was, say, a curtain, or a blanket for spreading on the prairie rocks and sunning on. They told me it was for their war-love, that it was a craft they performed all on their own, and that when it passed away they took hold of it once more. It's a tradition, they told me, one with teeth. Wool thick enough, made with desire and grace enough, to stop any blade, arrow, or channelling. So now I'm making one for you.”

- Excerpt from 'Windswept: Conversations From The Reach',
Ironcase #23 "June", Second Year Of The Empty Throne Era

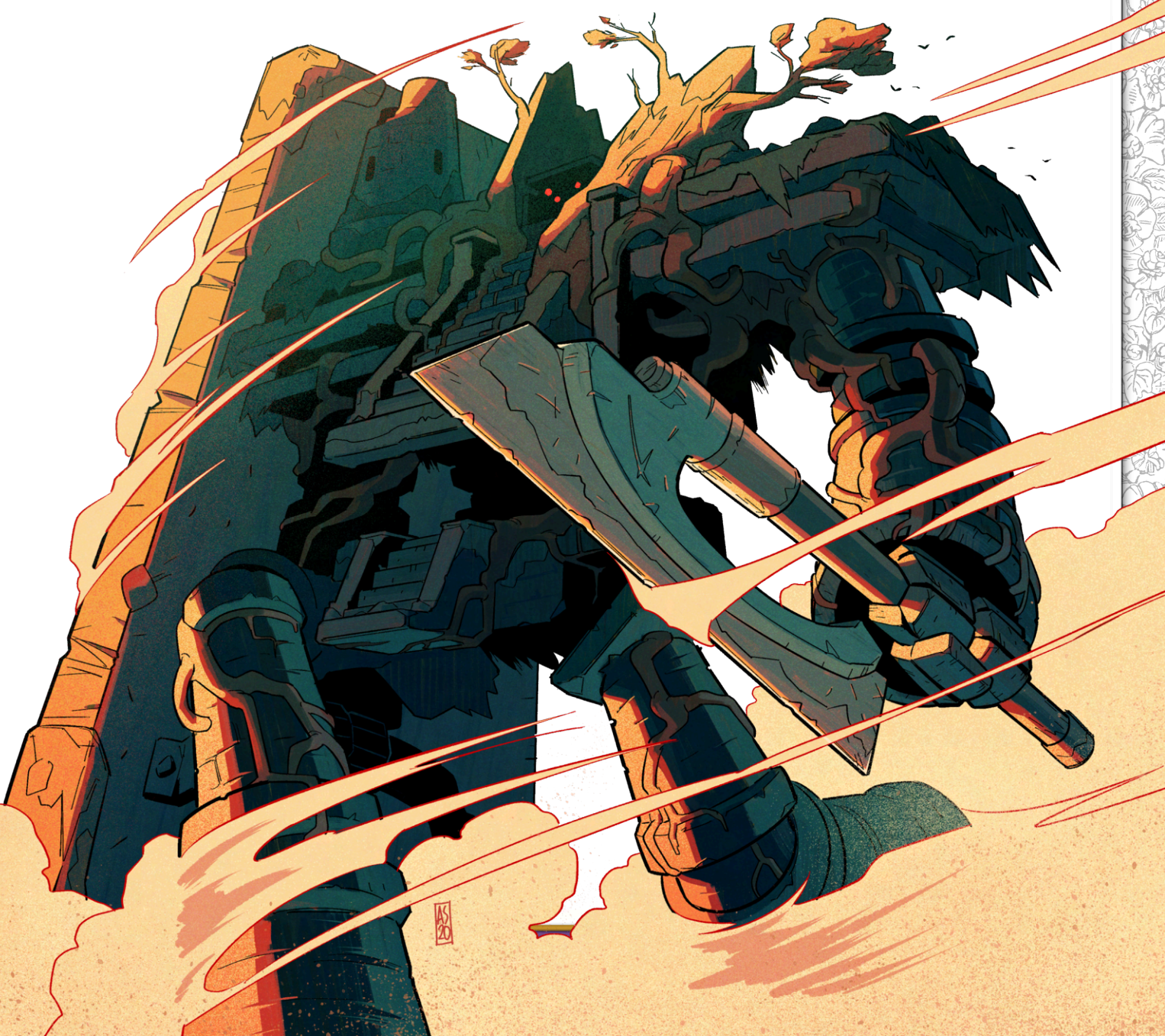


THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

EXAMPLE ASTIRS III

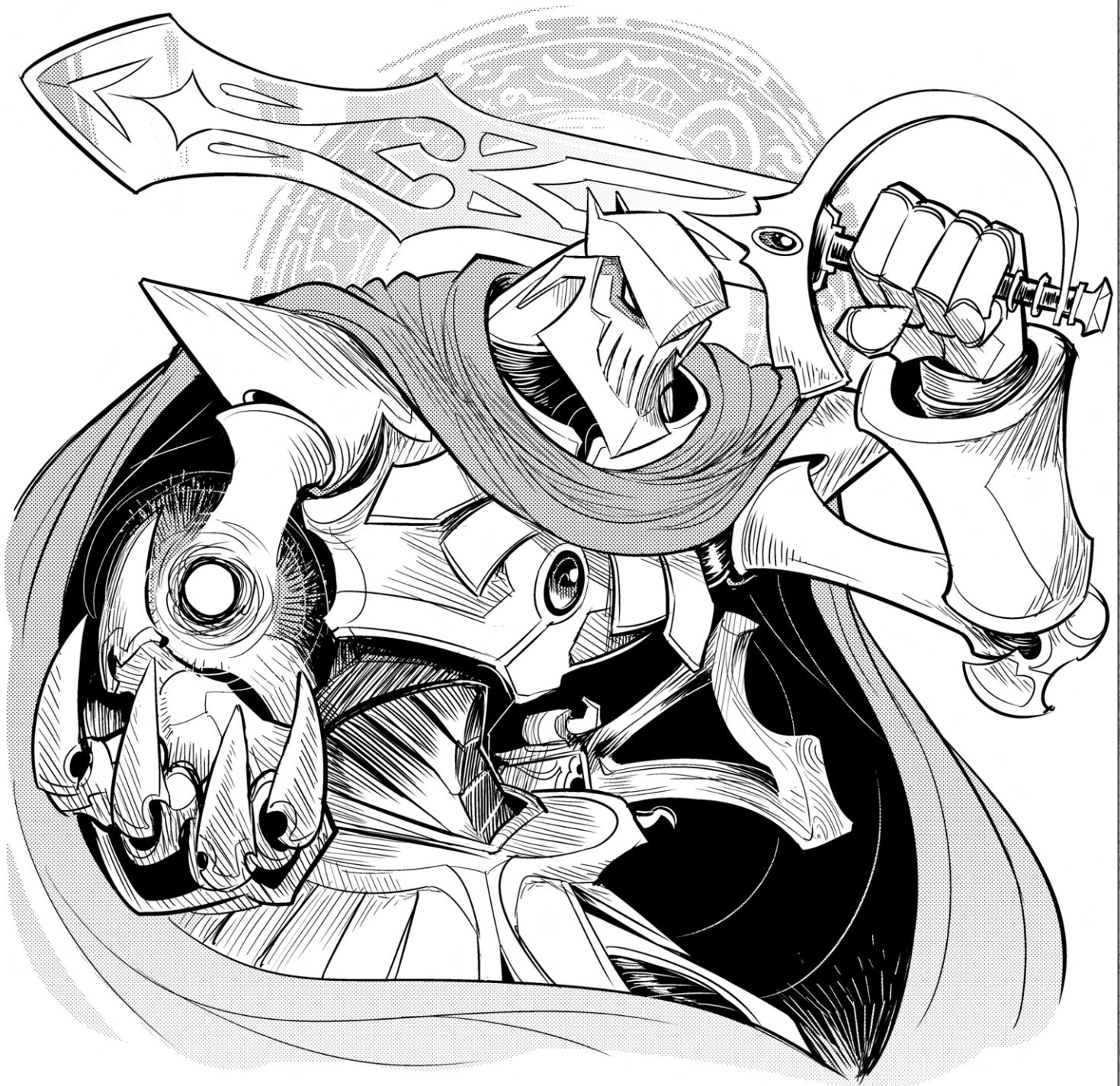
A selection of example tier III Astirs, made using the above custom Astir rules.

GOLIATH ^{III}		MUNDANE	CORE	POWER	2
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	
RESISTANCE CHARM		WARDING			
STALWART GREAVES (Lowers dangers from knockback or pushing)		TITANIC ARMOUR (+ward)			
<i>The Goliath is constructed with a simple design intent—to provide an unyielding bulwark for its allies to shelter behind. Thick armour and an even thicker shield make this effortless: for Goliath channelers, the tides of war are barely a stream.</i>			MV: GOLIATH SHIELD		
			Advantage when you HELP OR HINDER to protect others.		
CARRIED	Battleaxe & Shield III (melee / defensive, 2H)				
+MOUNTED	Blazewands III (ranged / bane, reload, mounted, drain)				



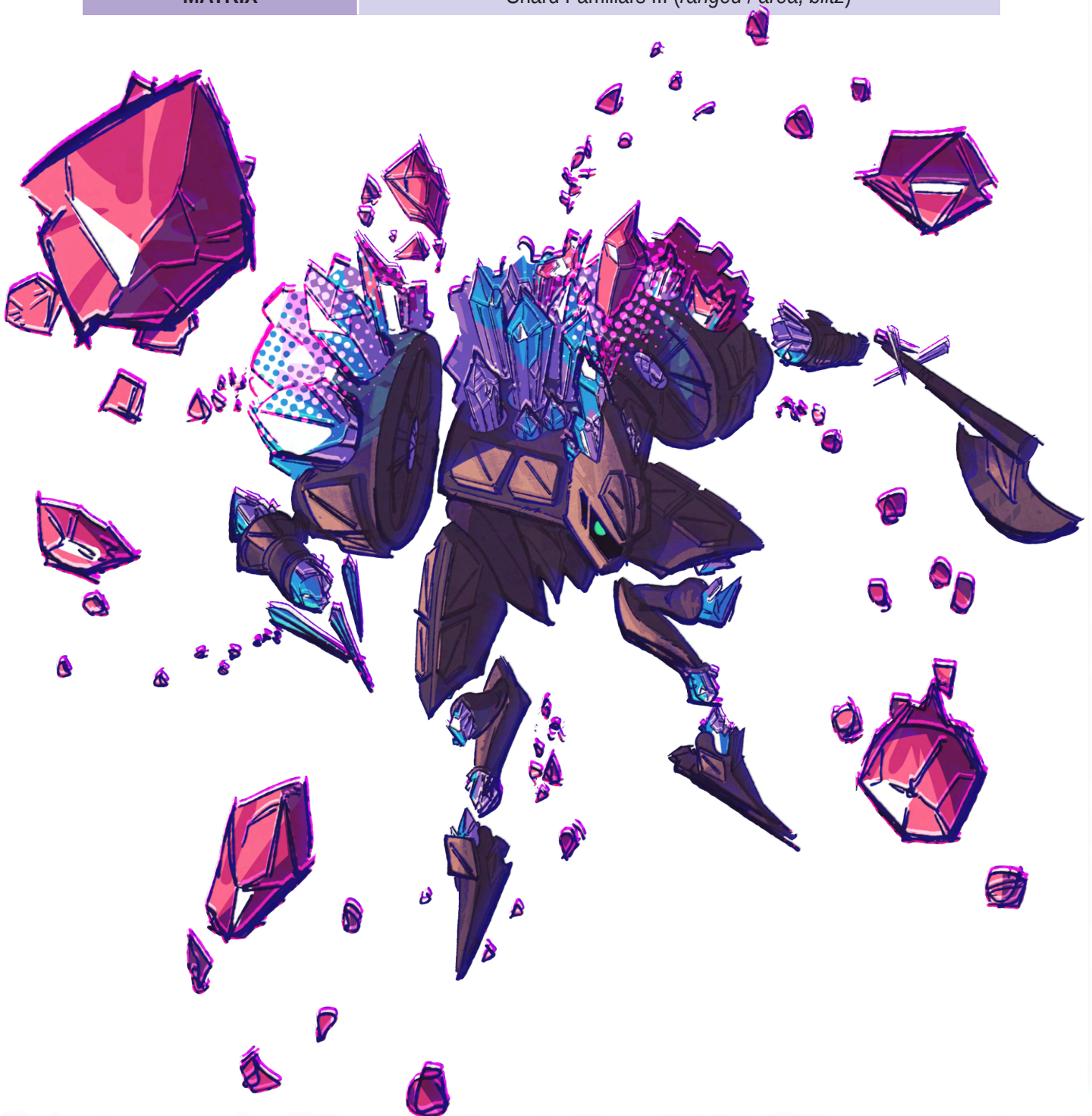
THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

ADVENT ^{III}		DIVINE	CORE	POWER	3
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	
ARTIFACT		WARDING			
REACTION ENHANCER		ADVENTIUM PLATE (+ward)			
<i>The Advent is a storied design, said by some to be based on an Astir that won a great war a century ago, and said by others to be that very same Astir. Stories of the white Astir vary, but it never seems to be on the losing side, whether that side is right or wrong.</i>			MV: ADVENT LEGACY		
			LEAD A SORTIE with advantage when piloting an Advent		
CARRIED	Rayrifle III (ranged / infinite, 2H				
SHEATHED	Forceblade III (melee / bane, drain)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

SUMMONER ^{III}		ARCANE	CORE	POWER	2
			CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING ■	
ARTIFACT		FAMILIAR MATRIX			
FAMILIAR SYNC RITUALS		Shard Familiars III			
<i>The Summoner is designed to overwhelm foes by directing fire from multiple angles. It does this with a small network of familiars, which coordinate fire as directed by their Channeler. A special matrix augmented to increase its magical output allows for a veritable swarm of familiars.</i>			MV: REFRESH MATRIX		
			+blitz, -limited to Familiars		
CARRIED	Cleaving Axe III (melee)				
MATRIX	Shard Familiars III (ranged / area, blitz)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS



TARRASQUE ^{III}		PROFANE	CORE	POWER	0
			OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■	
ARTIFACT		RESISTANCE CHARM			
CHAOS ENGINE		CHAINBREAKER'S BOON (Lowers dangers from restraints or slowing)			
<i>The Tarrasque has a reputation for being piloted by the brave or those with a death-wish, and it's not hard to understand why. Armed with little more than claws and a tail and powered by a voracious chaos-engine, it's a heavy, inefficient mess. But slip up once, and it'll eat you alive. With a meal in its belly, this mess becomes a monster.</i>			MV: MANA DEVOURER		
			+1 Power when you successfully STRIKE DECISIVELY another Astir with physical harm		
CARRIED		Rending Claws III (melee / ruin, drain 2)			
+MOUNTED		Novatail III (melee / impact, mounted, drain 2)			

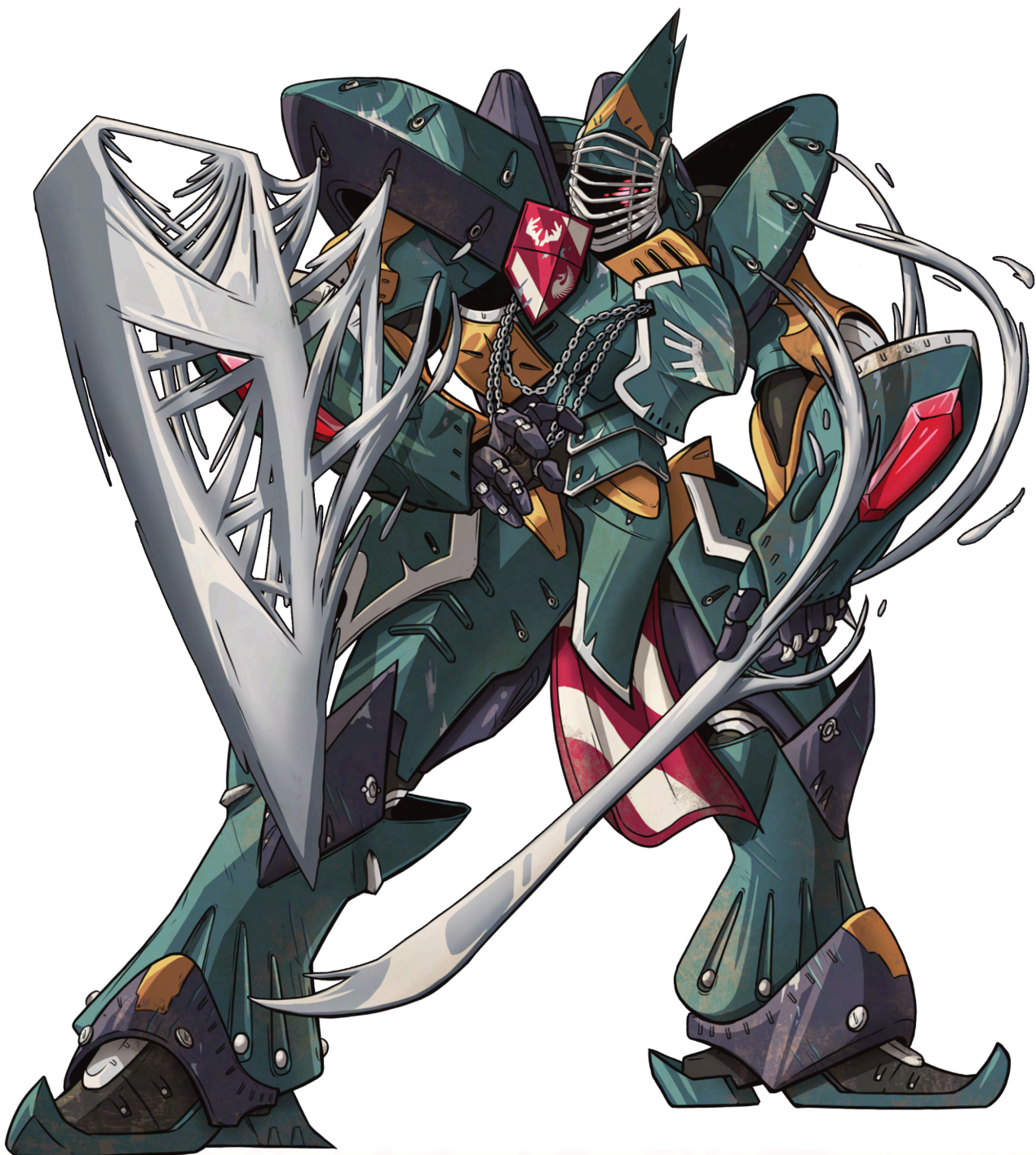
THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

LANCE-MINOR ^{III}		ELEMENTAL	CORE	POWER	2
			NATURAL	OVERHEATING ■	
HEAT CONDENSERS		FLOURISH COMPONENT			
Untick 'overheating' from your Astir		Regain 1 Power when you roll doubles.			
<i>Armed with a long, armour-piercing lance, this gallant model excels at charging down a foe from distance and delivering a decisive hit. While its length makes it difficult to strike close foes, a sidearm allows for defensive fire to keep foes occupied.</i>			MV: INERTIA DRIVE		
			Regain 1 Power when you roll a 12+ on WEATHER THE STORM to outpace, rush or dodge.		
CARRIED	Ardentpiercer III (<i>melee / impact, decisive, set-up, drain</i>)				
CARRIED	Force Repeater III (<i>ranged / defensive, weak</i>)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

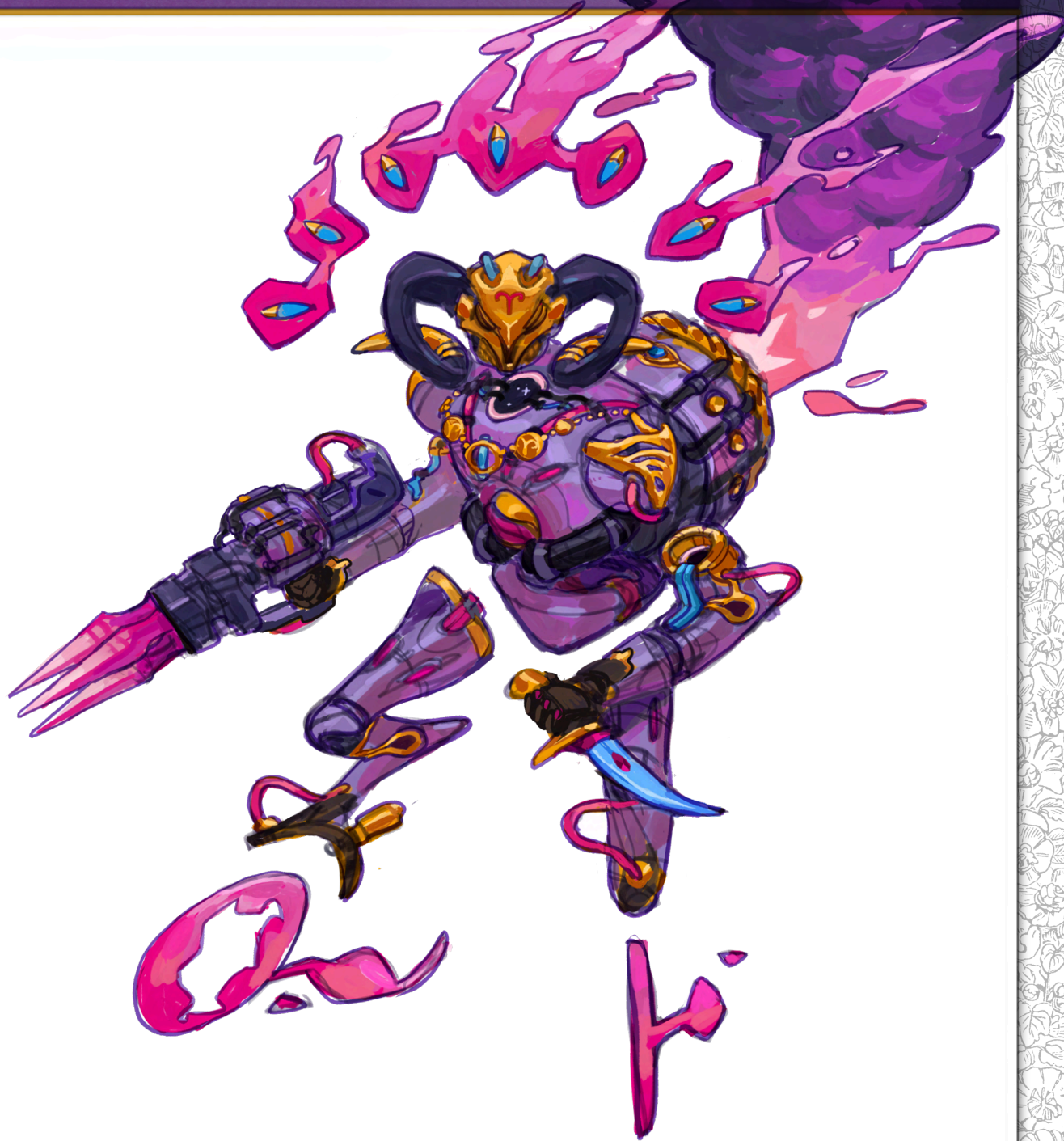
PROTEAN _{III}		ELEMENTAL	CORE	POWER	1
			ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING ■	
TRANSMUTATION LINK		ARTIFACT			
+adapted (aerial form)		QUICKSILVER FORM			
<i>The Protean is intended to be a flexible, middle-of-the-road design - a jack of all trades. It's body is filled with alchemical quicksilver, which can be magically reformed at a moments notice, making for an Astir that can adapt to virtually any situation.</i>				MV: FICKLE FORM	
				You may take the risk (unstable) to use your Quicksilver Form without spending Power on SUBSYSTEMS.	
CARRIED	Quicksilver Armoury III (melee / defensive, 2H)				
+MOUNTED	Mercurial Torrent III (ranged / area, bane, mounted, drain 3)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

OMENIII		MUNDANE	CORE	POWER	3
			ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING ■	
STANDARDISED PARTS		ARCANE FORGE			
Gain +1 token during Downtime to spend on repairs only		You may COOL OFF to resupply an expended weapon			
<i>While somewhat austere a design compared to other Astirs, Omens are famously easy to maintain and repair. Combined with the fact their design makes use of many common parts, Omens (or suits like them) typically make up the bulk of any organised force of Astirs.</i>				MV: GENERIC PARTS	
				COOL OFF with confidence when repairing or maintaining an Omen.	
CARRIED	Palm Bolter III (ranged)				
CARRIED	Conduit Blade III (melee / bane, drain)				

