

FABULA ULTIMA

T T J R P G

ATLAS
HIGH FANTASY



An epic journey will guide you beyond
what you have ever imagined you could be.



Destiny itself shall bow
before the fires in your hearts!



The **High Fantasy Atlas** for **Fabula Ultima** will guide you into a world of ancient mysteries, breathtaking views, incredible magic, and powerful beings. Like the heroes of legend and myth, your characters will start from humble origins and set off towards a glorious fate, eventually rising high enough to challenge the gods in true **JRPG** style!

- ◆ Dive into this classic, epic genre with **4 new Classes** (Chanter, Commander, Dancer, and Symbolist) and even more **Heroic Skills**!
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- ◆ Discover **Quirks**, new optional rules that bring even more characters, and push their heroic abilities beyond their limits using **Zero Powers**.
- ◆ **5 Villains**, challenging **new** bosses of increasing power to use in your adventures, providing your Players with tough and stimulating challenges.
- ◆ **200 full-color pages**, featuring manga and chibi-style illustrations from international artists. **Free PDF version included!**

FABULA ULTIMA
T T J R P G

A game by Emanuele Galletto

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INTRODUCTION

An adventure surpassing your wildest dreams awaits you in the **Fabula Ultima Atlas**! This expansion of the **Core Rulebook** focuses on **high** (or epic) **fantasy**, a genre characterized by ancient mysteries, breathtaking vistas, incredible magic, and mighty entities who battle each other for control over imaginary worlds that may appear far removed from our own.

Truth be told, you can see this **Atlas** as a natural continuation of the **Core Rulebook**, since the latter already showcases many examples and situations typical of high fantasy, due to it being a popular flavor in JRPGs.

Besides offering a brief introduction to our concept of the high fantasy genre, the Atlas provides **advice and game materials** for Game Masters and **additional rules** for Players, all in three simple chapters:

- ◆ The **World** provides valuable elements for creating high fantasy settings, including 10 archetypal locations you can use as campaign elements or for inspiration, plus a list of new **rare items** and **artifacts** for truly epic adventures.
- ◆ The **Protagonists** introduces **4 new Classes** (Chanter, Commander, Dancer, and Symbolist). It also provides several **optional rules** (such as Zero Powers) to push your characters over the top and unlock ever more combinations.
- ◆ The **Antagonists** chapter focuses on **5 Villains** – pregenerated Bosses, each more fearsome than the last – that will put even the most expert Players to the test.

This Atlas doesn't presume to be seen as a complete guide to high fantasy; the genre is widespread and takes on countless shades. Instead, this book is closely connected to its authors' creative and philosophical inclinations: their goal is to provide advice and examples from established JRPGs (see page **199**), useful both to those well-versed in this genre, and especially to those who have recently found their way to **Fabula Ultima** and JRPGs in general.

Just turn the page to learn more!

WHAT DEFINES FABULA ULTIMA'S HIGH FANTASY?

High fantasy can mean a lot of things, even within the world of **JRPGs**. In this book, and in **Fabula Ultima** more broadly, the term indicates several elements that the authors feel represent a specific way of building stories and settings.

In brief, we are discussing the authors' personal visions, which do not claim to be the absolute truth. Indeed, narrative genres have nebulous boundaries, and it would be impossible – maybe even irresponsible – to box them in too much.

What follows may help you to better understand the creative vision behind this book!



BE GOOD TO THE BONE

Your Player Characters in a high fantasy campaign are **good** to the point of being idealized. They always hesitate before wounding or killing, consider violence the last resort, and forgo all forms of opportunism.

One exception is the **tortured hero**, ready to cross the line when needed. Though the actions of these character types initially **contrast with those of their companions**, eventually the events of the campaign will cause **goodness to take root in their hearts**. The entire group is responsible for contributing to this character arc.



HAVE EXTRAORDINARY TRAITS

High fantasy characters, creatures, objects, and locations always have **extraordinary and extreme traits**: a mighty warrior able to smash through the very walls with her sword, a secret fortress floating above jagged peaks, and so on. In other words, **go over the top!**



WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE

In high fantasy campaigns, your characters' emotions should manifest **clearly and constantly** – often **without half measures** – in their words, actions, choices, clothing, and the weapons and magic they use in combat. This doesn't mean playing boilerplate characters; on the contrary, it means making the most of your screen time and **fully expressing** your character's nature.

*“Be it shrouded in light or shadow,
a glorious destiny awaits us.”*



DISCOVER A HIDDEN WORLD

An **absolute and shocking** truth emerges in the second part of a high fantasy campaign, completely overturning the balance of power. It might be the discovery of **another world**, a **looming disaster** that lies at the heart of your opponents' actions, or the **dark side** of an apparently benevolent institution.



CHALLENGE DESTINY AND THE DIVINE

High fantasy campaigns often end in an epic battle against an **inescapable fate** or **immutable reality**, which can take the shape of a **false god** or another entity with nearly **divine** powers.



MAIN REFERENCES

Here are some titles that shaped the artistic vision of this book:

- ◆ **Bravely Default** and **Bravely Second** feature plotlines that begin traditionally but later **overturn the Player's expectations** of heroes and antagonists, reaching a point of pure **metanarrative subversion**.
- ◆ **Final Fantasy IV** starts as the **redemption** story of a protagonist who has committed **a heinous crime** and then continues with a series of explosive and ever more over-the-top scenes and situations.
- ◆ **Final Fantasy IX** is an excellent example of a group **brought together by fate** into an often whimsical story, with some dramatic and spectacular moments, and an **extraordinary and diverse** cast for whom magic is crucial. It is also not afraid to tackle heavier themes such as like **death** and **war**.
- ◆ **Final Fantasy X** showcases a setting far removed from a pseudo-medieval European aesthetic. Its story focuses on **summons**, the struggle against **dogmatism** and **prejudice**, the need to accept **death** and **change**, and the right of future generations to **choose their own fate**.
- ◆ **Tales of Arise** is a great inspiration for a campaign focusing on a **revolution**. It takes place in a world **torn apart by colonialism**, where the protagonists must painstakingly learn to trust one another, and where the horrors of slavery and oppression are **portrayed visibly** through the theft and manipulation of life force.

HIGH FANTASY PILLARS

On page 14, *Fabula Ultima*'s **Core Rulebook** discusses the **Eight Pillars** that uphold its entire play experience. This Atlas builds on those elements in its own way.

ANCIENT RUINS AND HARSH LANDS

This pillar really comes to the fore in high fantasy: dense magical forests, ancient cities buried beneath the sands, haunted castles, and ruins hiding sinister secrets.

Each location is the **allegory** of an emotion or concept.

The **frozen Western Wasteland**, dotted with gray ruins that crumble to the touch, represents **magic's catastrophic costs**. The silence and blinding whiteness of the snow make this place a limbo without end.

A **castle with crystal towers** stands on the moon's dark side – the dwelling place of the last dragon, reachable only with an ancient airship. It symbolizes the search for **solitude** and the **loss of faith** in the world's people.

An opulent **city-cathedral** with jagged spires reaching to the sky. Wyvern flocks circle among the clouds, and **bronze sentries** silently guard fleets of stairs – all symbols of the **Dragon Church's** military might.

A WORLD IN PERIL

The world hides incredible secrets and powerful magic... but they are not hidden to all! What you know at the start is often the mere tip of the iceberg – as the campaign delves deeper into the world's lore, you may discover that the **Villains** you faced until now are simply pawns in a much vaster game.

Commander Cadmus of the royal army plans to convince the king that the movement of Imperial troops along the border warrants a preemptive assault. Cadmus believes he will soon become general and has faith in the **Light Stone** he received from **Nileth the Witch**. He is unaware that the jewel will react with the Imperial **Shadow Stone**, awakening a dreadful power that will bring chaos to both nations...

Hordes of monsters periodically surge from the dark rifts secretly created by the **Undying Popess** to justify the existence of the **Unsullied Order** and preserve her power, keeping a terror-stricken world in thrall.

CLASHING COMMUNITIES

High fantasy stories often begin with wars or great turmoil – the protagonists are called upon to fight on behalf of a faction or rescue innocent lives. But, sooner or later, the situation will escalate and become a matter of ideology – freedom versus order, hope versus desperation, or tolerance versus prejudice.

While the **Acheronian Empire** attacks the city of **Platea**, the principality of **Kemet** builds walls along their borders. The **Xanadu** islands, torn by succession wars, will be the next target of Imperial hunger. Alone, none of these peoples stand a chance against the Acheronian magitech armies.

For centuries, the realms of **Londinium** and **Gralia** have fought over **New Babylon**, each monarch wielding claims based on blood ties to the city's deceased **Matriarch**. The airship on which you are traveling is struck down by Gralian fire. The crash unearths a **dire weapon** forgotten by time, while the armies send forth their most ruthless leaders to crush the enemy, with no concern for the local population.

EVERYTHING HAS A SOUL

The stream of souls (see page 72) is crucial to high fantasy settings: it's the only thing truly eternal, from which all else came forth and shall one day return. However, it has no will of its own and can be altered by especially powerful magic and entities, sometimes with no turning back.

Zephyr is a world of islands that float around a core of thunderclouds – some say the **Everlake** can be found there, the source of both magic and life, to which all spirits return after death. Only those with the blessing of the **Church of Nimuë** may access the **springs** hidden between the isles: water basins where the life-flow condenses in luminous vapors, allowing contact with the Everlake.

The **Astral Drake Midgardsormr**, a **demon** created within the stream of souls by the peoples' despair, is now hijacking the stream itself, slowly draining the planet of its life force. Plants wither, oceans grow still and lifeless, and animals transform into fierce **monsters**. Only by finding and awakening the **six Elemental Guardians** can you defeat Midgardsormr, but there are also those who profit from the crisis caused by the Guardians' long slumber...

MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY

In high fantasy settings, the connection between magic and technology tends to be extreme: they are either one and the same – with powerful magitech infantry and ritual containment circuits – or in open conflict. If the latter is true, magic tends to be an ancient and lost art, while technology is dangerous and unfeeling. But there may be exceptions: magic could bring destruction while technology appears more controllable.

Asteride's vanguard troops use cutting-edge **weapons** and **magitech armor** designed to protect the **mage-tacticians** from enemy attacks. Conversely, the nearby nation of **Dagda** follows the path of martial arts and healing magic, believing that only cowards would rely on magically enhanced soldiers.

After the tragic **Night of Shattered Stars**, the **Quivira Federation** imposed harsh restrictions on magic, which has become illegal for anyone outside the **Crimson Caste**. Things grow more complicated when a **rebel** group from the vassal realm **Olmedia** finds a **young star witch**, barely alive after escaping the horrors of a secret Quivirian lab...

Either way, both magic and technology reach explosive and visually stunning peaks in high fantasy tales.

HEROES OF MANY SIZES AND SHAPES

Not only are there no limitations to what a high fantasy hero can be, but you should make sure these protagonists are **over the top**:

Albus is a **wood elf** from the **Petrified Forest**. He fights using swarms of floating crystals and unleashes powerful light spells. His antlers flower with countless blossoms when he casts his most potent spells.

Lydia is a **golf champion** who landed in this world from **another dimension** after touching a shard from a **time crystal**. The jewel still sparkles on her hand, allowing her to summon Arcana and use Entropic magic.

Pwih is an unusual blue-colored **mellow ooze warrior** who can speak and take humanoid shape. She doesn't know where her powers come from and has joined a group of heroes to learn more about humans.

“It makes no sense! Why? If we are so alike, why are you surrounded by people ready to protect you with their lives? Why are you not alone?”

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HEROES

In high fantasy, world events are **inextricably** tied to your heroes. Some of them may know that from the start, while others will learn with time. Either way, no hero is part of this tale by mere chance – and if they are, then it will likely be this existence “outside the boundaries of destiny” that lets them overturn the world's fate.

The prophecies speak of **four heroes** who will save the world from the clash between the **Giant of Fire** and the **Giant of Ice**. As foretold, the **Mark of the Lily** has appeared on the right hands of the **Prince of Alfheim** and the **Twin Vestals**... but also upon those of a **wandering sword master** and the **Prince's younger sister!**

Run over by a carriage when she was only a child, **Valea** lost her left eye and leg but she was saved by the **Bandit Princess**. The girl grew up to become an accomplished thief and joined a group of revolutionaries, but she is about to discover that the man leading the royal army was onboard that fateful carriage, and that the Bandit Princess was not motivated by altruism alone...

As always, these connections and plot twists may come from the Game Master or from Players using Fabula Points.

MYSTERY, DISCOVERY, AND GROWTH

In high fantasy campaigns, mysteries are deep, ancient, and shocking – the protagonists' personal growth happens precisely when dire revelations overturn their understanding of politics, magic, or spirituality. That's when your heroes may discover that they have been aiding the schemes of a **supreme Villain** for much of their previous adventures!

Kain – the last of an ancient line of **priestesses** – begins a desperate pilgrimage to revive the **Sacred Flame**, risking his life against the monstrous **angels** that haunt the wilderness between the city-states. However, what Kain and his escort ignore is that the Flame demands a terrible sacrifice and that angels were once something completely different...

By defeating **Charybdis**, **Maelstrom's** monstrous **guardian**, you have unwittingly broken the **Northern Sigil**. This has accelerated **Rector Lucretia's** reckless plan of opening the four cardinal sigils in order to channel the planet's energy into the magitech engines of her new **dimensional ship**.

BEFORE WE START

The following pages discuss some crucial aspects of participating in a high fantasy campaign with **Fabula Ultima**.

Since the **Core Rulebook** is strongly tied to high fantasy, these suggestions are also appropriate for the vast majority of **Fabula Ultima** campaigns.

PROTAGONIST SYNDROME

You will often find plots centered on one or two characters when searching JRPGs, manga, or high fantasy anime for inspiration. These tales are frequently written as escapist fantasies focusing on a male protagonist – with whom the expected average audience can identify – plus a romantic interest and a handful of more or less well-defined sidekicks.

Conversely, in **Fabula Ultima**, all Player Characters are equally important, which allows all of you to have an equal share in developing the story. Even PCs with “main character” **Quirks** (see page 114), like **Ruinbringer** or **Glorious Fate**, should not steal the spotlight from the other protagonists.

COMPLICATED AND RIGID PLOTS

High fantasy worlds are rife with magic and mystery, and are thus suited for plot twists and revelations, ancient prophecies, and travel through space and time. These elements are acceptable in **Fabula Ultima**, but don't overdo it – it's better for twists to result from Fabula Points or **opportunities** rather than being part of a dense and complex web of secrets imagined by the Game Master. The planning should remain **flexible**: you don't need an answer for everything, especially if these answers railroad the story, limiting Player creativity and damaging play.

DIVINE AND IMMUTABLE POWERS

The people of high fantasy tales often worship a great variety of gods, however, one of **Fabula Ultima**'s premises is that even the most formidable entities should be limited somehow. These beings may have accrued immense power, but they can still be bested by those with enough courage and loyal allies.

The world changes **constantly**, and **no one** is omnipotent nor eternal.

ARCHETYPES AND STEREOTYPES

High fantasy tales rely on various archetypes, from the **noble warrior in exile** to the **gloomy witch**, who appears **intriguing and reserved**. These archetypes are useful when establishing a character's concept and **Traits** but they should not become **stereotypes**. Try to include unique details, overturning expectations and showing that the first impressions of your heroes hide complex personalities.

Take special care with the following:

- ◆ **Archetypes that model real-world peoples and cultures.** Avoid stereotypes when representing cultural elements like religions, customs, and practices. If you want to build your character based on real-world figures – like exorcists, gladiators, ninja, pirates, priests, samurai, witches, or vikings – get your information from sources that do not reduce these people to mere narrative tools or aesthetic. If you use good quality sources, you will create complex, multifaceted heroes – it's also a great way to broaden your horizons.
- ◆ **Beauty, gender, and clothing stereotypes.** Try avoiding or subverting stereotypes that moralize the body – for example, do not make all heroes young, athletic, and conventionally attractive while their enemies are grotesque caricatures. Also, pay attention to harmful tropes related to gender, social relations, or clothing: a maternal and timid female hero, an aggressive tribal warrior, a cruel and sensual antagonist, or a perverse and diabolical Villain whose appearance does not conform to the gendered expectations of the real world we live in.

Creating a fantasy world allows us to let go of our daily burdens. We should embrace this opportunity without forgetting that the words, images, and symbols we use have historical and culturally rooted meanings, which will affect those around us.

ONE DIMENSIONAL VILLAINS

You are welcome to give your high fantasy Villains striking appearances and awe-inspiring abilities, but don't forget to make them **multifaceted characters**. Likewise, exploring concepts like "absolute good" or "absolute evil" isn't especially interesting – the Game Master should give their Villains believable motivations, turning them into the protagonists' proper nemeses.

After all, from great heroes come great Villains, and vice versa!



THE WORLD

This chapter provides a bird's eye view of **Fabula Ultima's** approach to high fantasy worlds. Both Players and Game Masters are welcome to read it – it can provide valuable tools for either role.

The chapter is constructed as follows:

HIGH FANTASY LOCATIONS

This section helps you create high fantasy regions, settlements, and points of interest. It also provides ten in-depth examples of high fantasy locations, each detailed first as a narrative archetype, and then as a collection of playable hooks.

CONFLICTS

This section explores high fantasy conflicts from both narrative and rules perspectives.

MAGIC AND RITUALS

This section delves into high fantasy magic, supernatural beings, and how to use these elements in your campaigns.

TECHNOLOGY

As with magic, this part discusses the role of industry and technology in high fantasy settings.

RARE ITEMS AND ARTIFACTS

The chapter's last two sections focus on rare objects and artifacts you might find in a high fantasy setting. As well as general advice, there are also a number of ready-to-use item lists.

HIGH FANTASY LOCATIONS

During **World Creation** (see the **Core Rulebook**, page 148), you are usually trying to envision new regions, towns, or interesting locations. This section first gives suggestions on the best perspectives to adopt when creating high fantasy places and then provides ten examples you can use in your campaigns, or draw upon for inspiration.

ALLEGORICAL PLACES

When you imagine and describe your high fantasy locations, remember that they should be rife with **meaning** expressed as **mood and spectacle**.

- ◆ **Meaning.** High fantasy locations always channel a theme: they embody an emotion, feeling, or even a historical event. If you can't connect the place you imagine with one of the PCs' **Themes**, a **threat** in the setting, or a **mystery** upon which you want to shed new light, then that place isn't relevant to the campaign.
- ◆ **Mood and spectacle.** High fantasy locations always have one or more fantastical traits – it may be as simple as a crystal tower that bathes its surroundings in light, or something more complex, such as an airport for flying airships or a network of marble aqueducts and waterways, where masked gondoleers steer their boats over flowing magical sands.

In essence, here's the “double rule” you can apply to each high fantasy location:

If a place is **spectacular for its own sake**, or if it **matters to the story but has little spectacle**, then it still needs some work.

However, remember that the right and responsibility to create, describe, and enrich locations and areas in interesting ways **doesn't** fall on the Game Master alone. For example, spending a Fabula Point to reveal that the volcanic tunnels you are exploring are a part of the sunken capital and hide a long-lost Arcanum is precisely the kind of input Players should provide during play.

CRESCENDO

Building on the previous point, remember that the places and events in high fantasy campaigns should **gradually** become **more intense**, spectacular, and over the top. This means that when you introduce new places in the story, you and the other Players are responsible for respecting the **campaign's general narrative rhythm**.

In other words, though all places should provide some spectacle, some “archetypes” are better suited for a campaign's start, middle, or end. Don't play all your cards at once.

For example, a **lost city guarding ancient magic** usually shows up during the second half of a campaign, while a **peaceful village terrorized by a monster** works better in the first half.

But take these indications with a grain of salt – sometimes, subverting some “classic” expectations makes for a memorable campaign, if done with moderation. Also, try not to put other participants in rough spots, as they may feel disoriented by sudden changes in the story or setting.

ELEMENTAL ATTUNEMENT

All high fantasy locations should be attuned to one or more natural or magical elements which contribute to their mood and themes.

For example, a city-tower of mages and healers could be attuned to **air** and **light**, while the fortress of a clan which follows an ancient warrior tradition might connect with **fire** and **earth**.

These descriptions can influence the kinds of creatures living in the surrounding region, as well as their abilities, spells, and magical objects.

Back to the example: the magic tower might be home to flocks of elegant herons and guarded by golems shooting light beams from their chest-eyes. The fortress, instead, might contain fire **elementals** and dragonlike creatures ready to aid the warriors in combat.

USING THE SAMPLE LOCATIONS

The following pages contain **ten complete** high fantasy **locations**, which you can draw ideas from or place directly in your campaign, both during and after **World Creation**.

Each location entry is structured as follows:

- ◆ **At a Glance.** This section provides a synopsis of the location: its **keywords**, the **themes** it symbolizes, the **terrain** around it, and its **elemental forces** as well as suggestions for **dangers** and **discoveries** in the area.
- ◆ **Questions for the group.** In **Fabula Ultima**, you shouldn't introduce elements disconnected from the group. These questions allow Players to have creative input and give depth to the location. Usually, the Game Master will ask the questions – and they should make it a habit of doing so even when introducing locations that do not come from an **Atlas**.
- ◆ **Typical features.** This section provides examples of characters and other elements that can typically be found in this sort of location. Feel free to take these and use them in other similar locations of your own devising.
- ◆ **Location.** Here you will find suggestions on where to place this type of location, both geographically and in the campaign's timeline – towards a campaign's start or end, for instance.
- ◆ **The Villains' plans.** This section provides suggestions on why Villains might be interested in this or similar locations.
- ◆ **Story hooks.** Lastly, this rich section details a list of **points of interest** (📍), **mysteries** (🔍), and **help requests** (🙏), which the Game Master may use in whole or in part during play.

Both Players and Game Masters alike are welcome to read these sample locations – they will help the group attune to the high fantasy style, and can provide you with inspiration when needed.

Regardless, don't take any of what follows as “canon” or “official” – you have full authority to modify any of these places as you see fit!



THE STARTING KINGDOM

Oniria

A serene and prosperous realm stretches along a wide navigable river, surrounded by ivory walls that project a mighty magical barrier. An elegant castle towers above shimmering azure waterfalls that dive into the lake at the center of this never-conquered capital. Some say there is no safer place in the world. Why would anyone ever leave?



ONIRIA AT A GLANCE

Keywords: adventure, home, longing, nest.

Themes: the journey's start, the call to adventure, the end of childhood.

Terrain: fields, hills, marble.

Common elements: 🏠 ❄️ 🌸

Travel roll: d6, d8.

Rare elements: 🐉 🐣

Dangers: a dangerous magical beast passes the barrier; people with no apparent connection to one another disappear throughout the realm.

Discoveries: a messenger bears odd news from the outer world; the entrance to an ancient ruin by the river.

- ◆ *Which of you were born here? In which district did you spend your youth?*
- ◆ *For those who have not been raised in Oniria, adapting to the Kingdom's everyday life isn't easy. Why is it so?*
- ◆ *What virtues are expected of a "good" Onirian?*
- ◆ *Why is this Kingdom envied by those who visit from neighboring lands?*
- ◆ *Oniria is greatly renowned for some of its local specialties: could it be unique desserts, traditional dances, or a peculiar kind of craft?*
- ◆ *What kind of vehicle do Onirians typically travel aboard? Is it open to all, or only for the elite?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Starting Kingdom should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ An **enigmatic leader** who cares for the people's needs.
- ◆ An **ancient order of knights** that defend the realm with magic.
- ◆ **Secret access** to a place long forgotten, perhaps discovered by one of the PCs during childhood.
- ◆ A **viewpoint** from which one can admire one of its marvels.



LOCATION

Oniria should be the first location visited by the protagonists and provide the backdrop for the **first few** relaxed **play sessions**. The Starting Realm should feel like a nest, sheltered from the dangers of the outside world, an **idyllic place** where life is serene – if boring! – and a **haven** the party can return to between adventures to take care of business... at least until some crisis occurs.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

Locations such as Oniria usually follow one of two storylines: either the city is **attacked** during the first few sessions by someone who covets its resources or bears some kind of grudge, or it will become the **lair** of an important Villain, perhaps due to a coup or magical catastrophe – it could also be revealed to always have been their base! This twist usually takes place during the **second part of the campaign**, and PCs will likely be unable to immediately deal with the threat, instead **regrouping** and acting later.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Oniria into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

FOUNDER'S PLAZA

A grand marble plaza dedicated to the Founding Queen lies at the center of Oniria's lake, connected to the city by airy vaulted bridges. There, the Queen's statue stands before a great waterfall. What does it hold in its hands?

- ◆ **The marketplace.** Every morning, dozens of stalls fill the plaza as **merchants and vendors** from the realm and beyond bustle about. Does any PC know a trusted merchant? What unusual item has everyone thus far ignored?
- ◆ **Celebration.** Oniria's most important festival is the **Night of Lights**: each year, people from far and wide gather in the plaza for lavish celebrations honoring the Founding Queen. Where does the festival's name come from? Which of the Queen's deeds is celebrated, and why did the current ruler not attend the ceremony last year?
- ◆ **The competition.** The **Contest of Heroes** takes place during the festival. What's it about? How does one participate? Who is the most exciting or suspicious contestant this year? And, more importantly, what's at stake?
- ◆ **Crime at the plaza.** An important item appears to have been stolen. How did the **thieves** disappear into the crowd? Have the PCs met them previously? What plans are in place to capture the culprits?

THE NEFTI RUINS

Ronan is an old scholar looking for a group willing to delve into the Nefti Ruins, a mysterious underground complex whose entrance lies hidden behind Oniria's waterfall. Ronan believes the **Iris Sphere**, a legendary globe he covets for his research, can be found within. He'll pay a handsome reward for it.

- ◆ **Unexpected company.** Ronan provides help in the form of an enigmatic adventurer called **Sinann**. How will she support the group? What is her hidden motivation for exploring the ruins?

*“Oniria is a land of dreams. Its waters full, its walls protect.
This is our home; outside, all is dire.”*

- ◆ **Witnessing history.** The ruins hold ancient writing about Oniria's grand past. During the exploration, the Game Master should ask whoever plays a **Loremaster** to add crucial historical details to the scene.
- ◆ **Treasure.** The characters might find ancient weapons, dusty potions, or forgotten tomes. What will they take?
- ◆ **Sequana.** In the center of the ruins, the group might face Sequana, an ancient river nymph summoned to protect the Iris Sphere. Sequana's nature makes her Vulnerable to **fire** and **bolt** damage but Immune to **ice** . She is quick and territorial, absorbs magical energy in the water, and is capable of casting **ice** spells. The heroes can free the nymph using a **Ritual** to break the bonds that force her to protect this place; otherwise, defeating her will lead to her death.
- ◆ **The iridescent sphere.** When a PC lays eyes on the Iris Sphere they see a clouded and shocking vision of Oniria's past. What is it? Will the PCs deliver the globe to Ronan, or will they keep it? How will Sinann react?



THE SCAM OF THE CENTURY

Emmet, a clever merchant, is gaining more influence over the court, claiming to know the recipe for the ultimate panacea.

- ◆ **My hands are tied.** Kristine, an Onirian Knight, contacts the PCs. Who among them did she grow up with? Kristine wants to prove Emmet is a fraud, but a noble protects the merchant, and the knights are powerless without proof.
- ◆ **Well-guarded.** A silent bodyguard, **Asher** , never leaves Emmet's side. Why is she so intimidating? What unusual weapon does she wield?
- ◆ **Unmasking.** What will the characters do? Will they approach Asher, sneak into Emmet's villa in search of the panacea, or seek an audience with the noble, hoping they are not in on the scheme?
- ◆ **Royal seal.** If the characters unmask Emmet and bring him to justice, Kristine might reward them in the queen's name, with an **ivory whistle** that summons fast mounts. What do the rides look like? How are they connected to an Onirian legend?

THE DARK FOREST

Artemis

The dense forest is shrouded in mystery, a tangle of roads and untrodden paths which cloud the senses and disorientate travelers. Something dark and terrible lurks in the heart of Artemis, slowly corrupting the whole forest – strain your ears enough, and you might just hear the soft whispers of some unknown being...



ARTEMIS AT A GLANCE

Keywords: corruption, nature, secrets, unstable magic.

Themes: destruction versus preservation, bewilderment, mysteries that should remain so.

Terrain: forest, meadows, river.

Common elements: 🐉 🖐️

Travel roll: d10, d12.

Rare elements: ⚡ 🌸

Dangers: the Bandit King and his band; the illusions of a witch; a pack of rampaging beasts.

Discoveries: an abandoned shack full of travel gear; the ruined Observation Tower in the heart of the forest.

- ◆ *One of your companions once lived near Artemis and is thus better suited to travel the hostile forest. How or why?*
- ◆ *Do the folk living near the forest pay homage to one of its denizens? What do they get in return?*
- ◆ *What are the features of the corruption spreading through the forest?*
- ◆ *A more or less prominent group wants to destroy the forest. Why? Who leads them?*
- ◆ *Some say a rare plant with unique properties grows in the forest's depths. What is it?*
- ◆ *What creature can you only encounter in Artemis?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Dark Forest should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ An **unnatural phenomenon** threatening its balance.
- ◆ A **chatty merchant** who is eager to share tales of their travels.
- ◆ A **skilled herbalist** living far from society.
- ◆ A **mysterious plant** protected or cursed by magic.



LOCATION

The group could cross this location briefly during **early play sessions** but only experience its lesser **dangers**. The forest is full of **secrets** far beyond the capabilities of inexperienced heroes – they may choose to come back later once they have found a way to access the more remote areas. Of course, someone might spend a **Fabula Point** right away to discover the paths inward – a dangerous choice for sure.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

Artemis is ancient and **mysterious** – few people have any notion of its magic and secrets. An antagonist might select it as a **hiding place** or **lair** as no one would think of snooping about, and possible **disappearances** among the locals might go unnoticed. Moreover, someone **scared** by the changes in the forest might act recklessly and decide to take care of the issue once and for all, striking at its roots.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Artemis into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE HEART OF THE FOREST

The forest is a tangle of colossal plants inhabited by fierce creatures. It guards its secrets jealously and is willing to taint the group with **corruption** to hold them off. **Corrupted** characters can't increase their attribute die sizes until they are purified by Rituals, Projects, or the aid of a skilled NPC.

- ◆ **The labyrinth.** Reaching the heart of the forest requires a **six-section** Clock. On a failure, the Game Master may bring in one of the forest's **dangers** – poisonous plants, fierce beasts, etc. – or **corrupt** a party member.
- ◆ **The corrupted oak.** Looming within Artemis' darkest depths is an ancient tree rich with magic and emanating **corruption**. Herein dwells the arboreal spirit **Hathor**: driven by rage and pain, they lash out with the tree's roots to drain Hit Points, and with luminous vines that inflict **weak** or **corruption**. They are Vulnerable to **air** and **fire** damage, but Absorb **light**. What might happen if the characters tried to communicate with Hathor? What was their original form?
- ◆ **The cocoon.** A giant cocoon grows at Hathor's base: the source of the **corruption**. Have any of the PCs seen something like it before? How did it reach this place? What would happen if it hatched? Or if it were removed or destroyed?
- ◆ **The sword in the bark.** A sword is embedded amid the roots. It can be retrieved – even during combat – and makes its wielder immune to the **weak** status. What mark adorns its hilt? Who once owned the blade?

THE VERDANT SANCTUARY

Artemis' greatest secret is the home of a powerful witch. The only way to reach it is by resisting the forest's magical illusions and passing a barrier of poisonous thorns that blocks the way.

- ◆ **The ward.** Those who try to push through the barrier are thrown back and become **poisoned**. Perhaps a **Ritual**, a **Project**, or one or more cleverly spent **Fabula Points** could dispel the thorns, allowing passage.

*“One cannot learn all the secrets of a place as old as Artemis.
The forest lives, speaks, and often wants us gone.”*

- ◆ **Ancient symbols.** The walls of the Sanctuary tell the witch’s tale; the PCs can learn how she is trying to stop or spread the **corruption**. Who feels sympathy for her? How is the witch’s mindset relatively narrow or cruel?
- ◆ **The Lady of the Forest.** She waits at the heart of the Sanctuary – an ancient and powerful **minor Villain** who wields the might of Artemis. If any character is **corrupted**, they become **shaken** when meeting her. During conflicts, the witch is Vulnerable to **dark** damage but is protected by two **Guardian Roots (soldier rank)** which are Vulnerable to **air** and **fire** damage. Once these are destroyed, the witch attacks with **Magic Charms** that either cause the **dazed** status or transfer all her loss of Hit Points to a random PC. Dispelling all the **charms** requires a **six-section** Clock.
- ◆ **Magical secrets.** The PCs might discover a **rare ingredient** for potions or recipes, the knowledge of a lost **symbol** (see page **148**), or a magical formula – perhaps tied to the **corruption**? How does the Forest change upon its Lady’s defeat?

CURSED MOON

Ancient legends tell of a lycanthrope who stalks the dark forest at night. Beware, for the creature has a goal: getting rid of any intruders.

- ◆ **Request.** The characters find a cabin at the edge of the forest where a meeting of the Hunters’ Guild – keen on getting rid of the beast – takes place. Who are the members of this organization? Is it specific to this place or more widespread? One of the PCs has faced a similar shapeshifter before. How did they defeat it?
- ◆ **Moon brew.** The lycanthrope will notice the group if they spend more than one night in Artemis, but perhaps the forest’s herbalist has a potion that can help them out?
- ◆ **Fenrir.** The beast is a lycanthrope with snow-white fur (a **minor Villain**) who shapeshifts at night (due to a curse) and is often followed by **Grey Howlers**. They are Vulnerable to **fire** damage but Resistant to **air** and **ice**. Upon attacking, they deal **physical** damage and inflict **weak**. Was Fenrir also a victim of the **corruption**? Once reduced to 0 Hit Points, the monster returns to a human form. Who are they?
- ◆ **The guild.** If the characters return to the cabin with proof of their fight with Fenrir, the Hunters’ Guild rewards them richly and offers a token of membership which can be used in many cities to get discounted food and lodging.



THE HIDDEN VILLAGE

Mirage

To those who see it for the first time, Mirage appears like an illusion in the desert. When you get closer, you see the outlines of buildings and palaces dug into solid red rock, crowned by tall towers sculpted from stone. An azure pond gently laps at the base of the buildings, its surface so crystalline that it reflects the night stars like a mirror. The life-giving water is closely guarded by the population.



MIRAGE AT A GLANCE

Keywords: ancient magic, desert, mirage, reflection.

Themes: the courage to face oneself in the mirror, the strength to challenge darkness and solitude.

Terrain: canyon, desert, red rock.

Common elements: 🍌 🖐️ 🌀

Travel roll: d12, d20.

Rare elements: ⚡ 🎲

Dangers: the riddles of the fearsome desert guardian; the sand serpents; thieves and smugglers hunting for buried treasure.

Discoveries: the entrance to the lost Library of Wonders; a trading caravan on its way to Mirage to establish trade links.

- ◆ *You once knew someone who chose to lose themselves in Mirage. They could be a great help to you now. Who are they and what is their profession?*
- ◆ *What emotions do the locals display as they welcome you?*
- ◆ *You see statues marking the spring's boundaries. What do they represent?*
- ◆ *The people of Mirage are known for worshiping a unique god. What is its name? Why is it feared in other regions?*
- ◆ *What is the village's most significant source of wealth? Is it some form of special knowledge or magic?*
- ◆ *What is the most eccentric building you notice as you near the town?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Hidden Village should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ A **wise person** who knows the answer to a crucial question.
- ◆ An **ancient ruin** with inscriptions that reveal important secrets.
- ◆ An **artisan** who can craft or sell very rare equipment.
- ◆ A great **source of magical power**.



LOCATION

A hidden place like this should appear in an inhospitable area like a desert, ice waste, or island lost in the ocean. The heroes might stumble upon it due to rolling a **discovery** during a journey, or by spending a **Fabula Point** to luckily happen upon a settlement where they can restock their dwindling resources.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

The secrets hidden in places like Mirage can entice any Villain hungry for magical power and knowledge. Reaching the town before the antagonist might be a **great challenge** for the group, but success will earn them a **crucial clue** which helps them better understand the Villain's plans. Conversely, if the Villain gets there first, they could **prepare a warm welcome** for the group by bribing some local officials to work as secret servants and **spies**.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Mirage into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE TOWER OF TEN THOUSAND MIRRORS

The Tower of Ten Thousand Mirrors is the tallest building in all of Mirage, shaped in ancient times out of a colossal spur of reddish rock. Its solemn air provokes the respect of any onlooker.

- ◆ **A test of courage.** A rite of passage that all villagers must take at least once in life occurs inside the tower – it might be an excellent chance to gain their favor!
- ◆ **Tempus fugit.** When the group enters the tower, create an **eight-section** Clock called “Acceptance” and a **four-section** one called “Denial”. If the Acceptance Clock is filled, **Xander** (see below) appears before the group. If the Denial clock is filled, the PCs are magically transported to the heart of the desert. Will they ever find their way back to Mirage? If so, how?
- ◆ **Reflections from the past.** The tower’s internal walls are covered in mirrors. When a character gazes into one, their Player narrates a past experience where the PC made mistakes or caused suffering – the other characters see nothing, but all the Players get to hear the story! Having done so, the Player should explain if the character is ready to take responsibility for their actions, or if they deny it: this decision fills **one section** of the appropriate Clock. Remember that the Player’s goal should be exploring their PCs’ emotional state and personal growth (or lack thereof).
- ◆ **Xander.** This **sand spirit** is the tower’s ultimate challenge. He can hide in shadows, becoming **completely invisible**, but he fears light. This invisibility can be removed by filling an **eight-section** Clock – approaches using **water**, **cold**, or **light** receive a +2 bonus. Xander hurls powerful **fire** spells but is Vulnerable to **ice** and **light** damage. Who created Xander and the tower? To what end? If he was defeated in the past, how does he keep reforming?
- ◆ **The peak.** Those who reach the top of the tower earn the approval of Mirage’s people. By defeating Xander, PCs might find an ancient grimoire holding a crucial clue or unique spell. Either way, they will also receive a magical mirror-shard, usable as a **special ingredient** for Projects or Rituals tied to **memory** and **remembrance**.

