

7th Sea Players' Compendium

Being a compilation of information, published and new, for players of the 7th Sea roleplaying game

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GAME PRIMER

What is 7th Sea?

The world of 7th Sea is a world of swashbuckling and sorcery, piracy and adventure, diplomacy and intrigue, archæology and exploration. It's a world of musketeers, buccaneers and privateers, ancient sorcery and lost civilizations, secrets that hide in the shadows and monsters that hide in plain sight.

Swashbuckling and Sorcery

It is a world where an order of musketeers guards not only the lives of the nobility, but also the virtues of honor, integrity, and fraternity. It is a world of sharp blades and sharp wits, where a cutting retort can be just as deadly as a sword point.

It is also a world where the nobility control the most powerful force of all—sorcery. Dark magic pulses in the hearts of the noble class, power that was given to them long ago. Some control the weather. Others assume the forms of animals. Some rip through the fabric of reality, while others play with the forces of Fate itself.

In short, the hard edge of steel coupled with the shadowy substance of sorcery.

Piracy and Adventure

The waters of 7th Sea are populated with the robbers of the waves. The pirates of 7th Sea are united by a common cause: freedom. Freedom from the tyranny of sorcerers and kings. Freedom from the shackles of the Church of the Prophets. Freedom from greedy land-owners and money lenders. Pirates sail where they want, take what they please and live a life of freedom unknown by any other man in the world of 7th Sea.

With the decline of the Church, things have become even better for pirates as kings and queens hire daredevil adventurers to explore the unknown and bring back the booty they discover. Of course, if those adventurers lower their guards for even a moment, they'll find themselves facing the black flag...

Diplomacy and Intrigue

In the world of 7th Sea, kingdoms are on the verge of becoming countries. A swelling tide of nationalism grows in the hearts of men and women, and a new kind of conflict—covert warfare—is finding its way into the world. But in the courts of kings and queens, diplomats dressed in powdered wigs, lace and silk try to resolve the disputes of nations. Of course, if diplomacy fails, there is the cold steel of the dueling sword waiting under all that finery.

A new kind of espionage is making its way into the world as well. Men and women trained in the arts of deception live perilous lives of illusion and artifice as they pillage enemy secrets with only their beauty, cunning and wits... and a willingness to do anything for crown and country.

Archæology and Exploration

Beyond the kingdoms of Théah lie the ruins of an ancient civilization, lost centuries ago. Hidden beneath thousands of years of dust and the waves are vast cities of lost Synchroneth. Who knows what ancient treasures remain, unseen by human eyes, untouched by human hands?

Men and women who call themselves "Archæologists" are hired by the kings and queens of Théah to unearth these treasures and bring them back to noble hands. Daring the perilous ancient ruins, these men and women are all the rage in the noble courts

and the subjects of romantic novels all across the land. Praised as heroes, they hope to discover the secrets of the Synchroneth in hopes that they may uncover the key to man's own origins, and possibly the secrets of the universe itself.

Conclusion

And that, in a nutshell, is the world of 7th Sea. It is a great deal like our own, but at the same time, not at all like our own. Théah is a whole new world to explore. Are you ready?

Théah

Théah is the continent where all the action of 7th Sea takes place—a continent with many similarities to 17th century Europe. She is ruled by a series of nation-states, which bear cultural and historical similarities to particular European nations on Earth. While she isn't Europe's twin sister, she is certainly a distant cousin, which should make Théah more familiar and learning about her culture and history easier. There are some important differences, however.

Sorcery

Sorcery is a very real power in Théah. Almost every noble family has the dark gift running in its veins, although one nation—Eisen—is an exception to the rule. Their sorcery is powerful and dangerous, each type demanding its own unique cost. It is a discipline that not all can, or should, attempt to master, but when its power is harnessed, it can change the fate of nations.

The Vaticine Church

Théah's principal religion—the Church of the Prophets, or Vaticine Church—has many elements similar to European Catholicism, but also some key philosophical differences. Aside from a slightly different iconography, the Church embraces science as a means of understanding the Creator's world, and encourages the proliferation of knowledge through schools and universities. Because of its efforts, Théans have made several scientific breakthroughs that would not occur on Earth until centuries later.

Unfortunately, the Church has a darker side as well. Théah has only just emerged from the thirty year long "War of the Cross," a struggle between the traditional Vaticines and a reformist movement known as Objectionism. The war involved every nation on the continent, and left the country of Eisen in shattered pieces. As if this weren't bad enough, a sinister Inquisition has recently seized power within the Church, threatening to transform it into an instrument of terror. Only time will tell if they succeed.

The Seventh Sea

There are six seas surrounding Théah. The mythical "Seventh Sea" is considered little more than a sailor's story, a tale to frighten cabin boys on their first voyage. It is said that when a ship enters the Seventh Sea, the stars move backwards, the sun and moon share the same horizon and strange cries can be heard from beneath the waves. While scholars dispute the veracity of the sailors' stories, too many have surfaced to be ignored.

The Synchroneth

The ruins of a society far older than man's lie scattered across Théah. Some sit in ruined cities beneath the earth, while others

lie on an extensive string of islands in the western seas. The race which built them—known as the Syrne—has remained unknown, but it is clear that they were not human. While their origins remain a mystery, the ruins are a treasure haven for daring men and women. Strange artifacts and wondrous inventions have been pulled from their depths, resulting in a great amount of puzzling... and, for some, an even greater amount of wealth.

Nations

The current nations of Théah—seven in all—represent the whole of the civilized world. A more detailed description of each nation can be found in the Théah chapter of the two core rulebooks: the 7th Sea Players' Guide and the 7th Sea Game Masters' Guide.

Avalon

Green and enchanted, this union of three kingdoms has recently risen to the fore-front of Théan politics.

Castille

Headquarters of the Vaticine church, this fertile nation has recently fallen under attack from the Montaigne to the north.

Eisen

A once-proud country now struggling to recover from the War of the Cross.

Montaigne

One of Théah's most powerful nations, leading the world in art and culture even as its Emperor crushes the populace beneath his thumb.

Pirate Nations

Not so much a nation as a general catch-all for the various piratical factions sailing the seas of Théah.

Ussura

A vast and wild country, whose people still live as their ancestors did centuries ago.

Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

This collection of islands is divided between wealthy Guilds seeking to dominate Théah's economy and the fierce raiders who refuse to surrender their heritage.

Vodacce

The former cradle of civilization, now split between seven Merchant Princes whose complex schemes reach every corner of the world.

Other Nations

Two other nation-states exist as well—the Empire of the Crescent Moon and the land of Cathay—but they are isolated from the rest of Théah by a combination of cultural differences and physical barriers. Other continents may exist, far beyond the western oceans, but no Théan has yet discovered them.

Secret Societies

The Nations are not the only powers influencing Théah. There are many more clandestine organizations—not beholden to nationality or religion—that move Théan politics, some unnoticed by even the most observant scholars and statesmen. More details on these groups can be found in the Théah chapter of the two core rulebooks: the 7th Sea Players' Guide and the 7th Sea Game Masters' Guide.

The Explorer's Society

One of the most prominent “gentleman's clubs” in Théah, a multinational organization dedicated to studying the past and discovering her geography.

The Invisible College

A secretive band of academics who work to protect scientific progress from the fires of the Inquisition.

The Knights of the Rose and Cross

An ancient order of adventurers, seeking to bring justice to the unjust and to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

Die Kreuzritter

A group of holy Vaticine Knights, wiped out centuries ago by a traitorous political ruler.

Los Vagos

Led by a mysterious masked man, these hidden crusaders protect the people of Castille from enemies both within and without.

The Rilasciare

Best known as the Free Thinkers, the Rilasciare promote free will and self-determination through a range of extremely unorthodox tactics.

Sophia's Daughters

A union of Vodacce women seeking equality and political power by covert means.

Heroes

There are many different kinds of Heroes in 7th Sea. The one you choose to play could have any number of skills, abilities, and unique quirks.