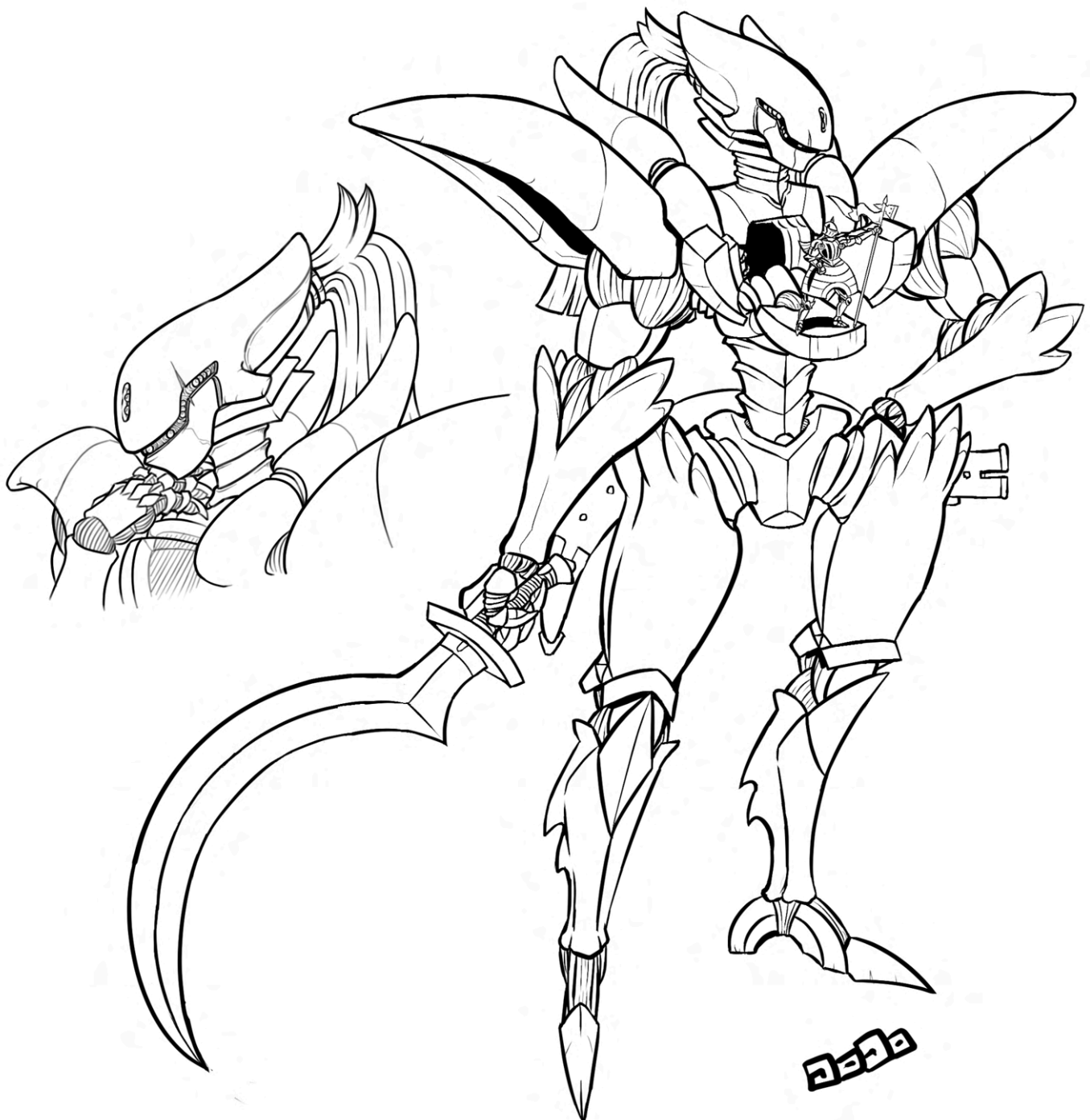




ARIESIII		ARCANE	CORE	POWER	1
			ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING	■
HEAT CONDENSERS			FAMILIAR MATRIX		
Untick 'overheating' from your Astir			Wisp Familiars III		
<i>The Aries is an imposing design, with devilish horns and familiars that have a habit of congregating in aura-like formations. The scariest thing about it, of course, is it's speed. Propelled on wheels of magical flame that scorch the ground beneath it, the Aries is not an easy thing to run from.</i>					MV: MANAWHEELS
					While overheating, take advantage when making a move that relies on your speed.
CARRIED	Blazewands III (ranged / versatile, reload, drain)				
CARRIED	Forceknife III (melee / bane, intimate)				
MATRIX	Mote Familiar III (sniper / impact, bane, dangerous)				

THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

JESTER ^{III}		ARCANE	CORE	POWER	0
			CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING ■	
RESISTANCE CHARMS		COMPLEX SPELLWORK			
PRESSURE REGULATOR (Lowers <i>dangers</i> from acceleration)		Component for Jester Lev-Spells			
<i>Embedded with spell-stones that reduce its weight, the Jester excels at staying mobile. Capable of hovering short distances and moving with agility unheard of for most Astirs, most long-time Jester Channelers develop an almost supernatural sense of battlefield positioning.</i>			MV: LEV-SPELLS		
			You may use the MOBILITY Move from the Scout Playbook while piloting this Astir.		
CARRIED	Dire Shotel III (<i>melee / ruin, 2H, drain</i>)				
HOLSTERED	Basilisk Lance III (<i>ranged / bane, restraining, drain, 2H</i>)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

TIER IV

PURSUER _{IV}		PROFANE	CORE	POWER	3
			OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■	
WARDING		ARTIFACT			
SHADOWVEIL (+ward)		HASTE RITUALS			
<i>The Pursuer is hunter, designed to track and destroy specific enemy Astirs. Though its pursuit-bond requires line-of-sight for an initial lock, the tracking it provides is accurate, long-lasting, and incredibly difficult to shake. When it comes time to end the hunt, sharp claws are often more than good enough to finish off a Pursuer's prey.</i>				MV: PURSUIT-BOND	
				You may designate another Astir you can see as your target. You are supernaturally aware of its location at all times	
CARRIED		Scything Claws IV (melee / intimate, blitz)			
+MOUNTED		Ritual-Rifle IV (sniper / mounted, drain)			



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

BIRDCAGE _{IV}		DIVINE	CORE	POWER	2
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	
ARTIFACT		FAMILIAR MATRIX			
ANGEL COLLARS		Bound Angels IV			
<i>There are many that would say the concept of Astirs is a dangerous one. Evil, even. There are few that make such a judgement so easy as the Birdcage, a hefty, walker-style Astir with little in the way of its own armaments. It makes up for this with a flock of bound and collared angels, who are cowed into service by threat of a true death. They are cruel machines, and their Channelers more so.</i>			MV: BINDING RITUALS		
			When you use SUBSYSTEMS to activate your ANGEL COLLARS, you may clear a risk related to your Bound Angels.		
CARRIED		Hulking Form IV (melee / bane, intimate)			
MATRIX		Bound Angels IV (ranged / defensive, distinct)			



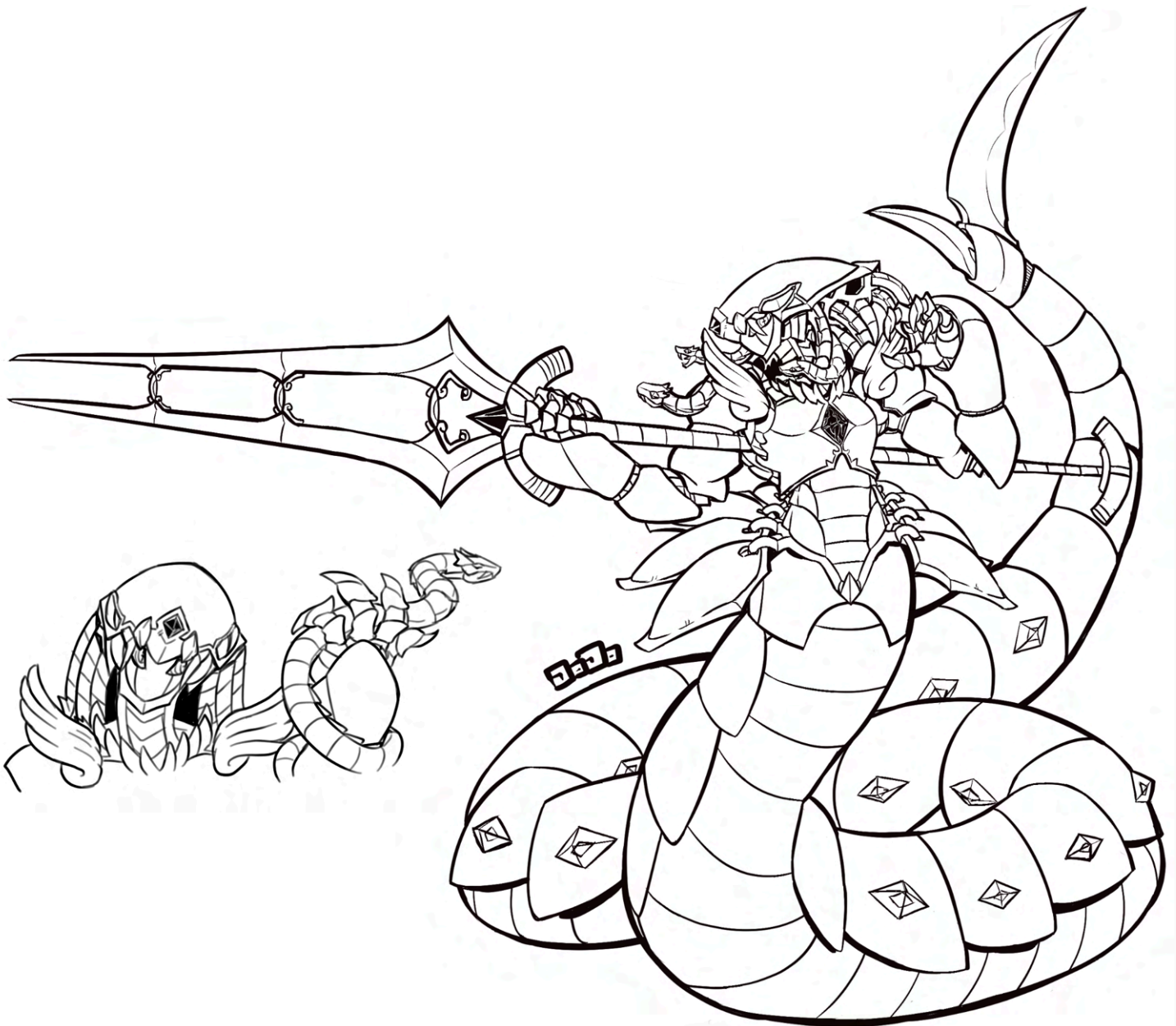
THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

JACK-OF-BLADES ^{IV}		MUNDANE	CORE	POWER	3
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING ■	
RESISTANCE CHARM		EXTRA ARMS			
FLASHFORGE (Lowers <i>dangers</i> from melee weapon breakage)		+2 Arms			
Rarely witnessed as anything but a storm of sharp and shattering metal, the Jack-Of-Blades is a strange Astir, designed to wield fragile weaponry that it breaks and re-forges repeatedly during combat. Power-channels in the blades allow for the re-purposing of magic usually lost in the heat venting process, and a paired armament forgoing defence in favour of offense means very little remains standing long in the face of a Jack-Of-Blades.			MV: BRANDED BLADES		
			Your next EXCHANGE BLOWS or STRIKE DECISIVELY has advantage when you untick 'overheating'.		
CARRIED	Paired Blades IV (<i>melee / defensive, 2H</i>)				
CARRIED	Paired Knives IV (<i>melee / bane, decisive, intimate, 2H</i>)				



THE CARRIER & ASTIRS

MEDUSA _{IV}		PROFANE	CORE	POWER	0
			OCCULT	OVERHEATING ■	
FAMILIAR MATRIX		SPELL ROUTINES			
Adder Familiars IV		Choose to take a 7-9 when you STRIKE DECISIVELY			
<i>Protected by magically animated snakes and bearing petrification magic, the Medusa is understandably a feared Astir. Even the most talented of pilots put themselves at risk when coming close to its gaze.</i>			MV: PETRIFIER CORE		
			When you EXCHANGE BLOWS , you may take disadvantage to have your opponent take the risk (restrained) on a 6-.		
CARRIED	Gorgon's Glare IV (ranged / bane, restraining, 2H, drain)				
MATRIX	Adder Familiars IV (ranged / area, limited)				



Couple summers ago, a few folks from up at the pass—ones with magic of a sort, but not the kind your Channelers use—figured out that if you hang enough people from the same tree—they hang deserters up there—it gets a little twitchy. A little angry, especially at those that are doing the hanging. It gets the inkling that, a little nudge from mother nature, and those branches can be arms. But, they also figured, well, you spin a little spell to stop it telling one man from another, and it don't care too much about who it swings those gnarled fists at. Now the trees up at the pass? I reckon you could build yourself a tidy little house out of one of those. They ain't, by any means, something you want taking a shot at you.

A lot of people came through that year, from the city, asking me what I thought this meant for the war. If what they were doing made up for them not having Channelers of their own.

Never did have an answer they liked. I'm not one that can speak too much on if this kind of magic's better than that kind of magic. But I always told them what I could. We run caravans that way once a month, buying and selling, and you know what?

Up at the pass, they always need more rope.

- Excerpt from 'The Thoughts And Tales Of Albert Jayner', Albert Jayner, YA230



THE CONFLICT TURN

The Authority and the Cause are the big players in any game of *Armour Astir*. The Authority is oppressive, powerful, and domineering, with its sights set on the world: or at least the slice of it our game takes place in. On the other hand, the Cause is (hopefully) benevolent and driven—but is just as likely scattered, conflicted, and scared. While players tend to their wounds and sneak precious moments in Downtime, these forces develop too, during the **Conflict Turn**.

AUTHORITY STRUCTURE

The Authority is a single entity, divided into Divisions and held together by Stability. Mechanically speaking, Divisions are comprised of the following;

- Important **actors** or **assets** that keep them safe from the player characters.
- A **passive** step, a benefit they automatically provide at the start of the Conflict Turn.
- **Pillars** that they control on behalf of the Authority (3 each).
- **Outcomes**, that can be chosen from when they're victorious during a Conflict Scene.

The latter two are determined by the Division's type: see the next page for a selection, though you should feel free to invent new ones. You should choose 3 Divisions, and give each a name as well as a goal or ideal they strive for as they serve the Authority—this ideal might conflict with other Divisions, or even the Authority writ large.

If you want to define your Authority further, with more than 3 Divisions, remember that more Divisions means more Conflict Scenes per turn. If you don't also add more Factions to the Cause, you risk making it very easy for the Divisions to tire out Factions and make it difficult for them to oppose, not to mention the extra complexity this adds to the Conflict Turn.

Additionally, keep in mind that the Authority isn't set in stone: the Divisions you start with might be replaced or fall apart, so don't feel like what you start with is necessarily the only set of Divisions you'll get to play with.

DIVISION STRENGTH & ROLLS

Divisions are not equal: every Authority has one Division that is stronger and more important to it than the other two—a major Division (5+) and two minor Divisions (4+). Their Strength affects the rolls players make during Conflict Scenes and when they **PLAN & PREPARE**. In Conflict Scenes, against the major Division, a 5+ results in a success for the Cause. Against a minor Division, a 4+ results in a success for the Cause. If the Cause doesn't succeed, the Authority does.

STABILITY

Even the most cruel, squabbling petty empire has some kind of internal equilibrium or momentum that stops it falling apart: **Stability** represents that. The Authority starts with 9 **Stability**, and loses it when the Authority's Pillars are felled (or as the result of a particularly successful and ambitious Sortie, if your Director decides so).

At 6 **Stability** or below, players start with 2d6 for **PLAN & PREPARE** instead of 1d6.

At 3 **Stability** or below, one Faction un-taps itself at the start of the Conflict Turn.

At 0 **Stability**, the Authority can no longer hold itself together. It's time to scatter it for good.

With major and minor Divisions winning Conflict Scene rolls 2/3 and 1/2 of the time, the Conflict Turn is by default tilted a little in the Authority's favour. This is because **PLAN & PREPARE** allows the player characters to lower Division Strengths with a successful Sortie; meaning that when the Conflict Turn is weighted towards the Cause, it's because the players achieved it, not because the Authority is incompetent for some reason.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

THE CONFLICT TURN

TYPE	FOCUS	EVERY TURN:
Military	Deploying forces to attack or defend with violence.	Hold 3 to spend during the next Sortie 1-for-1 to; - Introduce a new threat - Force someone to act in desperation
When a Military Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - A Faction with 3 GRIP is seized. - The Authority gains 1 GRIP on a Faction or Pillar. - A vulnerable or exposed asset or actor is fortified or hidden.		
Subterfuge	Deploying spies or agents to deal with things covertly.	Place 1 GRIP on a Faction or Pillar of their choice.
When a Subterfuge Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - A Faction with 3 GRIP is seized. - The Authority learns a secret about the Cause or a Faction. - The Director may force a re-roll during a Conflict Scene this turn.		
Resource	Accruing wealth, information and personnel.	Start a Division Scheme, or advance any existing one by 1 step.
When a Resource Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - At the end of the Conflict Turn, you may re-assign which Divisions are Major or Minor. - The next Sortie faces a complication: LEAD A SORTIE with disadvantage. - The Director takes 2 extra tokens during the next Downtime.		
Research	Developing new enchantments and rituals.	The Director may force a re-roll during a Conflict Scene this turn.
When a Research Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - The Authority learns a secret about the Cause or a Faction. - The Authority starts a new Scheme, or advances an existing one. - The Director takes 2 extra tokens during the next Downtime.		
Curator	Stealing and investigating that which doesn't belong to it.	Start or advance a 4-step clock titled 'Take something that isn't theirs.'
When a Curator Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - The Authority starts or advances a 4-step clock titled 'Take something that isn't theirs.' - The Authority starts a new Scheme, or advances an existing one. - A vulnerable or exposed asset or actor is fortified or hidden.		
Executive	Protecting and deepening systems of control.	Sneaking through, fooling or subverting Authority security and bureaucracy is done in desperation .
When an Executive Division wins a Conflict Scene, choose one: - The next Sortie faces a complication: LEAD A SORTIE with disadvantage. - The Authority starts a new Scheme, or advances an existing one. - The Director may force a re-roll during a Conflict Scene this turn.		

What happens when a Faction is seized? As usual, the narrative specifics are up to you. Mechanically speaking, the Faction is removed from the Cause. Anything beyond that, such as the fate of specific characters and the circumstances of the seizing are for you to decide.

Similarly, when a **Pillar** is felled, we assume that the Cause are taking control of whatever makes that thing important. This means that, fictionally speaking, a Cause doesn't have to hold an entire city or region in its hand to seize it: just whatever little piece made it valuable on the board as a **Pillar**.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

THE CONFLICT TURN

GRIP

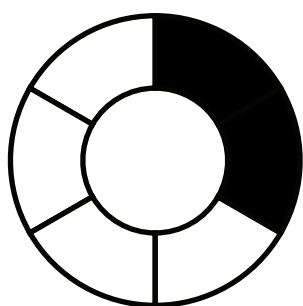
GRIP is a rough measure of the Authority's influence over Faction or **Pillar**, and represents everything from military occupation or pressure to the meddling of diplomats and spies. When a Faction the Authority doesn't control has 3 GRIP on it, it may seize it through a Conflict Scene: when a Pillar the Authority controls has 0 GRIP on it, the Cause may free it.

All Factions begin with 0 GRIP, and all **Pillars** begin with 3 GRIP.

DIVISION SCHEMES

With the Outcomes from Conflict Scenes, Divisions can gradually start and complete long-term projects. These Schemes, if completed, should create a large advantage for the Authority that threatens to completely turn the war in their favour unless it is dealt with as quickly as possible. Alternatively, the Authority might undergo a long term project to regain some of its **Stability** by building a new **Pillar** (literally or otherwise).

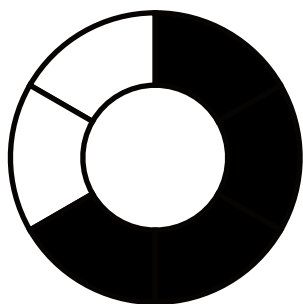
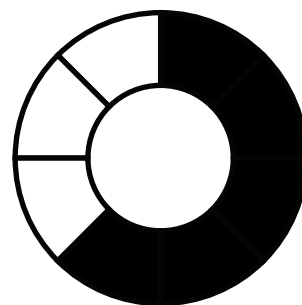
Schemes don't need to be one big macguffin that's being slowly constructed. A Scheme might be developing a plan for one decisive military push, slowly accruing reserve forces for an unstoppable offensive, or even the inner political turmoil of the Authority slowly resolving itself into a state where its true might can be properly coordinated.



Unsealing the Sovereign Crypt

Crown-Claimant Goze aims to open the Sovereign Crypt and use the contents as fuel for another ritual.

The End Of Mourning
Once the mourning period for the last Empress is over, the remaining heirs are sure to unleash the forces they have massed in a civil war.



Binding the Northspine Mountains Tyrant

The tyrant of the Northspine Mountains, a ferociously devious green dragon, would make an excellent adviser for the Kyrgain forces... if they can be brought in line.

DESTROYED DIVISIONS

If a Division is destroyed or dissolved during the Conflict Turn, it is replaced at the end of the next one with a Division of a different type. Until the new Division is created, any Pillars the old one controlled are temporarily considered to have 0 GRIP, meaning they can be felled with a Faction Outcome or with a Sortie via **PLAN & PREPARE**. The new Division inherits any Pillars the old one controlled if they're still standing.

Additionally, if it was previously the Major Division, it becomes a Minor and one of the others is promoted to Major instead, as the remaining groups within the Authority take or steal the lost Division's resources and favour. Once you've shifted that position, you should show a quick vignette of what this new Division's formation looks like.

THE CONFLICT TURN

DISFAVOUR

Divisions are not entirely a power unto themselves: they are a part of the Authority, and to an extent are held accountable for upholding its values, however terrible those are. Divisions that cannot toe the line and get results mark themselves apart with **disfavour**. When a Division takes action that disappoints, dishonours or disrespects their masters, increase that Division's **disfavour** by 1. Alternatively, when a Division does something that would make another look incompetent or disloyal, increase *that* Division's Disfavour by 1.

Similarly, when a Division takes action that impresses or elevates them in the eyes of their masters, reduce that Division's **disfavour** by 1. This should be something of note: more than just succeeding at a move. Trust is easy to lose, and hard to regain.

Mechanically speaking, any Division with 10 or more **disfavour** can be removed at the start of the Conflict Turn, if the other two Divisions desire it. No action or roll is needed, but toss a coin:

- On heads, the target Division is **ousted** and becomes a *tapped* Wayward Faction instead. A replacement Division (of a different type) moves in immediately: 10 **disfavour** doesn't usually happen overnight, after all. Moves were already being made.
- On tails, the the target Division is **dissolved**, and absorbed messily back into the rest of the Authority. A replacement Division (of a different type) moves in at the start of the next Conflict Turn, and until then any Pillars the old one controlled are temporarily considered to have 0 GRIP, meaning they can be felled with a Faction Outcome or with a Sortie via **PLAN & PREPARE**.

When playing Scenes during the Conflict Turn or more broadly depicting Authority characters, they should take the **disfavour** of Divisions into account when showing how they think and feel about them. This may also play into Sorties, with Divisions steeped in **disfavour** either not being given valuable opportunities to prove themselves or seizing any then can to try and claw back some worth in the eyes of their masters.

AUTHORITY FORCES

The Authority, broadly speaking, has far more soldiers and assets than ever worth individually keeping track of. Instead, we just keep a record of the movers and shakers—people and things that are key to how their Division operates. Broadly speaking, everything important that the Authority and its Divisions make use of is either an **actor** or an **asset**. An **actor** is someone or a *squad* of someones that can appear on-screen and threaten the players. They take *risks* and *perils* like the players, and might carry *perils* with them out of a Sortie if they retreat during it. An **asset** is an object or place that is useful to the Authority, and might be anything from a stockpile of simple supplies like food or clothing to an entire fortress or base. There's no strict limit or defined amount of these that the Authority has—this is not a simulated game of attrition where the Authority's finances and military numbers need to be kept track of—but **actors** and **assets** are important.

When a Division has lost **actors** or **assets** equal to or over it's Strength (5+ for a Major Division, 4+ for a Minor one), that leaves the Division *vulnerable*. *Vulnerable* Divisions can be destroyed either during the Conflict Turn or as the result of a Sortie, allowing players to deal real harm to the Authority.

Of course, not every foe or object your players stumble upon is an **actor** or **asset**. If you sneak in the back door of an Authority base and shoot a single guard, that doesn't bring the whole thing meaningfully closer to collapse: save that label for things that feel like they matter.

As the Director, it's important to think about what happens when **actors** and **assets** are defeated or destroyed. Does that elite cadre of Astir pilots fall in line behind a different officer when theirs is killed in battle, or was their loyalty to that officer rather than the Authority overall, causing them to leave it? When they lose a trio of experimental Astirs in battle, is the Captain of the *Second-Hand Fortune* given command over a new unit, or just demoted underneath one of their peers? Don't feel like you need to have a grand plan penned for every **actor** or **asset** in advance, though. Sometimes decisions in the moment are the most fun to make.