*“The way to Mirage? How should I know – the sands shift without end.
Besides, they say the village only appears for those ready to be lost.”*

THE VOICE OF WATER

Mirage is home to a spring with waters so pure they reflect the night sky perfectly. Some inhabitants say that on special nights you can hear the voice of their god, who lives deep within the spring.

- ◆ **A mysterious call.** When spending the night in Mirage, the PCs hear a voice bearing a request or message. What does it say?
- ◆ **Murky waters.** The spring's waters have greatly diminished of late, and are becoming clouded. Nobody knows why. Which character has witnessed a similar phenomenon before?
- ◆ **Velaurog.** A **gargantuan plant** (a **minor Villain**) now inhabits the spring, strangling it with its roots. The plant Absorbs **ice** damage and uses the spring to heal HP at the end of each round, but is Vulnerable to **air** and **bolt** damage, which also block its healing ability. What gave birth to such an abomination? Who among the villagers hides the truth?
- ◆ **The nature of divinity.** Once purified, the spring is revealed to be the home of an Arcanum or guardian spirit. The entity gives the PCs an **accessory** that increases HP recovery, as a token of gratitude.

LOST IN THE TUNNELS

Mirage was built on a network of underground tunnels, carved into stone centuries before the village came to be. Esther, the mayor's daughter, has broken an ancient proscription – delving into the tunnels while following the tracks of some unsavory individuals who she believes are searching for something down there – no one has heard from her in days.

- ◆ **Old acquaintance.** Has a PC met Esther before? What is she like?
- ◆ **Tomb raiders.** A group of tomb raiders working for a self-proclaimed archeologist, **Lord Chamberlain** (a **minor Villain**), has settled in the tunnels, looking for a precious **artifact**. Most of the robbers are actually **undead** created by Chamberlain himself.
- ◆ **Buried truths.** The tunnels' walls tell forgotten tales, revealing an incredible truth about the history of the world. What is it?
- ◆ **Gratitude.** If the PCs bring Esther back to the surface, they win the mayor's trust and a rich reward! If they helped Esther's investigation, the girl might follow the group as an allied NPC while they are in Mirage.



THE WORLD TREE

Yggdrasil

A single, majestic tree – Yggdrasil's branches stretch above the clouds, and its roots tunnel deep, nourishing the earth and making the whole area flourish. Legends passed down for generation after generation say that all living things – plants and animals alike – originated in Yggdrasil and will return to the great tree when the world reaches the end of its last winter.



YIGGDRAASILL AT A GLANCE

Keywords: creation, divinity, humanity.

Themes: protecting a fragile balance, tolerating all living creatures, understanding each other.

Terrain: grass fields, leaves, wood.

Common elements:   

Travel roll: d10.

Rare elements:  

Dangers: dark fiends threatening the tree; a magic barrier turning back those who would enter; sad wind-blown leaves that spread sorrow.

Discoveries: a magic bridge connecting Yggdrasil to other worlds; an oracle telling once-and-future tales.

- ◆ *A person who one of the PCs held dear left on a pilgrimage to the Tree many years ago. Who was it? Why did they not return?*
- ◆ *Entering Yggdrasill requires a purification Ritual. What kind?*
- ◆ *An ingredient with miraculous powers grows here. What is it?*
- ◆ *A curse strikes those who would bear weapons in the “heart” of Yggdrasill. What kind of curse?*
- ◆ *Once every ten years, a world-famous ceremony is held around the tree’s perimeter. What is its purpose?*
- ◆ *Which emotions dwell within each character’s heart as they reach this place?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical World Tree should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ A **talking animal** who guides newcomers.
- ◆ A **miracle leaf** that heals all ailments when eaten.
- ◆ A **hidden city** that rose under the great canopy or along the mighty tree trunk.
- ◆ The tree’s **heart**, where existence itself began.



LOCATION

This place of creation is shared by all living species and can be an ideal location to conclude **the first half of the campaign** – you can use it to **wrap up** existing storylines and **begin** the second stretch of the adventure. Ever greater and challenging obstacles will soon stand between the heroes and their goals, hiding secrets far more complex than they imagined.



THE VILLAINS’ PLANS

As a place of connection between all creatures, Yggdrasill is both a **threat** and **resource** for antagonists, so they may try to either destroy or conquer it. Once the heroes reach the World Tree, the current Villain might **already be at work**, with their plan well underway, or they might try to hinder their advance by committing their **first, true villainous act**: something so far removed from the PCs’ beliefs that they will decide to end the threat once and for all.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Yggdrasill into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

EDEN, CITY WITHIN BARK

Yggdrasill's trunk is vast, and over the centuries, a great and beautiful city has been built on it, its harmonious buildings made out of stone and wood from fallen branches.

- ◆ **The council.** A council of elders rules Eden, guided by **Consul Halcyon**. Each member masters a different type of magic. While they bear no ill intent, they are deeply suspicious of outside meddling.
- ◆ **The permit.** Visitors can only access Eden's lower levels – anyone wanting to visit the **Academy** or the **Light Bridges** (see below) needs the council's special permit. What is required to receive one?
- ◆ **Magic school.** The **Academy** is one of Eden's most noteworthy buildings, home to some of the most remarkable students of all things magical. It also houses a stunning collection of mostly uncatalogued **ancient grimoires** and **odd artifacts**. Which object have the PCs heard about? What might entice a Villain to action?
- ◆ **The door between worlds.** Forming a great spiral where the trunk twists before splitting into branches, the **Light Bridges** connect Yggdrasill to many portals worldwide, some of which have been inactive for a long time. Legends suggest they might lead as far as the moon or other planets.

BLUE DESPAIR

Yggdrasill's people suffer from a magic illness known as Blue Despair, which causes people to distrust one another, leading to daily outbursts of anger and aggression.

- ◆ **Omen.** Flocks of colossal **Vampire Bats** started nesting amid the upper branches once the leaves began to turn blue. Some swear they spotted a **Shadow Howler** (**Core Rulebook**, page 333) on the prowl, silently watching people, and then vanishing. Were the group to encounter it, it might show visions of impending doom, somehow connected to the PCs...

*“All creatures were born of Yggdrasill
and will return to it when they die. We are connected.
We ventured from a shared home, sustained by fragile balance.”*

- ◆ **The Heart of Yggdrasill.** Feeling the Blue Despair taking hold of her, Consul Halcyon asks the PCs to bring the Heart of Yggdrasill to Eden to cure the people with its miraculous powers. Where is the heart hidden? Why is it hard to reach? How was it contaminated, and which event made its wounds so deep?
- ◆ **Betrayal.** When the characters return to the village, one of the Consuls might fall prey to the Blue Despair and begin craving the Heart for themselves. Who is attempting to talk some sense into this Consul? What will happen if the PCs cannot solve the situation peacefully?
- ◆ **Blessing.** If the heroes solve these tensions, the Heart heals, and its protective energy dispels the Blue Despair. They receive a special blessing which protects them from all status effects for 1d6 days. Moreover, the group will always be welcome at the World Tree. They even receive a **small home** there – each Player should describe their room.



PEOPLE ON THE RUN

One of the Light Bridges that connect Yggdrasill to distant worlds suddenly activates. The people of Velim are fleeing from a gruesome war against an unstoppable foe. Now in dire straits, they seek shelter.

- ◆ **The Velimians.** Moved by prejudices against the Velimians, many people of Yggdrasill want the bridge shut down. One of these prejudices is tied to looks. How does the Velimians' appearance cause fear and incomprehension? A second prejudice is tied to their past. What are they sadly remembered for?
- ◆ **Unusual fears.** The PCs immediately notice that the Velimians fear **light** magic (which is powerful in Yggdrasill) to the point of panicking when they witness it. What caused this fear? Is it tied to the threat they are fleeing from?
- ◆ **Help us!** The Velimian spokesperson, **Bryce**, seeks the group's help. What are her requests? Should the negotiations fail, will she stand by as the bridge to Velim is sealed to protect Yggdrasill from the threat beyond? Perhaps the heroes might suggest a different course of action?
- ◆ **Rival factions.** The council fears the Velimians' past. However, the son of the Ice Consul, **Arthur**, would welcome the refugees. Both factions have their own reasons and support from the people, so it's up to the PCs to tip the scales – and public opinion! – one way or the other. What do the characters think, initially? Who among them believes it right to influence this outcome, and who disagrees?

THE GREAT OCEAN

Tethys

Tethys is a near-boundless ocean, rife with mysteries; no one knows what lies beyond it. Its waters are treacherous, subject to frequent storms and home to colossal sea beasts that can quickly capsize a ship. The sea-people also tell of mysterious music occasionally heard on calm nights. It seems to come from the depths of the ocean itself...



TETHYS AT A GLANCE

Keywords: envy, specters, the past, transformation.

Themes: loss of bearings, eternal wandering, old sins, forgotten tales.

Terrain: icebergs, sand, sea.

Common elements: 🍌 🎲

Travel roll: d12.

Rare elements: 🐾 🐣

Dangers: pirate ships with fierce crews; sudden whirlpools; a flock of giant and hungry flying creatures.

Discoveries: a map in a bottle; the remains of a shipwreck; an orichalcum column that seems to hold up the sky.

- ◆ *What kind of vessel do you cross the sea on?
Is there someone you know at the helm?*
- ◆ *Your means of travel uses a particular power source. What is it?*
- ◆ *What's the most unsettling tale you heard about the ocean before departing?*
- ◆ *Which of you already tried to cross Tethys, only to be driven back?
What happened?*
- ◆ *Some speak of a marine creature rampaging through
the Great Ocean. What kind?*
- ◆ *When calm settles, you seem to hear a beckoning voice.
How do you resist it?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Great Ocean should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ A legendary **sea creature**, either dangerous or friendly.
- ◆ A **ghost ship**, about which many tales are sung.
- ◆ A **crew** with ill repute.
- ◆ A **map** to a well-guarded treasure.



LOCATION

Tethys is a great place to **transition** between **the first and second halves** of the story – the heroes should have a good reason to set sail toward the unknown, seeking unexplored destinations. The Great Ocean might also act as a **boundary** or **frame** which the PCs can only observe in wonder during the **first few play sessions**.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

A **sea voyage** could be the perfect setting for a chase between heroes and antagonists – perhaps the Villain seeks to **steal something** from the group or **get rid of them for good**, allying with a gang of pirates or vicious monsters. Or, they might be **following the group in secret**, using them to find a path to their objective – a secluded location or a mysterious treasure hoard, full of items with extraordinary properties.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Tethys into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE EMPRESS

At any point while crossing Tethys, the Player Characters ship might meet an **imposing** and ancient-looking **galleon** with a worn-down hull and torn sails. It seems odd that it still rides the waves... until one realizes that this is none other than the ghost ship known as the **Empress**.

- ◆ **Troubled nights.** If the PCs ignore the grim vessel and do not board it, awful **dreams** about its empty halls haunt the rest of their nights in Tethys. The silent galleon will also follow their ship, disappearing only when close to shore – but reappearing whenever the heroes set sail.
- ◆ **A doomed voyage.** While exploring the ghost ship, the group will soon encounter what is left of its crew, now turned into **Skeletons**. A **Skeletal Quartermaster** – a clever **elite undead** – guards the captain's cabin. It can summon a new **Skeleton** to its aid at the end of each round until there are half as many as the number of PCs. The Quartermaster wields a mighty anchor still encrusted with sea salt – it inflicts heavy **damage**, but on a missed attack it randomly strikes one of the Skeletons instead, inflicting **minor** damage to it.
- ◆ **A final kindness.** The PCs find documents detailing the ship's sad end. Some restless spirits hiding in the rooms wish to talk to the PCs to unburden their souls. How will they help the phantoms?
- ◆ **Memento.** Once the group reaches the captain's quarters, the spirit of the undead seaman asks them to take a **pouch of ash** and a **Broken Crest** across the ocean and deliver them to someone named Ari. Perhaps one of the heroes has heard this name? Who is it?
- ◆ **Old glories.** The ship is full of excellent spare parts, armor, and expertly crafted weapons that once belonged to soldiers from a nearly forgotten realm. What was its name and coat of arms?

“Perhaps these dark and awful waters are what protects us from the sins of our ancestors.”

THE SUNKEN CITY

The city hides just below the waves, held in place by powerful magic. Little is left but a few columns and broken edifices reaching for the sky. Still, this nameless city pulsates with power and shines with a rainbow of lights.

- ◆ **Hidden history.** The city's name has been lost, and its statues toppled, but it still holds deep lore. A past event which the PCs believed in with great certainty turns out not to be true, and the proof is here to see. What event was it? Which one of the characters feels their worldview crumbling at the discovery?
- ◆ **Abandoned.** The dread pirate Edwards, captain of the **Timoria**, abandons all who question his power at the Sunken City. The survivors are exhausted and suspicious, but if the group offers passage, they will tell the PCs about a **sealed room** in the city, and may even reveal one of **Scylla's** Vulnerabilities (see below).
- ◆ **Song of Remembrance.** If the PCs break the seal, they reach the small temple of an unknown sea god. Upon the altar lies a parchment bearing the **Song of Remembrance**, a spell believed to counter any curse. Once used, the parchment crumbles to dust.

THE GODDESSES' ENVY

Long ago, an envious goddess transformed a young woman named Scylla into a monster. The fiend still roams the ocean, ambushing ships.

- ◆ **Ten tolls.** Scylla has a **ten-section** Clock that fills up by one at the end of each round. Upon the ringing of the tenth toll, the ocean's waters swallow the PCs' ship, causing their **surrender**.
- ◆ **Scylla.** A sea fiend with the face of an angel (a **minor Villain**) whose howling inflicts the **dazed** status effect. She Absorbs ice and Resists **dark** damage but is Vulnerable to **bolt** and **fire**. Her **Tentacles** – Vulnerable to **light** damage but Resistant to **ice** – inflict **slow** on a successful hit.
- ◆ **Song of despair.** Scylla longs for freedom, and her tormented wails could attract the heroes' attention. They could lift the curse through an **extreme Ritualism or Spiritism** Ritual, or with the **Song of Remembrance** (see above).
- ◆ **A monster's gratitude.** If the group helps Scylla, they receive her pendant: an **accessory** that makes the wearer Vulnerable to **fire** and **bolt** damage but lets them Absorb **ice**.



THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL

Endir

This sprawling city has covered the surrounding landscape, forcing it to serve as its nourishment. From its center rises the Dome, a research center where Imperial machines are created. The sky looms gray, and there is no way to tell dusk from dawn. Each day brings in more buildings, and the Imperial Capital seems to constantly grow and expand as if it were alive.



ENDIR AT A GLANCE

Keywords: cynicism, experiments, machines, pollution.

Themes: relentless land exploitation, use and development of magitech, imperialist expansion.

Terrain: ash, iron, scorched earth.

Common elements: ⚡ 🔮

Travel roll: d12, d20.

Rare elements: 🍌 👊 🎲

Dangers: spies everywhere; dangerous constructs oppressing the people; terrible mutations among the citizens.

Discoveries: a group fighting for change; a place of peace and silence within the capital.

- ◆ *What's the first thing you notice when nearing Endir?*
- ◆ *Trust and loyalty are rare sights in Endir. Someone in the city can help you, but you can't completely trust them. Why?*
- ◆ *Who is the highest Imperial authority? Why are they respected and feared?*
- ◆ *One of the magitech workers is an old acquaintance or relative of yours. How long has it been since you last met?*
- ◆ *An anti-imperialist group works in the shadows of the capital. What is the password for contacting them?*
- ◆ *How do the people of Endir react to your presence?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Imperial Capital should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ Clear **technological superiority** gained through secret experiments.
- ◆ An influential and enigmatic **person of power**, often a Villain.
- ◆ A **majority** that is **proud** of Imperial conquests.
- ◆ Strong **environmental impact** and aggressive land policies.



LOCATION

Endir should be a place to **resolve plot elements** and a crucial destination for the group. The Imperial Capital is usually home to a **faction that opposes** the Player Characters and what they all stand for – it may be the source of many of their troubles, or the birthplace of one or more Villains. The characters should know about this place from the early game sessions, but getting here should be challenging.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

When the heroes reach the Imperial Capital, they should be well on their way to **facing the Villain**, or at least fully **understanding** their wicked plans. The PCs' arrival might throw them **off balance** as they try to hide their true face and secret weapons from the world. A **spy network** or trusty underlings will likely try to stop the PCs before they discover something noteworthy, and could even decide to preemptively crush those that oppose them before it's too late.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Endir into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE DOME

A massive fortress-factory housing the Imperial Research Center rises from the middle of Endir. Getting in would be the best way to discover the Empire's plans or sabotage its weapons.

- ◆ **Watched.** Day and night, magitech constructs patrol the Dome's perimeter, while magic crystals detect intruders. Exploring the Dome uses an **eight-section** "Alert!" Clock. Fill sections due to failed Checks, when characters attract too much attention, or when they search every nook and cranny of an area. Once it fills up, the base goes on lockdown, and the PCs become the target of a new weapon's "test run".
- ◆ **Progress.** The Dome is a cutting-edge structure like none the PCs have seen before – clean and futuristic, but impossible to fully comprehend. The Empire's best minds toil restlessly here for the good and glory of the people... or do they? Who's in control, and who has doubts? Why are so many areas off-limits?
- ◆ **War room.** This exclusive area has its own **vulcan-train** station – perhaps an escape route should things go south? – and hosts the Imperial army's strategy briefings. If the PCs are *unlucky*, they might even run into a Villain: perhaps a high military officer, or even the **Emperor** himself – with their retinue, of course. It could be an excellent chance to learn more about their plans...
- ◆ **Experimental hangar.** A maze of labs where the Empire holds a still inactive crystal golem: **Prototype Y-Mir**. The golem is a magitech marvel, far above the heroes' abilities – it is one of the Empire's ultimate weapons, after all. At best, the group can hope to flee before it unleashes its **Spirit Blast**. But what missing component is stopping the golem from activating? How will it be used? The PCs can discover its essential functions by researching or communicating with it. They might even manage to make a few minor "tweaks" ... or turn the golem against the Empire itself!
- ◆ **The secret room.** One of the Dome's off-limits wings guards a large crystal, within which dwells **Halo**, an experimental artificial **Arcanum**. If treated kindly, it will tell its story – the Empire stole the crystal from a rival people and is using it to create and control the **constructs** in the city and army. How can it be stopped?

Endir the Great never sleeps. How could it, amid the constant screeching of metal and magic that birth the Empire's terrible weapons.

A SUPERB MIND

Doctor Heart is one of Endir's leading personalities. She is a true trailblazer in the field of crystallomancy, a discipline that has already brought great glory and prestige to the Empire.

- ◆ **Different opinions.** While near the capital's gates, the PCs hear a rumor suggesting that Dr. Heart never appears in public. Some believe she is simply sick, or spending all her time in her laboratory, while others suspect she has incurred the wrath of a rival – but who would oppose her research? What does the group know about Heart's discoveries? Has one of them met her before?
- ◆ **An unlikely mediator.** **Vygor**, a shifty man obsessed with crystals, claims to be Heart's personal assistant. He offers to take the heroes to the good doctor's secret hideout, where they will receive aid. What are the PCs' reasons for trusting him, or not?
- ◆ **A precious ally.** Dr. Heart can provide safe passage into the city and information about the Empire's plans – and who knows what else! However, she is extremely cautious and suffers from bad health due to pollution so she always relies on Vygor as a go-between. Why is she helping the heroes? Is Vygor loyal, or will he betray her if the price is right?

THE RESISTANCE

The local branch of the resistance, led by a mysterious person called “the Duke”, reaches out to the group, promising crucial intel. Who is their messenger? How did they manage to locate and reach the PCs?

- ◆ **The hideout.** What does the resistance's hideout look like? Where is it? Why has the Empire not found it, despite the actions of resistance members in the city?
- ◆ **Rebel Lily.** The Duke asks the heroes to escort a key resistance member out of Endir: she is none other than **Princess Lilian**, the Emperor's daughter. What distinctive trait or feature marks her as an imperial scion? Can the mark be hidden? Crucially: why is Lilian rebelling and ready to flee the capital? What does she think of the Player Characters, and why?
- ◆ **Neela.** This infamous bounty hunter is after the princess! She wields a massive axe that inflicts the **slow** status effect on multiple targets, and can also deal additional damage to those who already suffer from **slow**. Who among the characters has met Neela before? What do you know about her weak spots?



LANDS OF CATAclysm

Verge

Beyond the edge of the known world lies a vast green expanse without cities, roads, or people. Long ago, this region was made witness to events that shaped the known world's very survival, but which are now lost to history, along with the true name of this great plain. Some secrets are better left hidden – or at least, so believed those who penned the Chronicles.



VERGE AT A GLANCE

Keywords: answers, border, mistake, monsters.

Themes: answers to many questions, a mistake with grave consequences, silence for salvation.

Terrain: gorge, plain, prairie, river.

Common elements: 🍌 🗲

Travel roll: d10, d12.

Rare elements: 🐉 🍷

Dangers: magitech sentries guarding old ruins; an endlessly-wandering lone experiment, elemental calamities.

Discoveries: an odd tablet pulsating with magical energy; an explorer's lost pack, temple ruins.

- ◆ *What marks the border between civilization and forbidden territories?*
- ◆ *Nature reclaims the forgotten ruins. What happened to this place, and what clues remain?*
- ◆ *One of you comes from a community which forbids its members from venturing into Verge. What is the punishment for those who disobey?*
- ◆ *According to lore, what threat awaits those unwise enough to explore the Lands of Cataclysm?*
- ◆ *How will you orient yourselves in this vast plain?*
- ◆ *Can you see animals, or does the plain appear devoid of fauna?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Lands of Cataclysm should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ The **ruins** of bygone civilizations.
- ◆ Remains of technology – or magic – so **old** as to seem alien.
- ◆ **Information** about forgotten people or stories.
- ◆ Some **crucial answers** for the campaign's resolution.



LOCATION

Verge is a dangerous place full of secrets that could help the heroes unravel the campaign's plot, pointing them towards its **conclusion**. For this reason, and also because of its remote position, a group should ideally visit the Lands of Cataclysm during the **final act** of the campaign, were PCs to defy all forbiddances in their search for the world's hidden truths and the Villain's goals.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

Since places like Verge hide the answers to the world's great mysteries and the antagonists' plans, we might surmise that this is where it all began. Said plans shouldn't affect the characters too directly; instead, they should merely happen upon **traces** of the Villain here. Their opponents might have already understood the truth about this location's secrets, and be acting accordingly.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Verge into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE RUINS OF PANDORA

Dozens of floating rock fragments lazily circle the tip of a jagged spire that reaches toward the sky. The Ruins of Pandora are inhabited by some of the world's most imposing and terrifying winged creatures – an adventurer's deadliest nightmare.

- ◆ **The spire.** Before reaching the ruins, the group must climb the spire. What **people** have made this rocky area their home? Why are they not mentioned in any history book? Why do they see the characters as a greater danger than the monsters in the ruins?
- ◆ **Living memory.** The top of the spire holds the ruins of an ancient temple covered in vines and worn by the elements. Here lives **Stribog**, an odd, winged creature that communicates telepathically through visions. What has she seen in the ruins? How ancient is she, and how did she come to be?
- ◆ **The broken sanctuary.** The closer the group gets, the more the ruins look like the floating fragments of an ancient stone building. Elemental laws behave bizarrely here and the larger pieces of debris shift position regularly, smashing into each other.
- ◆ **The Life Machine.** In the center of the ruins, the PCs find a cold icosahedral structure: **Pandora's Box**, a massive **artifact** that can bring the dead back to life. What does the machine look like, and what awful energy source does it require? What aspect of life can the box never bring back? What did the ancient civilization resurrect, and how did they lose control over the box? And most importantly, who among the heroes wishes to activate the machine to try and bring back someone lost?
- ◆ **The horrors of the past.** Scattered around the machine lie the time-worn remains of failed resurrection attempts, carefully catalogued by the ancients. Tragically, a spark of life still burns within some of these **monsters** and **undead**, and they may attack the characters. Which of the creatures can communicate? Who among the Player Characters realizes they can understand this ancient tongue?

“Those who passed the final outpost found all the answers... pity they never came back!”

FORGOTTEN BY HISTORY

In the center of Verge lies a great battlefield cluttered with ancient wrecks, still bearing the scars of brutal magic. The Forgotten King, once a hero of the battle and now transformed by the Lands of Cataclysm, wanders endlessly across the battlefield.

- ◆ **The great mistake.** The Forgotten King might choose not to unleash his wrath, instead granting access to his memories, and showing the group the day the world changed and Verge came to be. However, the PCs must hold on tightly to their feelings and desires or they will be trapped in the king's vision. What do they hang onto?
- ◆ **The Forgotten King.** The King is an **undead** specter (a **minor Villain**) who never rejoined the stream of souls. He still wears the armor he wore when he was alive and wields the **Blade of Sorrow**, a **sword** inflicting **weak** and **shaken**. The weapon and its wielder are inseparable until defeat. Raising the sword skyward, the king summons **memories of fallen soldiers** or channels his tormented sense of loss to gain Resistance against **physical** damage. He is Vulnerable to **fire** damage. During combat he keeps speaking to the heroes, his voice grave and sad.
- ◆ **Dark frustration.** If the PCs defeat the king, they gain the **Blade of Sorrow**. This powerful **artifact** is a mighty **greatsword** granting Resistance to **physical** damage and inflicting the **weak** and **shaken** status effects on a successful hit. However, the wielder inevitably draws the ire of the restless dead.

UNSEEN PREDATOR

An old, fortified outpost stands on Verge's border – a meeting place for adventurers like Will, a young man desperately searching for his sister. Sadly, he has no means of hiring mercenaries.

- ◆ **Guilt.** Will thinks that his sister **Powell** joined an expedition to prove her mettle after the two of them had a nasty fight. Her party was later attacked by a mysterious monstrosity, apparently leaving no survivors.
- ◆ **Canyon Spectre.** Powell has spent the last several days fending off a **Dolgange**, a burly **monster** with chameleon-like abilities: it turns invisible during odd-numbered rounds of combat. Though exhausted and in Crisis, Powell helps the group by wielding her spear and using the **Breach** Skill (see **Core Rulebook**, page 219).
- ◆ **A bitter gift.** As a reward, Powell offers the Player Characters her **brave glaive** (see **Core Rulebook**, page 277). Is she planning to renounce the adventurer's life?



THE CITY OF THE ANCIENTS

Arcantis

Once the heart of an ancient and advanced civilization, Arcantis could not outrun fate and was swallowed by darkness. All that remains are crumbling ruins that cling to the sides of a narrow chasm, surmounted by unrecognizable structures that cause both fear and respect in passing travelers. Some say that the City of Ancients holds no more than rubble and the shards of past greatness. Perhaps they have just not delved deep enough...



ARCANTIS AT A GLANCE

Keywords: cataclysm, silence, wait.

Themes: what remains, those left behind, solitude after the fall, the ancestors' mistakes.

Terrain: magic passages, mountains.

Common elements: ⚡ 🔴 📖

Travel roll: d10.

Rare elements: 🍌 🎲

Dangers: maps are wrong and lead travelers astray; arcane constructs patrol the main thoroughfares.

Discoveries: the Ancients' pleas for help; mysterious halls dedicated to celestial bodies and covered in runes.

- ◆ *What is commonly known about the fall of Arcantis? When did it take place?*
- ◆ *How is the magic that fills the City of the Ancients familiar? What memories does it bring back, and why?*
- ◆ *One of you saw this place in your dreams, when they were little. What did it look like then? Why is the memory so vivid?*
- ◆ *What led you to this forgotten place?*
- ◆ *According to legends, who ruled the City of the Ancients?*
- ◆ *The central palace must be the most important structure. What does it look like from the outside? Which of you has seen something like it before?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical City of the Ancients should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ An **unstable energy source** pulsating below it – a magic vortex or volcano?
- ◆ **Odd constructs** on patrol that only respond to orders in a forgotten tongue.
- ◆ **Buildings** with hard-to-define purposes.
- ◆ **Contraptions or magic wellsprings** that heal living beings.



LOCATION

In high fantasy tales, an **ancient civilization** has already faced the main Villain or something very similar to them, and lost – or, they might have sacrificed themselves long ago to save the world. Learning the **truth** about Arcantis should drive the PCs to begin the campaign's final stretch – the knowledge gained can help solve an impending crisis or lead to an ultimate confrontation with the Villain.



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

Great secrets and powerful magic were lost during the fall of Arcantis, which the Villain may wish to claim and put to use. For example, they may want to build a **legendary weapon**, discover the secret behind the **eternal life** of constructs, or decipher the **ultimate spell** which they believed to be lost. Moreover, a shrewd antagonist might very well exploit the group's investigations to **unveil a mystery** without getting their hands dirty.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Arcantis into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.



THE PLANETARIUM

The grand structure above the ruins was once an observatory dedicated to studying the celestial spheres. Now it imprisons the souls of those Arcanteans who could not escape the cataclysm.

- ◆ **The long road.** Only one road leads to the Planetarium and it is patrolled by many **constructs** ready to fight in defense of their ancient masters. Will the PCs face them, or do they have something else up their sleeves? What mysterious source of energy allows these machines to still function?
- ◆ **The Astral Fulcrum.** The observatory combines several architectural styles, making it impossible to determine who built it – though a **Loremaster** might have some insights about that. The observatory's central room stands apart from the rest, emitting a dense magic aura that an **Entropist** or other expert spellcaster can identify as **Entropism**. Where does this power come from? Perhaps from the celestial bodies carved into the structure's rings? The Arcanteans seem to somehow be linked to this magic, which prevents them from returning to the stream of souls after death. What **rare material** or **artifact** works as a seal?
- ◆ **Prayer.** The spirits of the Arcanteans tell their **tale**. Why are their souls trapped there? Was it a tragic mistake or a desperate attempt to outlive their doomed civilization? What happened to Arcantis, exactly? If the PCs free the trapped souls before venturing onward, the spirits may show them a **vision** revealing a hidden truth, showing past events, or opening a way previously barred.
- ◆ **Fight for souls.** When the group reaches Arcantis, the Villains might have already started to control the Arcanteans' souls – create an **eight-section** Clock that fills at the end of each conflict round or, possibly, on a failed Check during exploration. How will the Villains use the stolen energy? Will it feed an awful machine or spell?

“A pinnacle of culture and magical lore, Arcantis was the first among nations. It was also the first that fell to the darkness.”

THE ECLIPSE

In Arcantis' lower reaches, amid damaged buildings and rubble, lie the remains of the magitech labs of this once mighty people. In a secret hangar, sheltered from ruin, a mysterious Arcantean airship awaits: **the Eclipse**.

- ◆ **AI.** When boarding the Eclipse, the PCs discover that the ship is “alive” and governed by a complex artificial intelligence named **Layla**. She is not happy to welcome non-Arcanteans onboard. How will they convince her to collaborate?
- ◆ **Unfinished business.** The Eclipse is a working prototype, but it was never completed. What was its former purpose? What powers it? What sets it apart from today's airships? Which of its functions is incomplete, and what are the risks of recklessly activating its protocol?
- ◆ **The twin.** Layla mentions that her memories reference something labeled as her “twin”. She recalls nothing else. What could this cryptic memory refer to?

THE JUDGE

When a Player Character uses magic for the first time within Arcantis, the earth begins to shake, awakening **Hadenor the Judge** from his long slumber. Soon after, the group encounters **Krizia**, an Arcantean soul who is somehow capable of leaving the Planetarium. She begs the heroes to put the tormented monster to rest.

- ◆ **Guardian.** Krizia reveals that Hadenor was created to prevent the abuse of magic and once acted as guardian of Arcantis. However, he could not stop the downfall. What were the first signs of this impending doom?
- ◆ **Hadenor.** The guardian of Arcantis (a **minor Villain**) is a **shadow** of his former self. He is confused, furious, and tormented by the past. The heroes may eventually reason with him, but not before a fight. He Resists **physical** damage but is **Vulnerable** to any damage dealt by Arcana or spells. He cannot be **poisoned** and wields a **morrigan** (**Core Rulebook**, page 277).
- ◆ **Purification.** If the PCs manage to purify Hadenor, the guardian will aid their quest in Arcantis before peacefully returning to the stream of souls. The characters also receive his **morrigan**, which deals **light** damage instead of **dark**. If the PCs fail to help Hadenor, or abandon him, the antagonists might capture and force him into servitude, creating a new **minor Villain**.



THE REALM IN THE SKY

Seraphim

Seraphim is a city lifted into the skies by ancient magic, separated from the rest of the world. The city is filled with a strange mist capable of stealing a creature's lifeforce; the silent inhabitants cover their faces to protect themselves. Those who live in the Realm in the Sky hide a great secret, one not easy to find.



SERAPHIM AT A GLANCE

Keywords: isolation, secret, servitude.

Themes: the difficulty of asking for help, a mist of lies that conceals the truth, solitude and isolation.

Terrain: crystal, rock.

Common elements: 🍌 🎲

Travel roll: d12, d20.

Rare elements: 🐉 🖐️

Dangers: winged monsters hunting outside the settlement; grim guards ready to punish trespassers on mere legal technicalities.

Discoveries: the Hall of Mosaics, where Seraphim's past is told; a lost merchant selling unique objects.

- ◆ *In order to resist the Mist, you are advised to wear a mask. What does each character's mask look like?*
- ◆ *The city contains statues, sanctuaries, and mosaics pointing to the cult of Aletheia, the only goddess worshiped here. What do they look like?*
- ◆ *What is prohibited in Seraphim but commonplace everywhere else? Who is tasked with making sure this never changes?*
- ◆ *Why do some people wear cracked masks?*
- ◆ *Can you see the Mist? What does it look like?*
- ◆ *While devoid of any stairs or elevators, the Realm in the Sky has developed vertically. How do its people move about?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Realm in the Sky should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ An **ancient prophecy** that locks the realm in a web of fear.
- ◆ The inhabitant's **fears** towards the god that should protect them.
- ◆ Great, widespread **silence**.
- ◆ **Laws** that could be seen as absurd anywhere else.



LOCATION

Being a Realm in the Sky, Seraphim should only be reachable during the **second part** of the campaign, perhaps as a key step during the final act. To travel above the clouds, the PCs will need adequate **means of transportation** or know someone willing to help them with such a feat. Being so far away from all they know will also prove quite deadly...



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

If the campaign is nearing its end, the characters may have sought Seraphim to obtain a great power, crucial to defeating one or more **major Villains**. If there are still **rivals** in play, they might be seeking the same power, which means the heroes will need to fend them off while also dealing with the dangers posed by the realm – perhaps settling the matter once and for all.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Seraphim into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

BABILIS ACROPOLIS

Shrouded in mist, the highest part of Seraphim is an imposing series of square buildings featuring silent, lofty spires.

- ◆ **Breathless.** The Mist is thicker here. Anyone without a mask loses a variable number of Mind Points, depending on how much Mist they inhale.
- ◆ **Master craft.** Though reserved, the locals enjoy trade and produce extremely precious **accessories**, besides the unique Mist masks.
- ◆ **Marble palace.** Queen **Apate** (see below) lives in the highest building of the acropolis. A nearby tower hides the complex device known as the **Mist engine**... which is also what keeps Seraphim afloat! Can the characters eliminate the Mist without destroying the realm? What rare material does the machine contain?

THE TRUE QUEEN

The Masked Queen is feared and revered by all of Seraphim. For centuries, she has held the city in her sway, hiding her schemes behind fake smiles and elegant words.

- ◆ **Tyrant! Apate** is a despot who disrespects everyone and everything – so why has nobody found the courage to resist her power? If confronted, she remains unfazed and counters with teasing words drenched in lies. Apate can **fly** and appears **ethereal**: she almost resembles the **goddess Aletheia** (see below), though her face is hidden by an elaborate mask, different from those of other inhabitants.
- ◆ **To arms!** In combat, the queen (a **major Villain**) wields a special two-handed **ferula** (**Core Rulebook**, page 270) dealing **[HR + 6]** damage. If she removes her mask, she can emit a **Magic Breath** which drains HP and inflicts the **shaken** status effect. She also casts spells that deal air damage and inflict **poisoned**. Apate Resists **air** and **ice** damage but is Vulnerable to **bolt**. When she reaches **Crisis**, Apate hides behind an ethereal shell that gives her Resistance to **physical** damage. Once protected, she uses the **Mist** to steal the PCs' Mind Points each round.

“If you seek truth in Seraphim, do not look behind the masks of its people: nothing but silence lies there.”

- ◆ **An end to lies.** If the characters have the **Mirror of Truth** (see below), they can use it while confronting the queen to start an **eight-section** Clock. Once complete, the mirror shatters, Apaté's mask turns to dust, and the queen returns to **Aletheia's** proper form. Even without the mirror, the PCs may use a **Ritual or Fabula Point** to make such an approach possible.
- ◆ **Truth or lie?** If **freed**, Aletheia tells the group her story. Why did she become Apaté? Why was she forced to remove Seraphim from the world? What role did the mask play in all this? Once she has regained her powers – some of which Apaté could perhaps not access – Aletheia could ask the group's opinion on **Seraphim's fate**: is it time to return to earth, ending the long isolation? If Aletheia **remains Apaté** and the PCs defeat her, they can take the **Oxis** mask, an **artifact** that makes its wearer **invisible**. Careful, though, it doesn't work against those who are used to deception – like **Villains!**



THE PRINCESS AND THE MIRROR

Princess Amber – recently arrived from a far-off realm with her retinue – desperately needs the PCs' help to find a precious artifact.