Hero Sheet

The words and numbers on a Hero sheet are there remind you of your character's strengths and weaknesses. Just as some heroes are stronger, faster or smarter than others, so will your Hero have a unique list of virtues and flaws. The Hero sheet helps you keep track of all of that.

Traits

Every Hero has five Traits: Brawn, Finesse, Resolve, Wits and Panache. To show your Hero's abilities in these Traits, we assign a number, or Rank, to each one. All your Hero Traits will be Ranked from 1 to 5, although it is possible to have a 0 Rank Trait, or even Rank 6 or higher. The high the Rank, the more ability your Hero has in that Trait.

Brawn is a measure of your character's strength and endurance.

Finesse measures his coordination and agility.

Resolve is a measure of your Hero's willpower.

Wits measures how quickly your Hero can think on his feet.

Panache is that “something special” that sets your Hero apart from Joe Average.

Skills and Knacks

Skills represent the training your Hero has acquired. If Traits define who your Hero is, then Skills define what he knows. Unlike Traits, not everyone has the same set of Skills. We all learn different lessons, even from similar experiences.

When your Hero purchases a Skill, he picks up a wide range of abilities. After all, when he takes a fencing class, he learns more than just thrusting: he learns to thrust, parry and riposte, and picks up some general knowledge of fencers and the history of the activity.

These “minor Skills” are called Knacks. Unlike Traits, Skills themselves do not have Ranks, but Knacks do. In that sense, characters who have trained under the same teacher can learn different lessons and come away with completely different abilities.

Example: Two characters apprenticed under the same master could have Performer Skills that look entirely different:

Jason, the Performer

Performer Knacks: Acting: 3, Dancing: 2, Oratory: 1, Singing: 3

Richard, the Performer

Performer Knacks: Acting: 1, Dancing: 3, Oratory: 2, Singing: 3

Wounds

A very important part of the swashbuckling genre is action, and whenever swords get drawn, somebody is going to get hurt. Your Hero can only take so many Wounds before he gets Knocked Out and is vulnerable to attack from Villains and other riff-raff.

Drama

The purpose of this section is to show you how to use the 7th Sea game system. While a more detail discussion of all of the rules appears later in the core rulebooks, we are giving you an overview of the important ones here.

Dice

7th Sea uses ten-sided dice exclusively. Dice help the Game Master and players resolve conflicts, adding a degree of luck and chance to the game.

Whenever the GM tells a player to make a check, the player picks up a number of dice, throws them and counts up the total. Because you almost always want to roll high in 7th Sea, rolling more dice is better than rolling only a few.

Example: If you roll three dice and they read 3, 8 and 8, the total of your roll is 19 (3+8+8=19).

In the following text, you'll see two words that are very important: **Roll** and **Keep**. When we tell you to roll 5 dice, you roll 5 dice. However, when we tell you to Keep only 3 dice, you choose any 3 dice and keep those totals.

Example: If we say “roll 5, Keep 3” we mean roll a total of 5 dice, but only count 3 of them toward your total.

Exploding Dice

Whenever a die rolls a 10, that die explodes. An exploding die is rerolled and the next result is added to the first one.

Example: A die rolls a 10, and you roll it again. The next result is a 5. Add the two results together and that single die rolled a 15.

If you roll consecutive 10s, continue rolling until you roll a number other than 10. Then add all the results together for the total roll. No matter how many times a single die explodes, it only counts as one die towards the number of Kept dice.

Actions

If your Hero wants to do something, he performs an Action. A Hero can make only one Action at a time. Because some Actions are harder than others, the GM will assign a Target Number [TN]

to each Action to represent its difficulty. Actions that are easy or simple will have low Target Numbers [5-10] while more difficult actions will have higher Target Numbers [25-30]. The average TN for most tasks is 15.

Action Rolls

There are two kinds of Action rolls used in 7th Sea: Simple and Contested.

A **Simple** roll is used when a Hero is acting on his own, when only his own abilities are being tested.

A **Contested** roll is used when a Hero is actively opposing (or being opposed by) another character.

The Simple Roll

Step One: The player declares an Action and the GM determines which Trait is appropriate for that Action. Then he assigns a Target Number [TN] for that action.

Step Two: The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's Trait and adds them together.

Step Three: Compare the total generated by the dice with the TN. If the character's roll is equal to or greater than the TN, then the Action is successful. If the roll is less than the TN, the Action fails.

A Simple roll is an Action whose outcome is based solely on the ability of the Hero. Does that Hero have the strength to lift and throw that table? Does he possess the deftness to pick that lock? Both are good examples of Simple rolls.

The GM decides the character's appropriate Trait and difficulty for the roll (Brawn would be appropriate for lifting and throwing a table, while Finesse would be appropriate for picking a lock).

The player rolls a number of dice equal to his Trait. He then compares the total on the dice with the assigned Target Number. If his roll is equal to or higher than the TN, his Action is successful. If it is lower, then he fails.

The Target Number Table shows the relative difficulties for Actions and their appropriate Target Numbers. This gives you a good estimate as to what those Target Numbers may be.

Target Number Table

TN	Difficulty
5	Mundane
10	Easy
15	Average (default Target Number)
20	Hard
25	Very Hard
30	Heroic
35	Never Done Before
40	Never To Be Done Again

The Contested Roll

Contested rolls are a little different from Simple rolls. A Hero makes a Contested roll when he's trying to use his Action against another character. The GM tells him to roll a number of dice equal to the appropriate Trait, just like a Simple roll, but:

- The TN for a Contested roll is equal to 5 × Opposing Trait.
- Both the Acting and Opposing characters make rolls, and the success of the Action is determined by their rolls.

In a Contested roll, one of three results can occur:

1. If only one contestant successfully rolls at least 5 × Opposing Trait, then he succeeds, and his opponent fails.
2. If both contestants roll successfully, the one who rolls higher wins.
3. If neither contestant rolls successfully, the Action continues until one or both of them can make a successful roll.

Example: Don and Jeff make a Contested Brawn roll. Don is Brawn 3; Jeff is Brawn 4. Don's TN is 20 (Jeff's Brawn 4 × 5)

and Jeff's is 15 (Don's Brawn 3×5). If only one of them rolls equal to or higher than his TN, he succeeds. If both of them roll equal to or higher than their respective TN, the one who rolled higher succeeds. If neither of them roll equal to or higher than their TN, they both fail and the test continues to the next Action.

Trait+Knack

Generally, when you roll to see if an Action is successful, the number of dice you'll be rolling is listed as A+B, where A is the Trait and B is the Knack used.

Example: If you're trying to hit a flying bird with a shot from your flintlock pistol, your GM will tell you to roll Finesse+Attack (Firearms) to gain a total.

Whenever you roll Trait+Knack, you always Keep a number of dice equal to the Trait.

Raises

When the GM assigns a player a TN, the player may find that TN a little too easy to meet. **A player may voluntarily Raise any TN he is assigned in increments of five.**

HOUSE RULE: Any successful action will add one unkept die to the result for every full 10 points that the TN is exceeded by, if no Raises are called. Obviously it is still better to call Raises, but this gives the GM some discretion above and beyond that rule mechanic.

Raising the TN increases just how impressive the success will be, and allows a Hero to complete tasks more quickly, more effectively, or with more style. A 'called shot' (striking an opponent in the hand, firing a bullet into an opponent's leg, etc.) is an example of what a player can do with Raises.

Called Shots Table

Called Shot To...	Required # of Raises
Arms, Legs, Chest	2
Feet, Hands	3
Face	4
Heart, Neck	5
Eye	6

As you read further, you'll see more references to Raises. Just remember that a Raise is always a five point increase to the given Target Number, which also increases the success of your roll.

Additional Wounds

For each successful Raise made when making an attack, the Hero may roll an extra unkept die on the Damage roll for a successful attack.

Rounds and Phases

Whenever the Heroes engage in combat, time slows down so everyone can get a chance to perform an Action. A Round is the basic unit of time in 7th Sea, which is further broken down into 10 Phases. Remember, Phases are 1/10 as long as Rounds.