CAUSE STRUCTURE

While the Authority is one entity organised into orderly Divisions, the Cause is disparate Factions united under one banner. Factions represent the smaller groups and efforts that make up the Cause. For those, we just keep a list of their leader, a short summary of who they are, and their type, which has an Outcome attached to it—what they'll do when they succeed during the Conflict Turn.

In the Conflict Turn, the primary role Factions play is taking part in Conflict Scenes and, depending on how the dice turn out, making moves of their own. What that opposition looks like, and what Outcome they provide, is determined by their type;

TYPE	OPPOSITION	OUTCOME
Guerrillas	Opposes with ambushes and scattered force	A specific asset or actor is made vulnerable or exposed in some way.
Agents	Opposes with assassination and subterfuge	Disrupt the Authority, removing 1d3 GRIP on a Faction or Pillar .
Bandits	Opposes with robbery and sabotage	Reduce a Scheme clock 1 step, and increase a beneficial clock 1 step.
Despoilers	Opposes with unnecessary and imprecise force	All Scheme clocks are reduced by d6. Players have 1 less token each next Downtime.
Scholars	Opposes with ingenuity and curiosity	Key intel gives the party advantage when they next LEAD A SORTIE .
Suppliers	Opposes with new equipment or supplies	Replace a seized Faction, or untap any other two Factions.
Firebrands	Opposes with propaganda and diplomacy	A Division of your choice increases its disfavour by d6.
Military	Opposes with direct assaults and force	Fell a Pillar with 0 GRIP, or destroy a <i>vulnerable</i> Division (flip a coin: on tails, they become a Wayward Faction).
Strange	Opposes with the weird and unexplained	Something unexpected and strange happens.
Adventurers	Opposes with bold action and unpredictable tactics	Deliver a cut of loot to the Carrier: flip a coin. Heads, it's <i>valuable</i> —tails, it's <i>treasure</i> .

You want 2 Factions per Division: so 6 by default. If you are hacking the game a little and running extra Divisions, add extra Factions to balance it out. If you want, you could also combine multiple Factions into one larger one that can be *tapped* multiple times (see below).

TAPPED FACTIONS

Factions can't offer infinite support. During Conflict Scenes they may become *tapped* as they expend manpower, supplies, or revolutionary zeal. *Tapped* Factions are exactly that: temporarily spent or unavailable. They can still take action that would cause them to be *tapped*, but only at the cost of sacrificing themselves permanently: their remaining members scattered to the winds, their resources lost, etc. Typically, 3 Factions will end up *tapped* each Conflict Turn; this is easily recouped by the players during Downtime if they want to do so, but will stack up fast if they ignore it.

Once a Faction is un-*tapped*, they can oppose Division Scene in the normal manner again. Factions do not normally un-*tap* on their own: the players un-*tap* them through their actions in Sorties using **PLAN & PREPARE** and with certain Downtime Scenes.

The Faction the players belong to acts like any other during the Conflict Turn, and can be *tapped*, un-*tapped* or destroyed as per any other—though in the latter case, the players should consider looking for a different Faction to group up with.

If a Faction is destroyed, a new one can be created to take its place: Supplier Factions can do this with their Outcome, but it might also be the goal of a Sortie, a long-term project, or simply something that unfolds in the background of play over multiple sessions.

THE CONFLICT TURN

EXAMPLE FACTIONS

The Iron Circus (Suppliers)

The Iron Circus build and repair magical constructs, operating out of a steel-clad airship. The Circus aren't an orderly workforce, but they're fast, reliable, and loyal.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Syl's Stallers (Bandits)

The Stallers, led by Syl Sarna, specialise in stopping constructs in their tracks. Using experimental gauntlets that nullify enchantments, they infiltrate reinforcements in transit and prevent their constructs from ever animating.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Allington Merchant's Association (Suppliers)

More commonly known as just the Allington Association, they possess a significant amount of capital and are more than willing to put it on the line to support more revolutionary-inclined clients.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Riverknights (Guerillas)

A cadre of fighters who use custom-enchanted aquatic Ardents to rapidly navigate rivers and canals, often striking ships or dockside fortifications before retreating as quickly as they arrived.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Barkwrights (Military)

Though low on resources and stretched thin, the Barkwrights have long since made a name for themselves protecting against deforestation. Their secret to success is an ancient transmutative magic that bonds flesh with living wood, which they use to recover from even terrible injuries.

TAPPED?



GRIP



League Lament (Agents)

An elderly coven of witches who orchestrate assassinations through repeatedly hexing their targets over a period of time, eventually causing them to die in accidents that, to anyone else, seem incredibly unlucky. The superstitious often blame the League Lament for any misfortune they suffer.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Door Society (Firebrands)

Locksmiths by day and revolutionaries by night, the Society considers revealing that done behind closed doors their speciality. All locks can be picked, and it's far easier if you're the person that made it.

TAPPED?



GRIP



PILLARS

Pillars are places, people or objects of great importance that allow the Authority to continue their stranglehold on wherever your game is set: each **Pillar** corresponds to 1 point of **Stability**, and is controlled by a Division: decide which Division controls which of your **Pillars** when you start your campaign. A Division starts with 3 GRIP on every **Pillar** under its purview.

When a **Pillar** falls, that **Stability** is lost: and thus, the Authority is inched closer to collapse. When a **Pillar** falls, the Authority consolidates: it rebuilds its strength around what is left, rather than attempting to regain what has been taken. It cannot regain GRIP on fallen **Pillars**: they're gone. The Authority never sees its collapse until it is inevitable.

In a large campaign spanning a globe, **Pillars** might be entire countries and capital cities or hugely influential diplomats and leaders, while in a smaller campaign your **Pillars** might be cities, towns and magical artefacts. In either case, make sure you don't step into the trap of only considering **Pillars** that are of military importance. Places and things of historical, cultural, spiritual or ecological importance are equally as valid: they, after all, represent the people and the future that the players and Factions are fighting to protect or free from the Authority's clutches.

Pillars aren't just for fighting over, of course. Once liberated from the Authority, **Pillars** will likely still need the attention of the Cause occasionally—you should allow your players to invest themselves in the future of **Pillars** if they want to. Players might help repair the damage from Authority raids or occupation, assist key figures in planning for the future of the region, or help seal away, protect or repair important relics. All of the above might be things done in Downtime, or might be the focus of Sorties and Missions.

Players may have a GRAVITY clock with a **Pillar** if they desire, but **Pillars** themselves do not have any statistics or moves attached to them—even small communities are difficult to codify in a way that is truly representative. The Director might associate Authority actors or assets with a **Pillar**: as occupying forces, as a home base, etc.

Why can't the Authority re-take **Pillars**? This is to prevent a tug-of-war situation where your game lasts forever as **Pillars** are traded back and forth. When players fell a **Pillar**, they're making a conscious choice to push the campaign, and the Authority, closer to an ending.

While the Cause and the players can attempt to take **Pillars** one by one, reducing their GRIP until they are exposed, they might also focus on attacking a Division: taking more effort, but giving them a temporary window in which they might fell multiple **Pillars** in quick succession. Make sure they understand both options are available to them!

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



THE WAYWARD

Sometimes, when a Division is ousted badly or the fiction demands it, groups with power that are unaligned to either the Authority OR the Cause can appear. Sometimes, these third parties may have always been there, waiting on the sidelines until it is time to make their move.

Wayward Factions use the same rules as those of the Cause, in that they have types and Outcomes, and can be *tapped* or *un-tapped* in play. They differ, however, in that Wayward Factions may choose to oppose the Cause instead of the Authority: *tapping* themselves to force a failure during a Conflict Scene, or more broadly *tapping* themselves to support the Authority during a Sortie. Wayward Factions typically become *un-tapped* as the result of Director moves.

What allows Factions to succeed is teamwork and a united front when opposing moves—something the Wayward, naturally, interferes with. What, then, unites the Wayward Factions? What do they want? These are the kind of things you should figure out if you have an interest in spotlighting the Wayward in your game.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

PLAYING THE CONFLICT TURN

During the Conflict Turn, you will play out Scenes together to depict the Cause's struggle to resist the Authority and its endeavours, or its attempts to bloody the Authority's nose on its own terms. During each Scene, you'll pick Challenges—some of which involve **rolls**—to add detail, then you'll choose a Resolution for the Scene based on how those **rolls** went. You could play the Conflict Turn with your whole group, or just a few players. You might even play the Conflict Turn of a campaign with a *different* set of players entirely!

When playing out a Conflict Scene, you might temporarily step into the role of characters who are part of the Authority or the Cause, or even appear as your normal character occasionally. You don't need to make up characters ahead of time, but it can be helpful to do so if you're not good at coming up with them on the spot.

Characters you embody in the Conflict Turn don't need a playbook or Traits—just a rough idea of who they are, what they look like, and what they want is good enough. Conflict Turn characters can be captured or die during certain Scenes, so be careful who you throw into them: there's nothing wrong with playing someone who feels a little disposable instead. It's what they're doing that will matter.

There are three steps to the Conflict Turn:

- Choosing which Scene to play, and what Division & Faction are involved
- Playing that Scene by making Challenges and **rolling**
- Resolve the Scene by comparing Cause and Authority successes

STEP 1: CHOOSE CONFLICT SCENE

Three Conflict Scenes are played during each Turn, one led by (or targeting) a Division of the Authority. Some Conflict Scenes will invite everyone playing to take turns choosing Challenges—in this case, some players won't get to issue one, so give priority to those who ideas they're excited about.

When you choose a Scene, choose the Division involved and *tap* a Faction that will be representing the Cause's efforts or interests during it. If it's already *tapped*, the Faction is destroyed. If you have no Factions that aren't *tapped* or just don't want to *tap* one, you can skip it: still play the Scene out, but the Division automatically wins when you get to the Resolution.

STEP 2: PLAY THE SCENE

Each Scene has its own set-up and instructions for play, detailing who players are and what they are doing. Each also has its own list of Challenges for players, including the Director, to make at each other: some of these call for you to **roll**. When you do so, roll a single d6; if the result is equal to or higher than the Division's Strength, the Cause succeeds; if it's lower, the Division succeeds instead. Keep note of how many successes and failures are scored during the Scene. If the players wish, they may *tap* a Faction to skip a **roll** and add a success. When you do so, narrate how this other Faction swoops in to provide aid or assistance (and potentially at what cost).

THE CONFLICT TURN

STEP 3: RESOLVE CONFLICT SCENE

Once all of a Scene's Challenges have been played, it's time to resolve it. Compare the successes and failures from rolls: if there are more successes, the Cause comes out of the Scene with a victory or advantage of some kind. If there are more failures, the Division is victorious instead. In the event of a tie, interpret the outcome as a group: if you're unsure, flip a coin.

In either case, as a group, choose a Resolution for the Scene that you feel lines up to the events of it as well as who came out on top. The winning side then narrates their answer to the Resolution, and chooses an Outcome they earned through it: feel free to flash forward to show the effects of a Scene where you need to.

When playing out Conflict Scenes, try to think of them as brief flashes to the broader events of the war: keep them short and sweet. Conflict Scenes are a great opportunity to briefly show off characters who don't have much opportunity to appear otherwise.

Finally, the events of the Conflict Turn should be communicated to the player characters in-fiction. Naturally, Downtime will provide a great opportunity to slip them this information, through newspaper reports and other media, relevant characters passing along accounts, and so on.

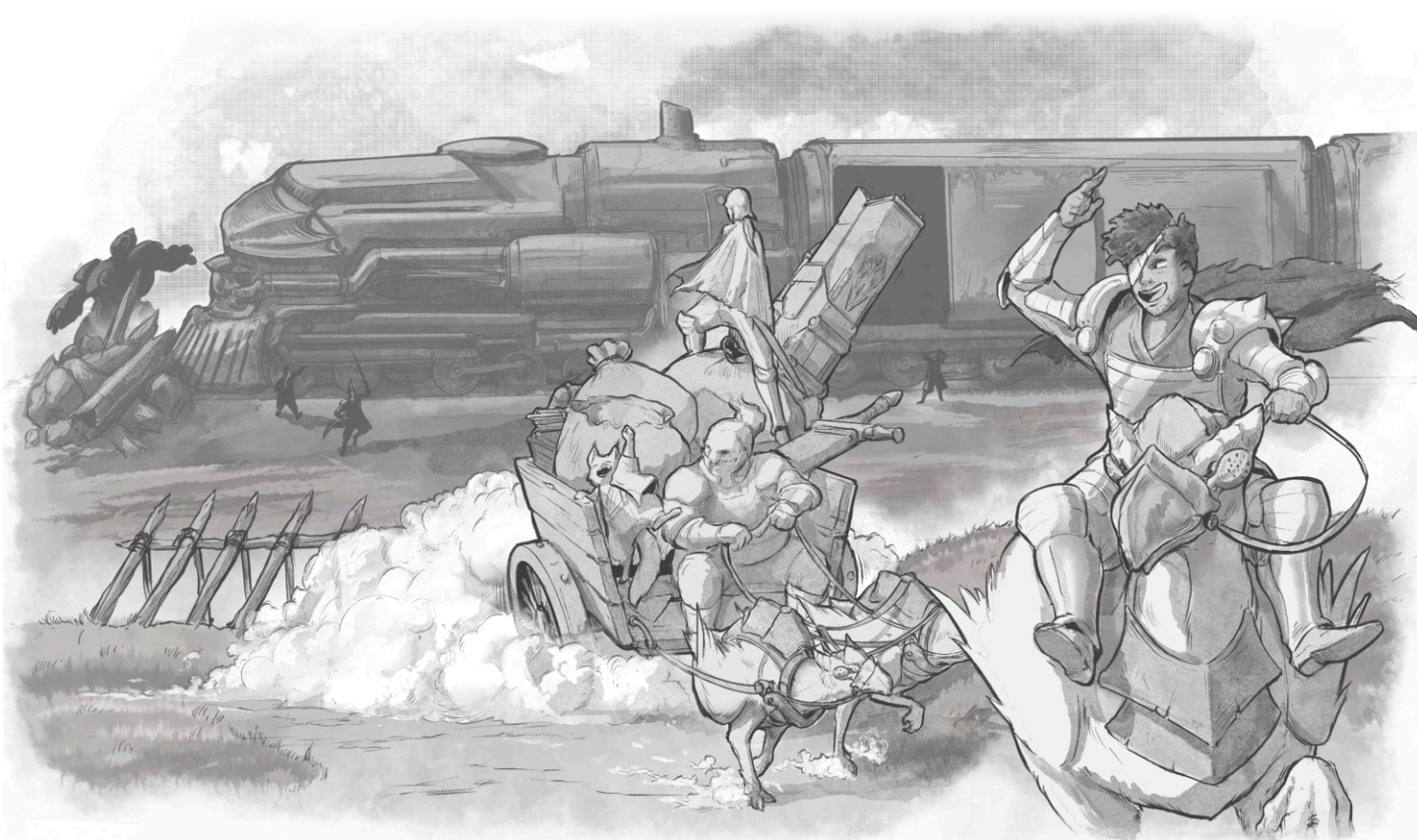
CONFLICT OUTCOMES

After a Conflict Scene is played out, the victorious side may choose an Outcome. If the winner was the Authority, the group may choose an option from those listed on the Division's type. If the winner was the Cause, the group may instead choose one of the Factions that was involved in that Scene—either the initial 'defending' Faction, or any that were tapped to skip **rolls**—and gain their Outcome.

If you have a specific Outcome in mind, you might frame a Conflict Scene around it specifically: but you don't need to commit to a choice ahead of time.

A Division being destroyed or changed is a big deal. Make sure this is seen and felt appropriately by the players, and unless you're intending it to be a big surprise, try and work that Division's falling fortunes into the fiction beforehand.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



CONFLICT SCENES

AN UNFURLING PLAN

Everyone plays, taking the role of either members of the Authority (as you hatch a plan of some nefarious nature) or the Cause (as you figure out how to thwart that plan). Decide together where this meeting is taking place, and who else is present. Who are you both playing? What history do you have?

During the conversation, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances.

Playing The Scene

Players freely roleplay, issuing Challenges to escalate and complicate the Scene. Continue playing until at least three **rolls** have been made or the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: look at the Resolutions below for what that might look like.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *I present evidence of a spy in our ranks: **roll** to see if it's taken seriously.*
- *I point out a blind spot in our intel: will we recommit resources (reduce a beneficial clock by 1 step) or **roll** and take the risk?*
- *A step of our planning is left undone: who will **roll** and suggest a solution?*
- *My squad or group is eager to contribute. Who will give us direction?*
- *Explain to me how this represents the Authority/Cause's ideals.*
- *How does your plan better serve the common people?*
- *I'm hesitant to commit my resources: who will **roll** and try to convince me?*

Resolutions

- *A consensus is reached: who benefits the most?*
- *We leave without reaching an agreement: who acts alone?*
- *The meeting falls to argument and conflict: who feels most slighted?*

A COVERT OP

Everyone plays. The Director assumes the role of various Authority or Cause characters, while other players act as agents for the opposite. Discuss what kind of undercover operation you are leading, and what happens should you fail.

Who are you? What part of the Division or what Factions are you tied to? Why were you chosen for this? What do you think about the mission?

Playing The Scene

Players freely roleplay, issuing Challenges to escalate and complicate the Scene. Continue playing until at least three **rolls** have been made or the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: look at the Resolutions below for what that might look like.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *A magical trap bars the way. Do you take a slow route around, or **roll** to disarm it?*
- *Tight guard patrols threaten to catch you. **Roll** to see if you can evade them.*
- *You must quickly and quietly take out a watchman: who will **roll** to do the job?*
- *Your intel turns out to be inaccurate: what's wrong, and how do you improvise?*
- *You find a position that overlooks something secret: describe it.*
- *Someone will have to split off as a decoy. Who goes? **Roll** to see how successful they are.*
- *Our plans are changed suddenly: **roll** to see if it's for better or worse.*

Resolutions

- *The agents are discovered and exposed: can they still escape?*
- *The agents escape without being caught: how do they celebrate?*
- *The agents sacrifice themselves to accomplish their duty: is it worth it?*

THE CONFLICT TURN

ALL OUT WAR

Everyone plays. Players distribute themselves between the Authority and the Cause evenly if possible, casting themselves as soldiers, Channelers and other members of the Division or a Faction. The Director may freely play characters from both sides where needed to facilitate the scene. Decide together where your battlefield is, what the stakes of this fight are and how these characters feel about the war and their place in it.

Freely roleplay the clashing forces, Astir against Astir, Carrier vs Carrier, and so on. During the struggle, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances.

Playing The Scene

Players freely roleplay, issuing Challenges to escalate and complicate the Scene. Continue playing until at least three **rolls** have been made or the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: look at the Resolutions below for what that might look like.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *I come straight for you, weapons ready: **roll** to see if you can hold me back.*
- *I lead an unexpected ambush, and **roll** to see if I catch you by surprise.*
- *I separate you from your supporting forces: **roll** to see if you can regroup.*
- *You are ordered to pull back. Do you follow orders?*
- *I seem to drop my guard: if you seize the opportunity, **roll** to find out if it's a feint or not.*
- *Our battle endangers a group of civilians. If you refuse to hold back, **roll**.*
- *You could complete a key objective at cost. What would you lose? If you give it up, don't **roll**: just add a success.*

Resolutions

- *One side is forced to rout: are they cut down as they flee?*
- *A truce is reached: what are its terms?*
- *The battle will continue tomorrow, but an impressive push wins it for today: what is secured?*

A CHASE

Two volunteers play, one hunter and one hunted. They should decide between them which takes the role of an Authority member and which represents the Cause, on what level the chase is occurring—on foot, in Astirs, etc—and why it is happening. Decide where the chase takes place, and who is at risk should things get messy.

Freely roleplay the chase. During it, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances. Other players may embody bystanders, the environment, and so on where required.

Playing The Scene

Take turns making Challenges, starting with the hunter. Continue playing until at least three **rolls** have been made or the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: look at the Resolutions below for what that might look like.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *I lead you into a trap. **Roll** to see if you can escape it.*
- *We briefly draw close, and I injure you: how do you push me away?*
- *We dash through a dangerous area. Will you take your time, or will you **roll** to give chase?*
- *I deploy something magical to my advantage. What happens?*
- *I find a sudden burst of speed in me: **roll** to see if you can match me.*
- *I slip through a busy, crowded place. Do you rush through and cause a scene, or **roll** to find another path?*
- *You turn a corner and lose sight of me. How do you find me?*

Resolutions

- *We walk into a dead end. Can the hunted still escape?*
- *An escape is in sight: can the hunter catch up in time?*
- *A third party intervenes: whose side are they on?*

THE CONFLICT TURN

ONE-ON-ONE

Two volunteers play, locked in conflict with one another. They should decide between them which takes the role of an Authority member and which represents the Cause, what form their duel takes, and what it's stakes are.

Decide where the duel takes place, and who is at risk should things get messy.

Freely roleplay the duel. During it, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances. Other players may embody bystanders, the environment, and so on where required.

Playing The Scene

Take turns making Challenges, starting with whoever has the most to lose. Continue playing until at least three **rolls** have been made or the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: look at the Resolutions below for what that might look like.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *My guard seems to drop for a moment. Will you **roll** to take the risk and strike?*
- *I reveal a surprising new weapon. **Roll** to see if you can adapt to it.*
- *We reach a momentary impasse: what do you say to me?*
- *I make a flashy, unnecessary play. Do you let me show off?*
- *I reach for a moment of intimacy, like a kiss, between blows. Will you let me close?*
- *Your allies appear. Do you allow them to intervene?*
- *I push you and our fight into a new location. **Roll** to see if you find an advantage here.*
- *I make an attack that threatens innocents. Will you **roll** to ensure their safety?*

Resolutions

- *I drive you back to the point that you could flee. Do you run or stand?*
- *We are evenly matched. Will you risk something to strike me down?*
- *Your skills are undeniable. Can I convince you to join me?*

THE DISCOURSE

Everyone plays, taking the role of either members of the Authority, the Cause, or both, as key figures discuss and politic among themselves, idly or otherwise. Anyone may be present, but **roll**; on a Division success, a Faction must still be *tapped* if you can do so without destroying it—**THE DISCOURSE** is exhausting. Decide together where this conversation occurs, who else is present, and what the power dynamic between participants is.

During the conversation, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances.

Playing The Scene

Players freely roleplay, issuing Challenges to escalate and complicate the Scene. Continue playing until the Scene reaches what feels like a natural end: after **THE DISCOURSE**, there is no winner or loser and no Outcomes are earned. Simply choose a Resolution as a group.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *I say something insulting about a superior or influential figure. Who reacts strongest?*
- *I press someone for their opinion on something. Do you answer honestly?*
- *I arrive, dressed to kill. Whose eye do I catch?*
- *I talk flippantly about our duties. Does anyone admonish me?*
- *I offer my opinion on another Division or Faction. Whose attention do I catch?*
- *I direct a flirtatious comment towards someone. Does it take root?*
- *I openly question our current course of action. Who can reassure me?*
- *I offer to take someone aside, to dance, talk privately, or otherwise. Is my offer accepted?*
- *I make a hopeful statement about our future. Can anyone back me up, genuinely?*
- *I say something overly revealing or personal. Does anyone press me on it?*

Resolutions

- *Someone or something breaks up our discussion. Who or what, and why?*
- *Our conversation is overheard: by who?*
- *One of us makes a statement that history will look back on as prophetic: who, and what is it?*

INVENTORY OF 'THE BUSY BEETLE'

Port Huginn Authority, YA230, Quartermaster Luis

1 HERCULES-Class Astir, '*Dire Dismissal*'

2 STAG-Class Astirs, '*Fair Lady*' & '*Florence*'

4 SHILDBEARER Ardents, unnamed

90 javelins (steel-tipped)

10 javelins (steel-tipped, enchanted to pierce armour)

1 dozen spears (iron-tipped)

1 dozen crossbows (wood construction, leather bindings)

180 crossbow bolts, quivers of 15

3 snap-rifles (licensed, unknown artificer)

9 fingers of alchemical ruby (medium quality, fully charged)

50 candles, beeswax

18 lanterns, brass

18 flasks, lantern oil, 1 pint

4 drums, lantern oil, 1 gallon

13lb powdered silver

1lb powdered diamond

3lb elemental fire, salts

7 healing elixirs, 6 fl oz

2 crates, assorted bandages & ointments

6 large drums, water, 10 gallons

6 crates, packaged rations

8 parcels, fresh fruit (sealed)

1 barrel, pickled fish

1 bar of chocolate, 4oz

1 crate, unmarked (sealed, shielded against divination)

- Excerpt from '*Flight Log Of The Busy Beetle*', several writers,
first entry YA211, final entry YA231, recovered YA233





RUNNING THE GAME

As the Director, it's primarily your job to facilitate play. To that end, you have an **agenda** and **principles** to guide your decisions and help you figure out what is in the spirit of the game. When it comes to making moves, your **director moves** give you clear options for directing the action. There's also a brief primer on **safety tools**, though I encourage you to research these more to find something that suits you, some **example foes** and guidelines for creating characters to oppose the players, and an explanation of **rivals**.