- ◆ **Friends or foes?** The princess asks the characters about the **Mirror of Truth**, an **artifact** believed to unmask all lies. Where is Amber from, and why does she need the mirror? The people of Seraphim are not inclined to help her – and what's that glimmer on their masks? – you can't just trust anyone these days...
- ◆ **The plan.** To locate the position of the mirror you'll need a lot of luck – and perhaps a Fabula Point! Once found, the artifact must also be recovered – how will the characters handle this part?
- ◆ **The guardians.** Any misstep will bring down the wrath of the **White Masks**, merciless spear-fighters who guard the mirror. During conflict, the **Mist** also helps the White Masks, causing **minor** losses of Mind Points to all those who breathe it. Why is this faction so tied to the Mist? Who do they truly serve?
- ◆ **A possible ally.** Amber might want to leave Seraphim on her **airship** once she has the mirror – but not without paying her debt to the group. What will she offer to thank them for the aid? Will she follow the PCs, or does she still need their help to deal with troubles back home?

THE INFERNAL FORTRESS

Concussio Mundi

At the heart of the abyss, where all nations converge, stands a burning fortress, a raging obelisk reaching skyward. In its depths, in the embrace of the shifting volcano, the Great Stone awakens – a dire event, in a deadly place, protected by constant eruptions and magma sprays. In one word: unconquerable. It may be the journey's end or perhaps the start of something new.



CONCUSSIO MUNDI AT A GLANCE

Keywords: beginning, change, choices, end.

Themes: to preserve or change the world, the danger of ultimate power, the task's end.

Terrain: crystal, magma, rock.

Common elements:  

Travel roll: d6, d8.

Rare elements:  

Dangers: a chasm filled with magma and defended by a guardian; suffocating heat; a curse that prevents you from leaving the Fortress.

Discoveries: a door sealed with ancient magic; a magic item belonging to a fallen hero; a Villain's servant seeking repentance.

- ◆ *How did you reach this place without being discovered by your enemies?*
- ◆ *Just before Concussio Mundi's entrance is an unlikely refuge. Who lives there?*
- ◆ *Was the fortress built by the Villain, or did it already exist before they arrived in these lands?*
- ◆ *What type of magical aid must you use to avoid the ever-present elemental dangers?*
- ◆ *Which great hero tried to eradicate evil before you, and what marks did they leave behind?*
- ◆ *A mysterious creature suggests you take a different path. What is it? Will you oblige?*



TYPICAL FEATURES

The typical Infernal Fortress should include at least one of these features:

- ◆ An **old ally**, corrupted by the Villain.
- ◆ A **throne room** or **Crystal room** where the final battle will take place.
- ◆ A court full of loyal **demons** who are masters of the elements.
- ◆ Aspects of the fortress that reflect the Villain's **true nature**.



LOCATION

The Infernal Fortress should be the location of the campaign's crowning event, the **final act**: here, heroes who unearthed every truth and lived and bled together will bolster each other, face their destiny and save the world. Concussio Mundi might be the last place our valiant heroes can see before the campaign's end... or before the world is changed forever!



THE VILLAINS' PLANS

The Infernal Fortress is the pride and joy of the main antagonist (usually a **supreme Villain**) and embodies their corrupted soul. They will stop at nothing to hold on to the results of their struggles, unleashing all their remaining forces against the heroes: in this part of the campaign, Ultima Points will almost never be used to flee.

STORY HOOKS

When bringing Concussio Mundi into play, the GM may use the following points to enrich the story by introducing **artifacts**, **Villains**, **discoveries**, and **rewards**.

THE HALL OF GUARDIANS

You'll find the Hall of Guardians, more arena than hall, at the top of Concussio Mundi, just before the throne room. The antagonist's four most loyal servants, each a master of one of the elements, await the PCs here to stop them once and for all.

- ◆ **Corrupted elements.** All four Guardians participate in the fight. They are **soldier**-rank creatures bound together – in terms of Ultima Points, consider them like a single **major Villain**. Has the group faced them before?
- ◆ **Basilisk.** The Fire Guardian has a gaze that steals Mind Points, and membranes that Absorb **fire** damage but are Vulnerable to **ice**. His presence creates a **four-section** Clock that fills by 1 at the end of each of his turns. Once full, the magical energy explodes, dealing **heavy** damage to his foes.
- ◆ **Calypto.** Quick to rage, the Water Guardian Absorbs **ice** damage but is Vulnerable to **fire**. She casts potent frost spells that inflict the **enraged** status effect, and can call upon the power of water to make all Guardians Resistant to **physical** damage.
- ◆ **Garuda.** The Air Guardian surveys the battlefield from above, casting the **Heal** spell (**Core Rulebook**, page 209) when necessary. At the end of each of Garuda's turns, if she is airborne, fill one section of a **six-section** Clock. Once it is full she uses her **Cyclone Strike**, which inflicts **heavy** damage. Garuda Absorbs **air** damage and is Vulnerable to **earth**.
- ◆ **Nosferat.** The deathly Earth Guardian inflicts the **slow** status effect with his **Death Roots** and knows spells like **Acceleration**, **Dispel**, **Drain Vigor**, and **Terra** (**Core Rulebook**, pages 189 and 192). He Absorbs **earth** damage and is Vulnerable to **air**.
- ◆ **Bonds.** When a Guardian falls, the others lose 10 Hit Points and 10 Mind Points each. Why? What tales and past memories bind them together?
- ◆ **Elemental might.** For each of the Guardians who falls, the PCs feel the might of the associated element coursing through their veins. What powers do they obtain? What must they sacrifice to use the new abilities in the final battle?

*“We gave it many names, trying to soothe our fear.
Even so, it remains unchanged: Concussio Mundi, the apocalypse.”*

THE CRYSTAL HALL

The fortress has a side wing guarded by creatures of darkness. One of the PCs feels a strange call that draws them down these halls.

- ◆ **Old blood.** That Player Character is a descendant of one of the heroes who gave their lives at Concussio Mundi centuries ago, and whose spiritual energy has left lasting traces. Did they already know, or did they only find this out now?
- ◆ **To Best oneself.** Fearing their undying power, the Villain has sealed the spiritual energy of past heroes within **crystal sarcophagi**, protected by dark magic: there is one sarcophagus per Player Character. One by one, each PC must reveal their worst nightmares and explain how their **Bonds** allow them to confront and defeat them.
- ◆ **Strength and memories.** By defeating their fears, the heroes obtain their **ultimate weapons**, each bearing the name of its former wielder. They are **indestructible weapons valued at over 2000 zenit**, which the group should create together. How does each weapon reflect the heroes' nature and personal growth during the campaign?

IMPRISONED POWER

As they explore Concussio Mundi, a voice guides the heroes deeper into the fortress. Here, within a room with glass and obsidian walls covered in runes, lies imprisoned Eza, a Jinn with great magical power.

- ◆ **Sabotage.** The Villain is draining the Jinn's magic, and soon, nothing will remain. If they destroy the seals that bind him, the characters can free Eza and severely reduce the Villain's abilities during the final battle.
- ◆ **Warning.** Eza magically compelled to serve the Villain against his own will – he longs for freedom but warns the characters that he will attack should they try and break the seals. He knows **light** and **dark** spells and changes his Absorption and Vulnerability based on the last spell he cast.
- ◆ **Precious gifts.** If the group promises Eza freedom, he will reveal one of the Villain's **Traits** or **Vulnerabilities**. If they free him, Eza might **join** the final battle or teach the PCs a **powerful spell** or **Ritual**.

CONFLICTS

The next pages provide suggestions to help you build high fantasy **conflicts**. They explore these situations from a rules perspective – which the **Core Rulebook** also discusses at length from page **58** – but, more importantly, they focus on the narrative tensions at play during clashes between individuals or factions.

A CLASH OF IDEALS

When building high fantasy conflicts, always try to understand what grand ideals are at odds: the high fantasy genre is often defined by the tragic conflict between opposite worldviews and tragically incompatible perspectives which upset and disrupt the lives of people.

Pay special attention to these elements:

- ◆ **PC Identities and Themes.** Conflict should always focus on the core elements of one or more Player Characters. Though the conflict might not affect the PCs directly, it can center on a concept or ideal they hold close, in order to test the heroes' convictions. If a situation doesn't touch upon the **Identity** or **Themes** of any of the PCs, you may wish to rethink it a bit to make it more relevant.
- ◆ **The Villain's plan.** All conflicts should be part of one or more **Villains' plans** – at least, the situation should allow an antagonist to pursue their goals, whether known or secret.
- ◆ **High stakes.** High fantasy is an over-the-top genre, so its conflicts should have dramatic effects that echo through the whole setting. The antagonist doesn't just want to conquer the city, but wishes to destroy a magic temple in order to release the demons trapped beneath its premises; the prototype airship isn't just a veritable vessel, but a flying fortress; the grand dragon of the north isn't merely a formidable foe, but the bringer of a new ice age; and so on.
- ◆ **Unexpected twists.** As they play out, conflicts reveal new information about characters, historical events, and the world's secrets. This concept can help you deal with **defeat**: for instance, you could use an Ultima Point as an antagonist flees the scene to have them let slip some critical bit of information – this can lessen the frustration caused by their **escape** – or a PC that has just **surrendered** might be saved by someone who can also provide valuable answers.

“Regardless of your choice, you will never be able to foresee all the consequences of your actions. Nevertheless, hesitating will surely not aid those you love.”



WAR AND BATTLES

While combat is surely the most common type of conflict in high fantasy, it is crucial to consider the following points:

- ♦ **Battle is a failure.** Though **Fabula Ultima**'s rules make for some awesome combat scenes, you should think of battle and the use of violence as the final, desperate play when all else fails – perhaps even a choice made to avoid something worse.
There's nothing wrong with playing a character hellbent on vengeance and war – that's what the **Anger** and **Vengeance Themes** are for! – but both their Player and the rest of the group are responsible for making sure the character evolves over time.
- ♦ **Allies are crucial.** If the characters find allies who will fight by their side, or if they're unable to, this must have some impact on the game. These NPCs might join scenes and provide their help directly, or eliminate troublesome enemies before the engagement even begins. Conversely, a party of heroes lacking support should find ways to infiltrate enemy lines with a stealthier approach, avoiding open conflict during the first part of their mission.



BATTLES WITH MANY FOES

During high fantasy campaigns, especially near the end, protagonists will often take part in scenes involving large numbers of foes.

Some classic examples include a battle between armies, a desperate stand against oncoming hordes of soldiers, infiltrating a palace crawling with guards, or a fight against dozens of awakened golems.

You can't run scenes like these by treating each enemy as an individual creature: the game's balance would suffer, and things would get very clunky. Instead, **focus on the crucial elements**, and treat the rest **abstractly**.

For example, you could:

- ◆ **Zoom in on the action.** Try focusing on a single, mighty foe, using the rest of the scene as a backdrop. After all, in these stories, the enemy army often routs once their general falls.
- ◆ **Use environmental effects.** You can simplify some elements of battle and turn them into features of the environment. For example, have the enemy catapults deal **minor** damage to a random PC at the end of each round – or at least until they disable the threat with a **Clock** or **opportunity**.
- ◆ **Creature swarms.** You can use the rules for **swarms** (**Core Rulebook**, page 297): an **archer** becomes a **unit of archers**, a **magitech soldier** becomes a **magitech battalion**, and so on. This allows you to have genuinely epic scenes where a PC can sunder the armor of an entire unit using **Breach** (**Core Rulebook**, page 219) or lay waste to whole enemy lines by striking not three individuals but **three different units** with their **Ignis** spell (**Core Rulebook**, page 189). Nothing changes rule-wise, but the effects can become explosive in terms of the storytelling.
- ◆ **Use tons of enemies.** Round after round, **waves** of enemies (**Core Rulebook**, page 298) might keep appearing to aid the main antagonist.

The basic rule remains unchanged: **don't overcomplicate things**. Plausibility and “realism” are secondary in JRPGs, when they're not irrelevant and unhelpful – especially in high fantasy contexts.



EXTRAORDINARY AND COLOSSAL BEINGS

Breathtaking battles against massive magical creatures with strange powers are a staple of the high fantasy genre.

- ◆ **No limits.** Your heroes in **Fabula Ultima** can face down colossal foes, from elder dragons to golems as tall as buildings.
- ◆ **Incarnations.** This concept recurs in many JRPGs and resonates with the idea that conflicts should be primarily between ideals, which may even take physical form and fight (see **Gods and Demons**, page 71).
- ◆ **Unique abilities.** These adversaries should have special and memorable strengths and weaknesses; you can take inspiration from myths and legends of the real world – that’s also a great place to find epic names.



AERIAL BATTLES

Dragons, angels, winged mounts, airships, and even flying characters (see page 118) are a relatively common sight in high fantasy worlds – sooner or later, you will find yourself engaged in an aerial battle.

- ◆ **Nothing new.** In some senses, “if we all fly, no one flies” is true: combatants should be able to reach each other without issues, as usual.
- ◆ **Falling.** Letting a defeated PC plummet from the sky might be tempting, but they should have some way to save themselves, unless they’re making a **Sacrifice**. Perhaps a well-placed flying creature or sky-pirate ship?
- ◆ **Unsaddled.** Any rider on a winged mount can be knocked from the saddle using a Clock. If you need to distinguish between rider and mount, treating the two as separate creatures in the battle, it might be helpful for the mount to have a Skill which allows it to extend its flying ability to the rider.
- ◆ **Aircraft.** Usually, an aircraft will function as a stage for your battles and will need no statistics – though you can make the scene memorable by describing the sails torn by magic, the smoking motors, and the bridge ripped apart by the claws of a mighty beast. When the situation focuses on aircraft, you can rely on opposed Clocks without necessarily starting a conflict scene – otherwise, you might consider the enemy vessels as **constructs**, in typical JRPG fashion.

RULERS, HIERARCHIES, AND AUDIENCES

Kingdoms and empires appear frequently in high fantasy settings, usually ruled by a sole sovereign or a council of some kind. The importance of these rulers varies from one world to another, but the following advice is helpful in multiple settings:

- ◆ **Details as needed.** You don't need to name every single council member, aristocrat, or lordling. As usual, you can assume that the story will focus on the handful of figures who are able to aid or hinder the protagonists.
- ◆ **Emerging importance.** If a Player spends a Fabula Point to introduce a political or social situation or a character who provides aid, including finding an **Unexpected Ally** (**Core Rulebook**, page 201), that character immediately becomes relevant to the story, sometimes to their own detriment.
- ◆ **An eye for decorum.** Navigating local customs can be challenging, especially in places that value noble blood, formalities, and respect for authority – you might end up in conflict before you even know it! In these cases, the rank and origin of the Player Characters can greatly aid or hinder the situation – the GM should **always** provide transparent information about these possibilities.
- ◆ **Backup plan.** Remember that **Fabula Ultima** is a heroic and optimistic game, so if the characters fail to achieve their goals during an audience with an influential figure, they should have ample chance to recover from the blunder. That might mean violating decorum or breaking laws, but that's a necessary price when trying to make the world a better place.

Last but not least: the dynamics of scenes focusing on intrigue, social pressure, and the weight of tradition and social norms are naturally closer to our everyday life than **Fabula Ultima's** typical over-the-top situations. Sometimes, bringing these elements into play might worsen your experience, especially for those seeking a bit of relaxed and heroic escapism.

In other words, many Players would rather fight the incarnation of an oppressive legal system, rather than play out a long debate about its faults.

Tackling this question is a good thing to do at the start of your campaign as it may very well influence world and character creation – the **Orator** Class, for example, excels in these contexts.

SOMETHING MEMORABLE

Spectacular events are crucial in all high fantasy scenes where there are tensions or conflicts. They might come from a specific rule, an emotional connection, or mere aesthetic – what matters is making the scene memorable.

Here are some examples:

A desperate attempt to stop a lumbering machine from destroying a sacred shrine. You must divide your actions between reducing the machine's Clock and disabling it – the Clock automatically fills by **1 section** at the end of each round.

A duel against a witch's stern and loyal bodyguard, who is ready to travel into the past to remedy the mistakes that made them both **Villains** – little do they know that this action will bear dire consequences or fail miserably.

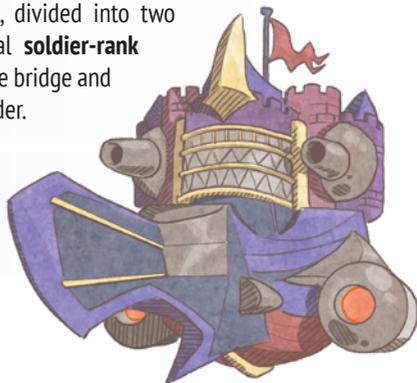
The fight against an ancient **demon** that wields weapons inspired by the cardinal sins – or cardinal virtues for beings tied to light and order.

A dancing and/or singing competition against a socialite who uses their charisma to ensnare the capital's public opinion – the background music is not optional!

A tense face-to-face with someone you once trusted, but was later revealed to be a **Villain** with elaborate schemes. Once again, they try to sway you to their side.

The assault on an ironclad flying ship, divided into two phases: you must first take out several **soldier-rank turrets**, then use the breaches to reach the bridge and face the **champion-rank** enemy commander.

A battle at the edge of reality itself, fought across the body of a slowly reforming chaos god.



MAGIC AND RITUALS

In all its many facets, magic is a core element of high fantasy worlds. At the end of a campaign, you will often notice that all the main events had a profoundly supernatural dimension. From the skeleton army to the great dragon that accompanied you in the final stretch of the adventure, magic was always a part of your story, often intertwined with **technology** (see page 74) and religious practices.

These pages provide tips and advice for managing magic and Rituals in your high fantasy campaigns – you can think of them as **adding** to the information found in the **Core Rulebook**.

ARCANA AND SUMMONS

Summoning spectacular ancestral beings is a staple of high fantasy and in **Fabula Ultima**, this trope is represented by the Arcana, who will often play a crucial role in your campaigns.

- ◆ **Living among you.** In high fantasy worlds, the Arcana are within reach and you can usually communicate with them, often in particular locations or through Rituals. These beings either play an active and intentional role in world events or have personal reasons not to partake in them.

An Arcanum in its “complete and true” form is essentially a **demon** (see **Gods and Demons**, page 71). Demons are “born” from worship of a mythological entity, highly-celebrated heroes of the past, or the physical manifestation of an ideal or universal emotion.

- ◆ **Borrowed power.** Regardless of how you obtain an Arcanum, what you hold is but a fraction of the power derived from a concept or ancient being. This power might be lent willingly, or can be obtained by anyone who performs the appropriate rites. It may entail a test of bravery or some bizarre requirement connected to the Arcanum’s **domains**. In the latter case, if you can draw on the Arcanum’s power even without its consent – assuming it’s self-aware – you shouldn’t be surprised to discover the **Villains** wielding it as well.
- ◆ **Imitations.** Summoning an Arcanum means shaping your soul into the form of a powerful and ancient being. Nevertheless, even when using the Heroic Skill **Grand Summoning** (see page 156), the result will be a pale imitation of the original being, influenced by the **Arcanist’s** unique perception and understanding of that specific concept or entity.

“The Five Sovereigns keep Creation in balance: frost, wind, earth, bolt, and flame. But legend tells of a Sixth Sovereign, exiled centuries ago...”



THEMED GROUPS

High fantasy stories often reference **groups**: the **Seven Heavenly Blades**, the **Five Elemental Crystals**, and so on. This concept works well when applied to Arcana – for example, the game world might be protected by the **Six Ancient Pillars** or influenced by the **Twelve Arcana of the Zodiac**.

There is often also a “final, hidden Arcanum”, which might act as a fulcrum to one of the campaign’s **mysteries** or be discovered anew using the **Revelation** Heroic Skill (**Core Rulebook**, page 240).

MORE THAN ONE ARCANIST

If Arcana are common or crucial for the campaign, your group may want to include more than one **Arcanist**. If so, consider this:

- ◆ **Do you really need it?** You might not need multiple characters with Classes focused on summoning. The **Zero Powers** (see page 124) might do the trick if all you need to do is granting everyone an awesome power they can call upon in times of need.
- ◆ **Arcana subgroups.** Some characters might bond with all types of Arcana, while others may be limited to specific subgroups. The second option has great flair, but it might require **new Arcana**. If you use the first option, all of your **group** might participate in the **bonding** process – instead of each Arcanist doing so alone – and an Arcanum might have **visual variations** (see next page) depending on who summons it.



VISUAL VARIATIONS

The form of each Arcanum may vary depending on the game world or on who summons it, without modifying any of its mechanical effects. For example, a swordswoman might summon Arcana in the shape of legendary swords that whirl about her, while a priest might give them the shape of ethereal apparitions tied to his traditions.



NEW ARCANA

The **Core Rulebook** mentions the creation of custom Arcana on page **178**. Custom Arcana are a great addition to high fantasy campaigns, especially if the world's Arcana are inspired by specific mythologies or have a unique and crucial role in the story.

There are no strict rules for making new Arcana, but the process must involve the collaboration of **all people** at the table.

That being said, here are a few essential tips:

- ◆ **Simplicity.** If an existing Arcanum or a combination of existing ones can do the job, you can simply modify some of the minor details – name, domains, damage type, Resistances granted, etc. However, try to consider how these changes influence the power level of your Arcanum: combining the **merge** effect of the **Sword** with the **dismiss** effect of the **Forge** may well be too powerful!
- ◆ **Moderation.** No Arcanum should be able to do “a little bit of everything” or be “a strictly better version of another Arcanum”. The Game Master’s job in **Fabula Ultima** is to make the protagonists shine, so there is truly no need to chase ever greater power at all costs.
- ◆ **Sensible and useful domains.** When choosing **domains**, try to ensure that they channel the Arcanum’s personality and themes and are helpful for **Arcanism** Rituals. Avoid redundant domains – if some come up, take a step back and revise the base idea for your Arcanum.

Lastly, when you create Arcana based on mythological figures from the real world, it can be a good idea to research them and educate yourselves on the role they played in society and culture – you might even stumble upon exciting details that can contribute to the creative process.

EXAMPLE: ARCANUM OF TAURUS

You've created a world in which the Arcana are based on the **twelve signs of the zodiac**: their **merge** and **dismiss** effects all connect to the qualities traditionally associated with each sign. Here, we are discussing **Taurus**, the bull, which might derive from the **Mesopotamian zodiac** and especially the figure of Gugalanna, the legendary heavenly bull whose "steps shook the earth".

Taurus is tied to the **earth** and represents **patience, tenacity**, and reflection before action. These elements are ideal for defensive effects, but we can avoid making an overly one-dimensional Arcanum by including at least one active effect – the **dismiss** power is perfect.

We can envision a merge effect granting immunity to the **weak** and **enraged** status effects – representing the bull's strength of body and mind – plus a dismiss effect like many other Arcana described in the **Core Rulebook** from page 179 on, but dealing **earth** damage.

The result isn't bad, if perhaps a bit underpowered compared to other Arcana. The closest parallel is with the Arcanum of the Frost, which provides Resistance, and also allows its **ice** damage to ignore Resistances. Truth be told, **ice** damage is a bit more efficient than **earth**, so we add a small bonus tied to Mind Point recovery, which aligns nicely with Taurus' ability to stubbornly endure.

**ARCANUM OF TAURUS**

Domains: patience, tenacity, earth.

MERGE

You are immune to the **weak** and **enraged** statuses.
When you recover Mind Points, you recover 5 extra Mind Points.

DISMISS

Quake. Choose any number of creatures you can see: each of them suffers 30 **earth** damage. This damage ignores Resistances.



BOUDICCA, REBEL LANCE

Kanna, the group's **Knight Errant**, has mastered the **Arcanist** Class and obtained the **Revelation** Heroic Skill (**Core Rulebook**, page 240). The newfound Arcanum should play a crucial role in the story, tying in to the fact that Kanna and the group have just decided to return to his homeland to help the local resistance.

During the campaign, another Player introduced a legendary heroine within the story, who she called **Boudicca** in homage to the historical figure. Kanna's Player would like to make Boudicca an Arcanum of **battle**, **independence**, and **rebellion**, especially as it was the decision to aid the resistance that triggered her emergence.

Since this Arcanum was obtained with **Revelation**, we can agree that it could be a bit stronger than average. Our starting model is the **Arcanum of the Sword** (**Core Rulebook**, page 181), but with its damage type changed to **light**. However, this variant of the Sword's benefit **can now target a Vulnerability** – no small thing! To balance things out, the Game Master suggests that the **merge** effect should make it impossible to modify the damage type.

Finally, the **dismiss** effect should channel the Arcanum's tenacious and rebellious nature: an obvious choice could be an effect that removes physical and psychological status effects, like that of the **Arcanum of the Oak** (**Core Rulebook**, page 180). It's usually not ideal to create Arcana with powerful offensive **and** defensive powers, but we had already decided that Boudicca would be more potent than usual. However, we limit the **dismiss** effect to when Kanna is in **Crisis**. That's not a vast restriction since being in **Crisis** is when this effect is most beneficial – but it must be triggered promptly!



BOUDICCA, REBEL LANCE

Domains: battle, independence, rebellion.

MERGE

Your attacks deal 5 extra damage.

All damage you deal becomes **light** damage and its type cannot change.

DISMISS

Second Chance. Choose any number of creatures you can see: each of them recovers from all status effects and also recovers 30 Hit Points. This amount increases to 40 Hit Points if you are level **20 or higher**, or to 50 Hit Points if you are level **40 or higher**.

This **dismiss** effect can only be used while you are in **Crisis**.

*“Such hatred, such resentment... they cannot be set aside.
And they cannot be erased: I shall exist until the end of humanity!”*

GODS AND DEMONS

Ancestral beings with godlike powers play a pivotal role in the vast majority of high fantasy stories, and at the end of the campaign the heroes will often clash with the gods themselves.

- ◆ **Final battle.** High fantasy **supreme Villains** are usually very ancient, powerful beings, worshiped by some and feared by many. The whole plot might center on conflicting worldviews, ideals, and desires, only to culminate in a head-on confrontation with the incarnation of the **concept** the heroes have been fighting against since the very start of the campaign.
- ◆ **Gods as demons.** The **Core Rulebook** (page 304) mentions that creatures of the **demon** species are the embodiment of legends and beliefs. Thus, in the worlds of **Fabula Ultima**, faith, religion, tradition, and even propaganda can cause the stream of souls to generate demons with astonishing powers. In these cases, the term “demon” may not have a negative connotation, but is closer to the Greek concept of a *daimōn*, meaning “divine being” or “between human and divine”.

In other words, human thought can generate gods, who can then use their position to strengthen the faith of those who believe in them, thus increasing their power, for good or ill.

- ◆ **Becoming a demon.** People with incredible willpower, and individuals who are widely feared or revered, may draw upon great power and even become demons themselves – this could be what happens during an **escalation** (**Core Rulebook**, page 102). A Villain could hasten their ascension by terrorizing an entire nation, manipulating public opinion, or attracting the devotion of preexisting religious cults.
- ◆ **Immortal (almost).** Demons are a mass of energy held together by willpower – the demon’s own, or that of the believers in the principles embodied. You can’t truly kill a demon until the emotions that created it disappear, so your heroes’ role as mediators between cultures is crucial when facing these beings. The nature of demons also explains why they always create cults and spread rumors about themselves. This gives you a great opportunity for a “sequel campaign”, in which a new embodiment of the same concepts returns to threaten the world.

However, a forgotten or egotistical entity – one held together only by its own conviction – might dissolve for good once defeated. These features can strongly characterize your demons.

THE STREAM OF SOULS

The atoms of **Fabula Ultima**'s worlds are formed by spiritual energy: when life forms, it originates from the stream of souls; when life ends, it returns to the stream. The characters' superhuman abilities also derive from the stream of souls, which should be **at least partially visible** in high fantasy campaigns.

Example: creatures disappear in a burst of blue particles when they die and magical objects emit luminous auras – visible to the naked eye – that change color depending on their function or dominant element.



SOULS AS TIME AND MEMORY

The stream of souls contains fragments of the memories of those who have returned to it. High fantasy Arcana could originate from this gradual accumulation of memories, and some characters might even tap into these ancient echoes when they use their Skills.

Taking things even further, if you think of time and space as created by perceptions and memories, tampering with the stream of souls might even **change** the fabric of **reality** – a great way to introduce space-time anomalies!



A CENTRAL ROLE

In high fantasy worlds, changes to the stream of souls should be **connected tightly** to your group's objectives, or the **Villains'** schemes:

- ◆ A witch plans to seal herself into an **ancient machine** and **rewind time** by reversing the flow of the stream of souls.
- ◆ An empire tries to **destroy the sacred oaks** of the people they've waged war against because the trees them to **connect with the memories of their precursors**, giving them precious council and, on rare occasions, the ability to summon Arcana.
- ◆ A nihilist tyrant uses **lies and oppressive politics** to cause conflicts among his people, which makes the stream of souls unstable and irregular. His endgame is to bring about the spontaneous birth of a **God of Chaos**.
- ◆ The heroes must return the **elemental gems** to their temples, thus **stabilizing** the stream of souls and avoiding a looming environmental disaster.

“COMMON” AND “SPECIAL” RITUALS

Since magic plays a crucial role in high fantasy, the characters will often want to use magic Rituals to further the story.

These Rituals will usually play one of two roles within the narrative:

- ◆ **Common Rituals.** The less imposing and grand forms of magic are a common sight for most people – it may take the form of crystal torches at the sides of the roads, elemental cores found within airship engines, or giant golems used for city maintenance.
- ◆ **Special Rituals.** These events are rare and tied to the main junctures of your story, like awakening an ancient curse, trapping a dragon, or calling forth a mighty avalanche to bury an entire village.

Both Ritual types follow the same rules – the difference lies in the role played by special Rituals, which should leave lasting marks on the game world and how people perceive magic.

LIFE BEYOND DEATH

Usually, in **Fabula Ultima**'s worlds, creatures return to the stream of souls when they die, and blocking or twisting this process creates an **undead**. Some individuals may even reincarnate as **demons** thanks to their great willpower or the devotion of many followers (page 71).

However, the high fantasy setting allows for a few exceptions:

- ◆ **Special methods.** An object, place, or magic formula may bring back the dead without corrupting them. If you include something of the sort in your setting, always consider the **terrible price** of using it, and also the **Villains' plans** – they'll stop at nothing to get their hands on it!
- ◆ **Resurrected characters.** Characters with the **Revenant Quirk** (see page 120) come back to life with full awareness. Their Player must contribute to defining what the afterlife is like in the setting.

Lastly, remember that there should be no coming back from death by **Sacrifice** (**Core Rulebook**, page 88) – at most, the fallen hero's spirit could appear as an NPC for a scene to give aid or advice to their old comrades.

TECHNOLOGY

Though usually less central than magic, technology is still widespread in high fantasy settings. Sometimes, it may merely provide aesthetic or stylistic flair, but its presence or absence usually has a definite symbolic or narrative role.

INFLUENCES ON THE GAME

Depending on the technology available in different areas of the world, certain aspects of play may be absent or, conversely, strengthened.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

- ◆ **Travel and mobility.** Easily accessible transport, especially if open to all people, makes your game world interconnected and can significantly accelerate the pacing of the campaign. Notably, having access to air transportation (**Core Rulebook**, page **125**) **triples** your travel speed and lets you ignore a majority of environmental obstacles.
- ◆ **Projects.** The joy of any **Tinkerer** is being in a place with abundant raw materials and mechanical components, but at the same time, widespread industrialization may make most inventions boilerplate.
- ◆ **New Inventory items.** **Fabula Ultima's group sheet** contains empty spaces that can be used to add new items available through Inventory Points in your setting. You aren't limited in what you can create but do consider the possible implications for the play experience. For example, an item that revives a character who already **surrendered** might make combat drag on longer than appropriate.

Try talking these things over during your **session zero** (**Core Rulebook**, pages **145** and **245**), but don't worry if you need to change or adjust your ideas during play.



AESTHETICS AND MEANING

The technology of high fantasy worlds is not usually tied to a specific historical or industrial period. On the contrary, it tends to take on hybrid forms deriving more from aesthetic taste than practical implications.

- ♦ **Spectacle and coherence.** Your high fantasy technology should include one or more imposing or extraordinary elements, but try to be coherent when you describe the buildings, equipment, and means of transportation used in an area, or by a culture – colors, materials, and the type of fuel used are good starting places.
- ♦ **Symbolic meaning.** The technology used by a particular people can often take on ethical meaning: widespread use of steel and fossil fuels combined with heavy industrialization point to the society's distance from nature and lack of emotional warmth. Conversely, a society coexisting with the natural world and whose tech is based on marble, bronze, wood, and colorful materials takes on a dreamlike air of wonder.

In contrast to **techno fantasy**, technology is not usually a core theme in high fantasy, but instead has aesthetic and symbolic roles.

THE PLACE OF MAGITECH SCIENCE

The union of magic and technology – or **magitech** science – is common in high fantasy settings. Consider exploring the role of this science during your world creation process, paying particular attention to how your heroes use it and possible differences of opinion within your group.

- ♦ **Tools with implications.** Though you may consider magic and technology as mere tools, neither good nor evil, using either may have a strong environmental, social, or political impact. Take some time to discuss the implications of using (or misusing) these tools within the game world.
- ♦ **Avoid trite tropes.** The classic struggle between “ancient, traditional magic” and “new, invasive technology” is a common trope in fantasy stories and one that allows for impactful scenes, however, it's always best to avoid stereotypes. It is better to highlight the pros and cons of both of these elements and create **Villains** who embody their most extreme and toxic aspects in the hopes that your heroes will forge a world where magic and technology coexist in harmony.

RARE ITEMS

Playing **Fabula Ultima** in a high fantasy setting is an excellent opportunity to go wild and create extraordinary weapons, armor, shields, and accessories.

This section contains tips to help you imagine and describe compelling high fantasy equipment, followed by a list of new **rare items** you can include in your campaigns or use as inspiration.

AWESOME AND COLORFUL

Rare items found over the course of a high fantasy campaign should never feel dull, even when characters are low-level.

Here are some examples:

- ◆ **Lavish battle-ready weapons.** These may be decorated with bronze, banners, and precious stones. Some may display elemental auras visible to the naked eye – like a vortex of foaming water – or consist of different sections held together by magic. Powerfully magical weapons might levitate beside their wielder and strike of their own accord. In all cases, these weapons still require the usual item slots.
- ◆ **Splendid and refined armor.** Rare armor could be crafted from extraordinary materials like obsidian, jade, or crystal, or enhanced with exquisite decorations. Forgoing all realism, high fantasy clothes and armor serve chiefly **aesthetic purposes**: they channel the personality and style of their wearer. You might consider associating one or more **iconic colors** with your character, which can guide your description of their attire.
- ◆ **Mighty and varied shield.** Shields come in many shapes and sizes: a gladiator's *lorica manica*, tower shields as tall as the mightiest warrior, or even elegant and enchanted bracers that summon a defensive barrier around their wearer. Though they keep the exact same rules of standard shields, feel free to describe these items differently depending on who is expected to wear them.
- ◆ **Accessories for all tastes.** Flashy and decorative in their own right, their appearance could vary depending on your game world and its customs. Rings, headdresses, and necklaces are classics, but accessories can also include gems embedded into the back of one's hand and regal hair ornaments.

Whatever item you envision, take some time to imagine and describe some details or visual effects that make your rare items unusual and marvelous.

MYTHOLOGICAL REFERENCES

Mythologies worldwide are rife with items with unique properties, from the **swords** of the **Arthurian cycle** to the **astra** of the **Rāmāyana** and **Mahabharata**. These objects are often somewhere between simple equipment and **artifacts** and they work perfectly as a source of inspiration for rare items in JRPGs.

If you choose to be inspired by objects from the legends and myths of the real world, make sure to research their original cultural context and purported magical abilities.

ICONIC EQUIPMENT

The characters in **Fabula Ultima** can equip any item as long as their Classes allow them to do so, however, it is common in JRPGs for each protagonist to be associated with a specific type of gear, like **two-handed swords** for knights and **grimoires** for mages. If you want to include this aesthetic coherence in your adventures using the **Wishlist** (**Core Rulebook**, page 123), you should work together to create a list of “dedicated” rare items for each hero.

Another exciting option – which you will see fleshed out in the following few pages – is creating rare items that **strengthen or add flexibility to Class Skills**, allowing for interactions and synergies that would otherwise be impossible.

THAT’S... A WEAPON?!

Following the best JRPG classics, high fantasy equipment should move beyond the “boring” options provided in the **Core Rulebook** – your heroes might fight using paintbrushes, forks, or musical instruments, or perhaps their **Twin Shields** (**Core Rulebook**, page 197) look like mighty mechanical gauntlets.

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

You don’t usually need to change the rules when you make an item look different. For example, an **arcane** weapon can be described as a flute without modifying the stats of a **staff** or **tome**.

However, if no existing weapon takes your fancy, you can rely on the rules for **Custom Weapons** on page 102.