A Round begins with Phase 1 and counts up (Phase 2, Phase 3, and so on) until the Round reaches Phase 10. At the end of Phase 10, the Round ends and a new Round begins.

Action Dice and Initiative

At the start of a Combat Round, you will get a number of Action dice to roll equal to your Hero's Panache. Action dice do not explode like regular dice.

Action dice have two purposes:

1. The numbers shown on the dice tell you in which Phases your Hero will have an Action this Round.

2. When added together, they give your Hero his Initiative Total for this Round.

Example: Let's say your Hero has a 4 Panache, so he rolls 4 Action dice at the beginning of a Combat Round. The dice he rolls come up 1, 3, 4 and 10, indicating that he will act in Phase 1, Phase 3, Phase 4 and Phase 10. Notice that he did not reroll the 10 and add the result.

When you add a Hero's Action dice together, you get his Initiative Total for the Round. Within individual Phases, the Hero with the highest Initiative Total goes first, followed by the Hero with the second highest Initiative Total and so on down the line.

Example: Using the previous example, your Hero's Initiative Total at the beginning of this Round is: $1+3+4+10=18$.

Whenever you take an Action in a Phase, you must "spend" your Action die. Spending your Action die reduces your Initiative Total, so be sure to double-check it at the beginning of each Phase.

Attack and Defense Knacks

A character who attacks another character is called "the Attacker." The character being attacked is called "the Defender."

In order for the Attacker to hit the Defender, he must roll against the Defender's Target Number to be Hit.

The Defender's TN to be Hit is $5+(5 \times \text{Defense Knack})$. Defense Knacks are listed in the Defense Knacks Table, below.

Defense Knacks Table

Defense Knack	When Used
Footwork	May be used at any time, unless over-ruled by another Knack
Parry	May only be used when holding an appropriate item
Balance	Must be used when fighting on an unstable surface (gravel, ship, moving carriage)
Climbing	Must be used when climbing
Leaping	Must be used when leaping
Riding	Must be used when riding an animal
Rolling	Must be used when rolling or sliding
Sprinting	Must be used when running
Swimming	Must be used when swimming
Swinging	Must be used when swinging

Your Hero cannot use Leaping while swinging or Swinging while Parrying. When leaping, he must use the Leaping Knack.

Damage Values

All weapons have a Damage Value that tells you how many Wounds you will inflict with a successful hit.

Each weapon is listed in the same way. A weapon's profile gives you the number of Damage dice you roll and the number of Damage dice you Keep from the roll.

Example: If a fencing sword has a Damage Value of 2k2, you roll 2 Damage dice and Keep 2 Damage dice from the roll.

If the weapon is a hand-to-hand weapon (such as a sword, knife, or thrown spear), you add your Hero's Brawn in unkept dice to the Damage roll when you roll it. If the weapon is a firearm, a bow, or a crossbow, you do not.

Example: In the previous example, if the Hero wielding the fencing sword has a Brawn of 4, he would roll 6 Damage dice (2 for the weapon plus 4 for Brawn) and Keep 2 Damage dice from the roll. Effectively, by taking into account the Hero's Brawn, the weapon's Damage Value becomes 6k2.

For ranged weapons (such as firearms, bows, or crossbows), you will see a bonus or penalty to hit your target.

Example: A pistol has a -10 penalty to hit at Short Range. This means that you subtract -10 from your Attack roll when you are rolling against an opponent's TN to be Hit.

Wounds

When your Hero gets hit by a sword or a bullet from a musket, he gets wounded. Once you've been wounded, you have to determine if you've taken a serious hit (Dramatic Wound) or a superficial one (Flesh Wound). This is referred to as a Wound Check.

To make a Wound Check, roll your Brawn with a TN equal to the number of Wounds you've taken so far in the combat. If you fail the roll, you suffer a Dramatic Wound. Otherwise, nothing happens, but the damage stays with you as a Flesh Wound. Flesh Wounds are cumulative.

Example: If you get 10 Flesh Wounds at the beginning of a Round and then get 15 more at the end, you now have a total of 25 Flesh Wounds.

For every full 20 points you miss your Wound Check by, you take an additional Dramatic Wound. Firearms, on the other hand are much more deadly. When making a Wound Check against a Firearm, for every full 10 points you miss the Wound Check by, you take an additional Dramatic Wound.

At the end of each battle, erase all your Flesh Wounds, but not Dramatic Wounds. You get to keep them for a while.

Example: A Hero gets hit twice in one Round. The first hit causes 10 Flesh Wounds. He has a Brawn of 3, so he rolls and Keeps 3 dice on his Wound Check. He rolls a 15, making the roll. He marks down the first 10 Wounds on his Hero sheet, so he'll remember how many Flesh Wounds he's taken so far this combat. At the end of the Round he gets hit again, taking another 10 Flesh Wounds, for a total of 20 Flesh Wounds (10 from the first hit and 10 from this one). He makes another Wound Check and rolls another 15, missing his new TN of 20. Now, he erases all the Flesh Wounds he has taken so far and notes a Dramatic Wound on his Hero sheet.

Dramatic Wounds

When you suffer a Dramatic Wound, the first thing to do is erase all the Flesh Wounds you've suffered so far. Don't get too excited; you still have to deal with the effects.

First, if this Dramatic Wound brings your total number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Resolve, none of your dice (except Drama Dice) explode.

If you accumulate a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Resolve \times 2, you are Knocked Out, and you're out of the combat. You'll probably wake up in a dungeon, or tied to a chair, assuming no-one kills you.

At this stage, if your opponent hits or shoots you again, or, in any case, if you accumulate a total number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Resolve \times 3, you are Dead. And that's probably it, although you may get to make a stirring final speech before you go (usually long enough to ask for revenge, make a bequest, or similar). Time to create a new Hero...

NPC Wounds

Player characters are a little different from NPCs (Non-Player Characters—those characters controlled by the Game Master). Players are Heroes, after all. While there are NPC Heroes, there are only a few (so they don't crowd the player characters!). The player characters are so distinguished, they even deal with Wounds in a different manner than the rest of the world.

There are 3 kinds of NPCs: Villains, Henchmen and Brutes. Each of them is wounded differently.

Villains

Villains are the counterparts of Heroes. They have the same abilities as Heroes, and the same potential to do evil as a Hero has to do good.

Villains are Wounded in exactly the same manner as Heroes. Whenever they receive Wounds, they make a Wound Check using their Brawn. If they succeed, there's no effect. If they fail, they take a Dramatic Wound. If a Villain ever takes a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to his Resolve \times 2, he is Knocked Out.

Henchmen

Henchmen are the lieutenants and hangers-on of Villains and Heroes. They're tougher than Brutes, but only a little bit. Henchmen are actually just on the verge of becoming Heroes and Villains themselves; all they need is a little push and they're on their way.

Henchmen receive Wounds as Heroes do, but if they suffer a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to their Resolve, they are Knocked Out. It's up to the GM whether or not the Henchman is unconscious or killed, but if he takes a Wound while he's Knocked Out, he dies.

Brutes: Brutes are riff-raff. They are nameless thugs that villains employ by the dozens, and who get Knocked Out by the dozens when Heroes show up. A group of Brutes (usually six in number) is called a "Brute Squad."

Generally, the TN to be Hit for most Brutes is 10. When a Hero successfully strikes a Brute, the Brute gets Knocked Out. That's it. There's no roll for Wounds, no Wound Check, just the Brute getting Knocked Out. The GM determines if the Brute has been killed or just knocked unconscious, but if a Brute ever takes even a single Wound after he's been Knocked Out, he dies.

Oftentimes, a Hero can dispatch a menacing Brute Squad with little effort. If a Hero is facing a Brute Squad directly, he may attack an additional Brute per Raise made.

Example: In other words, if you were facing four Brutes, you would need three Raises (one Raise for each additional Brute beyond the first) to attack them all. The Brutes' TN to be Hit would be increased to 25 (normal 10+15 for Raises). Of course, if your Hero was successful with his attack, he would Knock Out all of them in a flurry of swordplay.