AGENDA

As a Director running Armour Astir, there are certain things you should strive for. These are your agendas. Think of these like your tenets, as you perform the sacred rites of running a fun game for your friends.

- Portray a world entrenched in conflict.
- Let the players make a difference.
- Play to find out what happens.

PRINCIPLES

Additionally, you have your principles. Your principles are things to consider when deciding what move to make, and can also serve as a reference when you're unsure if a move you want to make is appropriate.

- Give Conflict Weight
- Begin And End With The Fiction
- Fight Wars With Words (Sometimes)
- Address The Characters, Not The Players
- Build Something Diverse
- Ask Questions And Use The Answers
- You Can't Pull Punches If You Don't Throw Them
- Make Moves Off-Screen
- Keep Things Magical

GIVE CONFLICT WEIGHT

In Armour Astir, conflict reaches everyone in some way. When you present your world and the people in it, consider the effects of it on them, and the things they've been caught up in because of it. Confront your players with the consequences of their actions, and remind them that marginalised people often suffer the most during times of struggle: even if it feels like what is being struggled against isn't something directly adversarial to marginalised identities.

Armour Astir is less gritty and boots-on-the-ground than some war games, but that is absolutely no excuse not to properly consider those most hurt by conflict and excluded from the power structures used to perpetuate it in their absence. Do **not** forget those that your Authority gladly would.

BEGIN AND END WITH THE FICTION

When you make your moves, establish and ground them in the fiction before you detail what the mechanical results are. Then, return to the fiction, and show the fictional consequences of those results. Be a good example for your players: teach them to make their action clear before resolving it with dice, and then to hook the consequences back into the fiction.

FIGHT WARS WITH WORDS (SOMETIMES)

Not all fights are fought with blades. Fight your players with words, spoken or otherwise, and remind them of the impact influential figures can have without setting foot on a battlefield when the opportunity arises. If your players are so inclined, let them wield this power too: let them disarm foes with a scathing insult, or write a challenging letter that wins over a sympathetic lord. Not all problems are best solved with force, after all.

ADDRESS THE CHARACTERS, NOT THE PLAYERS

As far as you're concerned, once you start the session you're no longer at the table with your good friends. To your left is Cordelian, the Arcanist, piloting his Lance-Minor Astir. To your right, the rough-and-rowdy Scout, Rio. Staring daggers at you from across the table is Mire, the Witch, whose Falcon-class Astir is currently missing an arm. So when you talk to your players, make sure you're actually addressing those Paradigms, Artificers and assorted other heroes. Ask Mire what they do, not what their player thinks they do. This helps everyone focus and keep their minds on the fiction that you're all creating together.

BUILD SOMETHING DIVERSE

War is a big, bloody thing, stretching continents as easily as it stretches time. Let your players feel the consequences of their involvement with it on more than one scale. Just as they involve themselves in the small-scale of conflict, getting in their Astirs and taking the fight to the enemy as commanded, let them involve themselves in the overarching systems of war—the politics, the organisation—and let them become valuable to the cause they fight for. Then, you can involve them in larger consequences—and if they try to run, they should find these connections they've made difficult to cut.

On a similar note, the people of your world represent a far broader set of identities and experiences than those likely represented by your players and their characters. Make sure that when you depict those people that you are not forgetting this, and do so in a way that ensures they are more than just beat-down groups that you set the Authority on for effect. Give marginalised players at your table room to take authorship and ownership of the fiction when it comes to people who share in their experiences, if that is a thing they are interested in doing. If not, be ready to listen and make changes if you misstep in your own handling of those elements. Remember too that the ways in which people are marginalised, especially when it comes to disabilities, are not always easily visible. Consider the ways in which disability affects people's daily life and routines, how this might be exacerbated or alleviated by the environment around them even when it goes unnoticed by others, and keep this in mind when making decisions about how those characters act and are presented to the table. Give disability the same focus and care you would when depicting characters who are marginalised by their sexuality, their gender or race.

Let marginalised groups of all descriptions have agency and purpose in your game, especially when the Authority would rather see them disappear. I guarantee you there is room for us.

ASK QUESTIONS AND USE THEIR ANSWERS

The shared fiction of your world is something you work on together with your players, so involve them in fleshing it out. Ask them questions about their characters, and the places and concepts related to them. If you don't know something, if you're short on interesting ideas, or you just want someone else's viewpoint, don't hesitate to ask one of your players instead. Be curious about what they want to contribute to the fiction, and help them feel invested in it by using the information they give you. This lightens the narrative load for you, helps keeps things a little varied, and also lets you have the same curiosity and surprise as the players do when something new becomes part of the story.

Additionally, as the Director you'll often be given responsibilities or moves you can make on behalf of the Authority or otherwise. Feel free to delegate these to a player whenever and however you want, to sponsor their investment in various elements of your narrative.

YOU CAN'T PULL PUNCHES IF YOU DON'T THROW THEM

At the table, you're all part of the same fiction. Your players are the stars of the show—so let them feel like it by giving them foes that feel worth their time. Characters in *Armour Astir* have lots of options for tilting the odds in their favour and tearing through lesser opposition: so don't be afraid of flooding the field with targets, or throwing tough and imposing foes at them when the moment calls for it. Death isn't so easy to meet for the players—**BITE THE DUST** is explicit that there is always a choice made, even on a failure—so it's better to throw punches you can pull back on as foes retreat or are called away, rather than take it easy and have everyone feel the Authority was a little toothless this time around.

MAKE MOVES OFF-SCREEN

It's also important to remember that, while your players and their characters are important, not everything that happens does so right in front of them. Don't be afraid to make moves and keep things shifting behind the scenes, then present the results of those moves to the group when appropriate. There are battles the characters aren't involved in, and discussions or decisions they don't get to make. Remind them that the world is bigger than they are.

KEEP THINGS MAGICAL

Finally, Armour Astir isn't just a game about mechs and pilots. It's a game about giant magical constructs, slinging spells at each other through enchanted weapons, protected by complex rituals and powered by Channelers—powerful magic-users fuelled by innate talent, divine powers, otherworldly influences and arcane artifacts. Don't forget that!



DIRECTOR MOVES

Just like your players have moves, you as a Director have moves to help guide and codify what you can do. The players make a move when they want to do something - you make a move when;

- They roll a 6 or below on one of their moves
- When they look to you for something to happen, or can't decide what to do
- When the fiction says something should happen

Broadly speaking, the moves you have are to;

- Make an obvious threat
- Test the forces of GRAVITY
- Exploit a *danger* or a *tag*
- Split them up
- Put them in *danger*
- Reveal something new
- Attack someone who's *defenceless*
- Start a (mysterious) clock
- Give an option with cost or consequence

Typically, after making a move, you should pass the narrative baton back to your players by asking: what do you do?

MAKE AN OBVIOUS THREAT

Show them the barrel of the gun, tease something to come, etc. Put things on the table so everyone can see what's in play, and take that into account when making awful decisions.

"There's an explosion from behind the bay doors, and a blue Astir striped with grey dashes through the smoke directly towards you, a long blade streaking with white-hot energy. What do you do?"

"You're out of sight, moving from column to column keeping an eye on the Ambassador, when one of his guards falls out of step with the others. They reach into their coat. What do you do?"

"Back on the ship, Hargen, you watch as the construct sensor spikes upwards in two, no, three spots. Ensign Wren dials in the sensitivity and turns to you. 'Two Wolves and an unidentified third, closing fast.' What do you do?"

EXPLOIT A DANGER OR A TAG

Use the risks and perils your players have taken, and the tags on their gear, as vectors for action against them.

"They're faster than you expect, rushing up on the side where your sensors are disrupted. You dodge just enough to make sure the blade doesn't go through your cockpit, but they carve your Astir's head off entirely instead; replace that risk (blinded) with a peril (blinded). What do you do?"

"You took the risk 'embarrassed', right? As you try to walk away, Cress takes your wrist, and says 'You know, we don't have to do this in front of the others. Come with me.' She starts to pull you away as the others are leaving—what do you do?"

"June brings her shield up, but she doesn't need it. You run the firing ritual and... nothing. Your missiles had the limited tag, and that previous salvo was your last. What do you do?"

PUT THEM IN DANGER

When the players fail a roll or leave themselves exposed to harm, that's a good opportunity to hurt them by putting them in *danger*. It's up to you how severe you be here in a given situation: putting them in *peril* is a much harder move than asking them to take a *risk*, and having them replace a *risk* with a *peril* is a slightly kinder middle ground.

"He dashes out of your reach to safety, and fires a rayrifle shot directly at you. You'll need to take a risk to avoid it. Ok, now what do you do?"

"You're holding the wreck up for the time being, but your Astir just isn't made for this. You can hear and feel the grating and grinding of its parts as your arms start to buckle—take the peril 'crushed'. What do you do?"

"They don't look impressed by what you have to say at all. The guy with the helmet looks at you, and seeing how scared you look, keeps eye contact as he slowly puts his blade through the injured guard. Replace your 'scared' risk with the peril 'shaken'. What do you do?"

ATTACK SOMEONE WHO'S DEFENCELESS

If a character has stacked up enough *dangers* to become *defenceless*, they're truly in the cross-hairs and are exposed to consequences that could force them to flee, be killed, or otherwise taken out of action. When someone is *defenceless*, there's blood in the water and everyone can smell it.

"Carryl, you glance leftwards and see Paldry's Astir, smoking and immobile. She's defenceless, and does nothing but panic as one of the Coursers dashes forward, sinking its lance right through her iron carapace. What do you do?"

*"You try to step away, but Kett isn't going to let you leave even if it costs him his life. He swings the thermal axe at you, decisively. I need you to **BITE THE DUST**—what do you do?"*

*"The crowd are talking among themselves as they watch you, waiting for you to respond, but you can't find the words. Second-of-Blades gives you that smug grin again, and says 'Take your time, channeler. I can wait here all day to see how little merit your case has.' You're already defenceless, so I need you to **BITE THE DUST** and see if you can keep your cool. What do you do?"*

GIVE AN OPTION WITH COST OR CONSEQUENCE

When your players ask you how or if they can do something, give them options: and where appropriate, tell them the cost or consequence attached. This lets them make more educated choices about the fiction you're all making together.

"Sure, you can try and snatch the sword away from him, but if you mess it up you'd be putting yourself in a really dangerous spot."

"You catch that red Astir out the corner of your eye, breaking away from the pack. You could give chase, but with the damage to your mobility enchantments you'd really have to push your Astir to catch up to them: you'd have to mark 'overheating'."

"You reach out with your magic to the presence you noticed, feeling around in the ether for it. You can feel your senses dimming as you extend further and further from your body, and you know that if you keep going you risk losing yourself entirely. Do you keep going?"

TEST THE FORCES OF GRAVITY

Ask a player to make a decision that calls one of their GRAVITY clocks into question, like putting someone they love in danger, or giving them a tough request from a trusted friend. They can't change their clocks until they're filled, but you can always make moves to sow the seeds of doubt—or reinforce those relationships instead.

"You're taking the time to carefully line up the shot, when you hear Function over the comms, struggling against someone. You have GRAVITY with them, right? What do you do?"

"Knight Huller breaks away from the others as he sees you leave, and plants himself between you and the door. Your clock is 'We can't help but fight when we lock eyes.', right? You could maybe still get past him if you wanted. What do you do?"

"Mishell takes you by the hand, and comes in close if you let her. She looks genuinely worried, and actually—she puts one of her hands on your shoulder, and says 'Jess, I need you to trust me. I know it seems like a lot, but I know you can do this. You're ready.' What do you do? As a reminder, your clock with Mishell is 'Always had each-other's backs'."

SPLIT THEM UP

Nice and simple—introduce something that separates the players, requiring them to deal with trouble without working together.

"Manchester, you fall behind as the three of you are sprinting through the halls. Hold and Sander make it down to the end of the corridor ahead of you, and you're catching up when the building shakes. The floor and walls in front of you crumble as an Astir backs through the building, demolishing a wide portion of it and cutting you off from the others. What do you do?"

"You watch the others swipe their stolen sigils against the crystal, and the lifts take them upwards. It goes red when you do yours, though, and instead you start descending. You know what's on the floor below, right? What do you do?"

"June, you manage to quickly boost your way out, so you're safe. Sear, though, you're not quite so lucky. That grey Astir didn't just stab you, the spear went through your armour and it's pinning you to the inside of the chamber. You can hear the hum of the macrospell charging, and see June rushing to safety in the distance. What do you do?"

REVEAL SOMETHING NEW

Reveal something new to the players that complicates things for them.

"Ok, ok. That's a six, but you don't fail here actually. There's a hiss of pressure as the Lovesong's cockpit opens, and the pilot gets out. It's like looking into a mirror, Coln. It's your brother. What do you do?"

"You dash forwards, bringing your axe down towards Hill as he staggers backwards, but his guard hasn't fallen. It was a feint, Lottie. He steps under your swing and tugs the weapon loose from your grip. I'm erasing his 'stunned' risk, and you should take the risk 'disarmed'. What do you do?"

"There's a huge cracking noise, and all of you—even the people who aren't channelers—feel the magic in the air around you get stronger instantly. Up in the sky, the clouds break as the Ophelian Engine tears into your plane of existence. What do you do?"

START A (MYSTERIOUS) CLOCK

Start a clock to represent a countdown until something happens, progress towards something, etc. Label it, or leave it a mystery: either way, a ticking clock creates pressure on the players and leaves them anticipating whatever is to come. Clocks typically have 4, 6, or 8 segments, but you could make a larger one if you wish, or divide something into multiple shorter clocks.

You should also decide what advances these clocks: will they fill on their own over time, are they something that ticks up when the players fail moves or ignore a threat, or do the players need to take action directly to advance it? Whatever the method, when a clock is filled, it should be a big deal. Everyone should know about what happens next.

SAFETY TOOLS

When playing tabletop games, even with people you're intimately acquainted with, there can be situations in which topics and imagery players aren't comfortable with can arise. It's important to communicate clearly ahead of time to help keep everyone at the table safe.

Personally, I recommend at very least having a 'Session 0', where players and the Director can make characters together and discuss what kinds of play and subjects they're interested in tackling. However, this alone doesn't provide a framework for the group to step back in the event that something unexpected and potentially triggering comes up during play.

To help with that, there are a number of safety tools groups can use to help avoid these situations that, even if they aren't used, better communicate the boundaries of everyone at the table. You should discuss as a group what safety tools, if any, you will be using.

Provided below is info on a few I am personally familiar with, but there are more out there - I encourage you to talk with your players and look up tools that suit your needs. There is no end-all be-all of safety tools other than open, honest communication with the people you play games with. While they can be helpful, they are no replacement for treating each-other with genuine care.

THE X-CARD

The X-Card is a simple method by which players can veto content during a game, signalling to everyone that they wish to step back from whatever has been flagged. It is a card with an X on it, that, should a player be uncomfortable with something that arises during a session, they can tap or raise to signal their discomfort. The group steps back or edits out the signalled content.

More information on the X-Card and examples of its use can be found at tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg.

LINEs & VEILs

Lines & Veils is a system where players can designate topics as a boundary for them at two levels - as either a 'line' or a 'veil'.

- Lines are hard limits. A 'line' is something that should not come up during the game - it is something that a player has communicated that they do not want present in their role-play.
- Veils are soft limits. A 'veil' is something a player has communicated they wish to 'fade to black' or 'pan away' from. Unlike a line, they are ok with it being present in the story—just not with it being a focus.

More information on Lines & Veils and examples of its use can be found at rpg.stackexchange.com/questions/30906/what-do-the-terms-lines-and-veils-mean.

STARTING & ENDING YOUR CAMPAIGN

STARTING A CAMPAIGN

Session 0! There are few better ways to start a campaign than all getting together and making your characters together. In *Armour Astir* specifically, you'll also want to sketch out the Authority and Cause with your players, and take notes on the things your players show interest for when you expand on them later. As for your first Sortie, it can be best to draw some thoughts from the table on what they think the relationship between their characters looks like at the start of the campaign. Are they unfamiliar heroes, waiting to be brought together by fate, or are they already a friendly crew working within the Cause? What does life look like under the Authority for them, and what form does resisting it take?

If most of the characters are new to the Cause, it can be fun to play the inciting incident that brings them all together. Did some of the crew steal Astirs during an attack by the Authority on their homes? Did someone defect from a Division while it clashed with the Cause?

If everyone is an established crew already, you have plenty of options too. Do you start with a Sortie that reveals a change in the status quo, or makes something new possible for the Cause? Is this Sortie the first open move the Cause has made, operating quietly until this moment?

ENDING A CAMPAIGN

Eventually, you will want your campaign to end. All good things do, after all. The back and forth of the Conflict Turn will likely eventually end with the Authority at 0 Stability, ripe for defeat, but there's more you can do to manage the length of your campaign.

Generally, it's a pretty good idea to think about how long you want the campaign to run, and talk about this with your players. Are your players happy to keep playing however long it takes, letting the events of the Conflict Turn and the choices they make define it? Or do you have a specific length in mind? 6 sessions? A certain amount of Sorties, however many sessions it takes to get through them?

With that info in mind, if you've ran a game or two before you might already have a pretty good idea how to end your campaign when it's the appropriate time. You're well within your rights to hand the players other opportunities to damage the Authority's Stability through their Sorties, or you might even choose to just automatically reduce it throughout the course of play, landing them at 0 when you're ready for your big finale.

Whatever happens, feel free to bend the rules a little to end your game in a way that works for your group.

RE: PACING

Armour Astir has a lot of tools for both players and the Director to directly influence the pacing of the campaign: players have a lot of direct control over how quickly they gain advancements from their GRAVITY clocks, for example, as well as having a big part to play in the decisions of the Conflict Turn. Those decisions have a big impact on how quickly the Authority goes from being overwhelming and untouchable to blissfully mortal.

If, as a group, you want to tweak this pacing further, you have plenty of options available to you. GRAVITY clocks, for example, could be shifted from 6-step to 8-step clocks if you know as a group you want those inter-character arcs (and the associated advancements) to come along slower. You can also extend the amount of Spotlight required to gain an advance too: if you so desired, you could even start with Spotlight requirements and GRAVITY clocks of a shorter length and then extend them each time they are filled.

Additionally, Division Schemes give you a good excuse to shift things around for the Authority. If the group finds choices they've made have interfered with the campaign's pacing in a way they're not happy with, or if they just find the game seems to be drawing to a close faster or slower than expected, giving an upcoming Division Scheme a bigger-than-expected impact is a good way to set things right again.

PREPARING & ENDING SESSIONS

PREPARING SORTIES

When preparing Sorties, a good starting place is to look at is your player's character sheets. What are their Hooks and GRAVITY clocks flagging? Where do their skills lie? What do their moves equip them for, and what don't they?

It's always a good idea to look over your notes from previous Sorties and Downtimes, if this one isn't your first. Your players probably expressed interest in certain characters and story elements: these are always good things to consider bringing back in the future. Additionally, did the events of the Conflict Turn highlight any new opportunities for the players? Have new weaknesses been exposed in the Authority to exploit, or do desperate Factions need their aid?

Additionally, if you're unsure what kinds of outcomes your Sorties should gain the players, looking at **PLAN & PREPARE**'s choices is a good place to start; messing with GRIP, exposing **actors**, etc.

If it's your first Sortie, you won't have previous ones to look back on, but hopefully you had the good sense to run a Session 0 with your players. Among other things, your first Sortie is a great thing to discuss with them as they make characters, as it's a great way for those characters to be introduced to each other and even the Cause if they are personally starting outside of it.

When it comes to opposition, the key thing to remember is the amount of *dangers* they can take. Main **actors** can take up to 3, putting them on par with players: they'll take multiple successful moves to dispatch, giving the people making the rolls ample room for failure. Side and Extra foes on the other hand can take only 2 or 1 respectively, making them easier to get rid of and much easier to present to a group in larger numbers. If you really want a larger amount of **actors** 'on-screen', you can even consider using squads to represent large numbers of quickly-dispatched foes. Generally, given the free-form action economy of games like *Armour Astir* that do not use turn based combat, putting a few Main or Side characters in front of you group makes for a much riskier 'encounter' than a large number of Extras.

PREPARING DOWNTIME

When the table is heading into Downtime, you as the Director have much less work to do. By picking out their Moves, the rest of the group will be directing scenes on their own terms, meaning your role is mostly reactive. All you need to really do is be prepared to make some moves should anyone fail, lend a hand by playing Director characters during scenes, and look out for opportunities to sprinkle in information on the events of the Conflict Turn.

Good things to think about ahead of Downtime, then, include:

- What *risks* and *perils* everyone has: what moves might they take to clear them? What could go wrong on a failed move?
- Who is around that could get involved in their moves? Do any players have GRAVITY clocks with Director characters that you should spotlight?
- What happened during the Conflict Turn? Do you need a scene or two to set up larger events? Is there anything small that can come up during theirs?

ENDING A SESSION

When ending a session, it's a good idea to give yourselves some space—maybe ten, twenty minutes or so—to cool down and go over the events of the session. Is everyone happy with how things went? Is there anything people want to discuss, or see more or less of in future sessions?

It's also a good time to check over the progress people have made on GRAVITY clocks and Spotlight. Has anyone forgotten to tick up their clocks? Are there clocks that are close to being filled that people should pay extra attention to next time?

As the Director, it's also a good time to take notes on things the players have flagged as things they're interested in this session. Are there characters you introduced that they responded well to? Plot threads you thought weren't important that they couldn't help but pull at? These are the kinds of things you can carry forward and bring back later to help them feel engaged and important to your shared fiction.

CREATING ACTORS

Actors (or non-player characters in more common parlance, though the GM of a game is also a 'player') are any characters other than those created and owned by the players. When they appear on screen, the Director is typically responsible for their actions, though where appropriate you could (and should) find opportunities to let players step into their shoes.

When creating an **actor**, you first need to think about how important they are. **Actors** are ranked as either **extras**, **side** or **main** characters. Extras are those who are only important in their opposition to the player characters: the rank-and-file, the nameless soldiers, etc. Side characters are those that have some minor importance to the story: if they're important enough for a player to know their name, they're probably at least a Side character. Finally, **Main actors** have a larger role, appearing fairly often and having an impact on the world similar to or beyond that of the players.

When making a **Main actor**, someone who is important to the story you're telling and likely to be on-screen often, come up with three adjectives to describe them. For a **Side actor**, someone who will appear more than once but isn't quite so important, come up with two. For Extras, who are unlikely to appear more than once (and are likely to end up dead), a focus on one adjective can help their short time on screen feel nice and sharp. If you know a character might involve themselves with the players in a more hostile manner—say, if they're one of the Authority's **actors**—you might choose a tag or two instead of some of your usual adjectives. Saying someone is resolute means something, but saying someone is *decisive* has specific mechanical effects.

If you want to come up with additional details or backstory ahead of time for Main or Side characters, feel free—but putting that degree of effort in for Extras is likely to be wasted time (unless your players latch onto them).

When creating the Authority and Cause, the characters you come up with that lead or influence those groups are most likely Main or Side **actors**. That said, **actors** can move between these classifications in play wherever appropriate. Sometimes you bring on an Extra without realising how in love with them the players will become—sometimes you want them to deal with a Main quickly in a way that doesn't become a whole complicated scene.

When a player makes a GRAVITY clock with one of your **actors** or a Faction/group, they are signalling that they want them around often to interact with and advance that clock. If for some reason it isn't feasible to give that **actor**/Faction/group regular presence in the game, you might agree to shorten that GRAVITY clock to 4 segments instead of 6—allowing it to be completed in fewer moves or interactions.

CLASHING WITH ACTORS

Naturally, players can and will probably spend a lot of time fighting against and opposing the actions of **actors** on account of the Authority being made of them (if a player is a member of the Authority something has gone drastically awry).

In conflict, a character's status as either an **extra**, **side** or **main actor** determines how many *risks* and *dangers* a player needs to inflict on them to make them *defenceless*.

Extras are *defenceless* at one *danger*, meaning they are dealt with pretty quickly in straightforward conflicts, or even immediately vulnerable when in a situation where they might be at *risk* already—a character attacking them when they're unaware, etc. Extras are perfect for the rank-and-file or enemies that attack in massed numbers.

Sides are *defenceless* at two *dangers*, making them a little more involved to deal with. Even in a situation where they're at *risk* to begin with, you'd still need to inflict a second on them to **STRIKE DECISIVELY**, making them less resilient than the players but still someone they need to confront properly.

Mains are *defenceless* at three *dangers*, making them equal to players in this regard. Mains should be a challenge the players can't ignore—someone they might tangle with on more than one occasion, who feels like a fair match for them (at least one-on-one).