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY RARE WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	ACCURACY	DAMAGE
	Bringer of Justice	600 z	[DEX + MIG] +1 [HR + 6] physical
	Brawling ♦ One-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When you use the Provoke Skill (Core Rulebook , page 195) against a creature whose current Hit Points are higher than yours, the Skill is automatically successful (no Check required).		
	Chimera Tail ♦	900 z	[DEX + DEX] [HR + 12] physical
	Flail ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Attacks with this weapon deal 1 extra damage for every different creature Species among those you learned your known Chimerist spells from (Core Rulebook , page 182). Spells learned and later forgotten do not count.		
	Major Arcana	900 z	[DEX + INS] [HR + 4] physical
	Thrown ♦ One-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ While you are merged with an Arcanum (Core Rulebook , page 178), your Accuracy Checks with this weapon trigger a critical success if both dice show the same number (and it is not a fumble).		
	Midas	900 z	[DEX + INS] +1 [HR + 4] dark
	Dagger ♦ One-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When you use the Soul Steal Skill (Core Rulebook , page 203) successfully against an elite or champion rank creature, the value of their soul treasure increases by 100 zenit.		
	Achilles ♦	1000 z	[DEX + MIG] [HR + 12] physical
	Spear ♦ One-handed ♦ Melee ♦ As long as your current Hit Points are equal to or greater than your maximum Hit Points, you are immune to all status effects.		
	Bestiarium	1200 z	[INS + INS] [HR + 6] light
	Arcane ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ You gain a +2 bonus to Magic Checks targeting the Magic Defense of creatures of which you know two or more Traits . The bonus also applies to Opposed Check against those creatures.		
	Chiaroscuro ♦	1200 z	[INS + WLP] [HR + 10] physical
	Arcane ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When you apply a symbol (page 148) to one or more creatures, you may choose one: each of those creatures recovers 5 Hit Points, or each of those creatures loses 5 Hit Points.		

It was an odd weapon of unknown origin, which should have worried them, but the thing was their only hope at the time.

WEAPON	COST	ACCURACY	DAMAGE
	Floating Edge ♦ 1200 z	[DEX + INS] +1	[HR + 10] air
	Sword ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Damage dealt by spells you cast with a total MP cost equal to or lower than 20 ignores Immunities and Resistances.		
	Grim Waltz ♦ 1200 z	[DEX + MIG]	[HR + 12] physical
	Spear ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ After you reduce a creature's Hit Points to 0 with this weapon, you may immediately perform a dance with a duration of "Instantaneous" among those you have learned (see page 144); the MP cost of a dance performed this way can never be lower than 10.		
	Heavy Metal ♦ 1200 z	[MIG + MIG]	[HR + 14] bolt
	Heavy ♦ Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When you attack with this weapon using the Vibrato Skill (page 137), all damage dealt by the attack becomes of the same type as the [key type] of the last verse you sang.		
	Tametomo ♦ 1500 z	[DEX + DEX]	[HR + 12] ice
	Bow ♦ Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ Attacks with this weapon deal 5 extra damage against creatures suffering from slow and/or shaken .		
	Immernacht ♦ 1800 z	[DEX + DEX]	[HR + 8] dark
	Bow ♦ Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ When a creature includes you among the targets of an offensive spell (⚡), if you are in Crisis , that creature must spend Hit Points instead of Mind Points to cast the spell.		
	Ultimatum ♦ 1800 z	[DEX + INS] +1	[HR + 12] earth
	Firearm ♦ One-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ When a creature includes you among the targets of an attack or offensive spell (⚡), they must first spend 5 Mind Points. Otherwise, they cannot include you among the targets.		
	Revenger ♦ 2000 z	[MIG + MIG]	[HR + 14] fire
	Heavy ♦ One-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When a creature inflicts a status effect on you, that creature also immediately suffers the same status effect – this doesn't work if you are immune to that status effect, or were already suffering from it.		

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY RARE ARMOR

ARMOR	COST	DEFENSE	MAGIC D.	INITIATIVE
 Dancing Dress	1000 z	DEX die	INS die +2	-1
When you perform a dance (page 144) with a duration of “Until the start of your next turn”, you may heal from one status effect of your choice.				
 Elemental Robe	1800 z	DEX die +1	INS die +2	-2
While you are in Crisis , spells you cast that deal air, fire, bolt, ice, or earth damage deal 5 extra damage.				
 Orichalcum ♦	2500 z	12	INS die	-4
As long as you have this armor equipped, increase your maximum HP by 10. This armor cannot be destroyed.				

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY RARE SHIELDS

SHIELD	COST	DEFENSE	MAGIC D.	INITIATIVE
 Bag Shield	1000 z	+2	-	-
When a Skill lets you recover Inventory Points, you recover 1 additional Inventory Point.				
 Drumshield	1700 z	+2	-	-
If you have the Resonance Skill (page 137), consider your Skill Level in it increased by 2 (up to a maximum of SL 5).				
 Argus ♦	2000 z	+2	+2	-
When you use the King's Castle and Bishop's Edict Skills (page 141), you may exclude one creature you can see from their effects.				
 Shield of Blades ♦	2000 z	+2	+2	-
When you attack with a weapon belonging to the heavy, spear, or sword Category, if the attack has the multi property, that attack deals 5 extra damage.				
 Parry Shield ♦	2500 z	+2	+2	-
If you have the Counterattack Skill (Core Rulebook , page 219), the Skill also triggers when the result of an enemy's Accuracy Check is an odd number.				

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORY	COST
 Ring of Denial	600 z
When you cast the Dispel spell (Core Rulebook , page 192), its MP cost becomes “10 × T” and its target becomes “Up to three creatures”.	
 Ring of the Occultist	600 z
Spells you cast with a target of “Up to three creatures” instead have a target of “Up to four creatures” (you must still spend additional Mind Points for the fourth target).	
 Ivory Ring	700 z
When your Faithful Companion (Core Rulebook , page 217) loses Hit Points, you may choose to lose an equal amount of Hit Points in their stead.	
 Magic Palette	700 z
When you deal damage to a creature bearing one of your symbols (page 148), that damage ignores Resistance.	
 Tactician's Diadem	800 z
When an ally takes their turn immediately after yours in the same round of conflict (such as due to Crushing Chariot , Ouroboros Dance , or Stolen Time), that ally recovers 5 Mind Points at the start of that turn.	
 Alchemist's Bag	1000 z
When you create a potion with the Gadgets (Alchemy) Skill (Core Rulebook , page 212), you may roll an additional d20.	
 Sorcerer's Pendant	1200 z
If you have acquired the Cheap Shot Skill (Core Rulebook , page 203), its extra damage also applies to any offensive spells (⚡) you cast that only target one creature, so long as that creature is suffering from at least one status effect.	
 Dancing Ribbon	2000 z
While equipped with this accessory, your Dexterity die is increased by one die size (up to a maximum of d12).	

ARTIFACTS

High fantasy takes many elements from the **Fabula Ultima Core Rulebook**, including **artifacts**, and pushes them to the next level – whether ancient and mysterious contraptions or legendary amulets whose magic can change the world's fate, there's no limit to their power.

ANCIENT RELICS

Most high fantasy artifacts belong to bygone ages and have been hidden or well-guarded up until the start of the campaign. Often, the theft or disappearance of one such artifact will trigger a crisis that the Player Characters will need to face during the first few sessions.

Recently created artifacts are much rarer – even when they exist, they are generally embellishments or reconstructions of more ancient devices. Regardless, the connection between these artifacts and the past history of your game world should always remain strong.

DANGEROUS OBJECTS

Artifacts in high fantasy campaigns should be capable of unleashing terrible events, whether because of their innate power or the prestige and authority they bestow on those who wield them. Each artifact is an opportunity, but also a terrible temptation for those around it.

TALKING ARTIFACTS

High fantasy artifacts may be so powerful that they develop their own consciousness, interacting with others and becoming de facto Non-Player Characters. Though these entities surely possess rare and ancient knowledge, they may have trouble understanding the current state of society!

Talking artifacts can answer many of the characters' questions, they also run the risk of **monopolizing** the flow of play – best to only introduce them during the later arcs of a campaign.



ARMOR OF SUPREMACY

Fine black armor bearing a gaping dragon's maw.

The dragon head adorning this armor is sentient and speaks in the wearer's mind – if they show enough bravery and ambition. Once this bond is present, the wearer can use an action to inflict **heavy fire** damage (**Core Rulebook**, page **93**) against one target, ignoring Immunities and Resistance. The heat of the dragon's fire is as hot as the lava of the **Black Volcano**, where some believe the armor was forged. Moreover, deep within that secluded volcano lies an ancient fortress, sealed by magic – perhaps the armor's true power is linked to the secrets buried inside...



BEHEMOTH'S HEART

The heart of a mighty dragon, preserved in a glass casket.

Dragons have long been considered a symbol of might and majesty, but none among them was ever as valiant as Behemoth, Lord of Dragons. He sacrificed himself to save his kin during the Celestial War, but his valor was such that a portion of him refused to die: his heart.

Legends say that those who receive the approval of the spirit bound to the Behemoth's Heart will be granted the ability to transform into dragons themselves and will be respected by all of dragonkind.



CHALICE OF YOUTH

A simple metal chalice decorated with an unsettling red gem.

Whoever drinks from this chalice, even if the liquid is just water, is rejuvenated and returns to what they perceive to be their ideal shape. However, the transformation only lasts a few days, and each use slightly changes the drinker's personality: their emotions are twisted and absorbed by the crimson gem adorning the chalice. Only the youngest are immune to the artifact's effects, but those who yearn for the mirage of eternal youth easily fall prey to its allure.



ELEMENTAL STONES

Four colorful stones that can fit in one's hand, and can be combined.

Water, fire, earth, and air: these four stones let their wielder perform **Elementalism** Rituals tied to the corresponding natural element, without spending Mind Points and with no Magic Check required.

Their power is immeasurable: they can light a campfire as easily as unleash the destructive fury of a volcano or tidal wave. However, their true potential is only revealed when they combine – whoever can do so will master the Fifth Element, whose properties are yet undiscovered.



EMARILLION

A book, in mint condition, with parchment pages and a red leather binding.

All events are instantly and expertly transcribed into this elegant tome, regardless of where and when they took place. Thus, those who hold the book have access to the whole universe's history, but the information is so dense that few can tolerate processing more than one or two paragraphs – book appears to choose who is allowed to read it, and can be quite picky about it!

Nevertheless, ancient archivists still deemed it wise to hide the book at the edge of space and time, or so their descendants claim...



EYE OF AWAKENING

An irregular gem, no bigger than a pebble.

This tiny emerald gem can awaken a dormant ability hidden in the memories of its owner. When the artifact is triggered it lodges in the user's forehead, forming the **eye of wisdom** (or **third eye**) and granting access to hidden memories.

Accessing these long-sealed memories is the equivalent of a **Spiritism** Ritual of **extreme** power: the gem's owner gains a **Heroic Skill** among those normally available to one of the Classes they have **mastered**. Some even say that the Eye once belonged to the **Tiara of Control** – nobody knows what kind of power the two artifacts might have if they were combined.



LANTERN OF DISCOVERY

A small glass lantern that holds an undying flame.

Some speak of a small bronze and glass lantern jealously kept within an ancient library, whose name was lost to time. For centuries, the lantern's power has endured, allowing the understanding of any text or glyph bathed in its light: one must only place a hand on it to see a translation appear in the shape of small dancing flames.

Nobody knows what fuel the lantern uses and if it is actually inextinguishable. All that is known for sure is that the magic light has never faltered, always showing the true meaning of any word or symbol it shines upon, revealing truths that have led more than one person to make terrible choices.



MIRROR OF APPEARANCES

A portable gold mirror with an iridescent surface.

The owner of the mirror can freely change their features, becoming identical to another person. It has been used by assassins, courtiers, and power-hungry tyrants, and some believe that this small artifact has caused more wars than entire hordes of fiends and demons.

However, some centuries ago, this artifact vanished from all reports, apart from the claims of some peddlers and antiquarians who swear to have found it – if any of them were right, the world may be yet again on the brink of chaos...



ORICHALCUM CHESS

A richly engraved chess board with 6 orichalcum statuettes.

Well protected by its prestigious ebony case, this heavy chessboard may seem a mere collector's item, only sporting 6 pieces forged from indestructible orichalcum. However, once the owner has tied their essence to the board – using a **Ritualism** Ritual with **individual** area of effect and **extreme** power – they may then set each piece atop the board, which will cause it to grow into a creature ready to serve the artifact's owner.

Legends say that none of this artifact's masters has ever succeeded in summoning more than one piece at a time. Moreover, the only pieces whose properties are known are the **Knight** (a fierce and agile fighter) and the **Queen** (a potent witch).



RED LION KEY

An old, engraved key decorated with a lion's head.

This unique key is forged from fire-red metal and can be used in any lock as a universal master key. A door opened with this powerful artifact will lead to a spacious and majestic hall surrounded by countless doors. The hall is protected by magic and can be used as a safe resting place. While you are there, invisible servants bring delicious food and heal the wounded.

The only way to leave the hall is to open one of the side doors with the key itself. Doing so functions similarly to an **Entropism** Ritual requiring no Mind Points but with a **Difficulty Level** that depends on how hidden or well-known the destination is. Finally, any items left in the hall **will not be found** upon return.



SOULPIERCING SPECTACLES

Very large glasses with wide, round lenses.

The thin, metallic gray lenses in this pair of glasses starkly contrast with the heavy ice-colored frame. The wearer can use a **Skill** action to look at a living creature and learn everything about it: its abilities, history, and objectives – even its darkest and most embarrassing secrets will be revealed in images and words! If the creature has an NPC profile, the Game Master should show it to the PCs in its **entirety**.

However, an alien presence twists and turns within the lenses' reflections. Each use of the spectacles lets the entity extend its thoughts and ambitions into this world, searching hungrily for something – it's unclear what the creature is and what will happen when it reaches its goals.



TIARA OF CONTROL

A tiara of white gold, set with three diamonds that emit multicolored lights.

Stories say that this splendid tiara was forged by an ancient, tyrannical god who came close to stealing free will from all living beings. Time has long forgotten the names of those who prevented this from happening and some even maintain that it was the artifact itself that defied its maker.

Whoever wears this legendary tiara can control the minds of living beings. However, the awful truth is that the ancient deity still dwells within its jewels. After repeated uses, the being can substitute its consciousness for the wearer's, sealing their soul within one of its shining gems.



TIME WAND

A thirty-centimeter metal wand that emits a strange ticking sound...

When you grasp this powerful artifact and point it at an object or living being, you can move the target back and forth through time, without shifting its location. The effect is equal to that of an **Entropic** Ritual of **extreme** power and **large** area of effect, which doesn't require Mind Points – the Magic Check is performed as usual.

If the wand is used on a living being, its effects vanish after about one day. Oddly, the lower part of this artifact seems to have a hook of some sort – could it have been part of a larger machine?



TIMEBREAKER BRACERS

This gold and silver glove channels the power of lightning into tiny sparks.

This finely decorated artifact dates from a forgotten time and is constantly surrounded by an **Entropic** magic aura. Whoever wears it can use an action to create a semi-transparent sphere around which dozens of small bolts rotate counterclockwise. The sphere can surround up to two creatures within short distance of each other, one of which must be the wearer. Time outside the sphere stops for a handful of seconds – long enough to perform a **single Check**, or for each creature inside to perform **one action** during a conflict.

Every activation of this artifact taxes the wearer's energy: **they permanently lose 5 Hit Points and 5 Mind Points**. In addition, the artifact overheats after use and can't be reused until the end of the scene.



WINE OF SORROW

A crystal jar containing a thick, blood-red liquor.

This deadly and delicious liquor shatters and breaks the body and mind of anyone who drinks it, after which they vanish in a puff of purple spiritual energy. It's so potent that it tears the soul away from the eternal flow, dissolving it forever. Though it may seem an ideal assassination tool, the liquid stirs and moves away from any who would not drink it consciously – which would defy the purpose.

Undeterred by the wine's terrible effects, some would do anything for a single drop of it: legends say that if someone lives through the agony of drinking it, they become godlike, immune to pain and unbound by the weight of emotions. But, in 500 years, no one has survived...



PROTAGONISTS

This chapter focuses on the creation and growth of high fantasy Player Characters – you'll need to pair it with the **Press Start** chapter of the **Core Rulebook** (from page **145**). All the options contained here are designed to be compatible with those presented in other **Atlases**. When deciding which additional mechanics to include in your **Fabula Ultima** JRPG campaigns, the whole group should consider what fits the story and the needs of all who participate – take good care of your play experience!

The chapter contains two main sections:

HIGH FANTASY HEROES

Here you will find tips and suggestions for Players who are about to create a character and play in a high fantasy campaign – there are also several examples of PCs that make use of the high fantasy rules and options presented in the following pages.

NEW OPTIONS

Here you will find new mechanics designed for high fantasy PCs but compatible with any **Fabula Ultima** campaign:

- ◆ **Custom weapons.** New rules for making strange and unusual weapons.
- ◆ **High fantasy Quirks.** New high fantasy style mechanics that enrich and give depth to different facets of your characters.
- ◆ **Zero Powers.** A new method to make your characters extremely strong, capable of breezing through most normal challenges.
- ◆ **New Classes.** 4 new Classes to make your characters even more high fantasy: the musical **Chanter**, the synergy-oriented **Commander**, the versatile **Dancer**, and the creative **Symbolist**.
- ◆ **New Heroic Skills.** 24 new Heroic Skills that augment the options of the **Core Rulebook** and provide power-ups and support for the Classes introduced in this **Atlas**.

HIGH FANTASY HEROES

High fantasy heroes can be highly diverse, as are the motivations that spur them to action. However, you should consider some essential premises before playing a group of heroes focused on this genre.

High fantasy is such a broad and widespread concept that most **Fabula Ultima** characters will take up some or all of its features sooner or later. You might end up creating high fantasy characters even when you're not focusing on the themes that define them, thanks to their vast presence in the JRPGs you might reference.

EMBODY AND DEVELOP A THEME

The core of a high fantasy character is the **motif** they embody, represented by the **Theme** written on their sheet and their overall role in the story. Each member of the play group is responsible for highlighting specific plot and setting elements, shifting the spotlight between different features of the world and its inhabitants.

- ◆ **A guiding light.** Your high fantasy character's actions, thoughts, and words are intensely imbued with their **Themes**. That doesn't mean they must be overly theatrical or affected, just full of meaning.
- ◆ **Looks.** The looks of high fantasy characters often make them **easy to read**: a dark knight clad in black armor, a brave warrior wielding her giant sword, a priest with pristine robes, and so on. However, it can be interesting to create **tension and contrast** between a character's looks and their demeanor or motivations – this adds depth, which is always a good thing. Of course, the same goes for the antagonists.
- ◆ **A reflection of the world.** When you choose **Themes** for your characters, these become cornerstones of the game world. The Game Master should connect at least one **Villain** to your Themes, which will help you to explore them through tensions and conflicts during play.
- ◆ **Change.** Though choosing a **Theme** matters, don't be afraid to change it. On the contrary, doing so will be an intense, all-absorbing act of growth for your character, one that you should not ignore. For example, changing your **Theme** after **Surrendering** might indicate a profound loss of faith – which you should properly portray during a scene – while moving from **Guilt** to **Hope** should signal a crucial change in how your character views the world.

BONDS AND FEELINGS

Passions, even if not of the romantic kind, are ever present in high fantasy stories. The protagonists are driven by strong **emotions** towards allies, enemies, places, and factions. Familiar tropes include rivalry that develops into friendship, loss of faith following a mentor's betrayal, and encounters with communities and cultures distant from one's own.

The optional rules for **Starting Bonds** (**Core Rulebook**, page 220) work well in most high fantasy campaigns.

Instead of avoiding intense, complicated, and apparently contradictory feelings, try to **focus on them intentionally**, but always remember the needs and preferences of other group members. The goal, as always, is for everyone to have a better experience with the game.

STYLE AND LOOKS

Whether we consider clothing, weapons, or magical powers, a high fantasy protagonist needs iconic style and looks which make them impossible to miss. This chapter contains several optional rules to give your game a high fantasy tone, which you can adapt to provide the visual effect you are going for.

For example, the **Zero Remedy** power (page 127) could manifest as a host of angels, a great urn pouring healing waters on your allies, or a wave of energy radiating from the hero's heart. Though these descriptions may seem mere decorations, they are what makes each hero unique and unforgettable.

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY CHARACTERS

The following pages provide profiles for ten Player Characters designed for high fantasy contexts. In contrast to the new **Classic Characters** (page 132), these examples focus on **the thematic construction** of the heroes and provide some tips on how to grow these characters and their role in the story.

All characters in the following pages use the optional rules for **Quirks** (page 114) and some have **Custom Weapons** (page 106).

AGNES



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Last Descendant of the Grimoire Guardians

Theme: Duty

Origin: Kingdom of Argus

Quirk: Glorious Destiny (prophecy of the Red Guardian)

Signature weapons: Tomes

AGNES IN DETAIL

- ◆ **Agnes is the last descendant of the Grimoire Guardians**, an ancient family devoted to collecting, cataloguing, and hiding dangerous magical tomes. She is also believed to be the **Red Guardian** – since birth, Agnes's destiny has been to retrieve the **seven fairytale grimoires** and use the legends told within to bind the oblivion drake **Níðhögg** when he inevitably awakens.
- ◆ Agnes's childhood friend **Callen** accompanied her in the search for the first grimoire, but he lost his life in the battle against the monster who guarded it. Driven by fear of failing her **Duty** and her family's expectations, Agnes linked Callen's spirit to her own to save his life: a partially self-serving choice, which she is yet to come to terms with.
- ◆ Agnes is an **Arcanist** and **Elementalist**. The group discussed Arcana in their game, and decided that each new Arcana Agnes binds will take the shape of a grimoire containing appropriate stories.
- ◆ The Game Master should ask Agnes's Player for input whenever the traditions or legends of the Guardians come up in a scene.
- ◆ Agnes's mission will be central to the campaign – perhaps even too much! Her Player should ensure that she doesn't steal the spotlight, and make sure to give other characters time to shine.

CalLEN



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Brave and Optimistic Spirit Guardian

Theme: Ambition

Origin: Kingdom of Argus

Quirk: Souls Entwined

Signature weapons:
Twin Shields

CalLEN IN DETAIL

- ◆ Callen is **Agnes's** childhood friend. He is a resourceful boy, fascinated by magitech science and tales of battle and heroism. He chose to help Agnes find the grimoires but was slain by a terrible foe. Agnes's magic tore him from the jaws of death, and he now exists as a **partially human, partially spectral** entity indivisible from the girl.
- ◆ Instead of being frightened by his new form, Callen is intrigued by it and has kept his **brave** and **optimistic** persona, with the **Ambition** of becoming a pioneer of the magitech arts.
- ◆ Callen's Classes are **Tinkerer**, **Guardian**, and **Weaponmaster**, focusing on the **Dual Shieldbearer** Skill – despite using the standard rules, his shields look like massive gauntlets. He also relies on **Counterattack** and **Infusions** to deal heavy damage.
- ◆ Since Callen and Agnes are both from the **Kingdom of Argus**, their Players will collaborate in fleshing out details about this place during play.
- ◆ The biggest challenge for Callen's Player is to avoid getting stuck in the role of Agnes's protector – the other Players should make sure to interact with him, offering him ample chances for narrative development.

ESTRELLA



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Multiversal Idol
Lost Between Worlds

Theme: Hope

Origin: City of Sigils

Quirk: From a Distant World

Signature weapons:
Orchestral claymore

ESTRELLA IN DETAIL

- ◆ Estrella is a **multiversal idol** lost in this world after she fell through a dimensional portal that appeared in the **City of Sigils**, where she was born and raised. Though she may never return home, Estrella has not lost her heart and has joined a group of heroes with the **Hope** of discovering a new portal. Between adventures, Estrella seeks inspiration for her songs.
- ◆ Estrella's Player chose a signature **custom weapon** called **orchestral claymore**: a **heavy** weapon that grants a bonus to Accuracy Checks and Magic Defense. The blade of this weapon vibrates in sync with Estrella's voice.
- ◆ Estrella is a hothead with no qualms about being direct and outspoken. Her Classes are **Chanter** and **Fury**.
- ◆ Though she may initially appear as a "light-hearted" and over the top character, Estrella is lost in an unknown world where she may be stuck forever: the Game Master should introduce other characters who "have lost their way home", to give Estrella a chance for narrative growth.
- ◆ Creatures much less inclined to kindness than Estrella might also find their way through other portals all around the game world – a worthy **threat** indeed!

GRIMM



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Disciple of the Four Peaks

Theme: Mercy

Origin: Temple of the Four Peaks

Quirk: Flight

Signature weapons: Bows

GRIMM IN DETAIL

- ◆ Grimm is a **Disciple of the Four Peaks**. After years of training, he is now tasked with traveling the world and helping those in need, regardless of who they are and what their past sins might be. Like many inhabitants of the Four Peaks, Grimm is **Aliseid** – a winged human.
- ◆ Grimm's **Mercy** channels his training at the **Temple of the Four Peaks**. Still, his people have a history of bloodshed – confident in their power of **Flight**, the Aliseidian winged forces struck fear in the region for centuries. Fortunately, a pacifist school of thought has taken root during the last few decades, calling for the sharing and preservation of goods as well as knowledge.
- ◆ Grimm is a **Symbolist**, a **Sharpshooter**, and a **Wayfarer**. His skill with the bow lets him apply **symbols** at a distance, though he prefers to use them to protect his allies.
- ◆ The Game Master should involve Grimm's Player when defining plot elements about the traditions of the Four Peaks and the many people connected to the temple.
- ◆ Someone still wishes to bring the Four Peaks back to their warmongering traditions – perhaps Grimm will someday return home to face threats from the past.

KEPLER DRAC



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Exiled Drachenheim Princess

Theme: Vengeance

Origin: Drachenheim

Quirk: Heirloom (wielder of the Second Blade of Drachenheim)

Signature weapons:
Ōdachi

KEPLER IN DETAIL

- ◆ Kepler is the **Exile Princess of Drachenheim**, land of **draconians** amidst the mountains. She left her homeland after a coup by her uncle and younger sister, **Karsten**, towards whom Kepler feels an intense thirst for **Vengeance**.
- ◆ During her flight, Kepler stole the **Second Blade of Drachenheim**, a **transforming custom weapon** which has two forms: “sheathed” (**+2 to both Defenses**) and “unsheathed” (**accurate** and **powerful**). Obtained via the **Heirloom** Quirk, this weapon is **rare**: each form deals 4 extra damage and makes its wielder immune to the **shaken** status effect. Karsten still holds the **First Blade of Drachenheim** – the wielder of both blades would be the legitimate heir to the Dragon Throne.
- ◆ Kepler is a keen strategist and arcane fencer – her Classes are **Commander**, **Elementalist**, and **Weaponmaster**.
- ◆ The Game Master should ask Kepler’s Player to chip in with information about Drachenheim and any legends related to dragons and wyverns.
- ◆ The climax of Kepler’s narrative arc will likely be the clash with her sister, where the hero may yet renounce her desire for vengeance – or make one last sacrifice.

LILIM



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Young Consort of the Demon Queen

Theme: Doubt

Origin: Holy Kingdom of Lathran

Quirk: Fettered Heart

Signature weapons:
Chains and Flails

LILIM IN DETAIL

- ◆ Men and women from the **Sacred Land of Lathran** are often wed to demons, forcing them to appear and obey. When Lilim volunteered for the rite, his bride turned out to be the **Queen of Demons**, Decarabia. Incapable of truly binding her power, the priests tried to banish her by killing Lilim instead, but the demon protected him and then disappeared.
- ◆ Lilim wields the **sacred chains** which bind him to Decarabia, but he rarely takes to the field directly: instead, he relies on **Lævateinn**, a colossal, intelligent fiery sword that follows him around – a gift from the queen before she vanished.
- ◆ Lilim's Classes are **Spiritist** and **Wayfarer**. His sword Lævateinn is an **elemental Faithful Companion** whose fiery humor balances out Lilim's brooding demeanor.
- ◆ Lilim's **Doubt** and his **Fettered Heart** Quirk are tied to his internal struggles: though raised in a society that detests demons, he was betrayed by those he trusted, and defended by the very being he had sworn to fight.
- ◆ The Game Master should focus on creating tensions between humans and demons, building up to the inevitable climax when Lilim and Decarabia find themselves face to face.

MORRIGAN

BASIC INFORMATION

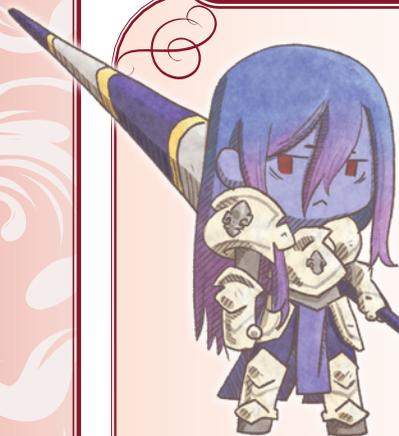
Identity: Revenant Paladin with a Broken Heart

Theme: Anger

Origin: Avalon

Quirk: Revenant

Signature weapons:
Heavy Spears



MORRIGAN IN DETAIL

- ◆ The **revenant paladin** Morrigan returned to life a long time after her demise in a body she did not know, which once belonged to **Roza**, a young woman slain during the latest Federate offensive. Morrigan has no memory of who or what took her from the agonizing limbo in which she dwelled, but the sight of a world still torn by wars so many years after her death fills her with **Anger**.
- ◆ The magical realm of **Avalon** is now a mere legend, but Morrigan still remembers it well. Sadly, she also remembers its tragic downfall and her failure to protect **Prince Cormac**, the man she loved.
- ◆ Morrigan has a split, conflicted nature: her Classes are **Darkblade** and **Spiritist**.
- ◆ Morrigan's Player should be the go-to person for all information relating to Avalon's lore, its culture, and its ancient, powerful magic.
- ◆ Morrigan begins her tale racked with resentment – the group has already agreed on how dark and gruesome her scenes could be. However, Morrigan's Player has explicitly asked the group to help create opportunities for the tormented knight to discover the value of **Mercy**.

PAVEL



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Fugitive Ninja from the Ocean Clans

Theme: Belonging

Origin: The city-state of Venize

Quirk: Elemental Soul

Signature weapons:
Giant Shuriken

PAVEL IN DETAIL

- ◆ Pavel is a **fugitive ninja from the Ocean Clans**. They hail from **Venize**, a seaborn metropolis dominated by mercenary guilds that make pacts with elemental spirits in exchange for special powers. Pavel gained their **Quirk** through this process – it allows them to manipulate **water** and **ice** at the cost of being Vulnerable to **bolt** damage.
- ◆ The **Belonging** Theme channels Pavel's rejection of family and home – where they are seen as a mere tool – and the search for people ready to love and appreciate them for who they are, not just because of their powers.
- ◆ Pavel fights with **giant shuriken**, **custom** two-handed **thrown** weapons that double as shields (**defense boost**, **magic defense boost**, **powerful**). Their Classes are **Sharpshooter** and **Wayfarer**, which offer good flexibility.
- ◆ The Game Master should ask Pavel's Player for details about Venize, the ocean, the mercenary guilds, and the elemental spirits involved in their pacts.
- ◆ It might be interesting to see Pavel face a Villain who feigns kindness and understanding but manipulates and sacrifices people when they cease to be of use.

RAINER VEDDICK



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Self-styled Rogue and Fencer

Theme: Justice

Origin: Marquisate of Yssira

Quirk: Cursed

Signature weapons:
Scimitars and Daggers

RAINER IN DETAIL

- ◆ Rainer is a **charming rogue and skilled fencer**, besides being a gambler, waltz and tango dancer, airship pilot, smuggler, and – of course! – paramour of all *three* young dutchesses **De La Foix**. Rainer Veddick is all this and much more... or so he claims. To the rest of the world, he's just a crook with a two-week life expectancy.
- ◆ Rainer seems **cursed**: things go downhill anytime he opens his mouth, and his presence often puts people on guard. Though his Theme is **Justice**, it's unlikely that his personal view of right and wrong will find much purchase.
- ◆ Rainer is a **Rogue, Dancer**, and **Weaponmaster** – a flexible play style based around dual-wielding weapons to inflict status effects.
- ◆ The Game Master should ask Rainer's Player for information about the criminal underworld and the trade marquisate of **Yssira**, which is rich in perils and opportunities.
- ◆ Rainer might seem like a “simple” antihero character, but this is just the start of his tale. In the future, an unexpected power might awaken within him... or not. Maybe Rainer is just an average guy who needs a chance to prove his heroism.

RAISA KOKAKO



BASIC INFORMATION

Identity: Balance Sorceress

Theme: Understanding
(Player's custom choice)

Origin: Belmonte

Quirk: Ruinbringer

Signature weapons: Staves

RAISA IN DETAIL

- ◆ Raisa is a **balance sorceress** – someone whose spirit sits on the line between positive and negative magic – who, having lost her parents, was raised by her grandfather in a hamlet called **Belmonte**.
- ◆ Raisa is just starting her journey and is sometimes scared of her powers. She yearns to **understand** the nature of her magic as well as that of the **Nine-Tailed Fox**, the mighty witch whose blood flows through young Raisa's veins – thus the **Ruinbringer** Quirk.
- ◆ Raisa is an **Elementalist**, **Entropist**, and **Spiritist**. Her Player has decided to develop the three Classes based on what happens session after session: tragic or harsh events will feed the **Elementalist** and **Entropist**, while hope and kindness will nourish her **Spiritist** side.
- ◆ The Game Master should ask Raisa's Player for details about Belmonte, the ancient magic tradition of balance sorceresses, and the mystery surrounding the Nine-Tailed Fox.
- ◆ Together, the rest of the group should work towards becoming a new family for Raisa, helping her to accept her powers and face the dark entity that might be unleashed should she ever lose control of her magic.

NEW OPTIONS

From here on, the chapter focuses on new options and rules designed to enhance the high fantasy vibes of your **Fabula Ultima** campaign. However, **if the whole group agrees, you can use these options for any campaign.**

These introductory pages provide preliminary information about the various options, in terms of both mechanics and play experience, to help you identify the most interesting ones for your game.

CUSTOM WEAPONS

You can use this rule to make unusual weapons. It's a simple and straightforward option with no profound gameplay implications – you can always leave it open to anyone who is interested.

HIGH FANTASY QUIRKS

This option is more complex and has a significant effect on character creation. If you use it, each Player Character will gain a set of unique mechanics defining their abilities and role in the story.

The effects are powerful, ranging from flying to using Fabula Points for spellcasting.

Use Quirks if you are comfortable setting aside the power balance between characters in favor of strong characterization. This option works best in **tight** and **collaborative** groups and may be too complex if this is your first experience with the game.



ZERO POWERS

This is likely the most “explosive” rule in this book: **Zero Powers** allow each Player Character to unleash incredible effects when they are cornered – far in excess of anything else in the game.

Some of these powers will let you unleash a barrage of attacks, heal all your allies, or cast powerful spells for free.

Using this option, you can rely on your heroes coming out on top in most conflicts – it’s excellent for a superhero-style story or casual play.

NEW CLASSIC CHARACTERS

These sample high fantasy builds expand on those provided in the **Core Rulebook** (page 172), expressing the full potential of this **Atlas**’ new Classes. You will also find two premade Groups to draw inspiration from – one features characters sharing a common Class, the other with greater variety.

NEW CLASSES

This **Atlas** introduces four new Classes for Player Characters. They are designed to interact normally with those found within the **Core Rulebook** and other expansions without needing modifications. The following pages also contain some practical tips for Players and Game Masters about using these new Classes.

NEW HEROIC SKILLS

This last, lengthy section contains twenty-four new Heroic Skills. Some are tied to the new Classes from this **Atlas**, but most add options for those found in the **Core Rulebook**. Notably, these pages present new Heroic Skills tied to each Category of **melee** and **ranged** weapons, which provides more extensive characterization options to **Weaponmasters** and **Sharpshooters**.

*“First of all, decide what you wish to create.
Only then shall you grasp your brushes and paints.”*



CHANTER

- ◆ A Chanter has access to a wide variety of support powers, from Hit Point and Mind Point recovery to changing damage type and even increasing Attributes. For a Game Master, creating an exciting conflict for a Chanter means first taking note of how they can manipulate the scene.
- ◆ The Chanter's abilities are less potent than those of the other Classes, but they have fixed costs and affect all enemies or allies automatically – the more characters that are in play, the more effective the Chanter is.
- ◆ Chanters are often celebrities, or at least well-known figures, which can be both a blessing and a curse. Also, don't forget to have the Chanter explain how show business works in your game world!



COMMANDER

- ◆ This is likely the most challenging Class to play effectively in all of **Fabula Ultima**: like any true leader, the Commander's strength depends on that of their comrades. If a Player chooses this Class for their character, it is crucial for the rest of the group to cooperate in creating characters that synergize well with the Commander's.
- ◆ You can significantly increase the offensive potential of your group by combining the **Queen's Gambit** and **Charging Cavalry** Skills. Charging Cavalry can also be used on NPCs, up to and including a **Faithful Companion (Core Rulebook, page 217)**.
- ◆ **Bishop's Edict** and **King's Castle** affect friends and foes alike. Timing and coordination are vital in using these Skills effectively without paying a steep price, and the Game Master should plan conflicts in which careful use of these powers can shine.
- ◆ Though Commanders can be of many types, they all share the idea of leading allies in battle. Thus, it's extremely important to flesh out the character's past, including their role in the wars and conflicts that shaped the game world up until today.