Drama Dice

Every Hero begins the game with a pool of Drama Dice equal to the Rank of his lowest Trait. These represent a character's innate ability to second-guess his surroundings and the intentions of his opponents, and to perform actions beyond the capacity of the common man (so-called "heroic actions").

When a Hero spends one of his Drama Dice, one of two effects can be invoked.

The first is to add a Kept die to any one Action. This can be called after the roll is made, but must be called before the GM describes the result of the Skill check. Drama Dice cannot be used after the Action has been successful. In other words, you can't add Drama Dice to the Effect roll. You can only use them to increase the likelihood of your success.

The second is to immediately recover from being Knocked Out. However, regardless of the current Phase, the Hero must then spend the remainder of that Round recovering, unable to perform any Actions. Your TN to be Hit during the remainder of the Round is reduced to 5.

There are other uses for Drama Dice, but they can wait until you learn more about the rules.

Gaining More Drama Dice

You earn Drama Dice through roleplaying. If your Hero snaps off some witty banter at a Villain while engaged in deadly swordplay, you'll earn a Drama Die. If he pauses for a moment before leaping out the window to give the beautiful princess a good-bye kiss, you'll get a Drama Die. In short, whenever you pull off an Action with unusual flair, or provide an inspired piece of roleplaying, you'll earn yourself a Drama Die.

CREATING HEROES

Hero Points (HP)

All characters are created from a base of **100 Hero Points** (HP). These points are used to purchase Traits, Advantages, Skills, Knacks, Backgrounds and Arcana.

Country of Origin

Characters must originate from one home nationality, chosen from the following:

- Avalon (akin to England, Ireland, Scotland)
- Eisen (akin to Germany, Poland)
- Castille (akin to Spain, Portugal)
- Montaigne (akin to France)
- Vendel/Vesten (akin to Holland, Scandinavia)
- Vodacce (akin to Italy, Venice)
- Ussura (akin to Russia, Mongolia)

Characters who choose to be from the “independent” Pirate Nations must still choose a Country of Origin from those above.

The character’s Country of Origin will affect the HP cost of some Skills, Knacks and Advantages during Hero Creation.

GAME HINT: Also check out the Dual Nationality Advantage. You might also like to check out the Nationality section of this compendium, particularly if your Hero is a noble or a Sorcerer.

Hero Creation Summary

Step One: Sorcerer

The first step is to decide if your Hero knows Sorcery. The HP cost depends on how strong your sorcerous blood is. Full Blooded or Twice-blooded Sorcery costs 40 HP. Diluted Blood Sorcery costs 30 HP. Half-blooded Sorcery costs 20 HP.

GAME HINT: Read the notes at the top of the Sorcery section of this compendium carefully. Also, check out the Parlor Trick Advantage.

Step Two: Swordsman

The second step is to decide if your Hero has attended a Swordsman School. Training in a School from the character’s Country of Origin costs 25 HP. Training from a foreign School costs 35 HP.

GAME HINT: Also check out the Beginning Swordsman, Specialty: Swordsman Knack and Trained Duelist Advantages.

Step Three: Traits

The third step is to improve your Traits. All Traits start at Rank 1. It costs 8 HP to increase a Trait by one Rank. Beginning Hero Traits have a maximum Rank of 3 (but see the section on Traits following for modifiers based on the character’s Country of Origin).

GAME HINT: Since your Trait Rank determines the number of dice you Keep when making rolls, it pays to have at least Rank 2 in each Trait. This also means that the Hero starts play with two Drama Dice, which is extremely useful. From experience, the optimal starting Hero should have at least two Traits at Rank 3, however this requires spending 48 HP to achieve this—you may like to carefully consider it.

Step Four: Destiny Spread

The fourth step is to determine the Destiny Spread for the character (see the Destiny Spread section). This is based on the character’s Country of Origin, and may provide the Hero with some additional benefits (or the opposite). At this stage, the Arcana available to the character will also be determined—the player does not need to decide to do anything with them at this stage, however (see Step Seven below).

Note: Characters from the Pirate Nations may choose to determine their Destiny Spread from either their Country of Origin or the Pirate Nations—not both.

Step Five: Advantages

The fifth step is to purchase Advantages, which give your Hero unique benefits, such as heightened senses, an armed forces commission or membership in some of Théah’s most exclusive clubs. The cost of Advantages varies, and some Advantages may not be available to your Hero, or may have some restrictions or prerequisites.

GAME HINT: Languages are extremely important in 7th Sea. Check out the Linguist and Nation Accent Advantages. Your character will have an accent of some form, although if you use the table listed under the Language Advantage, you are assumed to come from the ‘default’ province within your Country of Origin.

GAME HINT: You can also purchase Flaws for your Hero, which will give you more Hero Points to spend on other things.

Step Six: Skills and Knacks

The sixth step is to purchase Skills and Knacks for your Hero. Purchasing a Skill costs 2 HP. Increasing a Basic Knack costs 1 HP, while purchasing or increasing an Advanced Knack costs 3 HP. You may not start with any Knacks higher than Rank 3.

Note: Unless stated in their description, all Swordsman and Sorcerous Knacks count as Advanced Knacks.

GAME HINT: After your Hero has been started play, both Basic and Advanced Knacks cost the same number of Experience Points to improve. As Advanced Knacks cost three times as much as Basic Knacks to purchase at Hero Creation time, it usually pays to only purchase those Advanced Knacks that you absolutely need for your character before the start of play.

Step Seven: Finishing Touches

After Traits and Knacks, you have the opportunity to purchase a number of optional modifiers for your Hero.

Backgrounds

These provide your Hero with lingering back stories that need to be resolved. Backgrounds each cost anywhere from 1-3 HP. You cannot begin with more than 4 HP invested in Backgrounds.

GAME HINT: also check out the Foul Weather Jack Advantage.

Arcana

The Arcana available to the character are determined as part of the Destiny Spread (see Step Four above). These are the only two Arcana available to the Hero—whether he chooses to take one of them or not is up to the player. Arcana provide your Hero with a fundamental personality trait that either helps or hinders him. Arcana either cost 10 HP (for proper, or positive Arcana

(Virtue)), or give you 10 HP (for inverted, or negative Arcana (Hubris)) back.

Traits

Every Hero starts with 1 Rank in each Trait for free. Additional Ranks cost 8 HP each. There is a 3 Rank maximum allowed at Hero Creation, modified by a Country of Origin bonus. This bonus is applied to the appropriate Trait and costs no HP (it is a free Rank). The following table gives your character's Country of Origin bonus:

Country of Origin Bonus Table

Nationality	Trait Bonus
Avalon	+1 Resolve
Castille	+1 Finesse
Eisen	+1 Brawn
Montaigne	+1 Panache
Ussura	+1 Resolve
Vendel	+1 to Any Trait
Vesten	+1 Resolve
Vodacce	+1 Wits

Example: So, if you were Avalon, and wanted a Resolve of 4, it would cost you 16 HP. (1 free Rank, +1 bonus Rank, and +2 Ranks purchased at 8 HP each.) If you were Eisen and wanted a Resolve of 4—tough luck, Eisen heroes can only start play with a maximum Resolve of 3.

Final Details

Finally, after you've spent all of your Hero Points, you have a few more blanks to fill in on your Hero sheet: Wounds, Reputation, and Wealth.

Wounds

When your Hero gets cut by a sword or hit with a bullet from a musket, he gets wounded. Once you've been damaged, you have to see if something bad happens to you, or if you shrug off the hit for now. This is referred to as a Wound Check. You roll your Brawn with a TN equal to the Wounds you've taken so far in the combat (including the damage you just got hit with). If you fail the roll, you suffer a Dramatic Wound; otherwise nothing happens, but the damage—Flesh Wounds—stays with you.

At the end of each battle erase all your Flesh Wounds, but not Dramatic Wounds. You get to keep them for a while.