If you know an **actor** is going to be involved in fighting, there's some additional details you might want to come up with for them. You'll need to decide their tier, as described above in **Conflict & Tiers** (pg. 86). This defines broadly what they are effective against, and what is effective against them. You will also want to determine what **Approaches** (pg. 87) they use in combat, which gives them weaknesses and strengths against certain opposition.

Finally, give them whatever equipment, attacks or bonuses that feel appropriate for who they are and what their role is, either from the example lists or made fresh for your game. For Extra-level monsters, creatures, or other foes that you want to keep simple, you might forgo giving them this level of detail and just give them a note like 'this **actor's** attacks have the *bane* tag' or 'this **actor** has the *ward* tag'. Keep a few things in mind, though;

- *Bane* and *ruin* lets anyone hit effectively above their tier.
- For simplicity's sake, **actors** who pilot Astirs don't have Power or **SUBSYSTEMS** unless you decide specifically otherwise.
- Weapons used by **actors** might be stolen or picked up by players, and vice versa.
- You don't need to build the Astirs used by **actors** using the normal rules.
- Similarly, 'weapons' that aren't things players could take—like the natural attacks of creatures with claws or firebreath—don't need to have a balanced set of tags.

— EXAMPLE FOES —

The following pages have some example foes of various ranks and tiers, broadly categorised into;

- Astirs & Ardents
- People
- Creatures & Monsters
- Outsiders

These aren't the only kinds of creatures and things that can exist in your world, obviously: this list is by absolutely no means exhaustive, and is just comprised of examples to inspire your table.



ASTIRS & ARDENTS

Like those piloted by the players, Astirs and Ardents are the mainstay of most Authorities when it comes to warfare. Whether grown from the soil, forged in foundries, or summoned from another plane, all Astirs have something in common: they are exceptionally dangerous in the right (or wrong) hands.

UNPREPARED CADET III (EXTRA: SNEAKY) (MUNDANE)

- Sidearm I (ranged / defensive, weak)
- Omen III (mundane)
 - Magic Focus III (ranged / defensive, 2H)

“U-uh, reporting for duty, sir! Ready to skirmish.”

MILITIA LABOUR PILOT II (EXTRA: AMBITIOUS) (ARCANE)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (melee)
- Service Ardent II
 - Ardent Fists II (melee / intimate, defensive)
 - Condenser Stave II (ranged / refresh, 2H)

“Simple bipedal constructs, Service Ardents are still capable of doing the work of ten men. If only we had more of them.”

BANDIT SKIRMISHER PILOT II (SIDE: OVERCONFIDENT, MEAN) (MUNDANE)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (melee)
- Skirmisher Ardent II
 - Hefty Blade II (melee / messy, area)

“Quit bragging, Marco. It's not much of a competition when we have to scrap and fight to pull down one servo, but you can cut down two in one swing.”

MERCENARY ASTIR PILOT III (SIDE: PREPARED, AMENABLE) (DIVINE)

- Raypistol I (ranged / bane, limited)
- Wolf III
 - Rayrifle III (ranged / infinite, 2H)
 - Forceknife (melee / intimate, decisive)

“There's our print on the steelwork, sure—but everything else is new. The benefit of... diverse employers.”

AUTHORITY ACE IV (MAIN: IDEALISTIC, BOLD, VOLATILE) (PROFANE)

- Raypistol I (ranged / bane, limited)
- Cobra IV
 - Forceblade IV (melee / bane, drain)
 - Burstcaster IV (ranged / area, bane, messy, 2H)

“Cobra, mark one. Launching.”

MECHANICAL KNIGHT II (MAIN: NO-NONSENSE, CALM, DECISIVE) (MUNDANE)

- Shatterlance II (melee / bane, impact, reload, 2H)
- Sword/Axe/Mace I (melee)
- Warded Plate (ward)
- Steed Ardent II
 - Iron Hooves II (melee)

“Cavalry? Of a sort, I suppose. Just stay out of our way.”

PEOPLE

People come in all shapes and sizes, from all walks of life, with all kinds of identities. They're you, and they're me.

ANTI-CONSTRUCT TEAM I (EXTRA: SNEAKY) (ARCANE)

- Rayrifle I (sniper / reload, ruin, 2H)
- Shortswords I (melee)
- Arcane Generator I (Ignore reload on weapons)

"Stop complaining, kid. It won't feel heavy once you see it put a hole in an Astir."

MILITIA I (EXTRA: ENTHUSIASTIC) (MUNDANE)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (melee)
- Ardentbane Crossbow I (ranged / bane, 2H)

"People like you or me, ready to fight for what they believe in. Or to keep their homes, at least."

RIFLEMAN I (SIDE: CAUTIOUS, FRESH-FACED) (MUNDANE)

- Sword, Axe, Mace I (melee)
- Snaplock Rifle I (ranged / decisive, vorpal, distinct, reload, 2H)

"Heads down, hold fire. Don't shoot back until you hear the snap."

KNIGHT I (SIDE: DISCIPLINED, RESILIENT) (MUNDANE)

- Great Weapon I (melee / bane, area, messy, 2H)
- Warded Plate (ward)

"Clad in steel, bearing blades almost as tall as they are, and carrying the confidence of a nation. Once upon a time that was all an army needed."

SCOUT II (MAIN: ATHLETIC, SHARP, SNARKY) (MUNDANE)

- Scourblade II (melee / bane, 2H)
- Raypistol I (ranged / bane, limited)
- Grappling Rig I

"So, bad news about the captain. Someone swung out of a tree and stuck a broadsword through his cockpit."

PATHFINDER I (MAIN: QUIET, CAREFUL, PREPARED) (MUNDANE)

- Blessed Bow I (sniper / decisive, 2H)
- Hatchet I (melee)
- Invisibility Cloak I (valuable, fragile, makes you invisible)

"Arrows have to come from somewhere! Spread out. Search the treeline."



CREATURES & MONSTERS

All sorts of things lurk in the deep, dark corners of this land. Some of nature, some not so much.

WOLF I (EXTRA: FEROCIOUS) (MUNDANE)

- Tooth & Claw I (melee)

"Hail, adventurer. Prithee bring me ten wolf asses, so that I might fashion you a belt."

GIANT SPIDER I (EXTRA: SKITTERING) (MUNDANE)

- Fangs I (melee)
- Spinnerets I (ranged / restraining)

"Scouts say they found an Astir in the northern forest, covered in so much webbing they couldn't move it at all. No sign of the pilot. Probably for the best."

OWLBEAR II (SIDE: TERRIFYING, RESILIENT) (PROFANE)

- Rending Claws II (melee / decisive, 2H)

"Look, I don't care if you believe me or not. I'm not going back in without an ardent. Not while that thing is in there too."

WYVERN III (SIDE: HUNGRY, FLYING) (ELEMENTAL)

- Fireball III (ranged / area)
- Rending Claws III (melee)
- Fireproof Scales III (Cannot be harmed by fire)

"If you can see their shadow pass on the ground, it's too late. Your best bet is to hope that when they descend, it's not you they're after."

FROST DRAGON V (MAIN: IMPERIOUS, CRUEL, FLYING) (ELEMENTAL)

- Rimebreath V (ranged / area, reload, restraining)
- Tail Sweep V (melee / area)
- Frostbound Hide V (ward)

"The final count? Two companies of men, their assigned ardents, and a full wing of astirs."

LANDSHARK MATRIARCH IV (MAIN: TERRITORIAL, HULKING, EVASIVE) (MUNDANE)

- Crushing Jaws IV (melee / messy, bane)
- Digging Claws IV (Can dig and swim through earth or sand)
- Tremorsense IV (Can detect foes through vibrations in the ground)

"The worms? Oh, no. You can feel them coming from miles away. No, it's the sharks you want to worry about."



OUTSIDERS

Extraplanar creatures, those from worlds beyond ours, are broadly referred to as 'outsiders'. Unbound by natural law, outsiders are often inherently magical.

IMP I (EXTRA: TRICKY) (PROFANE)

- Devilish Firebolts I (ranged / bane)

"Among the lowest orders of devils, but dangerous in their own right."

FROST MOTE I (EXTRA: FREEZING) (ELEMENTAL)

- Freezing Touch I (melee / restraining)
- Ice Shard I (ranged / bane, reload)

"Set a fire burning tonight, have someone keep an eye on it. Mara said she saw motes blow in on the wind last night."

LOWLY ANGEL II (SIDE: UNPREDICTABLE, RADIANT) (DIVINE)

- Divine Flame II (ranged)

"The shapes of angels seem strange, but why pretend to understand the work of the divine?"

VOID GIANT III (SIDE: DESTRUCTIVE, DRIVEN) (MUNDANE)

- Obelisk III (melee / messy, 2H)
- Voidborn (Doesn't need to breathe or eat, is immune harm from cold)

"They came from above. Down from the skies, from the deep darkness of night."

PIT FIEND III (MAIN: CRUEL, AMBITIOUS, LAWFUL) (PROFANE)

- Abyssal Warmace III (melee / bane, messy)
- Hellish Regrowth (Perils from physical harm reduced to risks)

"Leading any gathering of devils will be a pit fiend. Unlike the lesser creatures beneath them, these fiends have the strength and tenacity to match their cruelty."

TERRA, TITAN ALIVE V (MAIN: INDIFFERENT, STOIC, BRUTAL) (ELEMENTAL)

- Erupting Earth V (ranged / area, messy)
- Titanic Punch V (melee / slow, ruin)
- Uncaring Gaze (Doesn't notice things III or lower unless directly interfered with)

"The elemental planes have no king or governor, and they never will. One would have to wrest power from the waking earth itself."



RIVALS

Rivals are recurring characters who appear again and again to challenge specific players who have earned their attention. Mechanically speaking, they are Main **actors** with a GRAVITY clock with whoever they're the Rival to. They also have a Need (what their faction demands of them, what they are obligated to do, etc), and a Want (what they want from their counterpart), which helps direct their fiction but also provides them with **LEVERAGE** the Director may use against their counterpart (whichever player is involved with a particular Rival).

LEVERAGE

When your counterpart interferes with your Need or indulges you in your Want, hold 1. You may spend this hold whenever 1-for-1 to do the following;

- Make them act in **confidence** or in **desperation**.
- Ask a challenging question that must be answered.
- Appear somewhere you aren't expected.

Rivals don't need to explicitly be foes that are gunning for a player in an antagonistic way. They might be an allies with a competitive relationship, someone they are trying to impress (or vice versa), and so on.

NAME:	Corel White									
NEED:	To follow her orders to the letter									
WANT:	To learn more about the Ilgard's music									
GRAVITY:	+2	■	■	■	□	□	□	HOLD:	2	

NAME:	Bromwael									
NEED:	To be rewarded by the Associate									
WANT:	To fight their rival alone									
GRAVITY:	+3	■	□	□	□	□	□	HOLD:	1	

EXAMPLES OF LEVERAGE

Lillette, an Arcanist, is crossing blades with her Rival, Kett. She has forced them into a corner and made them *defenceless*. There's no love lost between the two of them, so Lillette takes the opportunity and tries to **STRIKE DECISIVELY**, driving her trice-forged blade right through the chest armour of Kett's astir. Kett, however, has hold to spend. They spend it to force Lillette to act in **desperation**, the Director narrating as they release a wave of shocking force from their Astir to try and stay Lillette's blade.

Dani is struggling against Cress, her Rival. Rain is pounding against the rooftop they are fighting on, and Dani has been knocked over, crawling along the slick roof-tiles to try and grab their dagger. Before she can reach it though, the Director spends one hold to ask a challenging question that must be answered. Cress calls out through the storm: "Did what we had mean *anything* to you?"

OPTIONAL RULES: AMOR ASTIR

For the romantically inclined, the following additional rules and content can be used to inject a little extra intimacy into your campaigns of *Armour Astir: Advent*. They are intended to support emotional-yet-chaste meetings just as well as meeting your rival behind the Astir workshop for something a little more R-rated, but as ever, discuss with your group what everyone's lines and veils or other systems of comfort are when it comes to romantic or sexual content.

Provided below are an additional Downtime Scene, an additional Scene for the Conflict Turn, an optional tweak to the Rival mechanics and some additional Cantrip/Soldier moves. You may use them all, or simply pick and choose what you feel is appropriate for your game and your table.

Make love, not war, and have fun.

NEW DOWNTIME SCENE

Like **FADE, YOUR QUARTERS (OR MINE)** lets you advance GRAVITY clocks with your crew, Rival, or whoever else you're feeling amorous about. Unlike **FADE, YOUR QUARTERS (OR MINE)** doesn't provide Spotlight; instead, it has a different benefit for when things aren't serious enough to warrant GRAVITY, and a more flexible list of **token** options.

YOUR QUARTERS (OR MINE)

The leading player shares a moment of intimacy with a willing party, advancing a shared GRAVITY clock if they have one, or causing them to make their first move during the Sortie at **advantage/disadvantage** if they don't. They frame a short scene around this, either alone or with invited characters, drawing a curtain where necessary for the group.

During the scene, anyone may spend a **token** to choose one:

- Share a moment of intimacy, as above.
- Rewrite a Hook, or press someone else to do the same.
- Clear a *peril* of emotional origin from yourself or another character.

NEW CANTRIPS

Cantrips are moves not assigned to a particular playbook. Whenever you choose an Additional move, including those chosen when picking a playbook, you make instead choose from the Cantrips list.

ONE IN EVERY PORT

When the Carrier (or just the party) arrives in a new settlement, you may declare you have a past love interest there. Choose 2:

- They want you to spend time with them, not the Cause.
- They're unable to help with anything dangerous.
- They've fallen in with the Authority since (or were with them to begin with).
- You left them on bad terms.

GOSSIP GIRL

When someone leads the **YOUR QUARTERS (OR MINE)** Scene during Downtime, you may spend **tokens** on options from **HALLWAYS OR LISTENING POST** instead, and the first time you do so you may choose two options.

UNDER THE COVERS

When your romantic exploits leave you in enemy territory, hold 3. You may spend this hold 1-for-1 to act in **confidence** whilst trying to reunite with your allies.

When you get back to the Carrier, or your crew, convert remaining hold into **token** options from **HALLWAYS OR LISTENING POST** as you hand over intel gained on your way out.

NEW SOLDIER MOVES

DR FEELGOOD

When you lead the **YOUR QUARTERS (OR MINE)** Scene during Downtime with someone you have GRAVITY with, you may spend one of your **tokens** to gain the effects of all options other than 'Share a moment of intimacy, as above'.

POSTER CHANNELER

Your impressive physique, natural charms, or something else have made you a target of affections within and without the Cause. Teens hang canvas scrolls of you on their walls, Authority members get told off for effusing about you and models of your Astir or other equipment sell like hotcakes.

It's incredibly difficult for you to not get recognised for who you are, but as a trade-off, most of the revenue from your image feeds back to the Cause; whenever the Cause chooses an Outcome during the Conflict Turn, the option for a Supplier Faction is always considered an available choice.

NEW CONFLICT SCENE

A FATEFUL ENCOUNTER allows you to pair up characters from across the Cause and Authority to your heart's desire. A Faction is still *tapped* during this Scene, even though our focus is away from the Conflict; as some make love, others make war. The conflict between the Cause and the Authority continues even as we search for happiness, fleeting or otherwise, and the absence of individuals can have a fateful impact.

A FATEFUL ENCOUNTER

Two volunteers play, meeting to enjoy private time together. They should decide between them whether they represent members of the Cause, the Authority, or both, and whether their meeting is by chance or pre-ordained.

Decide where the encounter takes place, and who is at risk should things get messy, whatever that means.

Freely roleplay the encounter. During it, anyone may ask anyone else for details on the situation and circumstances. Other players may embody interruptions, environmental or otherwise, and so on where required.

Playing The Scene

Take turns making Challenges, starting with whoever has the most to lose. Continue playing until the Scene reaches what feels like a climax, then choose a **roll** to determine what unfolds away from our view; afterwards, choose a Resolution from the list below.

During the scene, anyone may issue a Challenge:

- *I make a shameful admission. Will you use it against me in the future?*
- *I push a boundary, mistakenly or otherwise—do you rebuff me?*
- *I introduce you to a passion of mine; does it spark anything for you?*
- *I begin to corner you, making escape all but impossible. Do you let me?*
- *I show you what I'm fighting for, and what it means to me. Do I move you?*
- *I invite you to close, to hold or to kiss me. Will you?*
- *You are called away, and must refuse. Can you keep our secret?*
- *I move to relieve you of something—a secret, clothes, etc. Will you allow me?*

Or end the encounter with a **roll**:

- *We left our posts to meet—**roll** to see what our absence costs.*
- *To support an operation, I lured you away; **roll** and find out if my allies succeeded.*
- *I plead for you to choose me over the war; **roll** to stifle your heart and resist.*

Resolutions

- *We stay the night together. Is our time together chaste, or spent passionately?*
- *Our time is brief and fleeting; do we leave yearning, or satisfied?*
- *Someone discovers us. Do we allow our secret to be broken?*

ADDITIONAL RIVAL RULES

If your Rivals aren't feeling like they're taking things personally enough, consider the following optional rules to spice things up a little.

Deeper Leverage

Add the following option to **LEVERAGE**:

- Hijack your Downtime Scene, leading one of their choice with you instead.

With this option, your Rival can force their way into the Downtime turn as desired, making them difficult to ignore. You still gain the benefit of whatever Downtime Scene they choose; after all, what kind of Rival doesn't want to see their counterpart at their best? That said, beware of needy Rivals who can't leave well enough alone. You might need to set some boundaries.

Changed For Good

When you **redefine** a GRAVITY clock with your Rival, you may invite the Director to re-write their Need, their Want, or both.

Get Over It

When you **abandon** a GRAVITY clock with your Rival, you may instantly kill them, have them instantly kill you, or both. If they kill you (or both of you die), your next character starts with 6 Spotlight.

Hand In Unlovable Hand

When you **commit** to a GRAVITY clock with your Rival, you may surrender your character to the Director. Create a new Wayward Faction that represents your character and your Rival, splitting off from the Cause or the Authority to find their own way.



OPTIONAL RULES: MULTI-SIDED CONFLICTS

For some campaign scenarios, like *The Academy Arcane*, your story isn't one of a vast Authority staring down the ambitious Cause. The conflict is one fought between multiple squabbling parties, resulting in something more complex but evenly-matched than usual play.

When playing a Multi-sided game, rather than a Cause and Authority, we play with multiple Sides, each comprised of multiple Branches. Instead of being agents of the Cause, the players are attached to a Side; rather than *untapping* Factions during Downtime, they replenish lost points of GRIP. Additionally, during Downtime, the Director may spend their **tokens** on behalf of any Side or Branch. If there are more Sides than players, take that many **tokens** instead of the usual amount.

BRANCHES & GRIP

Each Branch has a Strength, like a Division, and a list of Faction types that it is made up of: these determine what Outcomes can be gained following a Conflict Scene. At the beginning of play, all Branches have a Strength of 4+, making rolls during a Conflict Scene evenly matched. At the Director's discretion, there might be a leader and an underdog in the Conflict—in which case, one Side's Branches start at 5+ and another Side's at 3+.

The disfavour, Stability and Pillar mechanics are not used in a Multi-sided Conflict. Instead, each Branch has GRIP, and begins play with 3 points of it. This is a broad representation of supplies, secure positions, and morale: The less GRIP a Branch has, the closer to defeat it is. At 0 GRIP, a Branch is vulnerable: if it would lose GRIP again, either from a Conflict Scene or from the events of a Sortie, it is destroyed.

Destroyed Branches are replaced after one Conflict Turn, and begin at 3+ Strength—this can be raised back to 4+ with an Outcome gained from winning a Conflict Scene. If a Side with no Branches would be attacked or acted against, it falls, collapsing and crumbling under the weight of its foes.

The amount of Branches per Side depends on the total amount of Sides in your game. At **3 Sides**, each has 3 Branches. At **4-5 Sides**, each has 2 Branches. In games with **5+ Sides**, each has 1 Branch.

THE CONFLICT TURN

In a Multi-sided game, the same Conflict Scenes are used; they are played out differently, however. Instead of being between the Cause and Authority, during the Conflict Turn in a Multi-sided game every Side chooses a Conflict Scene and targets another with it. For that Scene, the issuing Side is the 'attacker', and their target the 'defender'. In a game with many Sides, you might play Scenes for only half of your Sides in each Conflict Turn to stop them taking a very long time to play.

Before a Scene is played, both Sides select a Branch to represent them during it. From that Branch, they also select what kind of **actors** they will deploy: this determines what Outcome the Side earns if they win the Scene.

Scenes are played out as normal: when you are asked to **roll**, you roll against the attacking Branch's Strength. If the result is equal to or higher to it, the defender earns a success; if the result is lower, the attacker earns a success instead. If a Side wishes, it may spend one point of GRIP to make use of the benefit listed on their Branch. Whichever Side earns more successes during a Scene is victorious, and narrates the Resolution. As with a normal Conflict Turn, in the event of a tie, interpret the outcome as a group: if you're unsure, flip a coin.

Rather than choosing an Outcome after Resolution, the winning Side earns the benefit associated with the **actor** they deployed. Alternatively, they can also spend a point of GRIP to choose a different Outcome from those available to any Branch.

SCHEMES

Just like the Authority can start and progress Division Schemes, Sides can also start and progress Schemes using their Branches. Every Branch has at least one method of starting or advancing clocks, which includes Schemes. If allowed to be filled, they should have an immediate noticeable effect; typically equivalent to 1-3 Outcomes, dependant on how long the Scheme's clock was. As with regular Division Schemes, the players may attempt to stop a completed Scheme with a Sortie; if it isn't targeted at their Side, though, they might prefer to let events unfold.

RUNNING THE GAME

TYPE	FOCUS	SPEND GRIP TO...
Military	Deploying forces to attack or defend with violence.	Roll twice and take the favourable result during ALL OUT WAR or ONE ON ONE .

A Military Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Military** (soldiers & mercenaries) - Remove 1 GRIP from the opposing Branch.
- **Firebrands** (community leaders & activists) - Flip a coin; on heads, start/advance a beneficial clock by 2 steps.
- **Mavericks** (wildcards & rebels) - Remove 2 GRIP total from the opposing Side's Branches, and 1 GRIP from a different Branch that is part of this Side or an allied one.

Subterfuge	Deploying spies or agents to deal with things covertly.	Roll twice and take the favourable result during A CHASE or A COVERT OP .
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A Subterfuge Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Agents** (spies & saboteurs) - Flip a coin; on heads, remove 1 GRIP from *any* Branch secretly.
- **Thieves** (bandits & infiltrators) - Reduce a Scheme clock 1 step, and start/advance a beneficial clock by 1 step.
- **Scholars** (researchers & strategists) - Reveal or obscure information about the next Sortie.

Resource	Accruing wealth, information and personnel.	Add to or remove a die from the next PLAN & PREPARE .
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A Resource Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Suppliers** (merchants & financiers) - Start/advance a beneficial clock 1 step, or restore 1 GRIP.
- **Courtiers** (diplomats & bureaucrats) - This Side cannot be targeted for the rest of the turn.
- **Adventurers** (walking catastrophes) - Deliver a cut of loot to the Carrier: flip a coin. Heads, it's *valuable*—tails, it's *treasure*. If this isn't the Carrier's Side, it comes with a request or bargain.

Research	Developing new enchantments and rituals.	Tiebreak any Conflict Scene in the direction of their choice.
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A Research Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Scholars** (researchers & strategists) - Reveal or obscure information about the next Sortie.
- **Suppliers** (merchants & financiers) - Start/advance a beneficial clock 1 step, or restore 1 GRIP.
- **Mavericks** (wildcards & rebels) - Remove 2 GRIP total from the opposing Side's Branches, and 1 GRIP from a different Branch that is part of this Side or an allied one.

Curator	Stealing and investigating that which doesn't belong to it.	Start or advance a 4-step clock titled 'Take something that isn't theirs.'
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A Curator Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Thieves** (bandits & infiltrators) - Reduce a Scheme clock 1 step, and start/advance a beneficial clock by 1 step.
- **Military** (soldiers & mercenaries) - Remove 1 GRIP from the opposing Branch.
- **Adventurers** (walking catastrophes) - Deliver a cut of loot to the Carrier: flip a coin. Heads, it's *valuable*—tails, it's *treasure*. If this isn't the Carrier's Side, it comes with a request or bargain.

Executive	Protecting and deepening systems of control.	Roll twice and take the favourable result during AN UNFURLING PLAN or THE DISCOURSE .
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An Executive Branch can deploy these **actors** and gain the associated Outcomes:

- **Agents** (spies & saboteurs) - Flip a coin; on heads, remove 1 GRIP from *any* Branch secretly.
- **Courtiers** (diplomats & bureaucrats) - The Side cannot be targeted for the rest of the turn.
- **Firebrands** (community leaders & activists) - Flip a coin; on heads, start/advance a beneficial clock by 2 steps.