DANCER

- ◆ The Dancer is a versatile Class that can help you to create fighters and casters with full access to all elemental combinations... at the cost of an ongoing Mind Point expense. The Game Master should always carefully consider each Dancer's specific abilities when designing conflicts.
- ◆ Do not be fooled by the name of this Class: the Dancer's abilities can manifest in a myriad ways, such as acrobatic martial arts, fencing stances, or even performance poses. What truly defines the aesthetics of the character's powers is the combination with their Identity and other Classes!
- ◆ Dancing usually has deep cultural meaning – the Game Master and the Dancer's Player should define what that means in the setting, especially if the character's dances have a sacred or religious meaning.



SYMBOLIST

- ◆ The Symbolist is a Class with many options, though it works best in a supportive role. Notably, it is one of the few Classes whose Skills endure after the scene has ended: **symbols** normally have unlimited life unless removed by their maker or destroyed by a Villain during a **Game Master scene** (see page 148).
- ◆ A Symbolist who selects the **Ritual Seals** Heroic Skill (page 159) gains an unprecedented power: the ability to pre-cast a Ritual and release its effect at a later time. This powerful option will likely inject creativity and lateral thinking into the game. However, remember to perform the Magic Check when the Ritual triggers – it's not a foolproof ability!
- ◆ You can use the Symbolist Class to represent a great variety of character archetypes: painters, sculptors, rune crafters, calligraphers, and more. Whatever the Symbolist's chosen art form, their Player should discuss its role in the world with the Game Master.

CUSTOM WEAPONS

A majority of JRPG protagonists wield unique weapons that reflect their style and are an expression of their personality – from battle umbrellas to gun axes, nothing should be considered too impractical!

The following rules allow you to create a **custom weapon** for your hero during character creation. Later on, the Game Master can create **rare** versions of these weapons as per the normal rules in the **Core Rulebook** (page 268; you can find sample rare custom weapons in the following pages).

Custom weapons aren't necessarily better than normal basic weapons – choose what to use based on what fits your personal vision of the character.

CREATING A CUSTOM WEAPON

A custom weapon starts with the following characteristics:

- ◆ It belongs to one **Category** of your choice (**arcane, bow, brawling, dagger, firearm, flail, heavy, spear, sword** or **thrown**).
- ◆ It is not a **martial** weapon (◆), but might become one depending on the **customizations** that are chosen for it (see below).
- ◆ It is a **two-handed** weapon and cannot benefit from the **Monkey Grip** Heroic Skill (**Core Rulebook**, page 238); in short, a custom weapon will always occupy both hand slots.
- ◆ It is a **melee** weapon or a **ranged** weapon (your choice, and regardless of the Category you previously chose for it).
- ◆ It has a **cost** of 300 zenit.
- ◆ Its **Accuracy Check** relies on **[DEX + INS]** or **[DEX + MIG]** (your choice).
- ◆ It deals **physical** damage equal to **[HR + 5]**.

A custom weapon also receives **three** customizations from the list on the right.

- ◆ Each customization can only be chosen **once** for the same custom weapon.
- ◆ Choosing a customization marked with ◆ turns the weapon into a **martial** weapon.
- ◆ If a customization says “you”, it refers to the character who has the weapon equipped.
- ◆ Some especially powerful customizations count as **two** customizations or increase the **cost** of the custom weapon.

CUSTOMIZATIONS

Accurate

Adds a +2 bonus to the weapon's Accuracy Check formula.

Defense Boost

You gain a +2 bonus to Defense, and you are treated as having a **shield** equipped for the sake of **your** Skills (for instance, **Defensive Mastery** or **Dodge**; see **Core Rulebook**, page 197 and 203).

Elemental

Choose **air**, **bolt**, **dark**, **earth**, **fire**, **ice**, **light** or **poison**. The weapon now deals damage of the chosen type instead of **physical**, and also deals **2** extra damage.

Magic Defense Boost ✦

You gain a +2 bonus to Magic Defense.

Powerful ✦

The weapon deals **5** extra damage, or **7** extra damage if it is a **heavy weapon**.

This customization is not available for **arcane** and **dagger** weapons, or for weapons with the **quick** customization (see below).

Quick (counts as two customizations) ✦

When you perform the **Attack** action and choose to attack with this weapon, you may perform two attacks (against the same target or against different targets). If you do, both attacks follow the rules for **two-weapon fighting** (**Core Rulebook**, page 69).

Transforming (increases the custom weapon's cost by 100 zenit)

This weapon has a second form, which must be designed as a separate custom weapon, must have the transforming customization, and doesn't cost you any zenit.

While you have one of the two forms equipped, you can equip the other form whenever you want; during a conflict scene, you can only do so during your turn, **before or after** an action, and **only once** per turn.

If one or both the forms are **martial** (E), remember that you must have the appropriate Classes to equip them. Additionally, a **transforming** weapon can still only have **one** Quality (the Quality applies to both forms).

COMPATIBILITY

Custom weapons allow you to create the most bizarre armaments you can imagine: and at the same time, efforts were made to keep them somewhat balanced. For instance, one might argue that a **quick** and **accurate** custom weapon is always better than a pair of **steel daggers**, but there is a loss in flexibility by being unable to combine that dagger with a different weapon – there's pros and cons to each choice.

TRANSFORMING WEAPONS

The **transforming** customization is by far the most complex option provided by custom weapons. One important note, however: if one form of weapon is a **melee** weapon and the other is a **ranged** weapon, or if they belong to different **Categories**, you only gain the benefits of **one** form at a time.

For instance, if you use a weapon with a **melee** form and a **ranged** form, you won't be able to add both **Powerful Shot** and **Powerful Strike** to damage, or to **Counterattack** while simultaneously having **Crossfire** available.

A character wielding a **transforming** weapon is always free to decide which form they start with at the beginning of a conflict.

SAMPLE HIGH FANTASY CUSTOM WEAPONS

The following pages showcase a few examples of high fantasy-style custom weapons, accompanied by possible **rare** evolutions. The following conditions apply:

- ◆ You may **never** wield a custom weapon in a single hand, not even decreasing its damage by 4 as indicated on page **268** of the **Core Rulebook**.
- ◆ When it comes to **transforming** weapons, any modification (extra damage, Qualities, Accuracy bonuses...) is automatically applied to both forms.

Sometimes, a Player Character's custom weapon will also be something they hold dear (especially if it was obtained through the **Heirloom** Quirk, found on page **120**). In that case, it can be a good idea to describe later rare variants as "upgrades" of the initial weapon, instead of completely different items (for instance, they might be described as gems slotted inside a sword, or unique cartridges for a firearm). However, the rules and mechanics that govern items and equipment should not be altered.

“Oh, these?
How I got them
is a mighty
fine tale!”



CHAIN DAGGERS

This is the iconic weapon wielded by Eryon, the Dancer. It is a **transforming** weapon, and both forms are **martial** weapons: thus, a character must be able to equip both martial **melee** weapons **and** martial **ranged** weapons to use this item.



DANCING KNIVES

The weapon's basic form, worth **400** zenit.

Form I ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]** Damage: **[HR + 5] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **dagger** Category and has the **quick** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG] +2** Damage: **[HR + 10] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **flail** Category and has the **accurate**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.



BLAZING CHAINS

A possible rare evolution, worth **1200** zenit.

Form I ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]** Damage: **[HR + 9] fire**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Deals 5 extra damage to **demons** and **undead**; this form belongs to the **dagger** Category and has the **quick** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG] +2** Damage: **[HR + 14] fire**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ Deals 5 extra damage to **demons** and **undead**; this form belongs to the **flail** Category and has the **accurate**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.



COMBAT GRIMOIRES

These spellbooks grant the ability to manipulate magical force to attack distant foes.



GRIMOIRE OF FORCE

The weapon's basic form, worth **300** zenit.

Grimoire of Force ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + INS]** Damage: **[HR + 5] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ No Quality; belongs to the **arcane** Category and has the **magic defense boost** and **quick** customizations.



GRIMOIRE OF WIND

A possible rare evolution, worth **1200** zenit.

Grimoire of Wind ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + INS] +1** Damage: **[HR + 9] air**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ Grants immunity to the **slow** status effect; belongs to the **arcane** Category and has the **magic defense boost** and **quick** customizations.



MORPHSPEARS

These spear and shield sets can transform into massive crackling axes, switching from a defensive stance to a far more aggressive one.



HOPLITE'S AXE

The weapon's basic form, worth **400** zenit.

Form I Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG] +2** Damage: **[HR + 5] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **spear** Category and has the **accurate**, **defense boost** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦ Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]** Damage: **[HR + 14] bolt**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **heavy** Category and has the **elemental**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.



DRAGONSPINE

A possible rare evolution, worth **1600** zenit.

Form I ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG] +2** Damage: **[HR + 9] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Grants Resistance to **fire** and **ice** damage; this form belongs to the **spear** Category and has the **accurate**, **defense boost** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]** Damage: **[HR + 18] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Grants Resistance to **fire** and **ice** damage; this form belongs to the **heavy** Category and has the **elemental**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.



PROTECTOR GREATSWORDS

These massive swords can be equally useful for attack and defense.



GUARDIAN CLAYMORE

The weapon's basic form, worth **300** zenit.

Guardian Claymore ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]** Damage: **[HR + 10] physical**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ No Quality; belongs to the **sword** Category and has the **defense boost**, **magic defense boost** and **powerful** customizations.



QUEENSWARDEN

A possible rare evolution, worth **2700** zenit.

Queenswarden ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG] +1** Damage: **[HR + 14] light**

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ Grants an additional +1 bonus to both Defense and Magic Defense; belongs to the **sword** Category and has the **defense boost**, **magic defense boost** and **powerful** customizations (for a total +3 bonus to Defense and +3 bonus to Magic Defense).

REVENGERS

These crossbows were designed specifically to hunt down the ruinous angels who wrought destruction upon the kingdom.



SOMBER MEMORY

The weapon's basic form, worth **300** zenit.

Somber Memory ♦ Accuracy: [DEX + INS] +2 Damage: [HR + 10] physical

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; belongs to the **bow** Category and has the **accurate**, **magic defense boost** and **powerful** customizations.



ANGELSLAYER

A possible rare evolution, worth **1600** zenit.

Angelslayer ♦ Accuracy: [DEX + INS] +2 Damage: [HR + 14] dark

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ When you hit a **flying** target with this weapon, you may force them to land immediately; belongs to the **bow** Category and has the **accurate**, **magic defense boost** and **powerful** customizations.

THUNDER GRIPS

These peculiar heavy gauntlets can combine into powerful short range cannons.



CANNON GAUNTLETS

The weapon's basic form, worth **400** zenit.

Form I ♦ Accuracy: [DEX + MIG] Damage: [HR + 5] physical

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **brawling** Category and has the **quick** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦ Accuracy: [DEX + MIG] Damage: [HR + 10] bolt

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ No Quality; this form belongs to the **firearm** Category and has the **defense boost**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.

*“What do you mean,
maximum range one meter?!”*



GROUNDSPLITTERS

A possible rare evolution, worth **2000** zenit.

Form I ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]**

Damage: **[HR + 5]** earth

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Creatures hit by this weapon suffer **dazed**; this form belongs to the **brawling** Category and has the **accurate**, **defense boost** and **transforming** customizations.

Form II ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + MIG]**

Damage: **[HR + 10]** earth

Two-handed ♦ Melee ♦ Creatures hit by this weapon suffer **dazed**; this form belongs to the **firearm** Category and has the **defense boost**, **powerful** and **transforming** customizations.



TWO-HANDED SHURIKEN

Large throwing weapons that can also double as shields.



GIANT SHURIKEN

The weapon's basic form, worth **300** zenit.

Giant Shuriken ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + INS] +2**

Damage: **[HR + 10]** physical

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ No Quality; belongs to the **thrown** Category and has the **accurate**, **defense boost** and **powerful** customizations.



PALE PRESENCE

A possible rare evolution, worth **1600** zenit.

Pale Presence ♦

Accuracy: **[DEX + INS] +2**

Damage: **[HR + 14]** ice

Two-handed ♦ Ranged ♦ Attacks with this weapons have **multi (2)**; belongs to the **thrown** Category and has the **accurate**, **defense boost** and **powerful** customizations.

HIGH FANTASY QUIRKS

Quirks are an **advanced optional rule** that provides strong thematic and mechanical options for Player Characters. The Quirks presented in these pages were written with a High Fantasy assumption, but may be used in any campaign. You may also use them as reference to create your own Quirks – but you should only do so if the rest of your group agrees to it.

- ◆ A Player Character may only ever have **one** Quirk.
- ◆ If you use Quirks in your game, it is **strongly suggested** that each Player Character begins play with one. Additionally, no two characters in the same group should have identical Quirks.
- ◆ On average, a group of Player Characters with access to Quirks will be able to tackle more challenging situations than what would be normal for their level.
- ◆ If it makes sense in the story, a character may lose their current Quirk and gain a different one – discuss this with the group.

USING QUIRKS IN YOUR GAME

Quirks should be seen as a mechanical and narrative reinforcement of your characters' unique nature. Keep the following in mind:

- ◆ **Quirks shape the game.** Even the less impactful Quirk is a powerful statement about your character and their role in the story. If you pick **Heirloom**, you don't just get "a cool sword" – you get an item with **implications**. If you pick **Glorious Fate**, the prophecy will become a major part of the game. Quirks will take the already heroic Player Characters and kick them up a notch, which can be prove a bit overwhelming. Think carefully before you use them!
- ◆ **Freedom of choice.** You don't need a Quirk for your character concept to be valid. If your **Identity** is that of a "**Heroine from the Past**", you shouldn't feel forced to pick **From a Distant World** for that Identity to be relevant to the story.
- ◆ **How to use Quirks.** These options should be used to bring interesting situations into play, to give your character unique issues and problems to confront, and to provide additional mechanical support for their Traits.
- ◆ **How not to use Quirks.** These options should never be used to make your character stronger than the rest of the group, to steal the spotlight, or to bring sensitive topics that make others uncomfortable into play.



ARBOREAL

You are a sentient plant creature with humanoid intelligence. Are you the result of a magical experiment, or do you belong to a particular species? Do you resemble a specific type of plant, flower, or tree? What is your relationship with other plant creatures, and with the woods and forests of this world?

Choose a status effect: **dazed**, **enraged**, or **shaken**. You are immune to the chosen status effect. However, you also become Vulnerable to a damage type of your choice: **air**, **bolt**, **earth**, **fire**, or **ice**.

You also learn one NPC spell (pages 310-311 of the **Core Rulebook**), but you cannot choose **Devastation**. If a Magic Check is required, use **[INS + WLP]**. Customize the spell as needed (name, damage type, status effects etc.). When you cast this spell while **in sunlight**, its total MP cost is reduced by 5 (to a minimum of 0 Mind Points).



CURSED

You bear the burden of a strange curse. Through which supernatural effects does it manifest? How did you become cursed? Was it a stroke of bad luck, or a form of punishment for something you did? How can the curse be lifted?

When you acquire this Quirk, describe the nature of your **curse** and tie it to one of the threats present in your world. Once this **threat** is resolved, you will finally have a chance to break free from the **curse** – describe how you expect this to happen.

Examples: weapons you wield often miss their mark; your mere presence instills a sense of dread; your magic has a tendency to trigger unintended results; creatures within arm's reach of you feel sharp pain across their bodies.

When you are about to perform a Check, you may instead describe how your **curse** gets in the way and automatically roll a **fumble** (both dice are treated as if you had rolled a 1 on them). If you do, you receive **2 Fabula Points** instead of 1, and generate an **opportunity** as normal.

If you ever manage to break the **curse**, immediately gain a Heroic Skill of your choice (you may even choose a Heroic Skill whose requirements you **do not** satisfy, unless they include a Skill you don't have). This includes choosing a Heroic Skill for a Class you do not have.



ELEMENTAL SOUL

You are deeply infused with the power of a natural element. Are you the child of an elemental creature, or did you join souls with some kind of spirit? Who might try to take advantage of your unique nature? Who is afraid of you?

Choose your elemental damage type: **air**, **bolt**, **earth**, **fire**, or **ice**. You gain Resistance to the chosen damage type. Additionally, whenever you deal damage, you may change its type so that it matches your elemental damage type. However, you also become Vulnerable to a different damage type chosen among those five.

You also gain the ability to perform Rituals of the **Elementalism** discipline, but only if those Rituals manipulate your chosen element (respectively air, electricity, earth/rock, fire, and ice/water).



EMPTY HANDS

You have forsaken the use of weapons, instead purely relying on your hands and feet. Did you develop this fighting style out of necessity, or was it a choice? Is it because of your monstrous anatomy? Did your blade take one too many lives in the past?

Your attacks with **unarmed strikes** deal 6 extra damage. This amount increases to 10 extra damage if you are **level 30 or higher**.

Additionally, while you have no weapons or shields equipped (aside for **unarmed strikes**), you gain a +1 bonus to Defense and a +1 bonus to Magic Defense.



SENSITIVE TOPICS

Many Quirks bring complex themes to your table: for instance, **Fettered Heart** can introduce topics such as gaslighting and repression; **From a Distant World** may imply xenophobia and discrimination; **Glorious Fate** can lead to strong social pressure and expectations; and **Cursed** or **Ruinbringer** may color your games with tragedy. Even simpler options such as **Elemental Soul** or **Flight** might make it so a character is treated as “not entirely human” by society. When you choose and customize your Quirks, commit to respecting the personal boundaries of those who play with you. Use **lines** and **veils** (page 140 of the **Core Rulebook**) and be ready to pause the game if a scene is making someone uncomfortable. Be kind to each other, and be kind to yourselves



FETTERED HEART

For many years you have obeyed the precepts of a certain person or authority; you built your entire existence upon them. Now, however, you begin to see those rules in a darker light, and your heart falters. When did you first doubt them?

You may acquire this Quirk only if your character's Theme is **Doubt**, and your Theme cannot be changed in any way as long as you have this Quirk.

When you acquire this Quirk, create a Bond towards the **Non-Player Character** or **institution** that shaped your life up to now. This Bond begins with **three emotions** of your choice, and cannot be lost or erased in any way as long as you have this Quirk (you can still reassign its **emotions** during Resting scenes). Additionally, create **three commandments** that are crucial to that NPC or institution: each commandment must be something you must **always** do or something you must **never** do.

Examples: the Lord of Dragons (always obey a dragon, never show your weakness, never extinguish fire); the Pale Church (always side with the faithful, never doubt the word of a Priest, never lend your ear to a demon).

The first time you break a commandment during each scene, you immediately suffer the **shaken** and **weak** status effects and lose **half your current Hit Points and Mind Points** (rounded down), but also gain **2 Fabula Points**.

If you break a commandment during a Resting scene, you will suffer the penalties **after** the recovery granted by that Rest. If you break multiple commandments during the same scene, the penalties and Fabula Points only apply to the first violation.

After breaking your commandments **6 times**, ignore any further violation unless it happens in the presence of a **Villain** who follows or embodies your commandments.

If you're ever unsure whether a situation fits the criteria of this Quirk, it is you who always have final say. Be as honest and sincere as you can.

Upon your **7th violation**, you lose this Quirk and change your Theme to one of the following: **Belonging**, **Guilt**, **Justice** or **Vengeance**. Then, you immediately gain a Heroic Skill among those available for your Classes (you may even choose a Heroic Skill whose requirements you **do not** satisfy, unless they include a Skill you don't have). Finally, you **recover all HP and MP and recover from all status effects**. From now on, the strength of your Bonds is **always treated as being 1 point higher** (for instance, a Bond with three **emotions** will have a strength of 4).



FLIGHT

You belong to a unique heritage of humanoids who have the ability to fly or levitate. How does this work? Is it magical, or do you have wings? How did this particular advantage shape the history and society of your people? How do people usually react to seeing you?

You are able to **fly**. In addition to the obvious advantage in mobility, your **melee** attacks can target **flying** creatures and you cannot be targeted by **melee** attacks unless the attacker is flying or is somehow able to reach flying targets.

While in **Crisis** or unable to fly freely (such as when you're inside a vehicle designed for human-sized creatures or in a narrow corridor), you lose all benefits granted by this Quirk. Additionally, when you suffer **air**, **bolt** or **ice** damage during a conflict scene, you lose the benefits of this Quirk until the start of your next turn.



FROM A DISTANT WORLD

Your presence here is an anomaly, an unexpected knot in the weave of destiny; the rules of this land sometimes fail to bind you. Do you come from a different planet, or perhaps a different time? How did you get here, and when? Do you think you still have a chance to go back, and would you do so? What terrible threat followed you?

When you participate in a conflict scene, you automatically gain 1 Fabula Point. Additionally, you can invoke a **Trait** to reroll dice even if you **fumbled** your Check (if you do so, you **do not** receive a Fabula Point for the **fumble**).



“It’s been a long time since I last had the strength to struggle against my fate...”



GLORIOUS FATE

There is a prophecy surrounding you, a prophecy of hope for a better world. Who spoke or wrote that prophecy? Do you embrace your destiny, or are you crushed by its weight? Did someone plant seeds of doubt in your heart?

When you acquire this Quirk, write down the **prophecy**, and what it foretold. Do this with the collaboration of everyone else in the group, tie it to a known **threat or emergency** in your world, and describe what **sign or omen** marks you as the person supposedly destined to fulfill that **prophecy**.

Examples: “The boy with the ruby necklace will bring back water to the Desolate Plains”, or “The Branded One shall destroy the Chaos Dragon”.

At the end of each session (approximately **four hours of play**), before assigning XP, think **carefully** and **honestly** about what happened during the session and choose **one** of the five options below. The choice is yours to make, but it’s often a good idea to talk about what happened with the rest of the group.

- ◆ **The prophecy was fulfilled:** lose this Quirk, fully restore your Hit Points and Mind Points, recover from all status effects, and gain a Heroic Skill from those available for your Classes (you may even choose a Heroic Skill whose requirements you **do not** satisfy, unless they include a Skill you don’t have).
- ◆ **You acted in accordance to the prophecy:** fully restore your Hit Points and Mind Points, and recover from all status effects.
- ◆ **You acted neither in accordance to nor against the prophecy:** nothing happens.
- ◆ **You acted against the prophecy:** gain 1 Fabula Point.
- ◆ **The prophecy can never be fulfilled:** lose this Quirk, gain 6 Fabula Points, and gain a Heroic Skill from those available for your Classes (you may even choose a Heroic Skill whose requirements you **do not** satisfy, unless they include a Skill you don’t have).

Once the first or last option is chosen, the role of the **prophecy** in your world comes to an end. Even if later on in the campaign it appears that a situation might match the words of the **prophecy**, the effects of this Quirk will no longer be in place: you are free to shape your destiny and act based on your inner moral compass. Or perhaps you always were?



HEIRLOOM

You possess one or more pieces of equipment that boast unique properties. Are those items something passed down in your family, or a gift from someone you hold dear? What strange or dangerous rumors surround these items? Who would do anything in their power to take them from you?

You obtain a **single rare item** worth 1200 Zenit or less, or **two rare items** worth up to 800 Zenit each. You may choose these items from the available lists or design them together with the rest of your group.

Once per session (approximately **four hours of play**), the Game Master may give you 1 Fabula Point in order to have sudden complications arise due to the unique nature of the item(s) you carry (such as rival duelists or strange monsters drawn by its magic). Items acquired through this Quirk **cannot be destroyed, damaged, lost or stolen without your permission as a Player**.



OLD TRANSPORT

You own an old vehicle that you love dearly. Unfortunately, the cursed thing barely holds together and won't stop causing you trouble. Did you build this vehicle yourself, or did you receive it from someone? What very specific flaw or quirk makes it unique? What makes it extremely recognizable?

You obtain a **transport** of your choice from the **Core Rulebook** (page 125), such as a land vehicle, a ship, or even an airship. The size of this transport is enough to accommodate you and the rest of your group, plus two or three guests, but it is unfit for combat.

Once per session (approximately **four hours of play**), the Game Master can give you 2 Fabula Points in order to make the transport's engines fail, cause an enemy missile to damage its hull, or introduce similar story-based complications. However, the transport **can never be destroyed without your permission**.



REVENANT

You were brought back after death, unable to peacefully merge with the stream of souls. Do you know why or how this happened? How does your undeath visually manifest? Were you returned to your body, or displaced into a different one?

You are not considered a living creature and gain Immunity to **dark** damage and **poison** damage, but become Vulnerable to **light** damage. You are also immune to the **poisoned** status effect.

You do not need to breathe, eat or drink, but you still follow the normal rules for **resting**. You also recover Hit Points and recover from status effects as normal (contrary to **undead** creatures, effects that restore HP cannot be used to harm you).

Finally, whenever you deal damage, you may change its type to **dark**. Additionally, all **dark** damage you deal ignores Immunities and Resistances.



RIVAL PRODIGIES

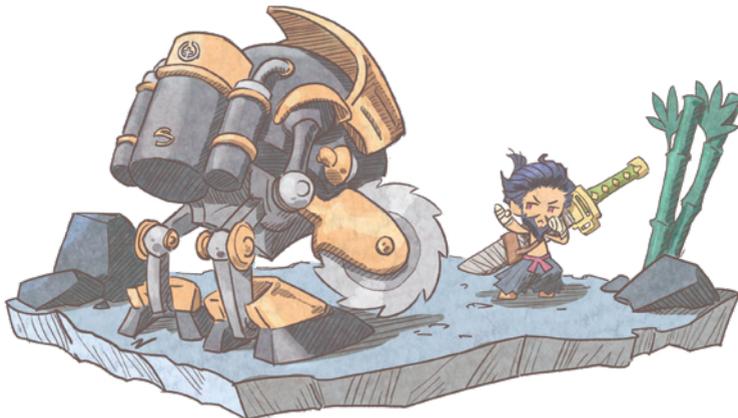
You possess an incredible talent, making you one of the very best in your field... too bad you're always one step behind your eternal rival! Who are they, and when did you last face off against each other? Who trained you, and what expectations do they hold about your future? What did you sacrifice to achieve this level of ability?

When you acquire this Quirk, choose what you **specialize** in: **Rituals, Skills, or spells**. Then, say who your eternal **rival** is: this Non-Player Character becomes a **minor Villain** (5 Ultima Points), and you create a Bond towards them, with 1 **emotion** chosen between **admiration** and **inferiority**.

When a rule or ability pertaining to your **specialization** requires you to spend Hit Points or Mind Points, you may spend 1 Fabula Point instead to completely ignore that cost.

However, while **your rival is present on the scene and has 1 or more Ultima Points left**, any Check you fail is automatically treated as if you had rolled a 1 on both dice and triggered a **fumble** (this means the Check cannot be rerolled and you immediately gain 1 Fabula Point).

If the **rival** has no Ultima Points but **escalates** into becoming a Villain of greater strength, they immediately recharge their Ultima Points: thus, the penalty described above will still apply. The only way to get rid of it is for your **rival** to die or to stop being a Villain.





ROBOT

You are an artificial body animated through science or magic. Do you know who created you, and why? Is your existence a threat to someone? Are there any “copies” of you around the world? Were you always a robot, or do you still hold memories of a previous existence?

You are not considered a living creature and gain Immunity to **poison** damage and Resistance to **earth** damage. You are also immune to the **poisoned** status effect.

You do not need to breathe, eat or drink, but you still follow the normal rules for **resting**. You also recover Hit Points and recover from status effects as normal.

You gain a +2 bonus to all Checks you perform to examine or interact with machines, technology and **constructs** (except for Accuracy Checks and Magic Checks).



RUINBRINGER

You possess almost limitless power, but there is a price to it: you shall bring doom to this world. How do you know this? Strange visions, markings that appear on your body, or something else? What gives you hope to stop what’s coming?

When you acquire this Quirk, say which **ruin** you are supposed to bring into the world: that **ruin** immediately becomes one of your world’s threats.

Examples: the Demon Queen, the Great Comet, the God of Bloodshed.

Until your **ruin** comes true, you **cannot Sacrifice yourself** (in fact, servants of the Ruin might even lend you a hand and free you from any imprisonments that would prevent you from fulfilling your role in their plans).

When a rule or ability requires you to spend Hit Points, Mind Points, or Fabula Points, you may instead **let your ruin advance** to completely ignore that cost. You describe what dark omens manifest, and the GM receives an **opportunity** (page 41 of the **Core Rulebook**) that can be used to add complications **after** the current scene has ended.

At the end of each session (approximately **four hours of play**), before assigning XP, roll **2d20**. If you roll **equal to or lower than** your current character level, your **ruin advances** (it will **always** advance if you are **level 40 or higher**).

When your **ruin advances for the 9th time**, you lose this Quirk and your **ruin** comes true, manifesting into the world as a **supreme Villain** (15 Ultima Points). However, you immediately gain a Heroic Skill from those available for your Classes (you may even choose a Heroic Skill whose requirements you **do not** satisfy, unless they include a Skill you don’t have). Steel yourself and face your destiny.



SOULS ENTWINED

You made a magical deal with another character. You can now dwell inside their body and physically manifest if necessary. When and why did you strike this pact? Is it part of your people's magical nature, or was it a desperate attempt to keep you alive? When did it first get you into trouble?

When you acquire this Quirk, choose another Player Character to act as a **host body** for your soul. You both immediately create a Bond towards each other. This Bond has 1 **emotion** chosen from **admiration**, **affection** and **loyalty**.

Make sure whoever controls the **host** character is okay with this and looks forward to exploring the unique nature of this Quirk with you.

You and your **host** may communicate telepathically (you are considered “able to hear each other” for the sake of Skills and effects that require it).

Outside conflict scenes, you may enter the body of your **host** or leave it to physically appear at their side whenever you want. If you are ever more than **1 travel day** away from your **host**, you vanish and reappear at their side. During a conflict, you may enter or leave the **host's** body **at the start of your turn** (doing so does not require an action).

While you are within the **host's** body, you cannot perceive the outside world with your normal five senses nor physically interact with it, and the creatures outside cannot perceive you with their normal five senses nor physically interact with you.

However, anyone who can sense the presence of souls (through Rituals or similar supernatural abilities) will realize the **host's** body contains two different souls.

You cannot enjoy the benefits of a **Rest** unless your **host** rests as well.

When you **Surrender**, you immediately vanish and enter the **host's** body (you may never be separated from the **host** as a consequence for Surrendering).

When you **host Surrenders**, you immediately enter their body and cannot leave it until that character regains consciousness.

When your **host Sacrifices** themselves, choose one option:

- ♦ **Survive:** you immediately leave their body, lose this Quirk, your current Hit Points become equal to 0, and you Surrender. Then, you permanently increase your maximum Hit Points and maximum Mind Points by 10.
- ♦ **Final Farewell:** you Sacrifice yourself in place of your **host**, who immediately recovers Hit Points equal to their **Crisis** score and no longer needs to Surrender or Sacrifice themselves.

ZERO POWERS

Zero Powers are an optional rule designed for stories in which Player Characters unleash incredible strength when cornered. While they fit **High Fantasy** campaigns especially well, they can be used in any game.

This rule will make the protagonists of your story downright **excessive**. As with any optional rule, make sure to discuss its use with the entire group.

On average, a group using **Zero Powers** is expected to defeat most foes without too much trouble, aside for those requiring specific strategies or intricate tactics.

CREATING A ZERO POWER

Each character who has access to this rule must create their own personal power, choosing a **trigger** and an **effect** from the lists in the coming pages.

The same group must **never** include two or more PCs whose powers have the same **zero trigger**, nor two or more PCs whose powers have the same **zero effect**.

USING ZERO POWERS

If your character has a **Zero Power**, they get a **Zero Clock**. This Clock has **6 sections** and can be “charged” **during conflict scenes** in the following ways:

- ◆ Fill **1 section** each time you **spend 1 Fabula Point to invoke a Trait or Bond** (apply this separately for each Fabula Point spent).
- ◆ Fill **1 section** each time you **lose Hit Points**, unless that loss was self-inflicted (such as with the **Vismagus Skill** from the **Spiritist Class**).
- ◆ Fill **a variable number of sections** when your chosen **zero trigger** activates.

On your turn during a conflict scene, if your Zero Clock is full, you may perform the **Skill** action to unleash your **zero effect**. You may only do so **once per turn**.

- ◆ Unleashing the **zero effect** erases all sections of the Zero Clock.
- ◆ All sections of the Zero Clock are automatically erased at the end of each scene.
- ◆ Sections of the Zero Clock may **not** be filled nor erased in any way except as indicated above, or through the **Zero Chance** effect (see page **126**).

ZERO TRIGGERS	FILLED SECTIONS
Compassion	1 per trigger
This trigger activates when you restore the Hit Points and/or Mind Points of one or more allies (this only triggers with effects that autonomously restore Hit Points or Mind Points, not those that increase recovery caused by a different effect).	
Defiance	1 per trigger
This trigger activates at the start of your turn during a conflict, provided one or more Villains and/or champion-Rank enemies are present on the scene.	
Love	1 per trigger
<i>Special rule: when you choose this trigger for your Zero Power, tie it to another Player Character you have fallen in love with (the feeling doesn't have to be reciprocal, but make sure everyone in the group is comfortable with this dynamic).</i>	
This trigger activates when the character you love loses Hit Points (unless that HP loss was self-inflicted) and/or Surrenders , provided you are able to see them. If the character you love Sacrifices themselves and you witness their Sacrifice , immediately fill your Zero Clock; at the end of the scene, choose a different trigger for your Zero Power .	
Revenge	3 per trigger
This trigger activates when you enter Crisis for the first time during a scene	
Sequence	2 per trigger
This trigger activates when an ally you can see unleashes their zero effect	
Strategy	1 per trigger
This trigger activates at the end of your turn during a conflict, provided one or more enemies present on the scene are suffering from a total of two or more different status effects (such as one dazed and weak enemy, or one slow enemy and another enraged enemy).	
Synergy	varies
This trigger activates when you deal damage to one or more creatures , filling 1 section for each creature that was Vulnerable to the type of damage dealt.	

ZERO TRIGGERS

Zero Blitz

You immediately perform a **free attack** with **each weapon** you have equipped. If you only have **one weapon** equipped, the attack deals 20 extra damage; or, if you have **more than one weapon** equipped, you gain a +5 bonus to the Accuracy Check for each attack.

Zero Chance

Choose **odd** or **even**, then roll **3d6** and see how many dice match your prediction. Then, apply the corresponding effect **or** the effect immediately above it, your choice.

- ◆ **No dice:** Fill **3 sections** of your Zero Clock, and fill **1 section** of the Zero Clock of **every** other Player Character you can see. Then, perform an additional action.
- ◆ **One die:** You perform a **free attack** with one weapon you have equipped. This attack deals extra damage **equal to the total rolled on the 3d6**.
- ◆ **Two dice:** You deal damage equal to **[30 + half your level + the total rolled on the 3d6]** to **one** creature you can see. This damage has no type (ignore Affinities).
- ◆ **Three dice:** You and every ally you can see recover from all status effects and recover an amount of HP and MP equal to **[your Crisis score + the total rolled on the 3d6]**.

Finally, if all three dice **show the same number**, you may perform an additional action during this turn (this is **in addition** to the action granted by “**no dice**”).

Zero Cost

Until the end of the scene, you treat all Inventory Point costs as being **halved**. You may also immediately perform the **Inventory** action for free.

Zero Elements

Special rule: when you select this effect for your **Zero Power**, choose two damage types among **air, bolt, dark, earth, fire, ice, light, and poison**.

You gain the following benefits: all damage you deal becomes of a type of your choice among the two you selected when you created this Zero Power, its type cannot change, and it ignores Absorption, Immunity and Resistance. Additionally, you deal 5 extra damage (be it with attacks, spells, items, Arcana, or any other method).

These benefits last until the end of the scene, until you unleash this power again, or until you end its effects (you may do so whenever you want).

You may also perform an additional action during this turn.

ZERO EFFECTS

Zero Limits

Until the end of the scene, treat all your Attributes as being one die size higher (up to a maximum of **d12**). You may also perform an additional action during this turn.

Zero Magic

You immediately perform the **Spell** action for free, casting a spell of your choice among those you know; the spell's **total Mind Point cost is treated as being 0** (this includes any cost increases due to Skills and effects). The spell deals 10 extra damage and, if it is an offensive (⚡) spell, you gain a +5 bonus to the Magic Check.

Zero Objective

Choose one option: fill **3 sections** of a Clock tied to the current scene; **or** erase **3 sections** of a Clock tied to the current scene.

Zero Remedy

You and any number of allies you can see recover from all status effects and recover an amount of Hit Points equal to **[40 + half your level]**.

Zero Scourge

***Special rule:** when you select this effect for your **Zero Power**, choose a damage type among **air, bolt, dark, earth, fire, ice, light, and poison**; then, choose two status effects among **dazed, shaken, slow, and weak**.*

Choose any number of creatures you can see: each of them suffers damage of then chosen type equal to **[30 + half your level]** and suffers the chosen status effects.

Zero Shield

Until the start of your next turn, **all damage** suffered by you and every ally present on the scene is halved (before applying Affinities).

Zero Triangle

You and up to two allies you can see immediately perform a **free attack** with a weapon you have equipped (or a **basic attack** if they are NPCs). These attacks receive a +5 bonus to the Accuracy Check.

TABLES FOR CREATING ZERO POWER NAMES

You can combine the tables on these pages to create **names** for your Zero Powers on the fly. Feel free to tweak the word order and possessive structures as appropriate.