Example: A Hero gets hit twice in one Round. The first hit causes 10 Flesh Wounds. He has a Brawn of 3, so he rolls and keeps three dice. He rolls a 15, succeeding at the roll. He marks down the Wounds on his Hero sheet, so he'll remember how many Flesh Wounds he's taken so far this combat. At the end of the Round he gets hit again, taking another 10 Flesh Wounds, for a total of 20 Flesh Wounds (10 from the first hit and 10 from this one). He rolls 15, missing his TN of 20. Now he erases all the Wounds he has taken so far and writes a Dramatic Wound on his Hero Sheet.

Dramatic Wounds

When you suffer a Dramatic Wound, the first thing to do is erase all the Flesh Wounds you've suffered so far. Don't get too excited; you still have to deal with their effects.

First, if this Dramatic Wound brings your total number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Rank in Resolve, then all of your dice rolls from now on until you manage to get some of your Dramatic Wounds healed do not explode. If you take a

number of Dramatic Wounds equal to twice your Rank in Resolve, you become Knocked Out and you're out of the combat. You'll probably wake up in a dungeon or tied to a chair, assuming no one kills you.

Reputation

As you become more famous, new opportunities become available to you. Patrons approach you, servants offer to join your employ, and you can command higher wages.

Of course, this has its attendant problems as well. Villains take a dislike to anyone they see as a rising threat, obligations begin to tie up your free time, and if you become famous and powerful enough, your own ruler might see you as a threat and begin to plot your downfall.

This is represented through your Reputation Points. Starting characters normally begin with no Reputation Points. You may obtain up to 130 Reputation Points.

You gain Reputation Points either when you perform heroic acts in front of witnesses, or an artist dramatizes your actions in some public form. The important thing here is that word of your exploits spreads. Without recognition, acts that would affect your Reputation Points grant you no mechanical benefit.

Example: Rodriguez Montello might get Reputation Points for defeating a group of bandits that were terrorizing an area, as long as someone saw him do it. If a poet then wrote an epic poem about his accomplishment, he would gain more Reputation Points, as long as the poem saw decent circulation.

You lose Reputation Points either when you perform dastardly deeds in front of witnesses, or an artist ridicules or belittles your achievements in some form that is seen by others.

Example: If Rodriguez were witnessed killing town guards in an alley, he would lose Reputation Points. Likewise, if a playwright wrote a play about him that depicted him as a bumbling fool, he would also lose Reputation Points.

Every 10 Reputation Points grants you one Reputation die, which can be used to perform Reputation Actions. These can include such things as contacting important people, gaining critical resources, or impressing people.

Just as Heroes can become famous, so can Scoundrels. If you lose enough Reputation Points (dropping below 0), you will find yourself gaining a certain notoriety. If you slip too far into the depths of depravity, however (-30 or more), your GM is within his rights to take your character away and make him an NPC, unless you've been the victim of negative publicity and haven't actually been murdering guards and razing villages.

Negative Reputation Points work the same way that positive ones do, but the dice gained through them are used by Villains and Scoundrels to perform evil or corrupt actions (like bribing people, getting accepted into various malevolent Secret Societies, or intimidating others).

Using Reputation Dice

So what do you do with Reputation dice, anyway? Your Reputation dice represent a number of Actions you can perform in any given Scene. You may use these dice together on a single Action, or split them apart into several Actions, as you wish.

For any Action you wish to attempt in a given Scene (see the Reputation Actions Table), you may devote any or all of your Reputation dice to it. The GM determines the Target Number for the Action, and you roll and keep the Reputation dice you have committed to the Action toward that TN. Success garners you the benefits of the Action, while failure gets you nothing.

You regain any Reputation dice you have spent at the beginning of each new Act.

Reputation Actions Table

Action	TN	Effect
Aid (Major)	30	Gain major aid from one neutral or allied NPC for one Scene.
Aid (Minor)	20	Gain minor aid from one neutral or allied NPC for one Scene.
Impress	None	Your Reputation dice (rolled and Kept) may be added to any social checks.
Intimidate	None	Your Reputation dice (rolled and Kept) may be added to any Social checks.
Martyr	40	Gain one ally (a formerly neutral or allied NPC) that will risk their life for your cause if need be.
Recognition	15	You are recognized by a stranger you have chosen.
Rescue	25	NPCs work for your freedom or escape from imprisonment.
Seduce	None	Your Reputation dice (rolled and Kept) may be added to any Social checks.

Automatic Reputation Effects (Optional)

The following effects are an optional layer to the Reputation System, intended to add flavor. Your GM will tell you whether or not you may use them.

Citation: You are awarded a citation of some sort, defined by your in-game circumstances and the GM. The citation could be knighthood, a medal of honor, land, or a work of art in your image or about your adventures.

Hangers-on: You acquire a following of fans, who begin approaching you for aid, money, one-night stands, and other favors that they have no reason to expect from you

Higher Wages: For every Reputation Point, increase your monthly income by one percent.

Membership: At long last, you have been offered a position in a group or organization (probably a Secret Society) that (at least roughly) matches your goals and ideology. The GM will work this into the game at his convenience.

Menace: You attract attention from the wrong crowd, who start looking for you and devoting resources to your capture or death. For Heroes, this can be any number of villainous societies, while for a Scoundrel it would likely be the King's Men or magistrates.

Patron: You acquire a patron (or an additional patron if you already have one), which may add to your existing income.

Effects of Reputation Points Table

Reputation Points	Effect
Constant	Higher Wages
Every 25 Points	Patron
At 50 Points	Hangers-on
Every 75 Points	Citation
At 100 Points	Menace
At 125 Points	Membership

Wealth

Wealth is very important in 7th Sea. For nobility, it is a measure of their status. They require a constant flow of wealth, as their peers judge them by the amount that they spend, as opposed to the amount they have. Nobles of Théah wear the most intricate clothes (often hand-tailored just for them), own the most lavish estates and possessions, and attend (or even fund) the most elaborate functions. They are the face of the social elite, but they are all still held in check by their net worth; should this ever fail, so will they.

Merchants, soldiers, explorers and other professionals of the world have a more pragmatic view of money. They earn it by

their craft and spend it to put food in their mouths, buy clothes and supplies for their trades, and provide shelter.

They are by no means a "middle class," though their constant hand-to-mouth lifestyle rarely allows for substantial savings.

Peasants and the lower classes are those for whom money is an alien thing. They toil in fields, upon farms, or as servants (sometimes remaining homeless) without much chance of ever getting ahead. They are commonly indentured to others (perhaps wealthy nobles) and have little opportunity to make life better for their young in future years. They are the lowest social class in Théah.

Consequently, the level of income your Hero has is very important to his concept. Several Knacks and Advantages exist that allow for additional wealth for beginning Heroes. In the following paragraphs, we'll show you how to calculate your starting money.

The Basics

First and foremost, it is important to note that, barring unusual circumstances (like being shipwrecked on a remote island or being stranded in far Ussura), all of your daily needs are accounted for. No Hero Points must be spent to cover basic food, shelter, and maintenance of holdings, such as homes and noble estates. Any additional money garnered through profession, patrons, and such is excess that can be spent however you like.

Determining Hero Wealth

Your starting money is equal to your monthly income multiplied by three. All Heroes are also assumed to start out with a set of clothes and a single weapon of their choice. If they wish to purchase more, they must use their starting money. You can find things to buy with all this money in the Equipment section of these rules.

While some Advantages may provide you with an income, generally you may only buy into initial wealth through one of the following avenues:

Wealth Table

Profession	Type of Wealth
Those with the Noble Advantage (not Sorcery)	Nobility
Artists, Performers, and Scholars	Patron
Merchants, Tradesmen, and Specialists	Profits
Servants, Priests, and Soldiers	Salary
Everyone Else	1 die (explodes) of Guilders

Your GM has additional information about administering wealth and governing the monetary aspect of 7th Sea campaigns.

Note also that the Inheritance Advantage can be purchased in addition to any monies gained through a Hero's profession.

Nobility (Nobles)

Heroes who purchase the Noble Advantage are members of a royal family of their nation with good standing. This is different than simply purchasing Sorcery.