OPTIONAL RULES: GENERATIONAL CONFLICT

While your typical campaign might stretch over the events of weeks, months or even years, you might wish to play a game focused on much longer spread out sections of time. In a **Generational Conflict** game, we focus on multiple **Eras**, seeing the growth of focal characters—or even the emergence of new ones—over the course of a much longer war, or over the course of multiple distinct wars.

In each **Era**, we build characters anew, choosing Advancements from previous Eras to inherit in this one. We might be playing the same character, having held onto skills from their past but having let others wane, or we might be playing new characters, influenced by and inspired by those in the past.

THE FIRST ERA

The first Era of a Generational Conflict plays out mostly the same as regular play; you make characters, you build your Authority and Cause, etc. You also decide on an endpoint for the Era; a narrative beat you aim to reach in play that will mark the end of the Era. This might be;

- Seizing or destroying a Pillar
- Dealing with one of the Authority's Divisions
- Having one of the player characters roll a 6- on a **BITE THE DUST**
- Completing a certain amount of Sorties, or a full Mission
- Completely destroying the Authority

How long an Era takes to complete should be a collaborative process, with everyone on the same page. Are your Eras short arcs within a Campaign? Are they entire Campaigns themselves, telling one iterative story across multiple games? Or are they somewhere in between? Everyone should have a good idea of what they're committing to.

Additionally, title the Era. This could be an in-fiction title, given by historians looking back, or something meta-textual purely used at your table, but either way it should set a vibe for the Era.

Once the Era is over, each player should make a list titled 'Legacy', and add one Advancement they or another player took during this Era to it. They should also write down one element of the setting or story present in this Era that they'd like to explore more in the future.

ERA 2 AND BEYOND...

In further Eras, you'll review the events of previous Eras, and then decide how far in the future your next Era is. You might be playing a few years or decades later into the same war: you might be picking up characters a century from now, as similar powers clash once again. You should decide:

- How long has passed between these Eras?
- Are you playing the same characters, or new ones?
- Are the Cause and Authority the same? If so, how have they changed in the time between?
- What makes this Era feel different to the past one?

Once the above has been decided, it's time to make characters again. Regardless of whether you're playing the same characters or new ones, each player makes a fresh character sheet (you may change playbooks if you desire); their new character then also starts with any Advancements written on your Legacy. Additionally, they should pick one or more of the thematic elements they've recorded from previous Eras, and write starting Hooks for their new character based on them.

As with the first Era, you should again decide an endpoint for the Era, and title it. Once it's over, you'll once again add a new Advancement and setting/story element to explore further in the future.

For further Eras, you'll repeat this structure—making characters, adding elements of your Legacy to them, then expanding your Legacy with things that interested you before moving on to the next Era.

Miranda's Legacy

"The Last Enlightened Era"

- **DEFY** +1
- New century Astir designs

"The Scattered Flames Era"

- **FACE TO FACE** (Impostor)
- The 7 exiled mages

"The Exodus Era"

- **RED COMET** (Soldier)
- The bleeding moon

[-3HTO INCIDENT]

Chief Machine-seer [REDACTED] enters Astir Hangar #3, and proceeds to perform the standard rituals for seraph-binding. Divination reveals no deviations or mistakes made in ritual process.

[-1HTO INCIDENT]

Second-seer [REDACTED] enters Astir Hangar #3 to deliver necessary tools and [REDACTED] for seraph-binding. Divination reveals minor deviations in binding ritual seals at this time due to a small lizard smearing the [REDACTED] glyph.

[-.3HTO INCIDENT]

Labourers Hurley, Wright and Lilan enter Astir Hangar #3 and begin preparations on a Siege-walker Class Astir to receive the modified, binded core. Seer-adepts [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] enter Astir hangar #3 and assist Chief Machine-seer [REDACTED] and Second-seer [REDACTED] as they begin the seraph-binding process.

[-.1HTO INCIDENT]

Labourers Hurley and Wright install the binded core containing [REDACTED] (outsider, divine source, classification # [REDACTED]) into the prepared Siege-walker Class Astir. Astir is at this time re-classified as Radiant, and titled 'PRIDE OF [REDACTED]'.

[INCIDENT]

Binded core containing [REDACTED] (outsider, divine source, classification # [REDACTED]) malfunctions due to earlier deviations in seraph-binding rituals. Manifestation is immediate (flames: class A, eyes: class D, chorus: class undetermined). 'PRIDE OF [REDACTED]' is rapidly liquified from the inside out due to extreme heat. Damage to Astir Hangar #3 is considerable. Chief Machine-seer [REDACTED], Second-seer [REDACTED], Seer-adepts [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] all evacuate via standard teleportation. Labourers Hurley, Wright and Lilan are subject to divine incineration.

- Excerpt from 'The Seraphim Files', author unknown, discovered C3/Y73.3, divine-dated to C2/Y93.8-9





MISSION HOOKS

THE GRAND MELEE

The Authority has arranged a grand tournament between Channelers. It has invited would-be challengers from *[around the country/within its military/around the world]* to fight in their Astirs *[one-on-one/in teams]* and compete for *[glory/a grand prize/a blessing/an important role]*. Little do the challengers know, however, the Grand Melee is simply an opportunity for the Authority to *[show off a new Astir/kill off skilled channelers/steal custom Astirs/recruit channelers]*.

PLACES

An Astir workshop, where:

- Artificers are dismantling a heavily damaged Astir
- Trainee Artificers are being taught the basics by the workshop chief
- Everyone is working together on an emergency/large repair job
- An injured channeler is being freed from their destroyed Astir

A lounge where;

- Channelers are waiting between tournament bouts
- Rich spectators are watching the tournament from safety
- Authority officials are debriefing their plans for the tournament
- The players can relax, whilst secretly being observed

The tournament grounds, where;

- Some challengers are being a little *too* secretive about their Astirs
- A boisterous Channeler is looking for a fight to tide him over
- The Authority is openly recruiting channelers
- Someone is itching to cause trouble

PEOPLE

An ace Authority channeler who is;

- Waiting for the perfect opportunity to betray their masters
- Desperate to prove their true worth
- Taking part in the tournament as penance

An artificer who is;

- A double agent
- Sabotaging any Astirs they work on
- Looking for a promising channeler to give an experimental upgrade

A mercenary channeler who is;

- Here for revenge
- Trying to find a place for themselves
- Ready to cause a whole lot of trouble

THINGS

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Ruined banners | • A vandalised altar |
| • A lost badge of office | • Books full of odd rituals |
| • A malfunctioning weapon | • A storm in a teacup |
| • A rare magical focus | • A trapped storeroom |
| • Crates of alchemical supplies | • A mythical sword |

NEUTRAL GROUND

The Cause has learned of a secret Authority project set up in a supposedly neutral city. It has sent the players to *[scout out/steal/destroy]* the project, which is *[an experimental Astir/a dangerous magical experiment/a secret arms depot]*. Complicating this is the fact that the Cause *[has no intel on the nature of the project/is hiding something from the players/has been fed false information]*.

PLACES

An entry checkpoint, where:

- Overworked employees aren't checking anyone's papers
- A recent event has extra attention being paid to inbound parties
- Someone is trying to smuggle goods into the city
- Some Authority soldiers are making a scene

A warehouse where;

- Authority personnel can enter their secret base
- A Cause agent has stored something valuable
- Astirs are being covertly stored
- A third party is trying to avoid suspicion

The forest nearby, where;

- The Authority is secretly testing something
- The magically enhanced trees are being directed to Authority lumberyards
- A large clearing makes for a perfect ambush spot
- Someone is itching to cause trouble

PEOPLE

A rookie Authority channeler who is;

- Far, far too naïve
- Personally invested in the success of the project
- An old friend of one of the players

An artificer who is;

- Helping cover up the project, since it might lead to other advancements
- Posing as a civilian while spying for the Authority
- Sheltering smuggled Cause resources

A Cause agent who is;

- Here on completely unrelated business
- Way in over their head
- Looking for help getting somewhere they shouldn't be

THINGS

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Stolen alchemical supplies | • A broken chain |
| • An abandoned Astir | • Forged documents |
| • A hidden weapons cache | • A trail of blood, still wet |
| • An unfinished ritual | • A seeing orb |
| • Strange remains | • Smuggled luxuries |

ESCORT DUTY

Needing protection, the Cause deploys the players to escort *[a convoy of goods/a prisoner transport/an important VIP]* to its destination. Unsurprisingly, the Authority show up to *[steal the escort for their own/attacking the party while they're vulnerable/raze and destroy what they can]*. Surprising both, however, is the unexpected arrival of *[a titanic creature/a showboating, disobedient Authority ace/a hungry third party]*.

PLACES

A narrow pass, where:

- Local predators have grown hungry
- A neutral party was hiding out in a small settlement
- Opportunistic brigands have erected some kind of blockage
- Astirs and Carriers have to go around, leaving the escort to those on foot or in smaller Ardents

An open plain, where;

- Mirages threaten to distract anybody unfocused enough
- The escort unveils how fast they can really go
- Something dangerous is sleeping
- Intense weather forces all parties into shelter

A bridge, where;

- Weakened supports threaten to collapse
- The Authority has set up an ambush ahead of time
- The party is permitted to expose their escort as a decoy
- Other travellers are caught up in a jam

PEOPLE

A civilian driver or pilot who is;

- Way too into running up against the Authority
- New to this, unfortunately
- Trying to prove themselves to the Cause

A distant command officer who is;

- Meddling and trying to take credit for the mission
- Being fed incorrect intelligence
- Just genuinely trying to help

An Authority spy who is;

- In the *[wrong/right]* place at the *[wrong/right]* time
- Trying to establish deep cover
- Wounded and desperate

THINGS

- Alchemical mines
- An abandoned mineshaft
- A sniper's overlook
- A suspicious cave
- A travelling circus
- Some keys (assorted)
- A ton of gravel
- An armour-clad safe
- A smuggling compartment
- An unexpected absence

ELEVENTH HOUR

The Cause has learned that the Authority has developed [*a macrospell/an Astir/a magical weapon/something strange and arcane*] capable of ending the war in one fell swoop—in their favour, of course. It falls to the players to [*discover it's secret location/destroy it/seize it for the Cause*] before the Authority can use it to [*force Cause leadership to expose themselves at a 'peace' meeting/destroy the Cause's primary base or holding/kill an absurd amount of dissenters*].

PLACES

A grand hall, where:

- The Cause's bureaucracy is crumbling
- An official is about to overplay their hand
- A performance with unforeseen consequences is about to begin
- A betrayal is about to be revealed

A Carrier's command deck, where;

- A terrifying order is about to be given
- A mistake is about to be made
- A coup attempt is made
- Someone has a moment of clarity

A secret location, where;

- The players aren't welcome
- The players are, suspiciously, very welcome
- Something is revealed to have been vastly misunderstood
- Something equally as bad is happening far more quietly

PEOPLE

An ace Authority channeler who is;

- Aghast at the lengths the Authority is going to
- A Cause agent in deep cover
- Responsible for pulling the trigger, whatever that looks like

A diplomat who is;

- Moving resources in a very unhelpful way
- Moving resources in a very unhelpful way, intentionally
- Trying to cajole a reticent group into action

A chief Artificer who is;

- In charge of the Authority's team working on the [*macrospell/Astir/etc*]
- Looking for a weakness in the Authority's plan
- On the verge of a magical breakthrough

THINGS

- Something unrecognisable
- A door that shouldn't be open
- An immense magical gemstone
- Forgotten bones
- A construct of vast size
- A dropped key
- Files meant to be burned
- A bribe
- Something you think is yours
- A volatile potion

AUTHORITY ATTACK!

The Authority is raiding [*a small town/a Cause stronghold/an off-planet colony/a major city*] in order to [*search for something/capture and occupy it/destroy Cause morale*]. It falls to the players to fend off the assault and save the day, even though [*one of the players calls this place home/a grand Cause secret is sequestered here/this place was once sacred to the Authority*].

PLACES

A warehouse, where:

- A prototype Astir is waiting
- The Authority have found a way in
- Evacuees have found shelter
- Something isn't right

A street, where;

- Drastic action is about to be taken
- Something hidden is being uncovered
- A stand-off occurs
- Innocents are left vulnerable

The outskirts, where;

- A heated skirmish is building
- Something is amiss
- A declaration is made
- An escape route is being protected

PEOPLE

A civilian leader who is;

- Held hostage by the Authority
- Hiding out with something important
- Leading evacuation efforts

An Authority channeler who is;

- In no way ready to lead this mission
- Out for revenge
- Trying to prove themselves to their superiors

A civilian who is;

- In the wrong place at the wrong time
- One of the players (better find yourself an Astir)
- Taking matters into their own hands

THINGS

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • A childhood home | • A hoisted flag |
| • An unfinished miracle | • A missing shipment |
| • A stockpile of arms | • A hole in the wall |
| • A broken gate | • A number of gold bars |
| • A system of canals | • A delicate alchemical process |

THE GHOST REACHES

OVERVIEW

The Ghost Reaches are a bustling, dense archipelago, that stretch from the many temperate southern islands up to the frigid Isle of Repose. Named for an old local legend, which described how wayward spirits would make a pilgrimage from island to island, eventually coming to a final rest at Repose.

The Reaches, while once divided by fierce rivalries, have long since been united under a ruling council consisting of democratically elected delegates from each island. How many delegates an island may elect is based on a number of factors, like population, how much trade value their ports provide to the Reaches, and so on. While in their warring days many of the islands struggled to be self-sufficient, co-operation has allowed them to find new identities and niches in regards to what they provide those that live there and the Reaches at large. These transformations in infrastructure and industry have left the Reaches a prosperous but lightly defended place, much of its military returning to civilian life in the post-unification period.

In recent years, this attracted the attention of the Faces Of Progress, an industrial-militaristic faction from the continent to the west. Seeking access to the Reaches' resources and workforce, the Faces Of Progress made a rapid, unexpected move to capture the Isle of Repose and re-purpose it as a staging point from which to move on the entire region. Opposing them (and their now-frequent raids on nearby islands) is The New Hunt, a loose militia that cobbles together Astirs from what local craftsmen can spare and parts taken from creatures on the Isle of Kings.

AUTHORITY: THE FACES OF PROGRESS

The Faces Of Progress, having recently grown from 'vampiric cohort', to 'cabal of industrial magnates', to 'sovereign state', is quickly becoming the production centre of the known world. Their factories produce everything from cutlery to armed Astirs, in dizzying quantities. To keep this up and expand even further, they find themselves in need of new sources for raw materials, a need they see fit to address by force. The Ghost Reaches is merely first on their list: once it has been strip mined and levelled to make room for factories, Progress will be made somewhere else.

Leader: The invasion of the Reaches is led by Galinn Juriss, a former mine foreman who proved himself as a natural military leader during the Faces' violent transition from business to nation. Rumour has it the Faces' true leadership has shared a certain sanguine gift with him.

Aesthetic: Porcelain, damage repaired with gold lacquer. Leather padding and patterned silks. Golden trims and ornamentation. Exposed tubing and scarlet liquids.

CAUSE: THE NEW HUNT

Formed in reaction to the Faces Of Progress seizing the Isle of Repose, The New Hunt is a loose militia of a few dozen resistance cells, doing what they can to prevent their foes gaining any more of a foothold in the archipelago.

Leader: The New Hunt has no overall leader, with cells acting largely independently.

Aesthetic: Monster bones, horns and teeth. Recycled driftwood, iron chains and bolts. Colourful paintwork, kill tallies and trophies.

THE GHOST REACHES

THE NEW HUNT

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EXAMPLE FACTIONS OF THE NEW HUNT

King's Isle Couriers (Guerillas)

Once upon a time, the KIC were your best bet for getting packages quickly and safely across the Isle of Kings. With the Faces of Progress on the scene, they've turned their pathfinding skills and secret routes to slightly different ends.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Beached (Military)

An offshoot of a mercenary company, The Beached washed up on shore after getting caught in crossfire during the Faces' initial invasion. In following with their company's code, they quickly set about converting their wrecked ship to a local HQ and scheming against their accidental attackers.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Sif's Sleepers (Strange)

Many were displaced when the Isle of Repose was seized, including the many priests that tended to its restful temples. Those young and angry enough to turn their sorcery against the Faces banded together as Sif's Sleepers.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Reaches Unity Fund (Suppliers)

With the Reaches' actual military slow to mobilise, many influential and resourceful individuals collected together to form the Unity Fund, a thinly-veiled operation to financially back the various resistance cells of The New Hunt.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Calistone (Bandits)

Calistone were a small-time band of thieves who just happened to have a very well-hidden route in and out of Repose at the time of the invasion. Though the route was only good for one heist, the spoils of Progress were enough to take them from an amateur group to a well-tooled organisation.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Loreth Tidal Guild (Scholars)

The Tidal Guild is responsible for maintaining a system of dams and locks that keep Loreth Island inhabitable following an magical accident that sunk it a few meters below sea level. Their engineering expertise also made them naturals at disrupting arcane fortifications and Astirs belonging to the Faces Of Progress.

TAPPED?



GRIP



BREAKING: MERCENARIES MAKE LANDFALL ON MERMAID'S ISLE - FRIENDS OR FOE?

Onlookers were stunned today as armed swords-for-hire made landfall on the northern shore of Mermaid's Isle, commonly known by locals as Watcher Beach. Bringing a number of constructs with them including a large Astir, these sell-swords quickly set about making a camp and raising a small stake wall. Their ship, which seemed to this scholar to be damaged quite heavily, was brought high on the beach and stripped for wood.

It is unknown from what company these mercenaries hail, but those of Mermaid's Isle are hopeful they will not cause trouble in the coming days of the Progress's occupation.

**- Excerpt from 'The Reach Gazette', Silt-town Publishing,
YA212.M3.D13**



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EXAMPLE DIVISIONS OF THE FACES OF PROGRESS

The Juriss Company (Military)

Galinn Juriss's personal expeditionary force, sent to claim the Ghost Reaches for his vampiric masters. Galinn is eager to improve his position: there are few within the Faces of Progress who have their own armed Companies, but there are fewer with their own lordships.

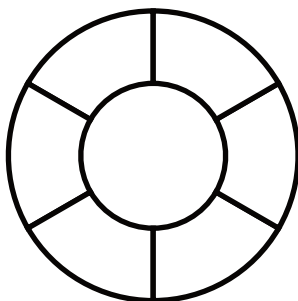
Progress's Promise (Curator)

Members of the Promise dedicate their lives to recording and preserving evidence of progress: where 'progress' is the many conquests of their vampiric masters. This typically involves plundering the lands taken by the Faces for artifacts and heirlooms to study... or just put on display.

Artery #23 (Resource)

The many Arteries of the Faces Of Progress transport goods, weapons, and that sweet sweet sanguine wherever they are needed. #23 is tasked with aiding and abetting the Juriss Company in their many endeavours.

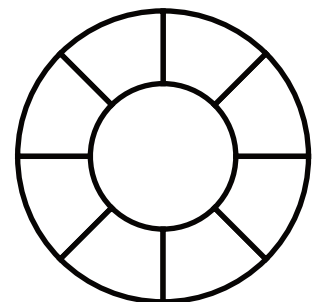
EXAMPLE SCHEMES OF THE FACES OF PROGRESS



Pacifying The Isle Of Kings

Sinnh Renere, an agent of Artery #23, thinks something can be done to make the Isle Of Kings's wildlife ignore Juriss Company troops.

A Watchful Eye
An extensive checkpoint system between islands would be tough to install, but would heavily restrict movement of The New Hunt.



THE GHOST REACHES

EXAMPLE ASTIRS OF THE GHOST REACHES

CLIPPER ^{III}		MUNDANE	CORE	POWER	2
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING	■
WARDING		SPELL ROUTINES			
RUGGED BUILD (+ward)		Choose to take a result of 7-9 on a WEATHER THE STORM			
<i>Clippers are large, rugged Astirs originally designed for patrols over the Isle of Kings, keeping the roads clear of overgrown fauna. The New Hunt has re-purposed an entire fleet of them for war, a task they are more than fit for.</i>				MV: CUTTING ARMS	
				You may use the SUBSYSTEMS move to remove a environmental hazard of your choice.	
CARRIED	Hewer III (melee / bane, drain)				
CARRIED	Force Repeater III (ranged / defensive, weak)				

PUNCTURE ^{III}		PROFANE	CORE	POWER	2
			OCCULT	OVERHEATING	■
ARCANE FORGE		RESISTANCE CHARM			
You may COOL OFF to resupply an expended weapon		CLARITY COVENANT (Lowers dangers from stunning/dazing)			
<i>Punctures are the rapier of any Faces Of Progress squad, designed to be let loose on particularly dangerous foes. Carrying large blood-fed spellcannons, Punctures are best dealt with harshly: focusing rituals mean middling blows will do little to sway their aim.</i>				MV: FOE EYE	
				You can always assess which foe before you is the most dangerous.	
CARRIED	Spellcannon III (ranged / versatile, blitz, drain 2, 2H)				
SHEATHED	Forceknife III (melee / bane, intimate)				

EXAMPLE GEAR OF THE GHOST REACHES

Bloodletter I (melee / distinct, defensive)

The rank-and-file of the Faces Of Progress carry these sinister spears, mundane in nature but by design capable of drawing the blood of their victims. Those not of the rank-and-file, it turns out, have an unquenchable thirst.

Ashmaker Bow I (ranged / ruin, decisive, dangerous, 2H)

Ashmakers were just a theory until the invasion began: one the New Hunt have taken pleasure in putting into practice. Immensely dangerous alchemical arrows paired with a bow ritually treated with the protections needed to withstand them, Ashmakers are the prized possession of any resistance cell.

Little Shark II (melee / intimate, freezing)

When the first mariner's ardent team was dispatched to interfere with Progress reinforcements, they found their equipment lacking for undersea use. Dubbed Little Sharks, these ardent-fit wands stacked with short-range frost magic provided an easy way of ruining ship hulls.

Decanting Staff III (ranged / bane, 2H)

A long staff, held in both hands of an Astir. A series of alchemical processes purify and extract magical energy from stolen blood, before turning it to violent ends.

Hewer III (melee / bane, drain)

A circular saw, spun at lightning speeds by the volatile reaction between distilled alchemical fire and permafrost from the deep heart of Repose.

THE ACADEMY ARCANÉ

OVERVIEW

The Academy Arcane is the oldest and finest magical college in the land, and has for centuries trained the best and brightest mages, whatever nation bore them forth. Whether they aspire to be war mages, artificers, alchemists, illusionists, or whatever else—few places give you as good a chance at success as The Academy Arcane. Archmage Alejandaine, the new Headmaster, aims to keep it that way... and in keeping up with the world outside, has for the upcoming year opened The Academy Arcane's doors to would-be Channelers for the first time. For the first time, students bound for the cockpit of an Astir will walk the halls of the Academy Arcane, find a new family among their chosen House, and forge a truly magical future.

It, of course, is not quite that simple. In the *Grand Contest* era, a school-wide tournament lingers in the future... but the conflict between Houses will not wait for the opening ceremony. It never has—and bringing clashing Astirs into the mix for the first time will only stoke the flames further.

A decade later, the embers of those flames will kindle anew. In the *Torn Continent* era, the members of those feuding Houses have long since graduated into soldiers of the nations they represent. Can they steer their chosen banner to the peak of victory? Or will they become dogs of war in the process?

GRAND CONTEST ERA SIDES

At The Academy Arcane, four Houses vying for recognition and victory. They are **Blue River**, sponsored by the Lowland Federation; **Red Mountain**, sponsored by the Kingdom of Emmechia; **Green Pasture**, sponsored by the Central Principalities; and **Gold Valley**, sponsored by the Auslier Demarchy.

TORN CONTINENT ERA SIDES

Years later, war sweeps the land; no longer one fought between school houses, but the nations behind them. The **Lowland Federation**, a cluster of allied democratic states; the **Kingdom of Emmechia**, an ageing monarchy in decline; the **Central Principalities**, a collection of territories that seek to use the war to winnow their princes into a single king; and the **Auslier Demarchy**, an outlying merchant nation ruled by lottery.

The Academy Arcane uses the optional **Multi-sided Conflict** and **Generational Conflict** rules, found in *Running The Game* (pg. 141). This means that rather than an Authority & a Cause, The Academy Arcane features several Sides, each vying for victory. It also takes place over two distinct Eras of play; the *Grand Contest Era* and the *Torn Continent Era*.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

GRAND CONTEST ERA

OVERVIEW

The Academy Arcané divides its students into four houses: Blue River, Red Mountain, Green Pasture and Gold Valley, each sponsored by one of the neighbouring powers. Students are free to choose their own house, and spend the duration of their time at the Academy Arcané living among the other students of their house in dedicated, private dormitories.

Throughout the year, the houses vvy for supremacy through practice skirmishes, limited deployments overseen by tutors, and other tests designed to raise them up as skilled, valuable wielders of magic. This culminates in the Midsummer Tournament; an annual series of challenges that pit house against house, in order to determine a single winner that will hold the trophy for a year. Being part of the winning house is seen as a mark of great talent and achievement—and as such, lights the fire of rivalry and inter-house competition like nothing else.