Action (roll 1d20 and check the column that matches the power's role)

Aggressive	Defensive	Power Up
1. Bite	1. Barrier	1. Aura
2. Blade	2. Bastion	2. Awakening
3. Breath	3. Blanket	3. Blessing
4. Bullet	4. Circle	4. Bloom
5. Chain	5. Diagram	5. Breath
6. Claw	6. Embrace	6. Cloak
7. Dance	7. Formation	7. Grace
8. Explosion	8. Fortress	8. Instinct
9. Fang	9. Guardian	9. Kiss
10. Flurry	10. Hand	10. Liberation
11. Glare	11. Invocation	11. Meditation
12. Impact	12. Mist	12. Miracle
13. Jolt	13. Net	13. Path
14. Maelstrom	14. Reflection	14. Prayer
15. Punch	15. Ring	15. Secret
16. Slash	16. Shield	16. Tale
17. Spear	17. Sigil	17. Touch
18. Stinger	18. Song	18. Vision
19. Storm	19. Spiral	19. Vow
20. Swarm	20. Veil	20. Wheel

Origin (roll 1d10 and check the column that matches the power's origin)

Art of War	Beasts and Monsters	Natural Elements
1. Agile	1. Crow	1. Electrostatic
2. Explosive	2. Dragon	2. Icy
3. Iron	3. Dragonfly	3. Ardent Coal
4. Aegis	4. Eagle	4. Dewdrop
5. Dust	5. Fox	5. Raining
6. Warlord's	6. Monkey	6. Rainbow
7. Legion	7. Phoenix	7. Seismic
8. Veteran's	8. Serpent	8. Swirling
9. Royal	9. Titan	9. Thundering
10. Sovereign	10. Wolf	10. Zephyr

Internal Strength	Sacred and Profane	Inexplicable
1. Ancestors'	1. Angel	1. Lady Luck's
2. Final	2. Consecrated	2. Chaos
3. Gentle	3. Demonic	3. Cosmic
4. Lone	4. Divine	4. Dream
5. of Broken Heart	5. Eternal	5. Ethereal
6. of Memory	6. Grave	6. Hidden
7. Wanderer's	7. Infernal	7. Lunar
8. Raging	8. Ruinous	8. Pale
9. Spiritual	9. Shining	9. Prismatic
10. Supersonic	10. Spectral	10. Scarlet

ZERO POWER VARIATIONS

Usually, each Player Character has their unique Zero Power from the start. However, trying some variations of this rule can also be interesting.

AWAKENED POWER

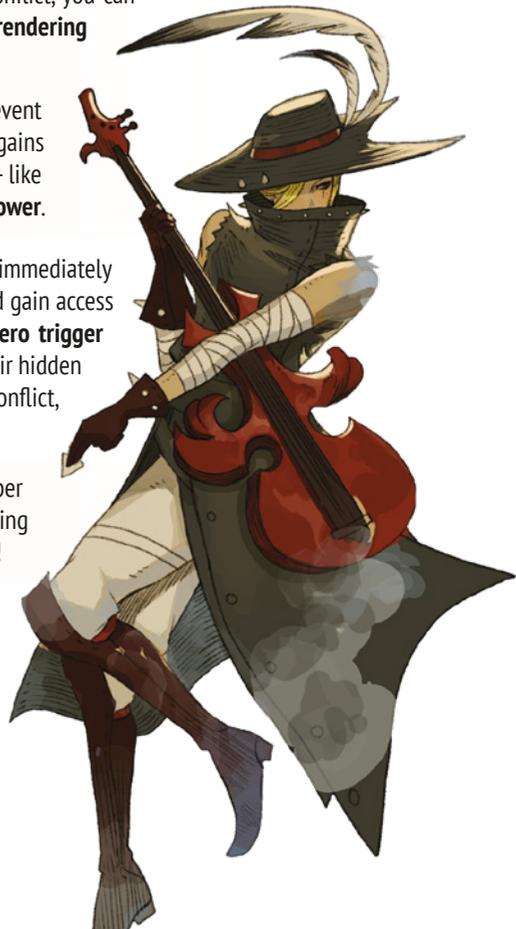
This variation of Zero Powers is ideal for epic stories where a hero can manifest an unexpected new power when they are on the brink of disaster, or when something changes their way of seeing the world.

If you choose this option, you choose the **effect** of your Zero Power during character creation but not its **trigger**. You don't have access to the power until you **awaken** it in one of these ways:

- ◆ When your character reaches 0 HP during a conflict, you can choose to **awaken their power** instead of **Surrendering** or making a **Sacrifice**.
- ◆ When your character faces a terrible truth, an event or memory causing great happiness or pain, or gains access to a source of power crucial to the story – like an **artifact** – you can choose to **awaken their power**.

When a character **awakens their power**, they immediately recover Hit Points equal to their **Crisis** score, and gain access to their Zero Power. They must also select a **zero trigger** coherent with the event that helped unleash their hidden potential. If the awakening happens during a conflict, the Zero Clock **fills immediately**.

A Player Character can use this rule **only once** per campaign. The Player chooses when the awakening happens – just make sure the moment is fitting!



*“Today, we face you together –
it won’t be like the last time!”*



COMBINED POWERS

This option links Zero Powers to the ties between group members instead of having them connected to a lone character.

If you choose this option, apply the following rules:

- ◆ Each Player Character gains a **zero trigger** as per the normal rules, and a Zero Clock with **4 sections** instead of 6.
- ◆ Each Player Character gains one **zero effect** for each other Player Character – decide together what they are. **Each possible pair of PCs shares one zero effect.**
- ◆ You can unleash the **zero effect** only when **both Player’s Clocks** are full. Only **one** character needs to perform the **Skill** action, which **empties both Clocks**.

Example: your group has four Player Characters, and therefore four individual **zero triggers** and **six** total **zero effects**. The **gunslinger** and **samurai** share the **Zero Scourge** effect, which they nickname “Bullet Slicer”. Once **both** their Zero Clocks are full, either of them can perform the **Skill** action to unleash the Bullet Slicer during their turn.

The Zero Power’s effects **resolve only once**, as if the character had unleashed a standard Zero Power.

You should only use this complex option if there are **four or fewer Player Characters**. Remember to refresh the possible combinations each time the group changes – that’s why it’s alright for there to be more than one version of the same **zero effect** per group. However, the **triggers** should all be different, if possible.

If you combine this option with the **Awakened Powers** described above, just **invert** things slightly: you choose your **triggers** during character creation and decide the **effect** of each combination when one of the Players awakens the power. Also, each Player Character has access to **one awakening for each PC in the campaign with whom they can create a combined power**.

NEW CLASSIC CHARACTERS

ACROBAT

Dexterity **d10**, Insight **d8**, Might **d6**, Willpower **d8**

Dancer (3 levels): **Dance (SL 2: Phoenix, Ouroboros)**, **Wardancer**

Fury (1 level): **Frenzy**

Sharpshooter (1 level): **Warning Shot**

Shuriken (×2), sage robe, 170 zenit.

DANCING WITCH

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d8**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d10**

Dancer (3 levels): **Dance (SL 2: Griffin, Yeti)**, **Wardancer**

Elementalist (1 level): **Magical Artillery**

Entropist (1 level): **Entropic Magic (Drain Vigor)**

Tome, travel garb, 270 zenit.

EXORCIST

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d8**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d8**

Symbolist (2 levels): **Symbolic Connection, Symbolism (Binding, Truth)**

Spiritist (1 level): **Soul Weapon**

Sharpshooter (2 levels): **Hawkeye, Ranged Weapon Mastery**

Shortbow, sage robe, 170 zenit.

FENCER

Dexterity **d10**, Insight **d8**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d6**

Rogue (1 level): **Cheap Shot**

Dancer (2 levels): **Dance (SL 2: Kraken, Peacock)**

Weaponmaster (2 levels): **Counterattack, Bone Crusher**

Rapier, combat tunic, runic shield, 70 zenit.

IDOL

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d8**, Might **d6**, Willpower **d10**

Chanter (3 levels): **Magichant (SL 3: Flame; calm, lively, and solemn tones)**

Orator (2 levels): **My Trust in You, Unexpected Ally**

Staff (described as a mic and stand), sage robe, 270 zenit.

METALHEAD

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d8**, Might **d10**, Willpower **d8**

Chanter (3 levels): **Magichant (SL 2: Thunder; frantic and menacing tones)**

Fury (1 level): **Provoke**

Weaponmaster (1 level): **Breach**

Waraxe, runic plate, 120 zenit.

RUNESMITH

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d10**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d8**

Arcanist (3 levels): **Bind and Summon (Forge), Emergency Arcanum, Ritual Arcanism**

Symbolist (2 levels): **Personal Touch, Symbolism (Creation, Elements)**

Iron hammer, travel garb, runic shield, 120 zenit.

SERGEANT

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d8**, Might **d10**, Willpower **d8**

Commander (2 levels): **Charging Cavalry, Queen's Gambit**

Fury (1 level): **Indomitable Spirit**

Weaponmaster (2 levels): **Bladestorm, Bone Crusher**

Broadaxe, brigandine, bronze shield, 70 zenit.

STRATEGIST

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d10**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d8**

Commander (3 levels): **Bishop's Edict, Crushing Chariot, King's Castle**

Loremaster (2 levels): **Flash of Insight, Knowledge is Power**

Pistol, bronze shield, travel garb, 120 zenit.

TRAVELING ARTIST

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d10**, Might **d6**, Willpower **d8**

Symbolist (3 levels): **Mirage, Symbolism (SL 2: Elements, Growth, Protection, Rebellion)**

Wayfarer (2 levels): **Tavern Talk, Resourceful**

Tome (described as a sketchbook!), sage robe, 270 zenit.

A COMPANY OF HEROES: READY FOR ADVENTURE!

Each group member plays a specific role: the **Valiant Knight** leads charges and protects allies; the **Heartthrob Thief** gathers items and info, weakens enemies, and strikes with abandon; the **Naïve Chosen** heals and supports allies; the **Young Sage** is a keen observer who knows mighty elemental spells.

HEARTTHROB THIEF

Dexterity **d10**, Insight **d8**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d6**

Rogue (3 levels): **Cheap Shot, Dodge, Soul Steal**

Weaponmaster (1 level): **Bone Crusher**

Wayfarer (1 level): **Tavern Talk**

Twin dagger (custom weapon, **[DEX + INS]**, **dagger, melee, accurate, quick**), combat tunic, 120 zenit.

NAÏVE CHOSEN

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d8**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d10**

Arcanist (2 levels): **Bind and Summon (Tower), Ritual Arcanism**

Chanter (2 levels): **Magichant (SL 2: Star; calm and solemn tone)**

Orator (1 level): **My Trust in You**

Staff, sage robe, 270 zenit.

VALIANT KNIGHT

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d6**, Might **d10**, Willpower **d8**

Commander (2 levels): **Charging Cavalry, Queen's Gambit**

Guardian (1 level): **Protect**

Weaponmaster (2 levels): **Bladestorm, Counterattack**

Greatsword, runic plate, 120 zenit.

YOUNG SAGE

Dexterity **d6**, Insight **d10**, Might **d6**, Willpower **d10**

Elementalist (3 levels): **Elemental Magic (SL 3: Fulgur, Glaciers, Ignis)**

Entropist (1 level): **Entropic Magic (Acceleration)**

Loremaster (1 level): **Flash of Insight**

Tome, sage robe, 270 zenit.

*The friendship they shared would
break the mightiest of curses...*

THE BAND: THIS BEAT WILL SAVE THE WORLD!

After attending Bremen's Royal Conservatory, these young prodigies are ready to serve justice with their music! They all share the **Chanter** Class, which they use in very different and synergistic ways.

GOth DIVA

Dexterity **d10**, Insight **d6**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d8**

Chanter (2 levels): **Magichant (Wind; haunting tone), Vibrato**

Dancer (1 level): **Dance (Nightmare)**

Sharpshooter (2 levels): **Ranged Weapon Mastery, Warning Shot**

Squall fiddle (custom weapon, **[DEX + MIG]**, **flail, ranged, elemental (air), quick**), combat tunic, 120 zenit.

GOLDEN-HEARTED SIREN

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d8**, Might **d6**, Willpower **d10**

Chanter (4 levels): **Magichant (SL 3: Flame, Frost; calm and menacing tones), Siren's Song**

Orator (1 level): **Unexpected Ally**

Bewitched mic (custom weapon, **[DEX + INS]**, **arcane, ranged, accurate, elemental (light), defense boost**), silk shirt, 170 zenit.

IRONCLAD BIG SIS

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d6**, Might **d10**, Willpower **d8**

Chanter (3 levels): **Magichant (Iron; lively tone), Sound Barrier**

Fury (1 level): **Provoke**

Guardian (1 level): **Protect**

Armored bass (custom weapon, **[DEX + MIG]**, **heavy, melee, accurate, defense boost, powerful**), sage robe, 70 zenit.

LIFE OF THE PARTY

Dexterity **d8**, Insight **d6**, Might **d8**, Willpower **d10**

Chanter (3 levels): **Magichant (SL 2: Thunder; frantic and menacing tones), Vibrato**

Weaponmaster (2 levels): **Bladestorm, Bone Crusher**

Thunder drums (custom weapon, **[DEX + MIG]**, **heavy, melee, accurate, elemental (bolt), powerful**), travel garb, 170 zenit.

CHANTER

ALSO: Bard, Idol, Troubadour

*Show's just begun,
and it's lights out
for you already!*



Whether tracing their fingers on a delicate harp, dazing an unprepared audience with the sheer power of their vocals, or happily diving into a crowd of delirious fans, **Chanters** could be described as magical one person orchestras!

A Chanter's abilities reach way beyond the normal limits of music and singing: they rely on the strength of their souls and weave magical energy into songs, supporting their allies during tense situations.

- ◆ Who taught you how to combine magic and music? Is it a natural talent?
- ◆ Are you a celebrity, or more of a traveling musician?
- ◆ Who is your greatest music rival? Who inspires you to be who you are?
- ◆ What do your instruments and singing style look like?



CHANTER FREE BENEFITS

- ◆ Permanently increase your maximum Mind Points by 5.

CHANTER SKILLS

MAGICHANT

[+10]

On your turn during a conflict scene, you may use an action and spend a variable amount of MP to weave voice and music into a magical effect known as a **verse**.

You may only sing **one verse** per turn, even if you have access to multiple actions; the full rules for **verses** can be found starting on the next page.

When you first acquire this Skill, you learn **all three volumes**, plus **one key** and **one tone** (see next page). Whenever you acquire this Skill again, you may learn **one key** or **one tone** (your choice).

RESONANCE

[+3]

After you affect one or more enemies with a **verse**, if you have an **arcane** weapon equipped, you may choose one option: until the start of your next turn, your allies deal **[SL]** extra damage to those enemies; **or** until the start of your next turn, you recover **[SL]** Mind Points **every time** one of those enemies suffers damage (if the same source deals damage to two or more of those enemies at the same time, you recover **[SL]** MP for each damaged enemy).

SIREN'S SONG

You gain the ability to perform Rituals of the **Ritualism** discipline; **additionally**, you may use **Ritualism** to create **hearing-based illusions**.

SOUND BARRIER

[+5]

After you sing a **verse** with **medium** or **high volume**, all **physical** damage you suffer until the start of your next turn is reduced by **[SL]** (applied **before** Affinities).

VIBRATO

After you sing a verse with **low** or **medium volume**, you may perform a **free attack** with a weapon you have equipped; treat your **High Roll (HR)** as 0 when calculating damage dealt by this attack.

VERSES

SINGING A VERSE

When you sing a **verse**, you combine a **volume**, a **key** and a **tone** you learned. These three aspects determine the **verse's** MP cost, targets and effect.

- ◆ The **volume** determines the sound intensity of your **verse** (and the creatures you can reach with it).
- ◆ Each **tone** determines the general effects of your **verse**.
- ◆ Each **key** has an associated **damage type**, **status effect**, **Attribute** and **recovery**. These modify the effects determined by the **tone** of your **verse**.

Example: you might combine a **low volume** with the **key of Flame** and a **haunting tone** to inflict **shaken** on a single creature for 10 Mind Points, or you could combine a **medium volume** with the **key of Iron** and an **energetic tone** to allow your allies to make additional progress on Clocks when using **Willpower**.

VOLUME	MP	TARGETS
--------	----	---------

Low	10	Yourself or another creature you can see who can hear you.
-----	----	---

Medium	20	Every ally who can hear you.
--------	----	------------------------------

High	30	Every enemy who can hear you.
------	----	-------------------------------

KEY	TYPE	STATUS EFFECT	ATTRIBUTE	RECOVERY
-----	------	---------------	-----------	----------

Flame	fire	shaken	Might	Hit Points
-------	------	--------	-------	------------

Frost	ice	weak	Willpower	Mind Points
-------	-----	------	-----------	-------------

Iron	physical	slow	Willpower	Mind Points
------	----------	------	-----------	-------------

Radiance	bolt	shaken	Dexterity	Hit Points
----------	------	--------	-----------	------------

Shadow	light	dazed	Insight	Hit Points
--------	-------	-------	---------	------------

Stone	dark	weak	Dexterity	Mind Points
-------	------	------	-----------	-------------

Thunder	earth	dazed	Might	Hit Points
---------	-------	-------	-------	------------

Wind	air	slow	Insight	Mind Points
------	-----	------	---------	-------------

Rumor has it the songs of the Vinebeard Dwarves are powerful enough to shatter stone!

TONE

Calm

Each target recovers **【key recovery】** equal to **【10 + twice your current Willpower die size】**. This amount increases by 10 if you are **level 20 or higher**, or by 20 if you are **level 40 or higher**.

If this tone causes MP recovery, it has **no effect** on the character who sings it.

Energetic

Until the start of your next turn, when a target succeeds on a Check that includes **【key Attribute】** and that Check allows them to advance or turn back a Clock, they may fill or erase an additional section of that Clock.

Frantic

Each target suffers **【key type】** damage equal to **twice** your current **Willpower** die size. This tone deals 10 extra damage if you are **level 20 or higher**, or 20 extra damage if you are **level 40 or higher**.

Haunting

Each target suffers **【key status effect】**. Each target also loses Resistance to **【key type】** damage (if they have it) until the start of your next turn.

Lively

Each target treats their **【key Attribute】** as being one die size higher (up to a maximum of **d12**) until the start of your next turn.

Menacing

The first time each target suffers damage before the start of your next turn, that damage becomes **【key type】**. This can trigger once for each target of the verse, separately.

Solemn

Each target recovers from **【key status effect】**. Each target also gains Resistance to **【key type】** damage until the start of your next turn.

COMMANDER

ALSO: Prince, Queen, Shōgun



*War has
no victors.*

Commanders are leaders and inspiring figures. Some are of noble blood, but a majority have earned the loyalty of their comrades on the battlefield, where their iron resolve and tactical prowess were tested time and time again.

When thinking about what a Commander might look like, don't feel bound to the idea of a knight in shining armor: bandit captains, fallen nobles and students of warfare are all perfect examples of what this Class may represent.

- ◆ Are you of noble birth? Or perhaps a hero of humble beginnings?
- ◆ Is battle something you seek, or something you strive to avoid?
- ◆ Are there any sacrifices you would never be willing to make to achieve victory?
- ◆ How do you manifest your abilities? Are they visibly supernatural?



COMMANDER FREE BENEFITS

- ◆ Permanently increase your maximum Hit Points by 5.
- ◆ Gain the ability to equip **martial melee weapons** and **martial ranged weapons**.

COMMANDER SKILLS

BISHOP'S EDICT

[+5]

During a conflict, you may use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to choose one option: all MP costs are doubled; **or** all sources of damage deal **[SL × 3]** extra damage. The chosen effect lasts until the start of your next turn.

CHARGING CAVALRY

[+5]

During a conflict, you may use an action and spend 10 MP to choose one ally that can hear you. That ally may immediately perform a **free attack** with a weapon they have equipped (or with a **basic attack** if they are an NPC). They gain a bonus equal to **[SL 3]** to the Accuracy Check, but treat their **High Roll (HR)** as 0 when calculating damage.

CRUSHING CHARIOT

After you use **Bishop's Edict**, **Charging Cavalry** or **King's Castle**, you may choose another Player Character that can hear you who has yet to take a turn during this round. That character may take their turn immediately after yours during this round.

KING'S CASTLE

[+4]

During a conflict, you may use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to choose one option: no creature can recover Hit Points or Mind Points; **or** all effects that restore Mind Points restore **[SL × 5]** additional Mind Points. The chosen effect lasts until the start of your next turn.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

[+6]

During a conflict, you may use an action to perform a **free attack** with a weapon you have equipped, treating your **High Roll (HR)** as 0 when calculating damage. After the attack is resolved, choose one option: one ally who is able to hear you recovers **[5 + (SL × 5)]** Hit Points; **or** you may immediately use a Skill you acquired among **Bishop's Edict**, **Charging Cavalry** or **King's Castle** for free (spending the appropriate MP).

DANCER

ALSO: Acrobat, Jester, Swashbuckler

*My story?
Dance with me
and you shall know it.*

Dancers are those who have trained their bodies to achieve exceptional coordination and flexibility, be it to impress a crowd with their gymnastics or to perform ancient steps meant to keep evil at bay.

The more gifted Dancers may direct the flow of spiritual force through repeated and precise motions, enhancing their physical abilities and manifesting magical effects.

They are surprisingly capable combatants, if sometimes a little... overdramatic.

- ◆ Your abilities require great focus and discipline. Who was your teacher?
- ◆ Why do you dance? Is it an art form, a profession, or something else?
- ◆ Are you graceful and charming, or roguish and boisterous?
- ◆ What do your stunts and performances look like?



DANCER FREE BENEFITS

- ◆ Permanently increase your maximum Hit Points **or** Mind Points by 5 (your choice).

DANCER SKILLS

DANCE

[+10]

Each time you take this Skill, you learn a **dance** (see next page).

On your turn during a conflict scene, if you have no **martial armor** equipped, you may spend 10 Mind Points to **perform a dance** you have learned. This doesn't require an action, but it can only be done **before or after** an action, and only **once per turn**. If you already performed a **different dance** during your previous turn in this scene, the cost of the new **dance** is reduced to 5 Mind Points.

Some **dances** are **instantaneous** and resolve immediately, while others have effects that last **until the start of your next turn**.

FOLLOW MY LEAD

When you perform a **dance** with a **duration** of "Until the start of your next turn", you may spend 10 additional Mind Points. If you do, choose one ally you can see towards whom you have a Bond of **affection**: apply the benefits of the **dance** to that ally as well as yourself (the benefits still last until the start of **your** next turn).

FRENETIC FOOTWORK

[+2]

After you perform a **dance** with a **duration** of "Until the start of your next turn", you gain a bonus equal to **[SL × 2]** to all Opposed Checks that rely on **acrobatics**, **coordination** or **speed** until the start of your next turn.

QUICK-CHANGE

After you perform a **dance**, you may perform the **Equipment** action for free.

WARDANCER

[+5]

After you perform a **dance**, your attacks with **brawling**, **dagger**, **flail** and **thrown** weapons deal **[SL]** extra damage until the start of your next turn. If you have an **arcane** weapon equipped, offensive spells (⚡) you cast also deal **[SL]** extra damage until the start of your next turn.

DANCES

DANCE	DURATION
Angel Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to light damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes light .	
Banshee Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. If that creature is already slow , they immediately suffer shaken .	
Bat Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to dark damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes dark .	
Golem Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to bolt damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes bolt .	
Griffin Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to air damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes air .	
Hydra Dance	Until the start of your next turn
After you suffer damage, choose one option: you recover 5 Hit Points, or you recover 5 Mind Points.	
Kraken Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. If that creature is already dazed , they immediately suffer slow .	
Lion Dance	Instantaneous
You immediately recover from a single status effect of your choice.	
Maenad Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. That creature loses an amount of Mind Points equal to your current Dexterity die size.	

DANCE	DURATION
Myrmidon Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to earth damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes earth .	
Nightmare Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. If that creature is already shaken , they immediately suffer weak .	
Ouroboros Dance	Instantaneous
Choose one ally you can see who has yet to take a turn during this round. That ally may take their turn immediately after yours during this round.	
Peacock Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. The next time that creature performs an attack or casts an offensive (🔥) spell during this scene, that attack or spell must include you among its targets if possible.	
Phoenix Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to fire damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes fire .	
Satyr Dance	Instantaneous
Choose another creature that is able to see you. If that creature is already weak , they immediately suffer dazed .	
Unicorn Dance	Instantaneous
Choose an ally that is able to see you and has a Bond towards you: you and that ally both recover an amount of Hit Points equal to your current Dexterity die size. The restored amount increases by 5 Hit Points if you are level 20 or higher , or by 10 Hit Points if you are level 40 or higher .	
Yeti Dance	Until the start of your next turn
Choose one option: you gain Resistance to ice damage; or all damage dealt by your attacks and spells becomes ice .	

SYMBOLIST

ALSO: Calligrapher, Painter, Runemaker

*What good is a brush
if your heart is not
in the right place?*



There is great power within symbols and images, and no one knows this better than a **Symbolist**. Rather than a magical discipline, symbolism could be described as a study of how to weave supernatural energies into signs and icons: these may be paintings, runes, talismans and more.

Most Symbolists develop their skills through intense practice and meticulous study, but there are many who view this magical discipline as a way to freely express their artistic vision.

- ◆ Who or what taught you how to weave magic into symbols?
- ◆ Do you consider yourself more of a spellcaster or an artist?
- ◆ Are there many practicing your art, or are you the exception?
- ◆ What do your symbols look like, and how do you place them on creatures?



SYMBOLIST FREE BENEFITS

- ◆ Permanently increase your maximum Inventory Points by 2.

SYMBOLIST SKILLS

MAGIC SYMBOLS

[+3]

If an ally bears one of your **symbols**, that ally may perform the **Spell** action and destroy that symbol to cast a single spell among those **you** know, as long as it has a **total Mind Point cost equal to or lower than [SL × 10]** (that ally must still pay the MP cost).

MIRAGE

You gain the ability to perform Rituals of the **Ritualism** discipline; **additionally**, you may use **Ritualism** to create **sight-based illusions**.

PERSONAL TOUCH

[+5]

When a creature you can see that is bearing one of your **symbols** suffers damage or recovers Hit Points and/or Mind Points, you may have that creature suffer **[SL]** extra damage or recover **[SL]** additional Hit Points and/or Mind Points, respectively).

SYMBOLIC CONNECTION

You always know the exact direction in which to find any creature bearing one of your **symbols**, as long as that creature is within **2 travel days** of your position.

SYMBOLISM

[+5]

Each time you acquire this Skill, you learn **two symbols** (see next page).

You may have **up to [SL + 1] symbols active at the same time**; if you create more while at your limit, you must first choose and destroy some of your previous **symbols**.

You may perform the **Inventory** action and spend 2 Inventory Points to create a **symbol** you have learned and choose one option: apply that **symbol** to yourself; or apply that **symbol** to an ally you can see; **or** perform a **free attack** with a weapon you have equipped. This attack deals no damage, but you apply a copy of the chosen **symbol** to each enemy hit by the attack (each copy counts as a separate **symbol** towards your limit or **[SL + 1] active symbols**).

SYMBOLS

Symbols follow a set of special rules.

- ◆ A creature may **only bear one symbol at a time** – if they receive a new **symbol**, regardless of source, any previous **symbol** is destroyed.
- ◆ **Symbols** and their effects have unlimited durations until destroyed.
- ◆ If a Symbolist dies, each **symbol** they created is immediately and automatically destroyed.
- ◆ If a creature bearing a **symbol** dies, that **symbol** is also destroyed.

However, if the creature is a NPC that simply changes its form and statistics when reduced to 0 Hit Points, that does not remove the **symbol**: in short, the symbol is “narratively” tied to that specific character, not to their current manifestation and parameters.

- ◆ A Villain may, during a Game Master scene, spend 1 Ultima Point to destroy any number of **symbols** borne by themselves and by any of their allies that are present during that scene.

This is the only possible way to remove a **symbol** against the will of the Symbolist who created it, save for the use of an **opportunity** appropriate to the scene or an NPC Skill specifically created by the GM (but this should be done no more than two or three times per campaign).

- ◆ A Symbolist may destroy any number of their **symbols** at any time, no action required.
- ◆ If a **symbol** requires you to make a choice when it is created, that choice applies to all copies of the **symbol** created with that action (but does not affect any copies of that **symbol** created through previous actions).

For instance, if a Symbolist applies two **symbols of weakness (fire)** through the **Symbolism** Skill, combining it with an attack with the **multi (2)** property, the creatures who receive those **symbols** will suffer extra damage from **fire**. If shortly afterwards the Symbolist applies a **symbol of weakness (bolt)** on a third creature, the two previous creatures will still receive extra damage from **fire**, not **bolt**.

Remember that the maximum number of **symbols** you may have active at the same time is based on your Skill Level in **Symbolism**.

SYMBOL

Symbol of Binding

The **current** Attribute die sizes of the creature bearing this **symbol** can **never** be **higher** than that creature's corresponding **base** Attribute die sizes (this does **not** end any spells or effects, but it will negate their influence over the creature's Attributes).

Symbol of Creation

When the creature bearing this **symbol** needs to spend Inventory Points during a conflict, they may instead destroy this **symbol** to spend no Inventory Points.

Symbol of Despair

When the creature bearing this **symbol** recovers Hit Points and/or Mind Points during conflicts, instead they only recover **half** the normal amount of Hit Points and/or Mind Points, respectively.

Symbol of Destiny

After the creature bearing this **symbol** makes a Check, if you are able to see them, you may spend 1 Fabula Point to force that creature to reroll both dice. You may only do so once per Check, and only if the Result was not a **critical success** or **fumble**.

Symbol of Elements

When you create this **symbol**, choose a damage type: **air**, **bolt**, **dark**, **earth**, **fire**, **ice**, **light**, or **poison**. When the creature bearing this **symbol** deals damage to one or more creatures, if you can see the creature bearing this **symbol**, you may spend an amount of Mind Points equal to **one third of the total damage being inflicted to those creatures**. (including any sources of extra damage). If you do, all damage dealt this way changes type to the type chosen when you created this **symbol**.

Symbol of Enmity

As long as the creature bearing this **symbol** is in **Crisis**, any of that creature's enemies who are able to see them must include them among the targets of their attacks and offensive spells (⚡), if possible.

SYMBOL

Symbol of Flux

When you create this **symbol**, choose a status effect: **dazed**, **shaken**, **slow**, or **weak**. Then, choose one option: the creature bearing this **symbol** gains immunity to the chosen status effect; or the creature bearing this **symbol** loses immunity to the chosen status effect and cannot gain it.

Symbol of Forbiddance

When you create this symbol, choose an action type: **Attack**, **Guard**, **Objective**, **Spell**, or **Skill**. When the creature bearing this **symbol** performs the chosen action, they lose 5 Hit Points and 5 Mind Points (**before** performing that action). Both amounts increase to 10 if you are **level 20 or higher**, or to 20 if you are **level 40 or higher**.

Symbol of Growth

Spells with a **target** of “Up to three creatures” cast by the creature bearing this **symbol** have a **target** of “Up to four creatures” instead. The creature still needs to spend additional Mind Points for a fourth target.

Symbol of Metamorphosis

When you create this **symbol**, choose a Species: **beast**, **construct**, **demon**, **elemental**, **monster**, **plant**, or **undead**. The creature bearing this **symbol** is treated as belonging to the chosen Species for the sake of Skills and effects, instead of their normal Species (this does **not** otherwise alter any of the creature’s profile, such as their Affinities or any special rules they may have). This **symbol cannot** be applied to Player Characters.

Symbol of Prosperity

When the creature bearing this **symbol** spends 1 Fabula Point to **invoke a Trait or Bond**, they also receive 100 zenit.

Symbol of Protection

When you create this **symbol**, choose a damage type: **air**, **bolt**, **dark**, **earth**, **fire**, **ice**, **light**, or **poison**. The creature bearing this **symbol** gains Resistance to the chosen damage type.

SYMBOL

Symbol of Rebellion

If a **Villain** is present on the scene, any Opposed Checks made by the creature bearing this **symbol** trigger a **critical success** when both dice show the same number (as long as the Check is not a **fumble**).

Symbol of Rebirth

If the creature bearing this **symbol** is about to be reduced to 0 Hit Points, they may destroy this **symbol**: if they do, they are instead reduced to exactly 1 Hit Point.

Symbol of Revenge

When a creature in **Crisis** hits the creature bearing this **symbol** with an attack or offensive spell (⚡), the creature in **Crisis** recovers 5 Hit Points and 5 Mind Points.

Symbol of Sacrifice

When the creature bearing this **symbol** suffers damage, if you are able to see them, you may destroy this **symbol**: if you do, you suffer the same amount of damage instead of that creature.

Symbol of Sorcery

The total Mind Point cost of spells that target the creature bearing this **symbol** is reduced by 5 MP (to a minimum total cost of 5 MP). If a spell targets multiple creatures bearing this **symbol**, the effect will be **cumulative**.

Symbol of Truth

Checks performed to examine or locate the creature bearing this **symbol**, as well as Accuracy Checks and Magic Checks for attacks and offensive spells (⚡) that include the creature bearing this **symbol** among their targets, gain a +2 bonus. If an attack or spell targets multiple creatures bearing this **symbol**, the effect will be **cumulative**.

Symbol of Weakness

When you create this **symbol**, choose a damage type: **air**, **bolt**, **dark**, **earth**, **fire**, **ice**, **light**, or **poison**. The creature bearing this **symbol** suffers 5 extra damage from sources dealing damage of the chosen type.

HIGH FANTASY HEROIC SKILLS

The following Heroic Skills are added to the list in the **Core Rulebook** (page 232); all these Skills require mastery of a Class in order to be acquired.

LIST OF NEW HEROIC SKILLS

Heroic Skills with a Class mastery requirement

Arcane Mark	Sharpshooter, Symbolist, Weaponmaster	Improve spells' critical chance with arcane weapons.
Bimagus	Two of Elementalist, Entropist, and Spiritist	Cast one spell right after another, saving MP.
Blade Adept	Rogue, Weaponmaster	Gain bonuses with daggers and treat them as brawling, sword, and thrown weapons.
Bullet Break	Sharpshooter	Counterattack with firearms after using Crossfire .
Ceaseless Battlefield	Commander	Halve the MP cost of Commander Skills.
Clean Slate	Symbolist	Remove spells and status effects from creatures.
Double Arrow	Commander, Sharpshooter	Attack twice with bows .
Fast Rituals	Chimerist, Elementalist, Entropist, Spiritist	Reduce the number of sections for Ritual Clocks in conflicts.
Fleeting Moment	Weaponmaster	Add High Roll when you Counterattack with a sword .
Grand Summoning	Arcanist	Summon Arcana as creatures.
Hoplite	Commander, Guardian	Strengthen attacks when you fight with weapon and shield.
Iron Forest	Commander, Weaponmaster	Force enemies to spend MP to act after hitting with a spear .
Magic Guard	Chimerist, Elementalist, Entropist, Spiritist	Negate enemy spells while you are in Guard .

LIST OF NEW HEROIC SKILLS

Heroic Skills with a Class mastery requirement

Paso Doble	Dancer	Ignore the MP cost of Follow My Lead when you are in Crisis .
Power Chord	Chanter	Improve allies' critical success chance with songs.
Pulverizing Strike	Darkblade, Fury, Weaponmaster	Breach deals damage with heavy weapons.
Rising Tide	Fury, Weaponmaster	Gain benefits for consecutive attacks with brawling weapons.
Ritual Seals	Symbolist	Place Rituals into seals.
Showstopper	Dancer	Perform three dances , then take a temporary break.
Spider's Web	Fury, Weaponmaster	Attack twice with flails .
Swirling Swarm	Dancer, Fury, Sharpshooter	Gain benefits for consecutive attacks with thrown weapons.
Tabula Rasa	Commander	Your Skills cause HP loss.
Theme Song	Chanter	Gain a theme song with a variety of benefits.
Triple Slash	Dancer, Weaponmaster	Equip three daggers/swords and perform triple attacks.

ARCANE MARK

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Sharpshooter**, **Symbolist**, and **Weaponmaster**.

When you hit one or more creatures with an attack using a weapon that belongs to the **arcane** Category, the attack deals 5 extra damage and you may choose one of those creatures. If the next offensive spell (⚡) you cast during this scene **only** targets the chosen creature, its Magic Check will trigger a **critical success** if both dice show the same number (and the Check is not a **fumble**).

BIMAGUS

Requirements: you must have mastered **two or more** Classes among **Elementalist**, **Entropist**, and **Spiritist**, and your character must be **level 30 or higher**.

Once per turn during a conflict, if you have an **arcane** weapon equipped, you may use an action and spend **20 to 50 Mind Points** to perform the **Spell** action for free **twice**, casting two spells without needing to pay their MP costs. If you do, the two spells must have a **combined total MP cost equal to or lower than [20 + the amount of MP you spent to use this Skill]**, and the second spell must have a **total MP cost that is equal to or lower than half the total MP cost** of the first spell.

BLADE ADEPT

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Rogue** and **Weaponmaster**.

While you have one or more **melee dagger** weapons equipped, you gain a +1 bonus to Defense and Magic Defense, and you treat those weapons as also belonging to the **brawling, sword, and thrown** Categories for the purpose of Skills and effects.

Additionally, your attacks with weapons that belong to the **dagger** Category may target creatures that cannot normally be targeted by **melee** attacks.

BULLET BREAK

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Sharpshooter** Class.

After you negate a **ranged** attack with the **Crossfire** Skill, if the Result of the Accuracy Check was an **even number**, you may perform a **free attack** against the attacker with a **ranged firearm** weapon you have equipped. This attack must have that enemy as its **only** target; treat your **High Roll (HR)** as 0 when calculating damage dealt by it.

CEASELESS BATTLEFIELD

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Commander** Class.

The MP costs for your **Bishop's Edict**, **Charging Cavalry** and **King's Castle** are halved.

CLEAN SLATE

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Symbolist** Class.

You may use an action and spend up to 30 Mind Points to choose one creature you can see for every 5 MP spent this way. Each creature chosen this way recovers from all status effects and is no longer affected by any spells with a **duration** of “Scene” that were affecting them.