Heroes who purchase Sorcery, but not the Noble Advantage, have lost their good standing in the family, or their family has lost its good standing in society, or perhaps the Hero was a bastard child.

Noble Heroes have access to a great deal of resources. For the initial points they spend on the Noble Advantage, they are considered to have a single manor house, complete with staff and a small population of serfs who work the land (see the Noble Advantage description for more details). The Hero is responsible for the protection and welfare of the peasants who work his land

and is also responsible for taxing them. If you wish to go into greater detail about the management of your land, use the Land Management rules (described under the Noble Advantage). Otherwise, the manor house is considered to make 500 Guilders a month for the noble, above and beyond the cost of its maintenance, which he may spend however he likes.

Patrons (Artists, Performers, and Scholars)

When you're talented and don't have any money, what do you do? You find a patron! In 7th Sea, you buy the Patron Advantage to do that. Patrons are wealthy individuals who sponsor struggling artists, poets, playwrights, swordsmen and rogues. How many points you spend on the Patron Advantage determines how wealthy your patron is, and how willing he is to spend some of that wealth on you. Determine your Patron's Wealth and Generosity (according to the number of HP invested in the Patron Advantage) below:

Wealth

1 HP: 10 Guilders
2 HP: 20 Guilders
4 HP: 40 Guilders

Generosity

1 HP: Once per month
2 HP: Twice per month
4 HP: Once per week

Remember, your patron's money isn't your money. And so many patrons are actually rich, snotty nobles who are so easy to offend...

Profits (Merchants, Tradesmen, and other Specialists)

Every professional (including merchants and craftsmen) acquires profits from his or her labors, which can take the form of commissions, proceeds from craft sales, or other business practices. You must buy the Membership: Merchant Guilds Advantage in order to draw income from this source.

At the end of each month, the Guildsman rolls a number of dice equal to his Rank in his chosen professional Knack (Blacksmith, Cooper, Carpenter, etc.), keeping two of them. The total generated by this roll is his income for the month in Guilders.

Salaries (Servants, Priests, and Soldiers)

Then there are the people who live month to month, relying upon their regular wages to survive. These Théans receive regular compensation for services rendered, rarely creating anything in the process. There are three basic salaried careers in Théah:

Soldiers: Both land- and sea-based soldiers receive monthly salaries according to their military rank. In order to draw income from this source, you must buy the Commission Advantage (see the rank descriptions under the Commission Advantage for details of the salary received per month).

Priests: Heroes with the Ordained Advantage receive 30 Guilders per month.

Servants: For every Rank in their highest Servant Basic Knack, they receive one Guilder per month. They receive ten times their monthly income instead of the usual three times monthly income, since they have less to spend their money on.

Investment

The Vendel know that it takes money to make money. They regularly invest in companies and expeditions to turn a profit.

They obtain real estate and develop it to improve its value. The Vendel also know that high risks can yield higher returns.

At the beginning of a Story, a PC can invest any amount of money that he has on hand into an enterprise. If you choose to do so, you specify the amount invested, and the degree of risk (Low, Moderate, or High) involved. You may want to specify the nature of the investment—a store, a merchant ship, a piece of land, etc.—as well (clear any details with the GM). Roll a single exploding die and add your Wits+Accounting to the roll. Vendel Heroes add 1 to their result. Then consult the Investment Table to see what that investment is worth at the end of the Story.

Investment Table

Roll	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
1-2	-10%	-50%	-100%
3-4	-5%	-25%	-50%
5-6	No change	-10%	-25%
7-8	No change	No change	-10%
9-10	No change	No change	-5%
11-12	+5%	+5%	No change
13-14	+5%	+5%	+5%
15-16	+5%	+10%	+10%
17-18	+10%	+10%	+15%
19-20	+10%	+15%	+20%
21+	+10%	+15%	+25%

At the end of a Story, you may cash in some or all of your investment or keep your money invested. If you keep the money, you start the next Story with an investment equal to whatever the investment would have been worth had you cashed it in. You can also invest in a new enterprise at the start of that Story. If you cash in, you get guilders equal to the current value of the investment. Your investment in that enterprise is reduced to the amount you leave invested in it, and carries over to the next Story as described previously. You are allowed to put more money in an existing investment at the start of a new Story. Roll individual results for each investment.

Example: You invest 100G in a high-risk venture. At the end of the Story, your roll result is a 5, which indicates that the investment has lost 25% of its value and is now worth 75G. You decide to take 25G out of that investment. You begin the next Story with 25G to invest and an existing investment of 50G in a high-risk venture. You decide to put the 25. into another high-risk enterprise, giving you a total of 75G invested in 2 businesses. At the end of this Story, you will roll once for each investment.

Alternative Heroes

Sidhe Heroes

Certain players may be intrigued by the idea of portraying a Sidhe as a Hero. While the Fae represent a potentially unbalanced element in any party, if portrayed properly, they can make a fascinating addition to any troupe. But they must be handled carefully, lest they dominate play and/or create too much conflict within the party. Sidhe Heroes won't be immortal and won't have many of the terrifying powers that their brethren do. Playing one just to be an unstoppable god isn't going to work. Similarly, using the Sidhe as some sort of gimmick just to make an interesting character will lose much of its charm after just a short while. But if the player is mature enough to handle an utterly alien Hero and wants to explore a different aspect of Théah, a Sidhe might be the perfect solution.

The Goodly Folke are not human and never were. They have a particular way of looking at things and can't understand real emotions. They can fake emotion, and obey certain rules that

give the impression of human thought patterns, but otherwise have no true connection to the mortals they emulate.

Player-controlled Sidhe are unique beings—trapped between the Seelie home by Bryn Bresail and the mortal world which they now tread. All Sidhe Heroes have lost contact with Bryn Bresail somehow, severed from their fellows. The Queen calls them “Fallen,” a slight differentiation from the “Unforgiven” Unseelie. Some were banished, like the Unseelie, for a real or imagined crime. Others tampered with magic even more powerful than their own and paid the price. A few even experienced something all Sidhe dream of and none ever realize—a true, genuine human emotion. Once the mortal world touched them, they became bound to it and left Bryn Bresail lest they “infect” their brethren.

Whatever the reason, the Hero has been severed from his ancient homeland and must now make his way in the world of mortals. Immortality is now denied him, and while he still ages inhumanly slowly, the cold grip of death will eventually claim him. Gone too is his invulnerability to mortal weapons. Gunpowder and steel now affect him as they would any other mortal. Finally, the psychological trauma at being banished from his homeland takes a considerable toll. He has to deal with a new and frightening land while struggling with intense emotions that are now as real to him as any mortal's. The player should develop a background for the Hero based on these factors, and come up with reasons for the Sidhe to be where he is now.

Because of its fall from grace, a Sidhe Hero sees things a little differently than others of its kind. The Fae are immortal; aging and death are nonexistent in their kingdom. The Hero has just had that taken away from him and now must deal with the ramifications. Imagine a being who has lived for millions of years with no concept of time, decay, or permanent change. Suddenly he feels his body decaying bit by bit, and must depend on beings with the lifespan of mayflies for his very survival. As these new sensations wash over him, he'll still lack the fundamental emotional experiences that define human beings, denying him a foundation to deal with his new condition.

The exact result varies from Sidhe to Sidhe. Some see it is a grand adventure—something none of their kin will ever have. Others wallow in the pathos of their condition, or transform it into an epic tragedy with themselves at the center. Whatever the case, they live suspended between two worlds: they are no longer Sidhe, but they can never be truly human. It affects every aspect of their lives.

Players may portray any style of Sidhe they wish, from an inhumanly beautiful Lord or Lady to a sinister but mischievous goblin. If they don't wish to use a template, they can create their own, using any physical form they wish. Creative players may want to come up with habits for their Hero, and maybe even a legend based around who he was before his fall. Perhaps he haunted an orchard in a specific village, or maybe he's known for carrying children off every full moon. A few local stories about the Sidhe and some permanent habits based on his “previous life” can go a long way toward establishing the character.