SIDES OF THE GRAND CONQUEST ERA

Blue River

Sponsored by the Lowland Federation. Befitting its theming, Blue River often attracts students interested in water or curative magics, but also is a popular house for illusionists. Blue River haven't won the Midsummer Tournament in around thirty years, since it also tends to attract more scholarly students, but the ageing Housemaster is insistent on one last victory before he retires. Their house motto is 'Strength of the rapids, grace of the stream'.

Branches: Subterfuge (illusionists and enchanters), Executive (bookish types)

GRIP



GRIP



Red Mountain

Sponsored by the Kingdom of Emmechia. Red Mountain has a proud military tradition inherited from its sponsors, and Emmechia often picks future officers from among Red Mountain's finest. It makes sense, then, that those with a knack for destructive magics often find a home in Red Mountain. Their house motto is 'The unassailable heights of glory'.

Branches: Military (noble scions), Curator (third sons and bastards)

GRIP



GRIP



Green Pasture

Sponsored by the Central Principalities. Green Pastures directs students to be independent, and to become their best selves through study and practice; putting emphasis on pushing the boundaries of known magic to create new opportunities. Green Pasture students, then, are less marked by common practice or kinds of magic, and more coloured by their passion and ambition to claim a high place in life.

Their house motto is 'Both shepherds and wolves stand above sheep'.

Branches: Military (mercenary brats), Research (rule-bending mages)

GRIP



GRIP



Gold Valley

Sponsored by the Auslier Demarchy. The Demarchy's involvement with Gold Valley is less hands-on than some of the other houses, standing primarily as a demonstration and reminder that they remain part of the same stage as the other nations. This laxer attitude means Gold Valley tends to attract students looking for a less demanding house, or for those who are unsure about their future and don't want to commit to something just yet.

Their house motto is 'All effort is golden'.

Branches: Resource (rich kids), Subterfuge (pranksters and troublemakers)

GRIP



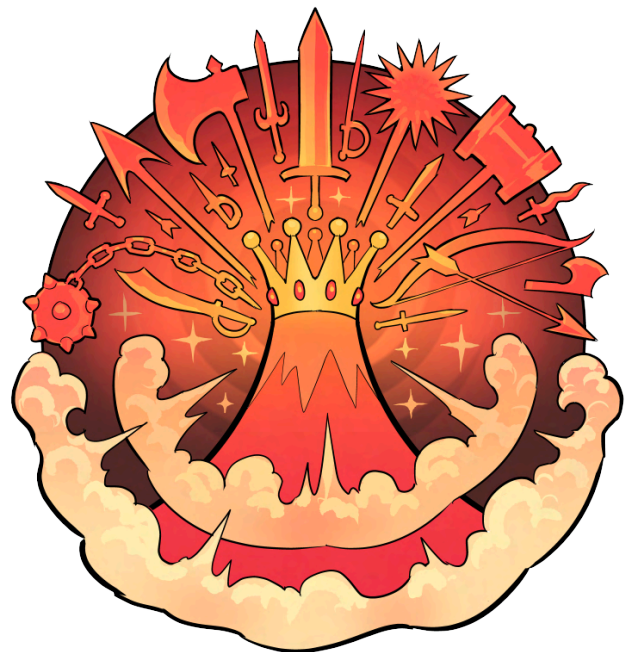
GRIP



The four houses were established early in the formation of the Academy Arcane, in order to foster camaraderie and competition between students—and to bring additional funding into the school, as neighbouring nations sought to sponsor the future of would-be mages.

Given that little has changed in the centuries since, it would be fair to say the houses were a success on all fronts.

- Excerpt from 'A History Of The Academy Arcane', Martine Teuno-cail, MD734



TORN CONTINENT ERA

OVERVIEW

War, as it always does, has swept the continent. Scholars and diplomats argue who truly instigated it; the Federation claims it acted in proactive self-defense, striking an Emmechian patrol that was, supposedly, not the first to attack their borders. Emmechia, on the other hand, claims to have no knowledge of the sort, but the Central Principalities disputes ever giving them permission to patrol troops this far through their territory—a dispute they were clearly willing to raise arms over.

As the war between the three ignited in full, the Demarchy would not be left out; citing attacks on Auslier trading caravans, the Demarchy's new Wartime Council voted unanimously to defend their interests. Once again, the Academy Arcane is the eye of the storm; a neutral ground, encircled by the tempest of war.

SIDES OF THE TORN CONTINENT ERA

Lowland Federation

The Lowland Federation is a large cluster of allied states, unified by their shared interest in democracy and freedom. They share resources and information in the interest of combined survival, even where their individual laws and cultural identities clash: to a lowlander, your neighbour is the most important person on the street.

Branches: Subterfuge (spies and illusionists), Executive (their bosses)

GRIP
□□□

GRIP
□□□

Kingdom Of Emmechia

The Kingdom of Emmechia is a large, long-declining monarchy, desperate to reinforce its strength and borders through victory. With the only direct heir far too young to govern, the Kingdom's aging sovereign is looking to turn his nation's death throes into a new decade of security—one that will ensure his son comes to the reins of a true power.

Branches: Military (the royal army), Curator (trophy-hunters)

GRIP
□□□

GRIP
□□□

Central Principalities

The Central Principalities are a diverse set of, as their name declares, principalities. Once, the principalities were a single monarchy, like Emmechia, but split as the many sons of a despised king split the land between themselves. Centuries later, competition and rivalry has them looking to war as an opportunity to thin their herd of aspiring princes down into a single sovereign. This mercenary spirit has spread like wildfire, especially among ambitious Principality mages; hoping to prove their worth to the future king.

Branches: Military (militias & mercenaries), Research (aspirant archmages)

GRIP
□□□

GRIP
□□□

Auslier Demarchy

The Auslier Demarchy is governed entirely by several councils of randomly-selected senators, elected by lottery to oversee their respective subjects (a council for education, a council for diplomatic relations, etc). It stands to gain little in the conflict, and likely would have stayed out of it had the new military council not unanimously voted to do so following reports of other nations plundering Auslier trading endeavours.

Branches: Resource (trading companies), Subterfuge (agent provocateurs)

GRIP
□□□

GRIP
□□□

THE ACADEMY ARCANES

EXAMPLE ASTIRS OF THE ACADEMY ARCANES

DANCER _{III}	ARCANE	CORE	POWER	3
		CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING	■
INPUT CHANNEL		CHAMELEON CLOAK		
DEFY DANGER with +CHANNEL		Become invisible for a Scene. The next <i>risk</i> you take is 'revealed'.		
<i>Dancers are designed for a single purpose: to weave beautiful havoc in and around enemy formations, without taking a scratch in return. For graceful exits, most are outfitted with stealth rituals.</i>			MV: FEATHERLIGHT	
			You never lose your footing or balance as result of a fall or manoeuvre.	
CARRIED	Greatblade III (<i>melee / area, 2H</i>)			

DIVINER _{III}	DIVINE	CORE	POWER	3
		ANCIENT	OVERHEATING	■
DIVINATION CODEX		COMPLEX SPELLWORK		
Ask 1 question from the READ THE ROOM list		-1 POWER		
<i>Though many would be quick to point out that the presence of Astirs in a conflict is a clear enough omen on its own, Diviner units fill a powerful strategic role. Many an army's tactics are informed at the last moment by a Diviner's predictions.</i>		MV: FUTURE SIGHT		When you READ THE ROOM , you may ask questions about the immediate future.
CARRIED	Rayrifle III (ranged / infinite, 2H)			
SHEATHED	Forceknife III (melee / bane, intimate)			

EXAMPLE GEAR OF THE ACADEMY ARCANES

Simplified Codex I (ranged / dangerous, **arcane**, bane)

Most arcane codices are useless in mundane hands. Thankfully, this edition has been heavily edited and simplified to allow even total novices to cast a few basic destructive spells.

Colour Spray I (ranged / area, weak)

A staple of any academy prankster: small glass bottles, full of enchanted water that dyes any surface it touches an illusory colour. It wears off... after a few days.

Cannon II (sniper / huge, vorpal)

Most have little interest in non-magical weaponry, especially given the prestige of the Academy. That said, the cannoneers of the west have steadily been making a name for themselves in recent years.

Colossus Repeater III (ranged / blitz, impact, 2H, drain)

Using the same mechanism as a common crossbow, Colossus Repeaters are designed to fire magically-charged bolts for maximum armour penetration. In a pinch, a talented Channeler can work the reloading mechanism quickly enough for multiple follow-up shots.

Contact Runes III (melee / reload, unreliable, ruin)

Heavily charged magical runes engraved on an Astir's hands and arms make for volatile, if difficult to use, close-combat weaponry.

PALUS SOMNI

OVERVIEW

Since time immemorial, all that dies upon the face of the Earth has been drawn inexorably to the Moon above, awakening breathless and unknowing in the dusty, airless wasteland. Marked by the Sun, the dead are then driven across the cold lunar seas into the Marsh of Sleep. Here they are protected by the ancient Compact of the Shade: accept the Sun's eventual consumption of your form, and you will be safe here. Under this agreement the Marsh grew into an ageless, eclectic country of strange cities reminiscent of a long-lost Earth, and its grateful dead became a kind of citizenry under the Sun, all too willing to step into its fire when they felt their time was due.

The Sun's dominion lasted until the wizards of Earth descended upon the Moon to plunder the districts of the dead and challenge the Sun itself for ultimate cosmic power. For a year and a day now the wizards have cataclysmically clashed with the Sun, their Astirs and earth-shattering magic surging into explosive yet inconclusive battles that set whole swaths of the Moon aflame. Death here is confusing, rarely sticking, always reversible to some extent. The unaffiliated dead find themselves stolen away by wizards or conscripted by the Sun, or often just abruptly vaporised by errant weaponry. Enraged but powerless, many throw in with the outlawed theorists of the Living Dead, who reject the Compact of the Shade and wizards alike, and instead plot the unthinkable: the liberation of the Moon from the duality of Earth and Sun, an unhinging from their orbit in favour of a course into space.

AUTHORITY: THE DUALITY OF EARTH & SUN

Brilliant wizards and blazing solar servitors contend across the breadth of the Moon for ultimate cosmic dominance. A year and a day into the war, neither side has made significant headway in their objectives. Made undying by the Moon's own power, they may well fight forever.

Leader: The Sun oversees its servitors wherever the Moon is illuminated, screaming direct orders in a language of charged particles travelling at near-light-speed to the eager ears of its minions. Earth's efforts are led more indirectly by a treacherous gang of wizard-lords with an unnervingly fluid leadership determined by personal prestige: the Voyager Council.

Aesthetic: Solar flares, strange matter, auroras, obsidian shards, burning sigils, nuclear blasts, lightning storms, flying lancers, meteorites, hovering mountains, mobile fortresses, light-speed munitions.

CAUSE: THE LIVING DEAD

To live in one's own right, the Living Dead theorise, requires severance from the authority of imperious celestial bodies. So, in order to unyoke the moon, the Living Dead collectively develop a science of unmaking via theorist cells experimenting amid the cosmic violence of the Earth and Sun.

Leader: More mainstream theorists unofficially defer to the Sloth King's careful and measured judgement. Radical elements, however, seldom acknowledge the megathere in the room.

Aesthetic: Surrealism, dazzle camouflage, cartoon trickery, particle accelerators, subterranean labyrinths, extinct lifeforms, stolen hardware, stage magic.

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EXAMPLE FACTIONS OF THE LIVING DEAD

The Sloth King's Retinue (Agents)

Oldest of the old guard, the Sloth King's retinue dug the ancient boltholes of the original Living Dead. A cadre of practically minded mammals, they are led by the Sloth King, a megathere who'll perform veritable feats of engineering, provided he agrees with their theoretical justification.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Causal Cavaliers (Strange)

The Cavaliers represent the bleeding edge of high-energy occultism, best known for opportunistically "surfing" on thermonuclear fireballs, leeching their energy to reliably achieve hyperlight velocities. Breaking causality from there, it turns out, is unavoidable, unpredictable and impossibly useful.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Treacher of Images (Scholars)

The paintings of the Treacher's crew are so lifelike that the only way to ascertain their reality is hurtling into the rocks they're painted on, a property she uses to routinely and comically misdirect the Earth's wizards, the Sun's servitors and especially the Sloth King.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Antlion Brigade (Bandits)

In the confusion of battle things often go missing: munitions, Astirs, whole fortresses. Surprisingly often it's swallowed by the ground, a sure sign of the work of the Antlion Brigade, whose sleight of hole has long been integral to sourcing fresh Earth arcana for experimental purposes.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Running Lizards (Military)

Few sights are more commonplace in the Marsh than a dinosaur going about their day. This affords great cover for the Running Lizards, community-minded dinosaur theorists who crew camouflaged saurian Astirs and penetrate deep into war zones to rescue those in danger.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Garden of Earthly Delights (Suppliers)

A long-running experiment to find out how useful the unsafe mass storage of Earth arcana could potentially be, the Garden is a controlled underground disaster area that produces fresh horrors mined, studied and traded by heavily armed teams of dedicated theorists-in-residence.

TAPPED?



GRIP



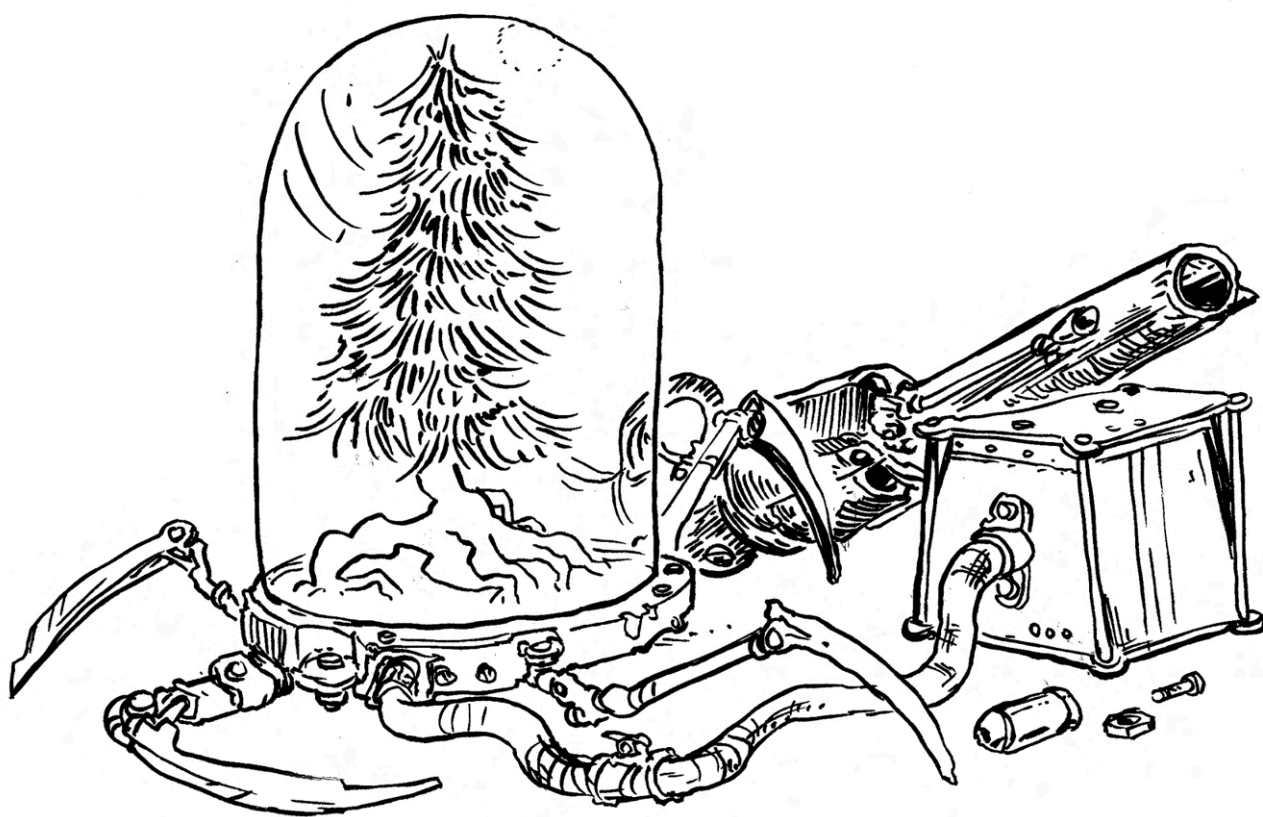
This library is dedicated to the Living Hierophant Zemelien, the first of our number to conquer mortality, without whose deeds we would not be here today.

Notoriously terrified of the idea of life after death, Zemelien experimented extensively with the concept of wholesale annihilation of the soul. Their work culminated, like that of many wizards of the time, in a final self-experiment as an ultimate test of rigour and commitment: the transformation of their own wizened body into a pine tree, each and every needle inscribed with arcane sigils that remain largely undeciphered.

To honour their irreplaceable work, we transplanted a cutting of Zemelien from Earth onto this hateful Moon so that they may witness our glorious effort in ending their hated cosmic order. The tree you see before you is a near-perfect regrowth of the original tree, facilitated by our finest botanical sorceries!

[Let it be known that the Voyager Council has issued a handsome reward for any information about the current location of the Regrown Hierophant Zemelien, who left this lobby the Tuesday before last and has not been seen in over a week. If you encounter the Regrown Hierophant, DO NOT ENGAGE and instead notify Councillor Drem at your nearest farspeech station.]

- Sign at the Eternal Library aboard the Dark Star, hand-etched, date Unknown



THE DUALITY OF EARTH & SUN

OVERVIEW

Heavily armed wizards and burning solar servitors contend across the breadth of the Moon for ultimate cosmic dominance. A year and a day into the war, neither side has made significant headway in their objectives. Made undying by the Moon's own power, they may well fight forever.

Leader: The Sun oversees its servitors wherever the Moon is illuminated, screaming direct orders in a language of charged particles travelling at near-lightspeed to the eager ears of its minions. Earth's efforts are led more indirectly by a treacherous gang of wizard-lords with an unnervingly fluid leadership determined by personal prestige: the Voyager Council.

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EXAMPLE DIVISIONS OF THE DUALITY OF EARTH & SUN

The Dark Star (Military)

A vast blue eye in the sky encircled by lightning, calling forth arcane forces powerful enough to boil an ocean – this is not the Dark Star, only the energy signature of its weapons. Its body is a floating fortress carved from one of Earth's mountain ranges and crewed by Earth's finest enchanters, filling people with unaccountable dread as it passes invisibly overhead in the night.

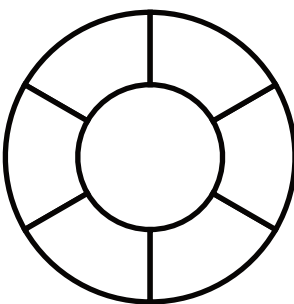
Hounds Of Sol (Subterfuge)

Hounds are vicious spidery constructs of jagged volcanic glass with a core of sapient molten metal, tasked specifically with rooting out traitors to the Sun such as the Living Dead. Their striking intelligence is a double-edged sword: it makes them gifted detectives, but also universally prone to sedition and even defection.

The Refractive Procession (Resource)

A chosen flock of solar emanations who bear the distilled, crystalline mind of a vanquished god forever into the illuminated side of the moon. Sunlight passes through the Procession and refracts, taking novel solid shapes that can then be armoured and forged into the mightiest of solar servitors.

EXAMPLE SCHEMES OF THE DUALITY OF EARTH & SUN

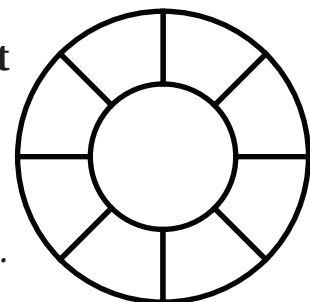


Councillor Teal's Final Temptation

A seditious cell of Hounds has made contact with Councillor Teal, a member of the Voyager Council in good standing. If they can lure her into their grasp by feeding the Council false information, they intend to crystallise her mind and use it to refract their own rogue servitors.

Project Sunspot

The orders of the Sun are directly relayed to its forces on the Moon from on high. Councillor Silver suspects that this could be used to Earth's advantage. If a crack team of wizards could make their way to the Sun and irritate its outer layers, the ensuing confusion could result in serious gains for Earth.



EXAMPLE ASTIRS OF PALUS SOMNI

PALIMPSEST ^{III}		ARCANE	CORE	POWER	2
			CRYSTALLINE	OVERHEATING	■
STANDARDISED PARTS			FAMILIAR MATRIX		
Gain +1 token during Downtime to spend on repairs only			Needle Familiars III		
<i>Palimpsests are central to Earth's offensive doctrine, forming an ominous advancing line with humming strange-shields and attendant swarms, exposed crystal cores glowing with absorbed magic. Often used for live artillery practice to give their magic an extra punch, an elite Channeler's personal Palimpsest carries a magical sample that most theorists can only dream of.</i>				MV: PALIMPSEST SYSTEM	
				You may WEAVE MAGIC with advantage to duplicate any magic or weapon recently utilised against this Astir.	
CARRIED	Strange-Shield III (melee / defensive, ward, infinite, dangerous, 2H)				
MATRIX	Needle Familiars III (ranged / restraining, weak)				

SPRINGTAIL ^{III}		ELEMENTAL	CORE	POWER	3
			NATURAL	OVERHEATING	■
DIVINATION CODEX		WEAPON CONDUIT			
When you READ THE ROOM , also ask “What is about to happen?”		+2 Power towards Weaponry			
<i>Powered by a curious oily bramble retrieved from a Cavalier excursion, the Springtail represents the next generation of causal engineering, capable of bending reality with a modicum of magical impulse. Only one was ever made, but somehow more and more of these keep turning up where you’d least expect.</i>				MV: HYPERLIGHT MANIFOLD	
				You may use SUBSYSTEMS to be in another place at the same time.	
CARRIED	Force Repeater III (<i>ranged / defensive, weak</i>)				
+MOUNTED	Paracausal Hook III (<i>melee / ruin, decisive, messy, mounted, drain 3</i>)				

EXAMPLE GEAR OF PALUS SOMNI

Wayward Skull I (sturdy, whispering, autonomous)

Skulls are easier to find than ever on the Moon, and are often a great source of information and advice. Befriend one, and all the newest rumours will find your ear.

Projection Vat II (enormous, set-up, sealed)

Much of the Moon's surface is unsafe for people to be on. To sidestep this issue, people sometimes dip themselves in sense-depriving projection vats to astrally project themselves across moderate distances.

Bestiary Array II (ranged / bane, versatile, messy, dangerous)

A popular weapon among the Living Dead, the Bestiary Array projects words of power into acrid smoky shapes of beasts, hard to catch and irritatingly effective at unravelling Astir enchantments.

Strange-Shield III (melee / defensive, ward, infinite, dangerous, 2H)

A luminous, semi-permeable cage surrounds this piece of cursed matter, acting as a shield for the Astir that would hold it. Indiscriminately devouring and compacting any matter and most energy caught within, they are a tool best used with great care.

Paracausal Hook III (melee / ruin, decisive, messy, drain 2)

Devised as a latch for hyperlight applications, the paracausal hook, if carefully aimed, also turned out to be remarkably effective at twisting physical matter in a way that displaces it into undiscovered dimensions, and vice versa. Stand well back.

THE ICE OF VALDEMAR

OVERVIEW

The people of Valdemar have forgotten what peace is like, and the warmth of summer is only a distant memory. For over three decades, the former breadbasket of an entire continent has been bound in ice and snow. A mysterious curse fell upon the land shortly after the assassination of the King, Morgan II, causing an unending winter. The perpetrator is unknown, though many suspect a conspiracy within Valdemar's standing army, the Kingsguard...

The civil war that followed caused as much death as famine and the cold. The Kingsguard easily got the upper hand in the initial battles. But as the seasons changed, the ice did not relent, and total victory eluded the monarchists. The war stalled, icing over into deep-seated hatreds. Now, only the hardiest of life remains in Valdemar, buffeted by howling winds and razorice. Those who were too poor, too stubborn, or too foolhardy to flee for warmer climes have gathered in walled settlements, protected by magical or mundane means from the relentless weather and hostile incursion. These bastions, islands in a sea of snow, are connected by the Iron Horses, titanic armoured vehicles that ride on rails at tremendous speed. And since the Restoration controls the railroads, they have the fealty, if not loyalty, of most of the remaining populace.

The few who still oppose the crown dream of a thaw in the bitter cold. The Equinox, the scattered and disparate forces of resistance, fight in any way they can to hold the dream of liberty alive.

AUTHORITY: THE RESTORATION

King Morgan II died days before renouncing the monarchy's absolute power over Valdemar. In his place, the nobles clustered around the head of the Kingsguard, who now calls himself King. With control over almost all transport, an army of advanced Astirs, and a ruthless desire for power, the Restoration seeks to return things "to normal", no matter how many people have to suffer.