DOUBLE ARROW

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Commander** and **Sharpshooter**.

When you perform the **Attack** action with a **ranged** weapon that belongs to the **bow** Category, if you have **no other weapon equipped**, you may perform two separate attacks instead of one (against the same target or against different targets). If you do, both attacks follow the rules for **two-weapon fighting**: each attack loses the **multi** property and cannot gain it, and you treat the High Roll of each Accuracy Check as being equal to 0 when determining damage.

Note that this Heroic Skill **does not stack** with a custom weapon’s **quick** customization (using **Twin Arrows** with a **quick** bow doesn’t allow more than two attacks, in short).

FAST RITUALS

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Chimerist**, **Elementalist**, **Entropist**, and **Spiritist**.

When you initiate a Ritual during a conflict scene, its Ritual Clock is created with **two fewer sections** than normal, to a minimum of **four sections**.

FLEETING MOMENT

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Weaponmaster Class**, and must have acquired the **Counterattack** Skill.

When you perform a **Counterattack** using a **melee** weapon that belongs to the **sword** Category, you may add your High Roll to the damage dealt by the attack (you do not have to treat it as being 0).

GRAND SUMMONING

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Arcanist** Class, and your character must be **level 30 or higher**.

When you summon an Arcanum, you may decide to spend 1 Fabula Point and spend half of your current Hit Points (rounded down) to shape your lifeforce into a full manifestation of their power. If you do, the Arcanum manifests as a **soldier**-rank creature of the **demon** Species under your control (they count as an ally and have their own independent turn during conflicts – if you use this Skill during a conflict scene, the Arcanum joins the scene **at the end** of the current round). You also do not gain any of the **merge** benefits you would normally enjoy when summoning that Arcanum. The summoned creature has the following profile:

- ◆ **Level** is equal to your level (thus gaining the bonuses to Checks and damage listed under steps **8** on page **303** of the **Core Rulebook**).
- ◆ A **d10** in one Attribute of your choice, and a **d8** in all other Attributes.
- ◆ **Maximum Hit Points** equal to **[twice the creature's base Might die size, plus half of your maximum Hit Points]**. The creature has **no Mind Points**.
- ◆ Resistance to **two** damage types of your choice.
- ◆ The creature receives all the **merge** benefits the Arcanum would normally grant you when summoned (damage Affinities, immunity to status effects, increased Attribute sizes, etc.). If a **merge** benefit would cause the Arcanum to be dismissed, this will cause the summoned creature to vanish unless you spend 20 Mind Points.
- ◆ A **melee basic attack** whose Accuracy Check relies on **two different Attributes** of your choice and deals **[HR + 8] physical** damage. Choose **two different options**: the attack is a **ranged** attack; **or** it deals 4 extra damage; **or** it deals damage of a type other than **physical**; **or** the Accuracy Check relies on a **single Attribute**.
- ◆ The creature may perform the **Skill** action to produce one of the **dismiss** effects normally granted by that Arcanum, but doing so will cause the summoned creature to vanish unless you spend 20 Mind Points.

The following rules apply when you **Grand Summon** an Arcanum:

- ◆ The creature is always summoned at full Hit Points, with no status effects.
- ◆ The creature vanishes if it reaches 0 Hit Points, if you die, lose consciousness or leave the scene, or **if you summon or Grand Summon** an Arcanum again. The creature also vanishes when a scene ends, or if you simply command them to do so (this will **not** trigger the corresponding Arcanum's **dismiss** effect).
- ◆ Take note of all choices made for **Attributes** and **basic attack** during the first time **Summon** a given Arcanum: these choices will remain unchanged whenever you **Grand Summon** that same Arcanum again in the future.

*Argus lancers developed their own fighting style
inspired by the region's intricate forests.*

HOPLITE

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Commander** and **Guardian**.

As long as you have a **weapon** equipped in your **main hand slot** and a **shield** equipped in your **off-hand slot**, your attacks with that weapon deal 5 extra damage and you gain a +1 bonus to Defense.

This Skill **cannot** be combined with **custom weapons** with the **defence boost** customization (page 107), **nor** with the **Dual Shieldbearer** Skill (page 197 of the **Core Rulebook**).

IRON FOREST

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Commander** and **Weaponmaster**.

After you hit one or more creatures with a **melee** attack using a weapon that belongs to the **spear** Category, if you have **no other weapon equipped**, you may spend 20 Mind Points and choose one of those creatures. If you do so, the attack deals **half** the normal amount of damage to each of its targets, and you choose one type of action among the following: **Attack**, **Guard**, **Objective**, **Spell**, or **Skill**. From now on, the chosen creature must spend 10 Mind Points whenever they wish to perform that type of action. If they can't, they must perform a different type of action. This effect lasts until the start of your next turn, or until you use this Skill again.

MAGIC GUARD

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Chimerist**, **Elementalist**, **Entropist**, and **Spiritist**.

When you perform the **Guard** action, if you choose **not** to provide cover to another creature, you gain the following benefit until the start of your next turn: when a creature you can see casts a spell, after that creature pays for the spell's MP cost, you may spend an amount of Mind Points equal to **[10 + the spell's total MP cost]** in order to completely stop the casting of the spell and negate its effects (the spell isn't cast, but the creature is still considered to have spent their action).

PASO DOBLE

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Dancer** Class, and must have acquired the **Follow My Lead** Skill.

While you are in **Crisis**, you ignore the MP cost for your **Follow My Lead** Skill.

POWER CHORD

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Chanter** Class.

When you sing a **verse** with **medium** or **high volume**, you may double the **verse's** cost in Mind Points, **or** spend 1 Fabula Point. If you do, you and every ally that is able to hear you gain the following benefit until the start of your next turn: your Accuracy Checks trigger a **critical success** when both dice show the same number (as long as the Check is not a **fumble**).

PULVERIZING STRIKE

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Darkblade**, **Fury**, and **Weaponmaster**.

After you hit a creature with **Breach**, if you attacked with a **melee** weapon that belongs to the **heavy** Category, you may have the attack deal damage equal to your **High Roll (HR)** instead of dealing no damage. Any source of extra damage, including the extra damage from the third option of the **Breach** Skill itself, still applies – ignore the damage dealt by the weapon.

RISING TIDE

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Fury** and **Weaponmaster**.

When you perform a **melee** attack using a weapon that belongs to the **brawling** Category, **if you have no martial armor and no shields equipped**, you gain **1 Bravery Point**.

Your **melee** attacks using weapons that belong to the **brawling** Category deal extra damage equal to your current **Bravery Points**.

At the end of each scene, **or** if you have **5 or more Bravery Points** at the end of your turn, you **must** spend all your accumulated **Bravery Points** and recover 10 Hit Points and Mind Points.

RITUAL SEALS

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Symbolist** Class.

When you perform a Ritual outside a conflict scene, if that Ritual has a **total cost equal to or lower than 60 Mind Points**, you may stop the process immediately before the Magic Check and store the Ritual's effect inside a **Ritual seal** placed on a surface you can touch. If you do, name a **condition** – this can be anything from “when I enter **Crisis**” to “as soon as I snap my fingers”. When that condition is met, the **seal** vanishes and the Ritual is unleashed at the **seal's** location: you perform the Magic Check and resolve the effects as normal (even if you are unconscious or not present on the scene).

You may only have **one Ritual seal** active at the same time – if you die or create a new **Ritual seal**, the one you previously created will vanish.

SHOWSTOPPER

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Dancer** Class.

At the start of your turn during a conflict, if you have no **martial armor** equipped, you may spend 1 Fabula Point to immediately perform **up to three different dances** among those you know, in the order you prefer and without paying their MP cost. If you do, you **cannot perform dances in any way** until the end of your next turn..

SPIDER'S WEB

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Weaponmaster** Class.

When you perform the **Attack** action with a **melee** weapon that belongs to the **flail** Category, if you have **no other weapon equipped**, you may perform two separate attacks instead of one (against the same target or against different targets). If you do, both attacks follow the rules for **two-weapon fighting**: each attack loses the **multi** property and cannot gain it, and you treat the High Roll of each Accuracy Check as being equal to 0 when determining damage.

Note that this Heroic Skill **does not stack** with a custom weapon's **quick** customization (using **Spider's Web** with a **quick** flail doesn't allow more than two attacks, in short).

SWIRLING SWARM

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Dancer**, **Fury**, and **Sharpshooter**.

When you perform a **ranged** attack using a weapon that belongs to the **thrown** Category, **if you have no martial armor and no shields equipped**, you gain **1 Momentum Point**.

You may never have more than **5 Momentum Points**.

Your **ranged** attacks using weapons that belong to the **thrown** Category deal extra damage equal to your current **Momentum Points**.

When a creature hits you with an attack targeting your **Defense**, you **must** spend all your accumulated **Momentum Points** and increase your Defense score by an equal amount against that attack (this may turn the hit into a miss).

You also lose all **Momentum Points** at the end of each scene.

TABULA RASA

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Commander** Class.

After you use **Bishop's Edict** or **King's Castle** Skills, if you are in **Crisis**, you may have every enemy creature present on the scene lose 10 Hit Points. This amount increases to 20 Hit Points if you are **level 20 or higher**, or 30 Hit Points if you are **level 40 or higher**.



THEME SONG

Requirements: you must have mastered the **Chanter** Class.

When you acquire this Skill, you obtain a **theme song** – give it a name and assign it a **key** from the ones you have learned (you can also choose a real-world song for this).

Once per conflict scene after you sing a **verse** in your theme song's key, you may start your **theme song** – if it's a real song, it's a great idea to play it in the background!

While singing your theme song, you gain the following benefits:

- ◆ You gain Resistance to **【theme song's key type】** damage.
- ◆ When you deal **【theme song's key type】** damage, you deal 5 extra damage and the type of that damage cannot be changed.
- ◆ The MP cost for singing **verses** in the same key as your **theme song** is halved. This benefit applies to you and to **any** of your allies who are able to sing **verses**.

The **theme song** lasts until the end of the scene or until you leave the scene, die, or fall unconscious. The **theme song** also ends as soon as you sing a **verse** in a **key** other than the **theme song's**, if your turn ends and you have not sung any **verse**, or if another character starts their **theme song**.

TRIPLE SLASH

Requirements: you must have mastered one or more Classes among **Dancer** and **Weaponmaster**.

As long as you have a one-handed **melee** weapon that belongs to the **dagger** or **sword** Categories equipped in each of your normal hand slots, you may treat your **armor** slot as if it were a second **off-hand** slot. You may only use this special slot to equip a onehanded **melee** weapon that belongs to the **dagger** or **sword** Categories – note that the **Monkey Grip** Skill **does not** turn two-handed weapons into one-handed weapons, and thus cannot be used in combination with **Triple Slash**.

When you perform the **Attack** action while you have three **daggers** and/or **swords** equipped, you may attack once with each weapon. This follows the normal rules for **two-weapon fighting**: each of the three attacks loses the **multi** property and cannot gain it, and you treat the **High Roll (HR)** of each Accuracy Check as being equal to 0 when determining damage.



ANTAGONISTS

This book's fourth and final chapter delves into the creation of high fantasy enemy NPCs – especially Villains. Game Masters can combine it with similar advice from the **Core Rulebook** (mostly from page 292 onwards) to plan riveting clashes for all game levels. As usual, you can use the material as is or adapt it to your liking by following the advice below.

HIGH FANTASY VILLAINS

An introductory section with tips and advice for creating and playing pivotal antagonists in the high fantasy style.

VILLAIN EXAMPLES

Five different enemy NPCs – one each for levels 10, 20, 30, 40, and 60 – that make ideal high fantasy Villains. For each, you'll find this information:

- ◆ **History.** The Villain's base concept and possible backstory.
- ◆ **Profile.** The Villain's statistics, as described on page 320 of the **Core Rulebook**.
- ◆ **Tactics.** The Villain's preferred combat tactics.
- ◆ **Extra content.** One or more additional ideas, including tips for modifying the Villain's profile, possible supporting enemies, and even additional phases (**Core Rulebook**, page 301) you can use during conflicts.

These Villains were designed to spark the Game Master's imagination and assume a group of **4 well-rounded PCs**. Remember that some of their abilities might not conform to the standard cost for NPC Skills (**Core Rulebook**, page 303) and that you'll likely need to tweak these Villains before including them in your campaigns. To balance things out, consider your Player Characters' capacities and then modify any opposing **Affinities, immunities to status effects, damage types**, or other parameters that could be frustrating to deal with or unsuitable for your group's campaign.

HIGH FANTASY VILLAINS

When you create a high fantasy antagonist, the information on page 254 of the **Core Rulebook** is an excellent starting point, but there are a few extra things to remember, just as there are for Player Characters.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Just like protagonists, high fantasy Villains are deeply connected to a specific theme that informs their every move.

- ◆ **Extreme worldviews.** These antagonists make no compromises, driven as they are by apparently unshakable beliefs that justify their actions. The PCs will likely need to defeat them before they can have a conversation – or perhaps the antagonists might launch into a monologue about their ambitions after cornering the heroes.
- ◆ **Custom built.** This concept from the **Core Rulebook** is crucial: high fantasy Villains should be bound tightly to the Player Characters' goals, hopes, and fears.
- ◆ **Emotional stories.** High fantasy Villains should cause the protagonists to feel strong emotions, including frustration, rage, fear, and even admiration and pity – anything goes, as long as it's not indifference. The most devious Villains may even rely on the PCs' reactions to manipulate them at will, using them as pawns – this can be a great twist, but best to rely on it only **once or twice** per campaign.

It might seem challenging to properly portray a complex Villain. Fear not – the trick is making the most of these two techniques:

- ◆ **Game Master scenes.** These scenes let you show the Villains interacting with their underlings, planning moves, and maybe confessing their ambitions, doubts, and pains to someone they trust. It's the best way to show a Villain's many facets or to reinforce the feeling that their powers make them truly unstoppable unless the protagonists actively thwart their efforts.
- ◆ **Conflicts.** When the Villain is on the scene, their actions and abilities should say something about who they are: a great warrior's battle lust, the careful scheming of a prince, or a sorcerer's devastating magic are just some examples of details that can enrich the story, making Villains feel like more than mere powered-up NPCs. Also, Villains should speak **freely and with cutting honesty** during conflicts, showing the Players their true colors.



(ALMOST) RELATABLE MOTIVATIONS

High fantasy antagonists are capable of truly horrific actions, but their motivations should be almost understandable – though never justified! In some memorable cases, these opponents can even become **tragic antiheroes** or **unexpected allies** in the battle against the “final foe”, the true Villain who was hidden in the shadows until then.

Example: an empress invading neighboring realms in a desperate attempt to gather resources to fend off a terrible demon; a sorcerer ready to commit any vileness to go back in time and stop an event that – they think – doomed the world.

If you want to highlight your most complex antagonists, ensure that **not all Villains are misunderstood individuals waiting for redemption**. Sometimes they are just cruel people who use their misfortunes as justifications, and manipulate others out of curiosity or caprice. After all, these are also strong motivations that could dovetail nicely with your Player Characters’ **Themes**.

A FACE FROM THE PAST

Tying a Villain to a Player Character’s past can provide an exciting twist and change the group’s expectations.

Typical examples are **the return of a mentor figure** who has now become a fearsome adversary or the discovery that an antagonist is really a protagonist’s **relative, friend, or love interest**.

In these cases, it’s a good idea to ask the Player whose character is involved in the twist to add details about their past relations with the antagonist, perhaps even playing out the revelation as a flashback scene.

These scenes tend to be very intense and strongly affect the protagonists’ psychology – the Game Master should encourage Players to tweak and modify the “grand reveal” so it doesn’t derail or sabotage their character’s path of personal growth.

In other words, plot twists work best when they **reinforce** a character’s narrative arc instead of overturning it.

UNMISTAKABLE LOOKS

Style is a vital feature of all high fantasy Villains, including how they dress, their equipment, the magic they wield, their signature colors, and so on.

These features often extend to a Villain's **underlings** and **henchmen** – truly self-referential behavior!

- ◆ A beast encircled by flower-like sigils, similar to those that appear when the forest witch casts her spells.
- ◆ War golems with large imperial crests on their chests.
- ◆ Airships painted a vivid red, to match their admiral's hair.

High fantasy antagonists tend to be flamboyant, leaving many traces of their passing. Conversely, a Villain who sticks to the shadows or has a sidekick with a very different style from their own provides an interesting exception that enriches the story and says something about them.

WHO'S AFRAID OF THE LIGHT?

Interestingly, high fantasy stories often move beyond the easy juxtaposition of “good” light and “evil” darkness. Truth is, both of these powers can be used for terrible deeds, and using one or the other is not an obvious sign of one's morals.

For example, **Cerine** (page **178**) is a powerful wielder of the dark arts who is moved by desperation, and is willing to engage in discussion if the Player Characters show kindness. On the other hand, **Maximilian** (page **184**) appears as an honorable adversary but hides his insecurity and aggressiveness.

This perspective makes characters more layered and complex, but it may not be what your group wants from **Fabula Ultima**. Sometimes it's perfectly fine to decide that light and darkness have moral implications – in these cases, a Player Character using abilities that deal **dark** damage will become a powerful narrative statement to explore.

BATTLING THE DIVINE

Following from the previous point, entities wielding divine powers aren't necessarily guardians and protectors of humanity in high fantasy tales. Quite the opposite: the **supreme Villain** at the end of a campaign often has divine features.

The Villain's divine powers could be an innate ability or something they developed over the course of the campaign, potentially through an **escalation** (**Core Rulebook**, page 102).

When dealing with these entities, keep three things in mind:

- ◆ **Power source.** Where do the entities' incredible powers come from? Are they born of obsessions, awful desires, or from the belief of an entire people?
The **Gods and Demons** section (page 71) delves deeper into these questions.
- ◆ **Connections.** What is the connection between the entity and the Player Characters? Is it the ancient goddess who protects their homeland? Perhaps a millennia-old threat that the heroes mistakenly awoke?
In any case, foreshadow the existence of this adversary a few times during the campaign using **clues** and **omens**, and make sure that its motivations are at least partially connected to the protagonists' actions.
- ◆ **Mythic and religious references.** The myths and beliefs of the real world have inspired some of the most powerful JRPG antagonists – if you want to follow suit, be mindful of how you represent these entities.

When a campaign includes a divine antagonist, the “true happy ending” usually only happens once the world's people resume their normal life, finally free to peacefully coexist without supernatural influences. The entity might even realize that wanting to dominate the world was a mistake, and decide to accompany the people toward a new future – or sacrifice itself to ensure they have one.

EILEEN, PIRATE QUEEN

Any sailor worth their salt knows that there are three forces of nature to be wary of when sailing upon the Entegard Sea: storms, sea monsters, and **Eileen**. An infamous pirate with an unquenchable thirst for gold, her origins are shrouded in mystery. Some say she was born a noble, but fell into piracy out of choice or necessity. Some say she is the princess of a fallen kingdom. Some say people should shut up and keep rowing, or she'll catch up to them.

Whatever her story, it's hard to deny Eileen's natural gift for battle, as well as her powerful charisma – her sailors are fiercely loyal, and will follow her to hell and back. The pirate queen shares no such feelings: her first priority is her own safety, with profit being a close second. The needs of her allies are a very distant third, and anything else is too low to warrant a number.

Eileen might be swayed into serving a just cause if she can turn a profit. However, anyone who enlists her aid should sleep with one eye open – preferably the one that can see her deadly harpoon.



EILEEN'S TACTICS

During combat, Eileen uses flexible tactics and coordinates her crew. Her transforming weapon starts in **harpoon** form.

- ◆ **On her first turn every round**, Eileen uses **Strike Now!** to make one of her allies attack, unless she is alone or has no Mind Points, in which case she attacks using her weapon's current form instead.
- ◆ **On her second turn**, Eileen strikes with her weapon. If her weapon is in **harpoon** form and there are **flying** opponents, she uses **Soaring Strike** – provided she has the necessary Mind Points – to ground them.
- ◆ **On her third turn**, Eileen uses **Soaring Strike** if her weapon is in **harpoon** form and she has enough MP, otherwise she simply attacks with her weapon's current form.

After this routine, Eileen **changes her weapon form** – don't forget the **harpoon** form gives her +2 Defense.

Eileen **always** uses the **opportunities** produced by her Checks to let a **Salamander** or **Cryomander** attack if they are present. If she rolls a double on her Accuracy Check, she **always** applies her unique ability, **Lady of Fortune**, to transform it into a **critical success**, unleashing her loyal lizards against the unlucky foe.

Eileen always saves 1 Ultima Point for Escaping. If cornered, she will ask the PCs to let her go in exchange for treasure or information, but if this option fails, she spends her last Ultima Point to escape amid a barrage of cannon fire.

During non-combat conflicts, Eileen relies on her **Charismatic Presence** as much as possible, which is why she is rarely seen without her crew. However, if things aren't going her way, she has no qualms about relying on brute force instead – that's what she excels at, after all!

EILEEN (Champion 3)

Lv 10 ♦ HUMANOID

Traits: authoritarian, charismatic, cunning, rebellious.

DEX d8	INS d8	MIG d8	WLP d8	HP	180 ♦ 90	MP	120	Init. 12		
DEF +3/+1	M. DEF +1		 RS	 VU				 RS		 VU

Equipment: fox garb (Core Rulebook, page 281), revolver-harpoon (transforming custom weapon; form I: **spear, melee, defense boost, powerful**; form II: **firearm, quick, ranged**; 400 zenit).

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Harpoon (form I)** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +4 ♦ [HR + 10] physical damage.
- ✦ **Revolver (form II)** ♦ [DEX + INS] +4 ♦ [HR + 5] physical damage. When Eileen performs the **Attack** action with her **Revolver**, she can perform two separate attacks. If she does, apply the rules for **two-weapon fighting** (Core Rulebook, page 69) to both attacks.
As long as Eileen is in **Crisis**, all damage dealt by this attack becomes **fire**.

SPELLS

- ★ **Soaring Strike** ♦ 10 MP ♦ **Self** ♦ **Instantaneous**.
Eileen makes a **free attack** with her **Harpoon**. This attack deals 5 extra damage and can target creatures that can only be reached with **ranged** attacks. If the attack hits a **flying** creature, Eileen can force them to land immediately.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ⚙ **Strike Now!** ♦ Eileen may use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to choose a single ally she can see. That ally immediately performs a **free attack** with one of their **basic attacks**.

SPECIAL RULES

- Calm Seas** ♦ As long as Eileen is **not in Crisis**, all her allies present on the scene gain a +2 bonus to Accuracy Checks and Magic Checks.
- Charismatic Presence** ♦ When Eileen succeeds in an Opposed Check, if that Check allows her to fill or erase one or more sections of a Clock and she can currently rely on her **charisma** or her **crew**, she may fill or erase 1 additional section of that Clock.
- Fox Garb** ♦ While wearing this armor, Eileen is immune to **slow**.
- Lady of Fortune** ♦ After Eileen performs an Accuracy Check, if both dice show the same number and it's not a **fumble**, she may trigger a **critical success**. If she does, treat her **High Roll** as being equal to 0 when determining damage.
- Stormy Seas** ♦ As long as Eileen is **in Crisis**, she gains immunity to **shaken** and loses her Vulnerability to **poison** damage.

*“What’s mine is mine,
and what’s yours... well, that’s mine too!”*

ALLY TACTICS

Eileen may be aided by **salamanders**, **cryomanders**, and **pirates**.

- ◆ **Salamanders** use **Burning Breath** during their turn, or **Burning Bite** if they are out of Mind Points. When using **Burning Bite**, they prefer to target PCs without status effects or with high HP.
- ◆ **Cryomanders** use **Freezing Breath** during their turn if they have enough Mind Points. Otherwise, they use **Freezing Bite** or **Guard** to protect Eileen if she is in **Crisis**. When attacking with **Freezing Bite**, they prefer to target PCs suffering from **slow**.
- ◆ **Pirates** use a **Saber** in the rounds when Eileen uses her **Revolver**, and the **Pistol** when Eileen uses the **Harpoon**. If Eileen is in **Crisis**, the pirates use **Hang On, Boss!** to heal her. During non-combat conflicts, they use **Braggard** to strengthen Eileen and weaken her foes.

If Eileen falls, her allies cover her **escape** – if she uses an Ultima Point – or otherwise just stop fighting.



SALAMANDER

LV 10 ◆ BEAST

Fierce and fiery, salamanders are among Eileen’s best allies, and she never travels without one.

Typical Traits: flesh-eater, loyal, trained, vicious.

DEX d8	INS d8	MIG d10	WLP d6	HP	70 ◆ 35	MP	50	Init. 13
DEF +0	M. DEF +0	🗡️	🌀	👁️	👂	🌀 IM	❄️ VU	☠️

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✂️ **Burning Bite** ◆ **[DEX + MIG] +1** ◆ **[HR + 5]** fire damage and the target suffers **slow** and **shaken**.

SPELLS

- ★ **Burning Breath** ⚡ ◆ **[INS + WLP] +1** ◆ **5 MP** ◆ **One creature** ◆ **Instantaneous**.
The target suffers **[HR + 10]** fire damage.

SPECIAL RULES

Opportunist ◆ When an ally of the salamander triggers a **critical success**, they can spend the **opportunity** to grant the salamander a **free attack** with **Burning Bite**.



CRYOMANDER

Lv 10 ♦ BEAST

Eileen and her crew use these stout, icy-breathed lizards as guards. They have quite the appetite.

Typical Traits: flesh-eater, loyal, trained, vicious.

DEX d8	INS d8	MIG d10	WLP d6	HP	70 ♦ 35	MP	50	Init. 9	
DEF +2	M. DEF +1						VU	IM	

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Freezing Bite** ♦ [DEX+ MIG] +1 ♦ [HR + 5] ice damage. Deals 5 extra damage against slow targets.

SPELLS

- ★ **Freezing Breath** ⚡ ♦ [INS + WLP] +1 ♦ 5 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Instantaneous. The target suffers [HR + 10] ice damage.

SPECIAL RULES

- Bodyguard** ♦ When the cryomander uses the **Guard** action to provide **cover** to an ally, that ally gains Resistance to all damage types until the start of the cryomander's next turn.
- Opportunist** ♦ When an ally of the cryomander triggers a **critical success**, they can spend the opportunity to grant the cryomander a **free attack** with **Freezing Bite**.

ONE WORLD, MANY PIRATES

Eileen and her crew were designed to fit a maritime context but you can also use their statistics for sky or sand pirates. In these cases, consider the following:

- ♦ **How do they move.** If their setting is not oceanic, what do they ride? Airships? Trained, floating titans? Colossal sandworms?
- ♦ **Change the crew's looks.** You can quickly turn bandanas, sabers, and pistols into aviator goggles, wrenches, and grappling hooks.
- ♦ **Modify the creatures that accompany them.** Instead of salamanders and cryomanders, the crew might be aided by winged or subterranean creatures. In most cases, all you need to do is change the creatures' Affinities and the type of damage they deal.



PIRATE

Lv 10 ♦ HUMANOID

Eileen's crew, ready to lay down their lives for her. After all, sailing with the Pirate Queen is no small feat.

Typical Traits: brave, insightful, loyal, noisy.

DEX d8	INS d8	MIG d8	WLP d8	HP	60 ♦ 30	MP	50	Init. 13
DEF +0	M. DEF +2		RS RS				VU	

Equipment: pistol, saber (like a **bronze sword**), silk shirt.

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✂ **Saber** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +4 ♦ [HR + 6] physical damage.
- 🔫 **Pistol** ♦ [DEX + INS] +4 ♦ [HR + 8] physical damage.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ⚙ **Hang On, Boss!** ♦ If Eileen is present on the scene and in **Crisis**, the pirate can use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to have her recover 10 Hit Points.

SPECIAL RULES

Braggart ♦ When the pirate performs the **Hinder** action to inflict the **slow** or **shaken** status effects, they get a +3 bonus to their Check.

THE QUARTERMASTER

If Eileen plays a significant role in the campaign, the group will likely face her crew before they meet her. In this case, you can plan an elite pirate variant to use as the ship's **quartermaster**.

Here are some tips on how to spice up the encounter:

- ♦ Use the bonus Skill granted by the **elite** rank to add **multi (2)** to the **Saber** attack. The saber itself could be replaced with a **rare weapon**.
- ♦ Change the quartermaster's Affinities so they're not the same as the rest of the crew's.
- ♦ Other pirates can use **Hang On, Boss!** on the quartermaster; the quartermaster cannot use this ability but can inflict a status effect with the **Pistol** shot – **dazed** or **shaken** are excellent choices.

FLAME DRAGON

Historically, heroes and **dragons** have had complicated relationships – there are as many dragon slayers as there are dragon riders. Be it a friend or foe, an encounter with a dragon often marks a milestone in any hero's tale.

Typical encounters with dragons see the heroes keeping their distance, preparing for the moment when they're discovered. Dragons are ancient creatures deeply tied to magic, so each has their own personality and desires. Depending on their demeanor, they may be open to conversation, giving the characters information and even aid, in exchange for something they think valuable: riches, knowledge, an offering or sacrifice, or sometimes a simple witticism.

Lastly, one should never trespass on a dragon's lair uninvited – dragons are known to be fiercely territorial, and do not suffer intruders lightly. Conversely, receiving an invitation from a dragon is a sign of deep trust... or it could be a deadly trap.



FLAME DRAGON'S TACTICS

This dragon is a formidable foe and is used to battling multiple several opponents at once, as is clear from their tactics.

- ◆ **On their first turn** in the first round, the flame dragon uses **Thundering Roar** to inflict the **shaken** status effect on as many foes as possible. On their first turn of other rounds, they use **Gift of Flame** to enchant an enemy weapon, making it useless. The dragon first targets weapons dealing **ice** damage. If there are none, they pick one randomly. If they lack Mind Points, the dragon uses this turn to protect themselves with the **Guard** action.
- ◆ **On their second turn**, the flame dragon attacks with **Draconic Breath** if they are airborne and have enough Mind Points. If not, they use **Rending Claws**.
- ◆ **On their third turn**, the flame dragon attacks with **Piercing Fangs**.
- ◆ **On their fourth turn**, the flame dragon attacks with **Draconic Breath** if they have sufficient Mind Points, otherwise they use **Rending Claws**.

The flame dragon should always pick their targets randomly: not because they're incapable of strategy, but to give the feeling of facing a massive force of nature.

Also, remember that, despite being melee attacks, **Rending Claws** and **Piercing Fangs** do not expose the flame dragon to **Counterattacks** (**Core Rulebook**, page 219) if the flame dragon is flying – unless the attacked character is also flying or armed with **melee** weapons that can target flying creatures.

If the flame dragon is fighting outside their lair, they spend an Ultima Point to safely leave the scene as soon as they fall to **90 HP or less**. If fought inside their lair, however, they defend it until their very last breath.

In non-combat conflicts, the flame dragon relies on their bulk and ability to fly to dominate the scene. In social situations, their **Reverential Fear** and deep knowledge make them nearly impossible to debate with: cowed or humbled, most people will simply do as the dragon command, without much resistance. If facing more valiant, the flame dragon does not hesitate to intimidate them with their **Thunderous Roar**.

FLAME DRAGON (Champion 4)

Lv 20 ♦ MONSTER

Traits: ancient, colossal, territorial, ruthless.

DEX d8	INS d8	MIG d10	WLP d8	HP	360 ♦ 180	MP	120	Init. 13
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DEF +1	M. DEF +2									
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BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Piercing Fangs** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +2 ♦ [HR + 15] physical damage.
- ✦ **Rending Claws** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +2 ♦ [HR + 10] physical damage. If the flame dragon is in **Crisis**, this attack gains **multi (2)**.

SPELLS

- ★ **Draconic Breath** ⚡ ♦ [MIG + WLP] +2 ♦ 10 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Instantaneous.
The target suffers [HR + 15] fire damage. This spell deals 5 extra damage to **shaken** targets.
- ★ **Thundering Roar** ♦ 20 MP ♦ Special ♦ Instantaneous.
The flame dragon chooses any number of creatures they can see: each of those creatures suffers **shaken**.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ⚙ **Gift of Flame** ♦ The flame dragon may use one action and spend 10 Mind Points to choose a weapon equipped by a creature they can see: all damage dealt by that weapon becomes **fire**. This effect lasts until the end of the scene, or until the flame dragon uses **Gift of Flame** again.

SPECIAL RULES

Draconic Vitality ♦ When the flame dragon enters **Crisis** for the first time in a scene, they recover 20 Hit Points, recover from all status effects, lose the **Hardened Scales** special rule, and increase their **Might** die size by one until the end of the scene.

Flying ♦ See the **Core Rulebook**, page 307.

Fuel to the Fire ♦ When the dragon loses **30 or more Hit Points** from a single source, their next use of **Draconic Breath** will deal 5 extra damage. This effect stacks – every time a source causes the dragon to lose **30 or more HP**, the damage of the next **Draconic Breath** will increase by 5 – until they finally unleash **Draconic Breath**.

Hardened Scales ♦ As long as they are airborne, the flame dragon has Resistance to all damage types except **ice**.

Rain of Fire ♦ As long as the flame dragon is **not in Crisis**, the cost of **Draconic Breath** becomes “10 x T MP”, and its **target** becomes “Up to two creatures”.

Reverential Fear ♦ **Shaken** creatures suffer a -2 penalty to Accuracy Checks and Opposed Checks performed against the flame dragon.

*“Intruders who trespass upon my home:
your lives are forfeit!”*

OTHER DRAGONS

If a flame dragon doesn't fit the needs of the group, you can modify the creature's profile in several ways. Here are some examples:

- ◆ **Ice dragon.** Vulnerable to **fire** damage and Immune to **ice**; swap all references to **fire** and **ice** in the fire dragon's profile. **Fuel to the Fire** could become **Undying Winter**, **Gift of Flame** turns into **Gift of Ice**, and so on.
- ◆ **Stone dragon.** Vulnerable to **air** damage and Immune to **earth**. You'll need to rework several sections of the profile to emphasize the connection to the **earth**. This dragon might not be able to **fly**, but they could **Absorb earth** damage instead. You may connect **Hardened Scales** to not being in **Crisis**, instead of being airborne.
- ◆ **Storm dragon.** Vulnerable to **earth** damage and Immune to **bolt**. You'll need to tweak several sections of the profile to emphasize the connection to **lightning**. You could swap **Hardened Scales** for **Celestial Tyrant**: the effect is the same, but the storm dragon **does not** lose the ability to fly when in **Crisis**.
- ◆ **Divine dragon.** Vulnerable to **dark** damage and Immune to **light**. You'll need to rework several sections of the profile to emphasize the connection to **light**. **Fuel to the Fire** could become **Draconsecration**: when the divine dragon deals **light** damage to a creature, that creature receives the **Holywyrms' Brand**. When a marked creature is struck again, the **brand** vanishes, and the attacker recovers 10 Hit Points.



CERINE, MOURNFUL LADY

Long ago, in the small fiefdom of Tarranorn, lived a pair of sisters hailed as heroes. **Cecilia** was the greatest swordmaster of the realm, while **Cerine** was a priestess unrivaled in the use of sacred magic. Together, the two elevated Tarranorn to a great power, carving their deeds into the annals of history. People near and far lauded them as chosen by Fate, destined to usher in a new age of glory for the world.

Unfortunately, Fate is a fickle patron, and the sisters' growing popularity brought the King's mistrust upon them. Betrayed by the one she had sworn to serve, Cecilia met an ignominious end in a nameless mire, cursing her fate to the last breath. Racked with grief, Cerine left her station in the kingdom, letting it collapse under the weight of its own corruption.

Cerine has dedicated her life to bringing her sister back, turning her talents to the dark arts and performing ghastly rites to become a lich. She still strives to breathe life back into her beloved "Ceci". In turn, Cecilia's ghost stands by her sister – an unshakable guardian, striking down all that oppose her "Ceri".



CERINE'S TACTICS

Usually, **Cerine** does not disturb **Cecilia's** rest unless necessary. Instead, several **spectral servants** (page 182) accompany her during the first encounters with the PCs.

- ◆ **During these first encounters**, Cerine uses her **first and third turn** of each round to cast **Lux** against as many targets as possible, changing its damage type to **dark** with **All Light Casts a Shadow** to avoid possible Affinities. In her **second turn**, Cerine casts **Forced Tribute**, **Dispel**, or **Enrage** if her opponents rely on spells.
- ◆ The **spectral servants** always use the **Guard** action to **cover Cerine**; then, they answer melee attacks with their **Rage Claw**.

If the PCs corner Cerine in her hideout, she summons her sister Cecilia – all spectral servants in the scene are **consumed** by the evocation and disappear.

- ◆ **In these cases**, Cerine moves to a support role: she uses her **first turn** of each **odd** round to cast **Acceleration** on Cecilia and the **first turn** of each **even** round to cast **Dispel** or **Enrage**. If she runs out of Mind Points, she simply attacks with **Heart of the Goddess** instead.

On her **second turn**, Cerine casts **Forced Tribute**; on her third turn, she uses **Soulshift** to help Cecilia recover as many MP as possible, or she spends 1 Ultima Point to recover Mind Points instead.

If Cecilia is defeated and the PCs do not spare her, Cerine is overcome by grief and begins attacking repeatedly with Lux; however, if the heroes show mercy, Cerine is deeply touched (see **A Light in Darkness**, page 183).

- ◆ **Cecilia** always uses **Undying Devotion** to protect her sister. During her turns, she always uses all available actions to strike with **Martyr's Slash**, making sure to include whoever last harmed her or her sister among the targets. If Cerine and Cecilia are suffering from **four or more status effects** combined, Cecilia uses one of her actions to cast **Cleanse**.