Mechanics

Sidhe Heroes gain marvelous abilities unknown to their human counterparts, but there is a price to be paid. These rules describe the advantages and disadvantages that every “Fallen” Sidhe must deal with.

Only one Sidhe Hero should be allowed in a party at any time. All Sidhe Heroes are considered Seelie; no player may begin with Unseelie Hero, and aspiring to become an Unforgiven is grounds for removing the character from the campaign.

Hero Points

Sidhe Heroes get 100 HP, the same as mortal Heroes.

Traits

Sidhe Heroes begin the game with their Traits at Rank 2, instead of Rank 1. Also, Sidhe Heroes are considered to have the Legendary Trait Advantage in all Traits.

Skills and Knacks

Sidhe Heroes have access to any Skills, except for the following: Criminal, Crossbow, Dirty Fighting, Doctor, Firearms, Heavy Weapon, Merchant, Panzerhand, Polearm, Pugilism, Scholar, Servant, Streetwise, Swordsman Schools, Wrestling, plus any Skills that have other Restrictions that the Sidhe Hero cannot meet. Sidhe Heroes also cannot pursue any Knack that is represented within these prohibited Skills, even if it is included in another Skill otherwise available to the character.

Advantages

Sidhe Heroes may not purchase any Advantages. However, they automatically gain the following Advantages at Hero Creation:

- Appearance (10 points) and Dangerous Beauty
- Combat Reflexes or Keen Senses
- Large or Small
- Sidhe Blood (Curses): Iron Vulnerability, Running Water and Gifts
- Sidhe Blood (Blessings): Slow Aging and Immunity to Disease, and Smell Glamour

A Sidhe Hero may begin with Sidhe Weapons, discounted in the same way as Heroes with Sidhe Blood Advantage (-1 HP cost). Sidhe Heroes may have up to 10 HP of such equipment.

Drama Dice

Sidhe Heroes do not have Drama Dice. The only way a Sidhe may have a Drama Die is if he is given one by another Hero via a game effect (such as a Virtue or through Sorcery).

Arcana

Sidhe Heroes cannot purchase Arcana, nor can they use Drama Dice to activate a Villain's Arcana. They also do not have a Destiny Spread.

Sorcery

Sidhe Heroes may not purchase any Sorcery; they automatically possess Glamour as if they were Full-Blooded (which in fact they are). Sidhe Heroes do not spend any Hero Points purchasing this level of Sorcery. They receive 7 Sorcery Points to spend on Sorcerous Knacks. Additional Sorcerous Knacks can be bought up during game play as usual.

While those Sidhe that have not “fallen” remain pure to the Glamour, their powers only work while within Avalon. Sidhe Heroes, now being mortal, have had their powers reduced to an equivalent (although still high) mortal standard. Their Sidhe Blood still holds strong, however. All Sidhe Heroes can achieve Rank 6 in any Glamour Knacks they have learned, although the Hero Creation limitations of Rank 3 still apply.

All Sidhe Heroes start with 10 Reputation Points, which gives them one Reputation die. Sidhe Heroes begin the game with a number of Glamour dice equal to their Reputation dice plus their highest Trait (rather than just their Reputation dice alone, like other Glamour mages). The power of the Sidhe, and the power of their Glamour, is strongest in Avalon. All Sidhe Heroes gather this to them, giving them an extra Glamour die per Mastery Level (Apprentice = 1 die, Adept = 2 dice, Master = 3 dice), when within the borders (and waters) of the Triple Kingdoms.

Sidhe Heroes do not gain Glamour dice in the same way mortal Heroes gain Drama Dice. However, remember that Glamour dice are not Drama Dice; they cannot be used to activate a Villain's Hubris and do not turn into Experience Points if unused.

Repartee

Sidhe Heroes are especially vulnerable to the effects of Repartee. Characters who use Repartee against Sidhe Heroes gain a bonus of two unkept dice to their Repartee Actions.

NATIONALITY

Some nations have separate rules affecting Heroes originating from that County of Origin. All Heroes originating from a specific nation or region begin play with the General Heritage, if listed. In some instances there are also Other Heritages, randomly generated by rolling a die, or chosen. Or in other cases there are no special rules at all, or alternatives for Heroes with specific Advantages, such as the Noble Advantage.

Castille

Noble Families

Castillian Noble Heroes should choose a paternal and maternal family, and apply the game effects of each, listed below. Only Heroes with the Noble Advantage can be from a noble family. Note that Heroes who purchase the Noble Advantage and choose to belong to one of the lesser families should either choose an appropriate family from the list [CA:31], or work with the GM to create an original family of their own (with a similar flavor to those below).

The Aldana Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Aldana pay only 22 HP to purchase the Aldana Swordsman School during Hero Creation, but they may not purchase the Criminal Skill under any circumstance.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Aldana receive the Courtier Skill for free. However, when using Repartee actions against members of the Gallegos Family, their TN is increased by +5.

The Gallegos Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Gallegos pay only 22 HP to purchase the Gallegos Swordsman School during Hero Creation, but they may not purchase the Streetwise Skill under any circumstance.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Gallegos receive a Free Raise when using **Sorcerous Knacks**, but they have -2 fewer Reputation dice while in Castille.

The Ochoa Family

Paternal/Maternal: Heroes from the Ochoa Family may not purchase the Noble Advantage under any circumstance.

The Orduño Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Orduño receive the Sailor Skill for free, but they may not purchase the Hunter Skill.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Orduño receive a -2 HP discount (to a minimum of 1 HP) when purchasing the Commission Advantage. However, they receive -50G less income each month.

The Soldano Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Soldano pay only 22 HP to purchase the Soldano Swordsman School during Hero Creation, but they may not purchase the Servant Skill under any circumstance.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Soldano receive +1 Free Raise when using Repartee actions, but they also receive -100G less income each month.

The Torres Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Torres pay only 22 HP to purchase the Torres Swordsman School during Hero Creation, but they may not purchase the Dirty Fighting Skill under any circumstance.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Torres receive free 3 point Dispossessed Background and an extra 100G starting money, but they must purchase a Hubris (Arcana) and only receive 6 HP for it (instead of the usual 10 HP).

The Zepeda Family

Paternal: Noble Heroes whose father is Zepeda pay only 22 HP to purchase the Zepeda Swordsman School during Hero Creation, but they may not purchase the Performer Skill under any circumstance.

Maternal: Noble Heroes whose mother is Zepeda receive the Priest Skill for free and receive 12 HP if they take the Overzealous Hubris (Arcana), but they may not take a Virtue under any circumstance.

Eisen

Provinces

Eisen Heroes should choose one of the following provinces (you may have done this already as part of selecting your Eisen Accent—see the Eisen Accent Advantage for details), and generate both a General and Other Heritage for their character accordingly.

Fischler

People from Fischler have lived all their lives near the Südlache and the Schwarzen Walden. It's hard to grow up in this area without learning how to sail a riverboat or how to pick your way through the woods. However, it's also difficult not to acquire a certain respect for the darker places of the world.

General Heritage: When making Fear checks, your TN is always 5 higher than normal. The cost of all abilities that allow you to ignore Fear (even temporarily) are increased by 2 HP.

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain the Riverboat Pilot Skill for free
- 5-8 You gain the Hunter Skill for free
- 9-0 You gain the Keen Senses Advantage for free

Freiburg

People from Freiburg lead fairly cosmopolitan lives. They are exposed to many different languages and experiences, which in turn, makes them more tolerant than those Eisen from the backwoods.

General Heritage: See the Eisen Accent Advantage for the linguistic benefits of a Freiburg heritage. You are unable to take the Hunter Skill, and all your Civil Knack rolls have their TN increased by 5 when you are not in a city.

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You receive 3 HP worth of languages for free
- 5-8 You gain the Combat Reflexes Advantage for free
- 9-0 You gain the Scoundrel Advantage for free

Hainzl

Many Eisen from this königreich are small and nimble, just right for squeezing through tight tunnels and caves. In addition, the enormous wealth that flows through Hainzl often trickles down to even the poorest bauer. However, there seems to be some sort of curse on the area that inflicts occasional mishaps on its inhabitants.