Leader: Gareth I, as he styles himself, has the fealty of the remaining nobles. Ambitious and cunning, he controls the railroads that keep Valdemar alive. To him it's only a matter of time before the forces of resistance capitulate entirely, and the monarchy rules once more.

Aesthetic: Plate and mail armour in gold and silver. Family crests, jewels, and crowns. Clouds of black smoke and soot when exerting themselves. White capes.

CAUSE: THE EQUINOX

The people of Valdemar cried out when the king, Morgan II, was slain days before his promised Declaration of Reform. Several disparate factions have banded together under the desire to remove the new king and finally bring about spring.

Leader: Isabelle of Nowhere, the heralded rebirth of a Warrior Saint from Valdemar's past. Though she denies this herself, her zeal and combat acumen have given her the de facto position as the head of the Equinox.

Aesthetic: Industrial scrap and re-purposed junk combined with a mix of a religious and revolutionary iconography. White flowers, red flags. Lovingly painted fists and cockpits. Powered by anything from ancient holy relics to chunks of razorice to the last seed from an orchard now vanished.

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EXAMPLE FACTIONS OF THE EQUINOX

The Steel Chariot (Guerillas)

Isabelle's personal forces, loyal to Her and the liberation of Valdemar. They use superior mobility and local knowledge to make hit and run attacks. When cornered, however, they will die for Her.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Union of Equals (Firebrands)

Prior to the Regicide, these were young revolutionaries and intellectuals looking to bring about major change. Now they're older and wiser, but still yearn for freedom. The firebrands of the Union keep the people of Valdemar hopeful, working, and willing to fight.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Red Hilts (Agents)

The long feared cadre of revolutionary anti-monarchists were the easy scapegoat for Morgan II's death. In truth, they had supported his Declaration, even preparing to disband their organisation. Hilts of Red sprout once again in the hearts of monarchists everywhere.

TAPPED?



GRIP



Cook's Company (Military)

One of the few mercenary bands to side with the Equinox. Their eponymous leader is Valdemari born and despises Gareth for deeply personal reasons. His forces are small, but battle-hardened from years of campaign on the continent.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Vagabonded (Suppliers)

Part artist collective, part engineers, the Vagabonded are the builders keeping the Equinox's machines operational. Their ability to turn discarded metal scrap and destroyed engines into functional weaponry is a marvel and totally worth their occasional eccentricity or design flourish.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The Daphnaie (Strange)

The secret reason Valdemar's fields were so plentiful was that they were cared for by the dryads. The humanoid plants using their great power over nature is the only thing keeping many redoubts and enclaves not controlled by the Royalists alive. But years of winter have drained their strength, and time is running out.

TAPPED?



GRIP



The blade of razorice cut through Isabelle's Astir like its blessed armour wasn't even there. She clutched her side, the giant machine's hands mimicking the gesture with precision. The full body integration circuit that gave her a dancer's grace in combat had the drawback of transferring not just tactile information through the neural link, but pain as well. The pain was blinding. An overhead smash, and Isabelle's Astir hit the frozen ground. She bounced inside the cockpit, restraints failing. The metal tang of blood filled her mouth.

"So this is the fabled Isabelle of Nowhere. The sainted saviour of all Valdemar," a voice cackled over the voice caster. Jocasta Nixon's Astir had already regrown the frozen blade's tip. She twirled the alchemical marvel at her side. "It doesn't have to end like this. I could be persuaded to be lenient, if you give up the location of the rest of your little band, you will receive medical treatment."

Isabelle spat. Her Astir dug its fist into the ground and pushed, staggering to its feet once more. With a pained yank, it tore out the shard of ice from its chassis. She held the colossal icicle like a club, grip biting into the frozen weapon.

"Two things before I beat you senseless. One, you need to start aiming higher. This chunk had no chance of hitting my core."

The mirth left Jocasta's voice. "And the second?"

An explosive impact sent the Kingsguard's Astir toppling to the ground. The local sensor grid lit up with contacts all around her, each engaging with one of her guards with withering weapons fire.

"The second," Isabelle said, stalking forward like a woman possessed, "Is that you don't need to ask where my friends are. They're already here."

- A Tale Of Restoration, author Unknown, date Unknown



THE RESTORATION

OVERVIEW

King Morgan II died days before renouncing the monarchy's absolute power over Valdemar. In his place, the nobles clustered around the head of the Kingsguard, who now calls himself King. With control over almost all transport, an army of advanced Astirs, and a ruthless desire for power, the Restoration seeks to return things "to normal", no matter how many people have to suffer.

Leader: Gareth I, as he styles himself, has the fealty of the remaining nobles. Ambitious and cunning, he controls the railroads that keep Valdemar alive. To him it's only a matter of time before the forces of resistance capitulate entirely, and the monarchy rules once more.

Aesthetic: Plate and mail armour in gold and silver. Family crests, jewels, and crowns. Clouds of black smoke and soot when exerting themselves. White capes.

EXAMPLE DIVISIONS OF THE RESTORATION

The Kingsguard (Military)

Once an elite order of warriors dedicated to the protection of the royal family, the Kingsguard blossomed in both size and ambition after Morgan II's death. They've spent the intervening years acquiring new and powerful Astirs, enforcing compliance, and besting most armed resistance to the new order. Jocasta Nyxon, Gareth I's protégé, leads the charge to crush the Equinox with an iron fist.

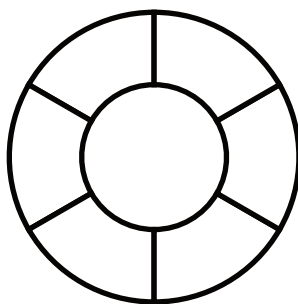
Royalists (Subterfuge)

Counter-revolutionary forces within and without the Equinox attempt to aid the Royalist forces in restoring monarchy, in the hopes that that will bring life back to the land. Some are craven opportunists, but many are just scared of what the alternative to the "safety" of King Gareth's rule would be.

Scalded Hands (Resource)

The engine at the heart of the Restoration's war machine, the secretive guild of artisans and alchemists are also the source of the kingdom's magical might. They perform dark and profane rituals, often entrapping magical creatures to drain of strength or to power their smog-billowing Astirs.

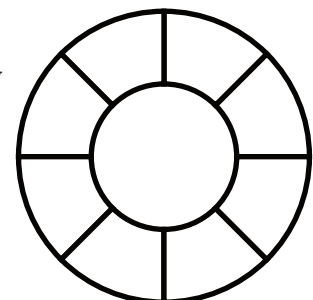
EXAMPLE SCHEMES OF THE RESTORATION



Chokehold

Jocasta Nyxon, new leader of the Kingsguard, is blockading the railroads leading to towns that refuse to hand over Equinox sympathisers. Time, and supplies, are running out.

Request From Below
A demonic emissary is asking for your help to stop the Scalded Hands from raiding her infernal plane and kidnapping her people for use as power sources. Closing their portal by force could cripple their war effort.



THE ICE OF VALDEMAR

EXAMPLE ASTIRS OF VALDEMAR

HAMMER ^{III}		DIVINE	CORE	POWER	4
			ANCIENT	OVERHEATING	■
STANDARDISED PARTS		WEAPON CONDUIT			
Gain +1 token during Downtime to spend on repairs only		+2 Power towards Weaponry			
<i>Hammers are the battering ram that lead the way during Iron Chariot attacks. They eschew survivability for firepower, often granted by sacred relics and controlled by a Channeller strong in the faith. Rumour has it Isabelle herself pilots one, and many Royalists have fallen by her own hand.</i>		MV: NEVER SURRENDER			
		Advantage when you WEATHER THE STORM while outnumbered			
CARRIED		Radiant Hammer III (melee / ruin, decisive, drain 2, 2H)			
CATAPHRACT ^{III}		MUNDANE	CORE	POWER	2
			ALCHEMICAL	OVERHEATING	■
ALCHEMICAL SUITE		WARDING			
Take 1 of each Potion when someone LEADS A SORTIE		ARTISAN SHIELDING (+ward)			
<i>Though originally of foreign make, the Cataphracts became the flagship Astir of the Kingsguard. Years of fighting have depleted the stores of replacement parts, however, and the regime has moved on from the design. Even though their armour has begun to tarnish, they can still pack a wallop.</i>		MV: RUN THEM DOWN!			
		STRIKE DECISIVELY with advantage when striking from a running start.			
CARRIED		Glaive III (melee / decisive, set-up)			
SHEATHED		Brimstone Petard III (ranged / area, bane, unreliable, limited)			

EXAMPLE CREATURES OF VALDEMAR

FROSTBEAR I (EXTRA, MUNDANE)

- Tooth & Claw I (melee)

"I've never seen one this far south before. They're getting hungrier."

INFERNAL SPARK I (EXTRA, PROFANE)

- Scalding Touch I (melee / bane)

"The smaller War Horses are powered by lesser demons and elementals. But the bigger the engine, the bigger the power source. I looked inside the engine of a Carrier once, kid. Once."

ABOMINATION II (SIDE, ARCANE)

- Rending Claws II (melee)
- Acidic Breath II (ranged / area)

"Most towns have some kind of subterranean project going on. New Hope was the one that dug too deep. There are things in this world worse than any Royalist. Don't forget that."

REVENANT III (SIDE, PROFANE)

- Tarrasque III
 - Broken Bow III (ranged / defensive)

"Whatever curse we're under is doing more than making things cold. Half-mangled Astirs with long-dead pilots wander old battlefields, re-enacting their final moments in a disjointed pantomime. Do not interfere; the dreamer does not enjoy being awoken."

APPENDIX

RISK & PERIL EXAMPLES

RISKS

Risk (distracted) - Something has caught your eye, and it's very distracting. Maybe you could make some space and collect your thoughts?

Risk (targeted) - Missile lock! Evade, evade! Could you counter-spell the targeting systems, or put something between you and the missiles?

Risk (suppressed) - You're being held at bay by suppressing fire. Maybe you could take them out, or find some cover.

Risk (on fire) - Your Astir is on fire. It's really hot all of a sudden. You could find some water, or do something else to extinguish the flames.

Risk (bleeding) - That's a nasty cut you've got—you could bandage it up, or try to close the wound with magic...

Risk (chilled) - Brrr! You or your Astir are all frosty. Find a way to turn up the heat, or chip away that building ice.

Risk (flirty) - Can love bloom on the battlefield? You're hoping, but maybe you just need a minute to cool off.

Risk (scared) - Getting in an Astir can be pretty frightening. Maybe someone could talk you down, or maybe you just need to face your fear.

Risk (disrupted) - Your Astir's systems have been messed up, knocked out of alignment, etc. You could magically re-align them, or manually open things up and fix the problem.

Risk (angry) - That was too damn close! You're real mad about it! You could get rid of the target of your frustrations, or just try to get some space from them.

Risk (unaware) - You just didn't know they were coming for you! Lucky for you, the moment you have this risk it will probably remove itself very quickly... when your attacker hits you.

PERILS

Peril (exhausted) - You're running on empty. Little short of a real rest will fix that.

Peril (wounded) - That's more than a little bruise or cut—you need real medical attention for this one.

Peril (broken limb) - Whether it belongs to you or your Astir, this needs proper treatment—and for your Astir, maybe replacement.

Peril (impaled) - You'd better leave that where it is. It's going to get in the way, but it'd get worse if you took it out...

Peril (furious) - Something REALLY got to you, huh? You're mad in a way that sticks even when the fire dies down, and need some real time to work things out.

Peril (bad rep) - Your reputation with someone or something has taken a real hit. It's going to be trouble until you do the work to fix things.

Peril (in love) - It turns out love can bloom on the battlefield, and it's got you good. There's a few ways you could resolve this one.

Peril (burnout) - Overheating has seared the inside of your Astir, destroying parts. This calls for some real internal repairs.

GLOSSARY & SHORTHANDS

Sortie: A period of time in which the players have left their Carrier to fight, scout or otherwise act with an objective in mind.

Mission: A larger goal that would take multiple Sorties to achieve.

Campaign: A full game of Armour Astir, consisting of several Missions and ending in resolution in some way of the core conflict.

Trait: The 6 stats that cover your characters abilities and are used to make moves.

GRAVITY: A measure of one characters admiration and understanding of another.

Cause: The group that you and yours represent in your fight against an Authority.

Authority: The primary antagonistic group of your game.

Dangers: *Dangers* are effects that make you vulnerable to harm, physical or otherwise. *Dangers* are split between minor 'risks' and more serious 'perils'.

Defenceless: Being *defenceless* means that you must **BITE THE DUST** when threatened by harm, physical or otherwise.

Approach: The five approaches: **mundane**, **arcane**, **divine**, **profane** and **elemental**. Approaches offer **confidence** or **desperation** when using **EXCHANGE BLOWS** and **STRIKE DECISIVELY** and are determined by your playbook or by an Astir or Ardent. Some weapons have their own **approach**, which overrides your usual if you choose to use it.

Tag: A tag is a small note that provides some narrative or mechanical information that can be easily added to an object or character to provide detail or customisation.

Weapon: Something used to inflict harm on someone else (by design or otherwise).

Gear: Any piece of useful equipment that isn't used to hit someone over the head.

Construct: A magically-powered machine or vehicle. Constructs typically require a Channeler to pilot and fuel them, though some are automatons. Ardents, familiars, and Armour Astirs are all constructs.

Armour Astir: Astirs are powerful enchanted constructs, typically at least 20-30ft tall at least, that must be piloted by a Channeler who provides the magic required for them to function. They're mechs. You know what these are.

Ardent: A mobile construct, smaller and simpler than an Astir. Some require a driver or controller, though anyone with the skill will do, and some have a life of their own. Ardents can be anything from mechanical steeds to magical tanks and beyond.

Familiar: Familiars are small, autonomous constructs that assist their master with a narrow field of tasks. Like a drone, or funnels/bits.

Artifact: A part of your Astir that can be activated with the **SUBSYSTEMS** move to give you **advantage** on a roll, before or after you make it.

Advantage: To roll an additional die and take the highest two.

Disadvantage: To roll an additional die and take the lowest two.

Confidence: To treat any dice result of 1 as a 6 instead.

Desperation: To treat any dice result of 6 as a 1 instead.

Overheating: Caused and removed by certain **MOVES**. Normally removed at the end of a Scene like *risks*, also.

APPENDIX

MAGICAL OBJECTS

d66	Object
11	A set of cooking utensils that are always spotlessly clean.
12	An orb that floats by the head of its owner, providing them with wisdom.
13	A coin that always lands as it is called.
14	A basket of porcelain spheres that move to form a model of the solar system when laid on black cloth.
15	An ornamental sword that any onlooker views as tailor made for them.
16	A jar of sand that wards the bearer against fear.
21	A clay tablet that can capture a perfect rendering of any scene it is held up against.
22	A map that may be temporarily written on with your fingers.
23	A thin crystalline needle that constantly points at the closest source of invisibility magic.
24	A hammer that will drive nails through anything.
23	A silver token that prevents the holder from knowingly lying.
26	A small vial of liquid that burns through everything except glass.
31	A gold-painted ring that alters divination magic cast by the wearer to show more hopeful or lucky futures and outcomes.
32	An iron rose that sprouts thorns in the hands of someone who has broken a vow or promise.
33	A gem that can capture words from the bearer's target.
34	A shield that can hold back any flood.
35	A feathered cloak that projects a waterproof barrier around the wearer.
36	A box that only opens during an eclipse.
41	A knife and fork that vibrate gently in the presence of poison.
42	A set of hand-made dice that only ever roll 3's.
43	An adhesive that will bond any two things.
44	A solvent that will separate any two things.
45	A mask with jewelled lenses that feeds false information about the wearer to anyone who would use mind-reading magic on them.
46	A lock that merges with any surface it is pushed into, until unlocked.
51	A wax strawberry that becomes poison once a trigger word is spoken.
52	A flag that slowly ruins the soil wherever it is planted.
53	A never-ending ball of string.
54	A fake paper Astir that folds up to fit in your pocket.
55	A thin stone disc that floats freely wherever it is left, and can support a few kilograms of weight.
56	A keyring that guides the holder to lost keys.
61	A leather collar that hides the wearer from magic that detects living creatures.
62	A crown that repairs itself and reshapes itself to fit any head.
63	A short knife that is capable of cutting through any non-magical rope, cord or chain.
64	A gauntlet fitted with a jewel that can conjure a storm overheard.
65	A pair of gloves that can touch in the intangible.
66	A pair of picture frames that act as a portal to each-other.

APPENDIX

MAGICAL WEAPONS

d66	Object
11	<i>A spear that binds those injured by casting chains from their blood.</i>
12	<i>A sheathe from which a blade of any length can be drawn.</i>
13	<i>A long Astir's cannon that fires shells full of magically contained magma.</i>
14	<i>A launcher filled with wands that cast blighting spells upon impact.</i>
15	<i>A javelin that trails flame behind it when thrown.</i>
16	<i>A wand that allows the bearer to draw down bolts of lightning.</i>
21	<i>A flintlock pistol with rounds guided by bound spirits.</i>
22	<i>An ornamented halberd that lets forth a terrifying roar when it takes a life.</i>
23	<i>Paired swords that unerringly track wounds left by the other.</i>
24	<i>An Astir-sized staff capable of spraying beams of frost.</i>
23	<i>A crossbow adorned with elemental crystals that charge its bolts with thunderous energy.</i>
26	<i>A bow, made from the wood of a tree grown in blessed grove.</i>
31	<i>A set of perfectly balanced bronze orbs.</i>
32	<i>Three silver arrows, each with a small plaque for a target's name.</i>
33	<i>A pair of alchemical mortars, designed to flood the world with toxin.</i>
34	<i>A rifle loaded with thick pieces of magical crystal.</i>
35	<i>A hollow mace, from which sticky tar oozes.</i>
36	<i>A ballista that trails a path of solid, tangible light behind its bolts.</i>
41	<i>A multi-chambered firearm designed to fire lead-encased scrolls.</i>
42	<i>A flat-tipped executioner's sword that leaves only closed wounds.</i>
43	<i>A brace of flintlocks that briefly crack open thin portals to a much more incendiary realm than ours.</i>
44	<i>An axe carved wholly from one huge, serrated fang.</i>
45	<i>A pouch of small gems that explode dramatically when shattered.</i>
46	<i>A blade that is magically incapable of leaving wounds.</i>
51	<i>A long whip embedded with venomous, weeping thorns.</i>
52	<i>A catapult that conjures a new payload into existence after every shot.</i>
53	<i>A ring of keys which can magically merge into a small blade.</i>
54	<i>A lightweight lance, embellished with golden seals that attempt to deflect any magic that would harm their bearer.</i>
55	<i>A thin glass orb filled with acid, that slowly repairs and refills itself after smashing against its holders target.</i>
56	<i>A silver dagger that can be safely hidden in the flesh of its bound owner.</i>
61	<i>A heavy mace that emits a dispelling field, designed to stop Astirs without causing damage that would make them unsalvageable.</i>
62	<i>A winged spear that grants the bearer limited flight in pursuit of their foe.</i>
63	<i>A contraption that fires searing javelins accurately in trios.</i>
64	<i>A matched pair of long-clawed gauntlets, which harbour a charge of frosty magical energy.</i>
65	<i>A crystalline wand, charged with spells that brand those struck.</i>
66	<i>A long-handled axe, enchanted to whip up heavy winds whenever it is swung in anger.</i>

APPENDIX

ARMOUR ASTIR ARTIFICE

*A short game about creating something magical (and terrible), for three players.
Created originally for #WizJam2k19*

You are a coven of **MAGE-ARTIFICERS**, brought together to enchant an **ASTIR**—a magical construct that will, alongside its **CHANNELER**, push back the **ENEMY**.

One of you is **RADICAL**, and sees the **ASTIR** could be more than the others understand.

One of you is **BELOVED**, and knows everything about their **CHANNELER**.

One of you is **DILIGENT**, and understands well what threats the **ENEMY** poses.

Take turns describing a spell, enchantment or magical artifact that could be implemented into the **ASTIR**'s design to the other **ARTIFICERS**. One **ARTIFICER** will support your pitch, and tell you why—The other will dispute it. Then, you roll to see how your magic turns out.

Alone, you roll a single d6, but;

If the **RADICAL** describes a potential transgression or misuse, good or bad, they add a d6.

If the **BELOVED** describes how the **CHANNELER** will feel about this and why, they add a d6.

If the **DILIGENT** describes how this counters a threat presented by the **ENEMY**, they add a d6.

Roll these dice, and check what the highest result is;

If it is a 1 or 2, it is flawed: whoever disputed the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing how it failed or caused someone harm once.

If it is a 3 or 4, it is acceptable: whoever designed the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing it being used to successful ends.

If it is a 5 or 6, it is perfect: whoever supported the feature may narrate a scene in the future describing how it was used to achieve something beyond what you thought possible.

When the three of you decide that the **ASTIR** is finished, give it a name. Finally, check how many designs were flawed, how many were acceptable, and how many were perfect. Finally, you will narrate how the **ASTIR** and its **CHANNELER** are remembered, far in the future:

If most were flawed, you are scavengers stood around the recent wreck. The **DILIGENT** narrates first, the **BELOVED** second, and finally, the **RADICAL**.

If most were acceptable, you are soldiers watching a parade of arms. The **BELOVED** narrates first, the **RADICAL** second, and finally, the **DILIGENT**.

If most were perfect, you are students touring an exhibit. The **RADICAL** narrates first, the **DILIGENT** second, and finally, the **BELOVED**.

*If you have more than three players and want to add extra roles, consider; the **HAUNTED**, who will not see the same **MISTAKE** made twice, the **ARTIST**, who has a **VISION** for the future, the **PRAGMATIST**, who will not let us build beyond our **MEANS**, or the **IDYLLIST**, who knows swords must one day be **PLOWSHARES**.*

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Additional design influences include *Technoir* by Jeremy Keller, *The Sprawl* by Hamish Cameron, *Masks* by Brendan Conway, *Scum & Villainy* by Stras Acimovic and John LeBoeuf-Little, *We Made Them Look Like Us* by Takuma Okada, *Tendencies: Spirits & Glamour* by Frankie De Leon, and countless others. The Generational Conflict optional rules are very inspired by *Microscope* by Ben Robbins, which I love.

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MISC.

Other things I enjoyed throughout this games development include;

- Podcasts: *The Shrieking Shack*, *Waypoint Radio*, *Emojidrome*, *Film Critters*, *The Magnus Archives*, *Hold This L*, *Borat Club*, *Just King Things*, *A More Civilised Age*, *Night Clerk Radio*,
- Books/Comics: *Delicious In Dungeon*, *Dead Dead Demon's DeDeDeDe Destruction*, *Dorohedoro*, *Ancillary Justice/Sword*, *Consider Phlebas*, *Player Of Games*, *Little Teeth*, *Men Women & Chainsaws*, *about 25% of From A Certain Point Of View (The Empire Strikes Back)*, *The Honjin Murders*
- Games: *Dragon's Dogma: Dark Arisen*, *Risk of Rain 2*, *Path of Exile*, *Disco Elysium*, *Outer Wilds*, *Timespinner*, *Battletech*, *Umurangi Generation*, *Destiny 2*, *DUSK*, *Resident Evil 2 Remake*, *Resident Evil 7*, *Resident Evil Revelations*
- TV/Films: *Dirty Pair*, *The Tatami Galaxy*, *Us*, *Get Out*, *Armored Trooper VOTOMS*, *Nichijou*, *Midsommar*, *Raw*, *Ghost In The Shell: SAC*, *Night Is Short*, *Walk On Girl*, *Hardware*, *Nosferatu the Vampyre*, *Pontypool*, *Parasite*, *Kamen Rider Kuuga/Agito/Faiz/Blade/Hibiki/Kabuto/Ex-Aid/Build/Den-O/Revice*, *Riverdale*, *What We Do In The Shadows*

FONTS

Fonts used throughout this game include Gentium Book Basic, Tw Cen Mt, Scheherazade, Poor Richard, Perpetua, Centaur, **Berry Rotunda**, Liberation Sans, Liberation Sans Narrow and Liberation Serif.



Briar Sovereign is a trans, nonbinary games designer and writer based in the UK. They love mechs, magic, and Kamen Rider: only two of which feature in this book, unfortunately.



ARMOUR ASTIR: ADVENT

is a high-fantasy roleplaying game about striking back against an authority that seeks to control you.

It is a game of rival pilots clashing in steel-clad Astirs, of soldiers holding their own against the odds, and of spies and diplomats twisting the world to their ends. It is not a game of careful preparation or pleasant truces;

It's hard to change the world without taking a *risk*.

Take on the role of magical mecha pilots or their supporting crew as you and your table flesh out a tyrannical Authority; and then create the Cause that will tear it down. A love letter to mecha anime and fantasy fiction broadly, Armour Astir is designed to evoke the feel and pace of iconic mecha shows in an accessible, narrative-focused format: without skimping out when it comes to the exciting action.

Check out weregazelle.com or weregazelle.itch.io for more tabletop roleplaying games, as well as supplemental content for Armour Astir: Advent and others.



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