Cerine will rarely summon Cecilia outside her hideout and will spend 1 Ultima Point to **Escape** the scene when defeated. When fighting with Cecilia by her side, Cerine will not back down.

CERINE (Champion 3)

LV 30 ♦ UNDEAD

Traits: bitter, devout, jaded, priestess.

DEX d8	INS d10	MIG d6	WLP d10	HP	270 ♦ 135	MP	220	Init. 14
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DEF +2	M. DEF +4				IM	VU	RS			IM
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Equipment: heart of the goddess (cultes des ghoules but deals **light** damage – **Core Rulebook**, page 270), holy cloak (sage robe with Resistance to **fire** and **light** damage; 1200 z).

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Heart of the Goddess** ♦ $[\text{INS} + \text{INS}] + 3$ ♦ $[\text{HR} + 11]$ **light** damage. When Cerine hits one or more creatures with this weapon, she recovers 5 Hit Points.

SPELLS

- ★ **Acceleration** ♦ 20 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Scene.
The target can perform an additional action during each of their turns. Once the target has performed a total of two additional actions granted by this spell, this spell ends.
- ★ **Dispel** ♦ 10 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Instantaneous.
If the target is affected by one or more spells with a **duration** of “Scene”, they are no longer affected by any of those spells instead.
- ★ **Enrage** ⚡ ♦ $[\text{MIG} + \text{WLP}] + 6$ ♦ 10 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Instantaneous.
The targets suffers **enraged** and cannot perform the **Guard** or **Spell** actions during their next turn.
- ★ **Forced Tribute** ⚡ ♦ $[\text{MIG} + \text{WLP}] + 6$ ♦ 10 MP ♦ One creature ♦ Instantaneous.
The target loses $[\text{HR} + 15]$ Mind Points, and Cerine recovers half the Mind Points lost by the target.
- ★ **Lux** ⚡ ♦ $[\text{INS} + \text{WLP}] + 6$ ♦ $10 \times \text{T MP}$ ♦ Up to three creatures ♦ Instantaneous.
Each target suffers $[\text{HR} + 20]$ **light** damage.
Opportunity: each target hit by this spell suffers **dazed**.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ⚙ **Soulshift** ♦ Cerine can use an action and spend any amount of Mind Points to have another creature present on the scene recover that many Mind Points.

SPECIAL RULES

- All Light Casts a Shadow** ♦ When Cerine or an ally she can see deal **dark** or **light** damage, Cerine can change all damage dealt by that single source to the opposite type.
- Undead** ♦ Cerine is immune to **poisoned** and HP recovery may harm her (**Core Rulebook**, page 305). Additionally, Cerine becomes Vulnerable to **light** damage again if she loses her armor.

“Hero. A meaningless title for a thankless role. Let me teach you the true reward for heroism. Ceci, to me!”
“By your side Ceri, now and forever!”

CECILIA (Elite)

Lv 30 ♦ UNDEAD

Traits: capable, devout, heroic, silent.

DEX d8	INS d6	MIG d10	WLP d10	HP	Special	MP	280	Init. 9
DEF 14	M. DEF +2				IM	VU		IM

Equipment: paladin’s cuirass (steel plate with Resistance to **light** damage; 1000 z), Resentment (greatsword inflicting **dark** damage that ignores Resistances; 700 z).

BASIC ATTACKS

✂ **Resentment** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +7 ♦ [HR + 15] **dark** damage. This damage ignores Resistances.

SPELLS

☆ **Cleanse** ♦ 5 × T MP ♦ Up to three creatures ♦ Instantaneous.
 Each target recovers from all status effects.

OTHER ACTIONS

⚙ **Martyr’s Slash** ♦ Cecilia can use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to perform a **free attack** with **Resentment**. If she does, the attack gains **multi (2)** and deals 5 extra damage.

SPECIAL RULES

Arcane Resurrection ♦ Cecilia has no Hit Points. When an effect would cause her to lose or recover HP, she loses or recovers Mind Points instead.

Undead ♦ Cecilia is immune to **poisoned** and HP recovery may harm her (**Core Rulebook**, page 305). Additionally, Cecilia becomes Vulnerable to **light** damage again if she loses her armor.

Undying Devotion ♦ Cecilia can protect Cerine if she is in danger, using the same rules as the **Protect Skill** (**Core Rulebook**, page 197) except Cecilia can always use this ability and does not need to wait until her next turn to recharge it. If Cerine is defeated or surrenders, Cecilia surrenders as well.

HOW DO YOU CALCULATE THAT?

Due to her **Arcane Resurrection** special rule, Cecilia has no Hit Points: she must rely on her Mind Points as a gauge measuring her “health” level. Her MP total isn’t the result of a precise equation, but rather she has been assigned an amount that felt appropriate to her level, making sure she can take a few hits – especially from effects that directly reduce MP, such as the **Bone Crusher** and **Warning Shot Skills** (pages 205 and 219 of the **Core Rulebook**).



SPECTRAL SERVANT

Liv 30 ♦ UNDEAD

Skeletal corpses reanimated by Cerine's dark magic, now serving as her tireless bodyguards.

Traits: cruel, mindless, murderous, silent.

DEX d10	INS d8	MIG d10	WLP d6	HP	110 ♦ 55	MP	60	Init. 13	
DEF +1	M. DEF +2				IM				VU IM

BASIC ATTACKS

✂ **Dark Claws** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +3 ♦ [HR + 10] dark damage and the target suffers **weak**.

SPECIAL RULES

Bodyguard ♦ When the servant performs the **Guard** action, if it chooses to provide **cover** to an ally, that ally gains Resistance to all damage types until the start of the servant's next turn.

Rage Claw ♦ After a creature **hits or misses** a spectral servant with a **melee** attack, immediately after resolving the attack, the servant can perform a **free attack** with **Dark Claws** against that creature.

Undead ♦ The spectral servant is immune to **poisoned** and HP recovery may harm it (**Core Rulebook**, page 305).

CERINE'S SERVANTS

If Cerine's servants are guarding her hideout – perhaps a proper **dungeon!** – you can add some variety to them so that the Player Characters can try different approaches and the battles don't get repetitive.

- ♦ **Soldiers and mages.** You can use the profiles of the **Skeletal Mages** and **Skeletal Soldiers** (**Core Rulebook**, page 351), adapting their statistics to level 25 or 30. The easiest solution is to give the mages a few extra spells and the soldiers the ability to inflict status effects with their attacks.
- ♦ **Ties to the past.** Some of the servants might still wear clothing dating back to the tragic events of Cerine and Cecilia's lives. The Player Characters might pick up on this, and connect Cerine to the legends about the sisters of Tarranorn. Also, if a PC hails from present-day Tarranorn, it's a good idea to let their Player fill in the blanks.



OTHER TYPES OF CONFLICT

The statistics from the previous pages focus on combat-related conflicts. That doesn't mean it's impossible to talk with Cerine – or Cecilia, once she is summoned – but it does hint that both sisters mostly rely on force. After all, a long history of betrayal has convinced them that words mean little in the face of the darkness that lurks in people's hearts.

CERINE'S RITE

An interesting aspect of creating a magical Villain like Cerine is wondering what her power source could be. Here are some tips that you can adapt to the **threats** and **mysteries** of your campaign:

- ◆ A **magic formula** that was stolen from one of the protagonists' homelands.
- ◆ A **rite that has endangered** someone dear to the protagonists.
- ◆ An **artifact** like the **Black Blood** (**Core Rulebook**, page 289).

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

In most high fantasy worlds, there's no coming back from undeath and the transformation into a lich: these acts irreparably destroy a person's spirit and identity, or twist their thoughts towards darkness.

However, Cerine and Cecilia have kept their **personalities** and **consciences**. Their awareness makes them fearsome foes but also opens an avenue to dialogue, if not even redemption – though this depends on Cerine's actions throughout the campaign.

Notably, if the PCs show respect and compassion for the betrayal suffered by Cecilia, or if they refuse to deliver a finishing blow against Cecilia or Cerine, the sisters might start seeing them in a different light. To make such narrative and emotional developments possible, Players should find out about Cerine and Cecilia's past, for example via **clues** or **Game Master scenes** and through **dialogue** during conflicts.

MAXIMILIAN

The Empire's pride and joy, charismatic and brilliant second-born prince Maximilian is possessed of immense talent in swordplay and diplomacy. Maximilian is a natural leader, the paragon to which each Imperial citizen aspires, a living symbol of the power and glory upholding Imperial vision.

His abilities have caused him to be the subject of countless favorable comparisons with his older brother, the Crown Prince – a cause of no slight tension. Yet Maximilian has no ambitions for the throne: he is content to let his brother deal with the monotony of governance, while he furthers the Empire's interests in the continent.

All who have witnessed Maximilian on the battlefield describe him as dignified, just, and calm: an exemplary warrior. But this calmness is a mask, hiding his anxieties and insecurities. Mindful of his position, he is careful to cultivate this façade, only allowing it to slip in the presence of his armsmaster Nike and his childhood friend Theo, his companions in countless marches and battles.



MAXIMILIAN'S TACTICS

The first clash with Maximilian should be against his **Prince variant (Champion 3, worth 3 soldiers)**. In these cases, his strategies are:

- ♦ **On his first turn** of the first round, Maximilian casts **Awaken** to raise his **Might**. On the first turn of every other round, he uses the **Guard** action to defend until the second turn, and recovers from all status effects save **enraged**.
- ♦ **On his second and third turns**, Maximilian uses **Smash Through** or, if the effect of **Awaken** has been removed, he casts it again to increase his **Might**. If he is out of Mind Points, Maximilian performs **Shield Bash** on the second turn and **Bronze Sword** on the third.

If the fight takes place outside the Imperial Capital, Maximilian saves **all his Ultima Points** except one for **Escaping** in case of defeat.

If the fight happens in the capital, once Maximilian is defeated he takes his **second form: Bastion (Champion 2, equal to 2 soldiers)**. When this happens, **Nike** and **Theo** (pages 188 and 189) join the fray by his side.

- ♦ **In his first turn** of the first round, Maximilian uses **Raise the Banner**. Then he cyclically goes through a specific routine of actions in the following turns: **Exploding Charge**, **Elemental Charge**, **Piercing Charge**, and finally an attack with **Conviction**, using all the buffs accrued. After the attack, the cycle starts again from **Exploding Charge**.
If Maximilian is in **Crisis**, he instead uses a random **Charge** and then uses **Dire Times** to attack. If he doesn't have enough Mind Points, he simply attacks with **Conviction** instead.
- ♦ **Nike** uses the **Guard** action to **cover** Maximilian, using **Protect** to soak up the blows against him.
- ♦ **Theo** casts **Heal**, mainly on Maximilian, but also on himself or Nike if they are in **Crisis**. If the enemy relies on a specific type of damage, Theo casts **Elemental Shroud** on himself and his allies to alleviate the damage. If Maximilian is at full health and no allies are in **Crisis**, Theo casts **Ventus** or attacks with his **caduceus**.

During this battle, Maximilian **spends Ultima Points** recklessly to succeed on Checks or recover Mind Points on his turn.

MAXIMILIAN, THE PRINCE (Champion 3)

Liv 40 ♦ HUMANOID

Traits: ambitious, dignified, honorable, proud.

DEX d8 INS d8 MIG d10 WLP d10 HP **390 ♦ 195** MP **200** Init. 7

DEF 14 M. DEF +2  **RS**    **VU**   **RS**   **RS** 

Equipment: adamantorso (Core Rulebook, page 282), bronze sword, runic shield.

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Bronze Sword** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +5 ♦ [HR + 16] **physical** damage. If the target's current **Might** die size is smaller than Maximilian's, this attack deals 10 extra damage.
- ✦ **Shield Bash** ♦ [DEX + MIG] +4 ♦ [HR + 15] **physical** damage and the target suffers **weak**.

SPELLS

- ★ **Awaken** ♦ 20 MP ♦ **One creature** ♦ **Scene**. Maximilian chooses **Dexterity**, **Insight**, **Might**, or **Willpower**: until the end of the scene, the target increases that Attribute's die size by one (max d12).

OTHER ACTIONS

- ✦ **Smash Through** ♦ Maximilian may use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to perform a **free attack** with **Shield Bash**, followed by another **free attack** with **Bronze Sword** against the same target. If he does, he treats the **High Roll** of both attacks as being equal to 0 when determining damage.

SPECIAL RULES

Clash of Wills ♦ When Maximilian is targeted by an offensive spell () , if his current **Willpower** die size is larger than the caster's, he gains a +2 bonus to his Magic Defense against that spell.

Endure Alone ♦ When Maximilian performs the **Guard** action, if he chooses **not** to provide cover to another creature, he recovers from all status effects other than **enraged**.

Instinctive Dodge ♦ When Maximilian is targeted by a creature's attack, if his current **Dexterity** die size is larger than the attacker's, he gains a +2 bonus to his Defense for that attack.

Punishment ♦ After a creature **hits** Maximilian with a **melee** attack, after the attack has been resolved, Maximilian may immediately perform a **free attack** with **Shield Bash** against that creature.

Weak Spot ♦ When Maximilian deals damage to a creature, if his current **Insight** die size is larger than the target's, that damage ignores Resistances.

“Evil, you say? Is it evil to place my people’s interests above all else? Is it evil to live up to the expectation of those who believe in me?”

MAXIMILIAN, THE BASTION (Champion 2)

Liv 40 ♦ HUMANOID

Traits: arrogant, determined, desperate, proud.

DEX d10	INS d8	MIG d8	WLP d10	HP	280 ♦ 140	MP	180	Init. 11		
DEF 14	M. DEF +0	RS		RS	VU		VU	RS		

Equipment: adamantorso (Core Rulebook, page 282), Conviction (mortar-shield; rare custom weapon; firearm, ranged, accurate, defense boost, powerful; +4 damage; deals light damage and grants Immunity to all status effects; 2400 z).

BASIC ATTACKS

✘ Conviction ♦ [DEX + INS] +6 ♦ [HR + 24] light damage.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ⚙ **Elemental Charge** ♦ Maximilian can use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to have his next attack with **Conviction** deal 5 extra damage. If he does, all damage dealt by that attack becomes of a random type selected by rolling a d6: **1. air, 2. bolt, 3. fire, 4. ice, 5. earth, 6. poison.** The Player Characters **can see** what damage type is charged up.
- ⚙ **Exploding Charge** ♦ Maximilian can use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to have his next attack with **Conviction** gain **multi (3)**.
- ⚙ **Piercing Charge** ♦ Maximilian can use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to have his next attack with **Conviction** ignore all Resistances.
- ⚙ **Raise the Banner (once per conflict)** ♦ Maximilian drives his banner into the earth. As long as the banner **stands**, Maximilian, Nike, and Theo receive the bonuses described in their profiles. Removing the banner requires a **six-section** Clock.

SPECIAL RULES

Desperate Measures ♦ When Maximilian enters **Crisis** for the first time in a conflict, he can immediately use one of his **Charges** (above) without paying its **Mind Points** cost and already benefiting from **Desperate Times** (below).

Desperate Times ♦ After he performs one of his **Charges** (see above), if he is in **Crisis**, Maximilian immediately performs a **free attack** with **Conviction**.

Last Stand ♦ When Maximilian reaches 0 Hit Points the first time during a conflict, if his **banner** still **stands**, he stays at precisely 1 HP and immediately performs an action of his choosing, free of charge. After resolving the action, if the conflict is not over, Maximilian falls to 0 Hit Points.

Token of Conviction ♦ If **Conviction** is about to be stolen or destroyed, Maximilian can spend 1 Ultima Point to prevent it. Maximilian is immune to all status effects while **Conviction** is equipped.



NIKE

Liv 40 ♦ HUMANOID

Nicknamed “Unbreakable”, she guards Maximilian’s equipment and is the group’s most expert member.

Traits: determined, diligent, loyal, veteran.

DEX d10	INS d8	MIG d10	WLP d8	HP	140 ♦ 70	MP	70	Init. 6	
DEF 15	M. DEF +5	RS		VU		RS			

Equipment: runic plate, runic shield × 2.

BASIC ATTACKS

✦ **Twin Shields** ♦ **[MIG + MIG] +7** ♦ **[HR + 15]** physical damage. This attack has **multi (2)**.

SPECIAL RULES

Divide and Conquer ♦ After a creature **misses** Nike with a **melee** attack, that creature suffers **slow** immediately after resolving the attack.

Dual Shieldbearer ♦ See the **Core Rulebook**, page 197.

Protection ♦ Nike can swap places with an endangered creature, as per the **Protect Skill** (**Core Rulebook**, page 197).

Shield of the Empire ♦ As long as Maximilian’s **banner stands**, Nike reduces all damages she takes by 5, **before** applying Affinities.

Thundering Blow ♦ When a creature hits Nike with a **melee** attack, after resolving the attack, Nike can immediately perform a **free attack** with **Twin Shields** against that creature. If she does, the attack doesn’t have **multi (2)** and the **High Roll** is considered to be 0 when determining damage.

FACE THE TRUTH

Maximilian is a double-faced Villain: he is both a heroic and honorable prince and an insecure man hiding behind a mask of gold and glory.

Regardless, Nike and Theo feel genuine affection for Maximilian. If forced to discuss the topic, they may admit to being worried about the prince, who is crushed by expectations and obsessed with the Empire’s cultural and military expansion. Also, Theo’s **compassionate** nature has made him question the Empire’s policies more than once.

Though loyal to Maximilian, Nike and Theo might seek a discussion with the PCs – an action that the prince, in his prideful arrogance, could consider outright treason.

*“Do not pretend, HEROES,
that you would have done differently
were our positions reversed!”*



THEO

Liv 40 ♦ HUMANOID

Nicknamed “Voice of the Wind”, Theo is the same age as Maximilian, and they have spent most of their lives together.

Traits: compassionate, elegant, loyal, well-read.

DEX d8	INS d10	MIG d6	WLP d12	HP	110 ♦ 55	MP	130	Init. 11
DEF +1	M. DEF +2		IM					

Equipment: caduceus (Core Rulebook, page 270), sage robe.

BASIC ATTACKS

✦ Caduceus ♦ [WLP + WLP] +4 ♦ [HR + 16] physical damage.

SPELLS

- ☆ **Elemental Shroud** ♦ 5 × T MP ♦ Up to three creatures ♦ Scene.
Theo chooses a damage type among **air**, **bolt**, **fire**, **ice**, and **earth**. Until this spell ends, each target gains Resistance against the chosen damage type.
- ☆ **Heal** ♦ 10 × T MP ♦ Up to three creatures ♦ Instantaneous.
Each target recovers 65 Hit Points.
- ☆ **Ventus** ⚡ ♦ [INS + WLP] +4 ♦ 10 × T MP ♦ Up to three creatures ♦ Instantaneous.
Each target suffers [HR + 25] **air** damage.
Opportunity: each **flying** target hit by this spell is forced to land immediately.

SPECIAL RULES

- Sense of Belonging** ♦ As long as Maximilian’s **banner stands**, Theo recovers 10 Mind Points at the start of his turns.
- Caduceus** ♦ As long as Theo is equipped with his caduceus, spells he cast that restore Hit Points restore 5 additional Hit Points (already included above).
- Debt of Gratitude** ♦ When Maximilian enters **Crisis** for the first time in a scene, if Theo is present and has enough MPs, he can immediately cast **Heal** on Maximilian (and **only** Maximilian).
- Support** ♦ When Theo sacrifices his turn to **help** an ally, as per the **teamwork** rules (Core Rulebook, page 76), the bonus granted to the ally’s Check becomes +4.

TRAGEDIA

A wise princess, forced into a life of crime and piracy.

A kind mage, cursed to lose form and reason, and forced to soar the skies as a dragon.

A brave heroine, betrayed by her country and left to die in the muck.

A devout priestess, who gave up her humanity in the throes of grief.

A young prince, driven by duty and ambition to stain his hands with the blood of countless innocents.

History is rife with heroic tales, whose fate ultimately proves tragic. Many wonder why it should be so...

Why, because the story itself demands it!

When the enemy lies vanquished, and evil is banished from the known lands, it is not comfort nor solace that await the hero at journey's end, only suffering and death.

This is a fact so inevitable and cruel that many attribute it to some unseen writer weaving threads of fate towards mournful ends – ruin incarnate.

The few bards who dare sing of this entity call it **Tragedia**.

“Someday, somehow, your footsteps will lead you before Tragedia. By its decree, your story shall reach its conclusion.

Will you be content with it? Will you accept this ending, this heart-wrenching demise?

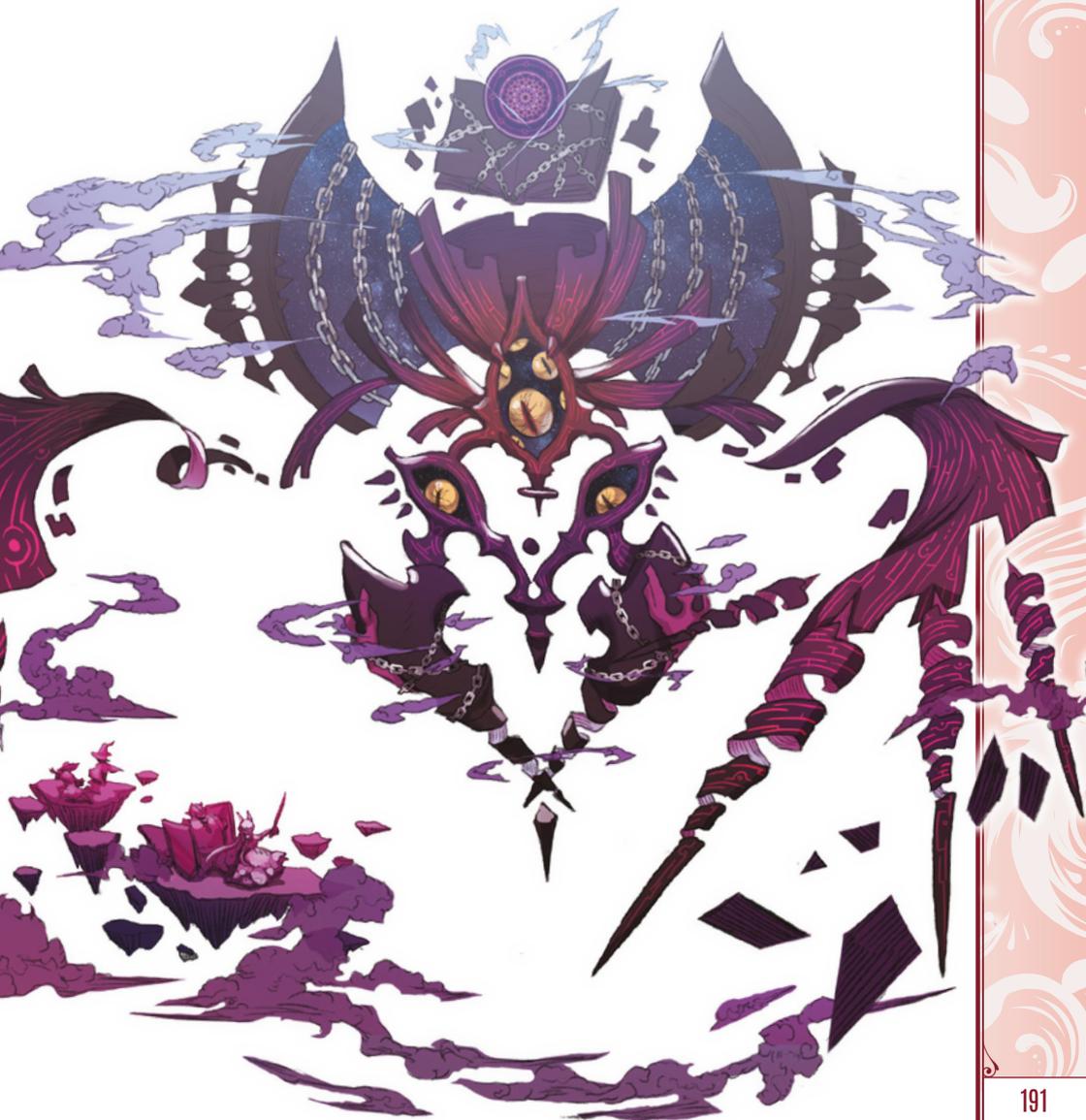
Or will you once again challenge fate ordained, snatching the quill from those inexorable hands?

Now more than ever, the stage is yours... Heroes.”



Supreme Villain (15 Ultima Points); variable Rank (see below).

*“Your triumphs and tribulations, your **STORY!**
All were thanks to my guidance, and now the grand finale.
A tragic epitaph, penned by the very hand that made you heroes...
Ah, the sublime epilogue!”*



TRAGEDIA ♦ PHASE 1

MIMESIS (Champion 3)

Liv 60 ♦ DEMON

Traits: inevitable, mutable, plus all the Traits gained with **Echoes of Fate** (below).

DEX d8	INS d10	MIG d8	WLP d12	HP	480 ♦ 240	MP	240	Init. 16
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DEF +4	M. DEF +2									
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BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Transcendental Spike** ♦ **[MIG + WLP] +6 ♦ [HR + 20]** physical damage. In addition, the next time the target takes damage from any source, that source deals 20 extra damage to them.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ✦ **Wheel of Fate** ♦ Randomly choose one of the available Villains for Mimesis to **embody** – it can't be the Villain embodied in the last turn. Then, if Mimesis has **embodied** all the available Villains **at least once**, it gains **1 Destiny**, up to a maximum of 5 (to use Destiny, see **Apocrypha**, **Red String Aegis** and **Final Clash** below).

REGOLE SPECIALI

Apocrypha ♦ When Mimesis performs an **attack**, that attack gains the **multi (Mimesis' current Destiny)** property. If the attack already had **multi**, this property increases by the amount of **Mimesis' current Destiny**.

Echoes of Fate ♦ Mimesis gains all the **Traits**, **Affinities**, **basic attacks**, and **Spells** of the Villain it **embodies**.

If that Villain is **level 19 or lower**, attacks and spells obtained this way deal 15 extra damage; if they are level 39 or lower, the extra damage is 10 instead; if they are level 59 or lower, the extra damage is 5 instead.

Basic attacks and Affinities granted by the Villain's equipment are also imitated, and their equipment can't be destroyed or stolen.

Mimesis **always** uses the embodied Villain's formulas when performing Accuracy or Magic Checks – for example, if it embodies **Maximilian, the Prince** (page 184), it uses **[DEX + MIG] +4** for **Shield Bash** and **[DEX + MIG] +5** for **Bronze Sword**.

Final Clash ♦ When Mimesis attacks or casts an offensive spell () , if that attack or spell targets **one or more creatures that have a Bond towards the Villain** that Mimesis is **embodying**, Mimesis gains a bonus to its Accuracy or Magic Checks **equal to its current Destiny**.

Flying ♦ See the **Core Rulebook**, page 307.

Red String Aegis ♦ When a creature deals damage to Mimesis, that damage is reduced by an **amount equal to Mimesis' current Destiny**.

TRAGEDIA'S TACTICS: MIMESIS

In its **first phase**, Tragedia takes the guise of **Mimesis**, a being that can partially replicate the abilities of the antagonists who have appeared during the campaign.

Before the session, the Game Master must select a number of Villains from those faced during the Campaign **equal to the number of Player Characters**. Ideally, each of these Villains should be connected thematically or story-wise to at least one PC.

- ◆ **In its first turn** of every round, Mimesis uses **Wheel of Fate** to **embody** one of the Villains chosen by the GM, completely altering its appearance.
- ◆ **In its second turn** of each round, Mimesis uses one of the actions available to the Villain it **embodies**, focusing its attention on the Player Characters with whom that Villain had a connection.
- ◆ **In the third turn** of every round, Mimesis uses **Transcendental Spike** against the Player Character with the highest current HP.

This phase has two main objectives:

- ◆ **Recall past battles**, allowing the Players to use the information they gathered in previous conflicts to face this new, powerful adversary.
- ◆ **Bring back emotional memories** from the entire arc of the campaign. Mimesis will distort the Villains it embodies, turning them into caricatures who mock the PCs. Mimesis should speak freely during this phase, and the Game Master should invite the Players to respond in kind, showing off their characters' emotions.

When Mimesis reaches 0 Hit Points, Tragedia shifts into its **second phase: Anagnorisis** (see next page). The conflict scene **doesn't end**, but the current round does, and you'll need to reroll Initiative.

TRAGEDIA ♦ PHASE 2

ANAGNORISIS (Champion 2)

Liv 60 ♦ DEMON

Traits: authoritarian, oppressive, tenacious, unfathomable.

DEX d8 INS d10 MIG d8 WLP d12 HP **320 ♦ 160** MP **240** Init. 13

DEF +4 M. DEF +2     **RS**     **RS** 

BASIC ATTACKS

- ✦ **Interpolation** ♦ **[MIG + WLP] +6 ♦ [HR + 20]** physical damage. Damage dealt by this attack ignores all Affinities except Resistances. If this attack causes one or more Player Characters to enter **Crisis**, fill 1 section of the "Predestination" Clock.

SPECIAL RULES

Death of the Author ♦ Anagnorisis is immune to **poisoned** and **enraged**.

Dramatis Personae ♦ When a creature deals damage to Anagnorisis, that damage is reduced by an amount equal to the **total strength** of that creature's Bonds.

Fourth Wall ♦ As long as the dramatist's quill (to the right) is **not in Crisis**, Anagnorisis is Immune to all damage types. The Game Master **must describe** this effect as some kind of barrier, and **must describe** the barrier failing when the dramatist's quill enters **Crisis**.

TRAGEDIA'S TACTICS: ANAGNORISIS

Tragedy now manifests as **Anagnorisis**, the manipulator of destiny, accompanied by the dramatist's quill (see right).

- ♦ Create a **thirteen-section Clock** with **4 sections already filled**. This Clock works as usual, **but without the option of using an opportunity to fill 2 sections** – you can use one to **erase 2 sections**, though.

If the Clock reaches 13, remove it from the scene. Then, all PCs lose 9999 Hit Points and the Game Master places a piece of paper with the words "**Fin?**" on the table. If one of the PCs decides to **Sacrifice**, their Player can tear up the paper: this allows **all** companions to recover **all** HP, MP, and IP and recover from all status effects.

- ♦ **Every turn**, Anagnorisis uses **Interpolation** on the Player Character with the highest current HP.

When Anagnorisis reaches 0 Hit Points, Tragedia shifts into its **third and final phase: Catharsis** (page 196). Remove the dramatist's quill and the Predestination Clock from the scene. The conflict **doesn't end**, but the current round does, and you'll need to reroll Initiative.

DRAMATIST'S QUILL

Liv 60 ♦ ELEMENTAL

Traits: autonomous, ethereal, immutable, tenacious.

DEX d12	INS d12	MIG d6	WLP d8	HP	180 ♦ 90	MP	100	Init. 13		
DEF +0	M. DEF +0			RS	RS	RS	RS	RS	IM	IM

BASIC ATTACKS

✂ **Thus They Suffered a Grievous Wound...** ♦ **[INS + WLP] +6** ♦ **[HR + 20]** physical damage.

OTHER ACTIONS

⚙ **As Ordained by Fate...** ♦ The quill can use an action to command a Player Character to take one of the actions below on their turn, determined by rolling a d6. If the character follows orders, even if just as part of another action, they gain 1 Fabula Point and fill 1 section of the Predestination Clock, **otherwise**, they lose 20 HP and 20 MP.

(1-2) ... **Thy Sword Smites Thy Comrades:** the creature must deal damage to another creature chosen by the quill.

(3-4) ... **Thou Hast Mercy for Thine Enemy:** the creature must make one or more of their enemies recover HP, increase one or more of their Attribute die sizes, or have them recover from one or more status effects.

(5-6) ... **Thou Hast Ruin to Thy Comrades Brought:** the creature must inflict one or more status effects on their allies.

⚙ **Exeunt** ♦ The quill can use an action and spend 50 MP to immediately end **all status effects** and **all other effects** that would last till the end of the scene, including spells.

SPECIAL RULES

Elemental ♦ The quill is immune to **poisoned**.

In the Next Episode... ♦ When the quill reaches 0 Hit Points, if the Predestination Clock has **2 or more filled sections**, the quill comes back to life with 90 HP, and 2 sections of the Clock are erased. When this happens, all Player Characters receive 2 Fabula Points.

TRAGEDIA'S TACTICS: DRAMATIST'S QUILL

On its turn, the quill always uses **As Ordained by Fate...** to cause a random effect (roll 1d6) on a random target, but it **never chooses the same effect twice in a row** – that would make for a boring story! If there are **four or more status effects, spells, and/or ongoing effects** in play with effects that are beneficial to the PCs, the quill instead uses **Exeunt** to remove them. If it doesn't have enough MP and is not in **Crisis**, it uses **Thus They Suffered a Grievous Wound...** on a random target – otherwise, it performs **As Ordained By Fate...** like usual.

TRAGEDIA ♦ PHASE 3

CATHARSIS (Champion 3)

Liv 60 ♦ DEMON

Traits: divine, dominating, imposing, punishing.

DEX d8 INS d12 MIG d10 WLP d8 HP **510 ♦ 255** MP **200** Init. 13

DEF +4 M. DEF +2 RS RS RS RS RS RS RS RS RS

BASIC ATTACKS

✂ **Slow Epilogue** ♦ **[MIG + WLP] +6 ♦ [HR + 20]** damage. This attack has **multi (3)**. Damage dealt by this attack has no type, thus ignoring Affinities.

OTHER ACTIONS

- ✳ **Abysal Agony** ♦ Catharsis can use an action to emit a horrible wail that strikes fear in all who hear it. All creatures except Catharsis suffer **dazed, shaken, slow, and weak**. When this happens, any PC may spend 1 Fabula Point to negate the effects of this action, describing **what they say or do** to stand up to the wave of terror.
- ✳ **Divine Frenzy** ♦ Catharsis can use an action to launch an endless barrage of blows, reducing the HP and MP of all its enemies to 1. When this happens, any PC may spend 1 Fabula Point to negate the effects of this action, describing **what they say or do** to defend their allies from Catharsis' onslaught.

SPECIAL RULES

Bonds that Transcend Destiny ♦ When a Player Character deals damage to Catharsis, they deal extra damage equal to the **total strength of their Bonds**.

Catharsis ♦ When Catharsis enters **Crisis** for the first time, it explodes in a burst of Fabula Points. Each Player Character receives **15 Fabula Points**; then, all of Catharsis' Resistances become Vulnerabilities, and **Slow Epilogue** loses its +6 bonus to Accuracy Checks.

Divine Tribute ♦ When Catharsis deals damage to a Player Character, that character suffers extra damage equal to their **current Fabula Points**.

SEEMS A BIT MUCH

The battle with Catharsis assumes that the Player Characters have some Fabula Points left from the previous phases and can withstand **Slow Epilogue's** damage – they should be level 50, after all. If the situation gets bleak, the Game Master can partially or entirely restore the group's strength: narratively speaking, this effect should be connected to the intervention of some magical entity the group aided during the campaign.

TRAGEDIA'S TACTICS: CATHARSIS

After beating Tragedia's "façade" phases, the Player Characters can now behold the being's dark core (see the image on page 185). This form channels Tragedia's lust for agony and deep-seated fear of not being truly all-powerful and eternal.

- ◆ **On its first turn** of each odd round, Catharsis uses **Abyssal Agony**, and on its **first turn** of each even round, it uses **Divine Frenzy**.
- ◆ **On its second and third turns** of each round, Catharsis uses **Slow Epilogue**, focusing on the targets with the highest current HP.

Once Catharsis enters Crisis, the fight is mostly over: use the remaining rounds as a "victory lap" to honor the campaign's finale.

When Catharsis reaches 0 Hit Points, Tragedia **loses all remaining Ultima Points** and starts dissolving.

Since Catharsis is now a regular NPC, the Players can determine its fate. This is the culmination of the group's story, **so don't be afraid to go overboard!** The heroes have earned the right to write their own finale.

TO APEX AND BEYOND

Tragedia is an excellent example of "metanarrative" boss who acts as the epic conclusion to a High Fantasy tale: if the whole campaign was a battle between worldviews, then the fight against Tragedia becomes an allegory of the daily struggle for the right to exist authentically, as human beings with our own identity and not as the result of someone else's narration, expectations or beliefs.

- ◆ This type of battle will often carry profound implications and may strike very personal chords. The group is responsible for managing the intensity of the scene and everyone's emotional involvement, course-correcting on the fly if necessary.
- ◆ When you create a boss like this, ask yourself a fundamental question: "what was our campaign about?". There won't always be a clear-cut answer, but it's important for each Player Character to glimpse a part of themselves in this last battle for the fate of reality itself.

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INSPIRATIONAL WORKS

Bravely Default, **Bravely Second** and **Bravely Default II** by Silicon Studio and Square Enix; **Etrian Odyssey III** and **V** by Atlus; **Final Fantasy I, IV, VI, IX, X, X-2, XII** and **XIV** by Square Enix; **Genshin Impact** by MiHoYo; **Granblue Fantasy** by Cygames; **I am Setsuna** by Tokyo RPG Factory and Square Enix; **Legend of Legaia** by Sony Interactive Entertainment; **Suikoden IV** by Konami; **Tales of Arise**, **Tales of Berseria**, **Tales of Vesperia** and **Tales of Zestiria** by Namco Bandai; **The Legend of Dragoon** by Sony Computer Entertainment; **Valkyrie Profile** by tri-Ace and Square Enix; **Voice of Cards: The Isle Dragon Roars** by Square Enix; **Xenoblade Chronicles 2** by Monolith Soft.

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This book's quality greatly depends on you all!

Your story
will shine on.