General Heritage: Whenever more than one of your dice explode during a single roll, your GM receives a Drama Die that may only be used against you.

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain the Small Advantage for free
- 5-8 You gain the Merchant Skill for free
- 9-0 Your monthly income is increased by 25%

Heilgrund

Heilgrund natives are extremely proud of their ancient position as the seat of the nation. Heilgrund has always been the source of many of Eisen's Heroes and great warriors, not to mention the national headquarters of the Vaticine Church. Unfortunately, many citizens of this königreich have lately been assailed by a strange wasting disease.

General Heritage: You always have 5 Flesh Wounds that never go away. You may have more Flesh Wounds than this, but you will never have less.

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain the Ordained Advantage for free
- 5-8 You gain the Citation Advantage for free
- 9-0 You gain the Commander and Ride Skills for free

Pösen

Pösen has a long tradition of military preparedness. Even the lowliest bauer stands a good chance of being trained with one or more weapons. Of course, this gives them a reputation as warmongers, but if war comes again to Eisen, they'll be ready.

General Heritage: You always receive one fewer Reputation die than normal (minimum of zero).

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain the Academy Advantage for free
- 5-8 You gain the Heavy Weapon Skill for free
- 9-0 You gain the Firearms Skill for free

Sieger

Those Eisen from Sieger are among the strongest and hardest in all the nation. They are also famous for the excitement that seems to follow them wherever they go. Of course, this doesn't necessarily make people happy to see them coming.

General Heritage: You may not buy a Virtue, and you must take a Hubris, which only gives you 5 HP (instead of the usual 10 HP).

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain the Large Advantage for free
- 5-8 You gain the Toughness Advantage for free
- 9-0 You gain the Foul Weather Jack Advantage for free

Wische

The people of Wische are the most devastated by the War of the Cross. Scarcely any of them survived the experience unscarred, and even those who never suffered any trauma know someone close to them who has. To make matters worse, many of them lost their savings to looting soldiers or marauders.

General Heritage: You receive no starting income, and your monthly income is reduced by 25%.

Other Heritage: Roll 1D10 once on the following table:

- 1-4 You gain a 3-point Orphaned Background for free
- 5-8 You gain a 3-point Lost Love Background for free
- 9-0 You gain a 3-point Waisen Dependent Background for free

Montaigne

Noble Families

The game effects of being from a specific noble family are listed below. Only Heroes with the Noble Advantage can be from a noble family.

The Montaigne Family

General Heritage: [NPC-only] This is the ruling family. Because of the extremely powerful game benefits that members of this family receive, players cannot choose for their Heroes to be from this family.

Allais du Crioux

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Allais family receive an extra income of 100G per month, but they receive two fewer Reputation dice (minimum of 1) when at court in Charouse, limiting their success as Courtiers.

Flaubert du Doré

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Flaubert family receive an extra income of 150G per month, but they receive one fewer Reputation die (minimum of 1) when in Montaigne.

Riché du Paroisse

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Riché family receive the Small Advantage for free, and receive 12 HP if they choose the Hot-headed Hubris as their Arcana (which they may always do even if their Destiny Spread says otherwise). However, they must pay 12 HP to choose the Self-controlled Virtue, they receive 100G less income per month, and their Brawn maximum is reduced by 1 (to 4, in most instances).

Leveque d'Aur

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Leveque family are immune to taxes and tariffs of all sorts while in Montaigne. In addition, they receive the Academy Advantage for free. However, each Civil Skill they purchase costs them 3 HP at Hero Creation, and 15 XP thereafter. Finally, because of their martial skill and privilege, l'Empereur tends to keep a close eye on their affairs.

Duboise du Arrent

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Duboise family may purchase the Friendly Virtue for 5 HP (even if their Destiny Spread says otherwise). In addition, they receive one Free Raise when performing Reputation Actions in Montaigne. However, they receive only 5 HP if they take the Proud Hubris, and in any event, it costs them 3 HP to purchase Martial Skills at Hero Creation, and 15 XP thereafter.

Valroux du Martise

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Valroux family may learn the Valroux style of fighting (see the Valroux School) for 20 HP. In addition, they always receive one Free Raise when performing a Taunt or Intimidate Action against other Montaigne.

On the other hand, their other Reputation Actions have their TN raised by 5 while in Montaigne, and they must purchase Montaigne Swordsman Schools besides Valroux as if they were from another country.

Bisset du Verre

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Bisset family receive 12 HP if they take the Greedy Hubris (which they may always do so even if their Destiny Spread says otherwise), and receive an extra 125G in income each month.

However, they must pay 12 HP for the Altruistic Virtue, and should the war end, they will not only lose the 125G a month bonus income they receive, but an additional 50G each month besides.

Étalon du Toille

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Étalon family pay only 5 HP if they choose a Virtue as their Arcana. However, they receive no points if they take a Hubris as their Arcana. In addition, they receive a +1 maximum increase to their Brawn instead of the normal Montaigne bonus of +1 to Panache.

As might be expected from such men of honor, all Étalons give half their monthly income to charity.

Praïsse du Rachetisse

General Heritage: Noble Heroes from the Praïsse family with Porté Sorcery receive two extra points in their Porté Sorcerous Knacks during Hero Creation. However, they receive 5 HP less (95 HP, instead of the normal 100 HP) and canines take an instant dislike to them, snarling or attacking if the opportunity presents itself. Praïsse Heroes who do not take Porté Sorcery do not receive the extra Sorcerous Knacks, nor do they suffer a 5 HP penalty or the enmity of canine.

Rois et Reines du Rogné

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Rois et Reines family may take the Membership (Musqueteers) Advantage for free. However, if they do so, they must then select a Hubris for their Arcana (chosen from their Destiny Spread), for which they receive only 8 HP (instead of the usual 10 HP).

Gaule dul Motte

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Gaule family are unable to learn the Courtier Skill, and lose one Reputation die (to a minimum of zero) when they are in any major Montaigne city. However, they receive the Scholar Skill for free and, due to their familiarity with the unnatural beings near their home, receive two Free Raises when rolling to resist Fear effects.

Sices du Sices

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Sices family always receive one Free Raise when using the Repartee system—whether defending against it or using it themselves. When they spend Drama Dice while using the Repartee system, they receive two Kept dice for every Drama Die they spend. However, every two Drama Dice spent to augment a Martial Skill add only one Kept die to the roll.

Michel du Gloyure

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Michel family may never purchase Sorcery of any sort. In addition, they receive 75G less income per month. On the bright side, Sorcerers

attempting to use a Sorcerous Knack directly against a Michel suffer a two unkept dice penalty.

Deneuve du Surlign

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Deneuve family receive the Servant Skill for free. In addition, their Gossip Knack is considered one Rank higher (maximum of 6) when in Paix. However, the TNs of their Reputation Actions are increased by 5 when targeting Montaigne nobles.

Vodacce

Noble Families

The game effects of being from a specific noble family are listed below. Only Heroes with the Noble Advantage can be from a noble family.

Bernoulli

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Bernoulli family must purchase the Scholar skill at Hero Creation, and must spend at least an extra 5 HP on Scholar Knacks. They always receive one Free Raise when researching or using a book-learned Scholar Knack (Astrology, Mathematics, Sciences).

Caligari

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Caligari family may purchase the Foul Weather Jack Advantage for 3 HP. In addition, their monthly income is increased by 75G, due to their patriarch's constant need to send them on dangerous missions. However, they must also take a 2-point Defeated Background, attached to the Villanova's insult to their family name.

Falisci

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Falisci family gain one Free Raise when trying to manipulate others. In addition, they receive 12 HP if they take the Arrogant Hubris (which they may always do so even if their Destiny Spread says otherwise), but they must pay 12 HP for any Virtue. Finally, they are compulsive gamblers, and must make Resolve [15] rolls to resist a bet.

Lucani

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Lucani family with Sorte Sorcery receive two extra points of Sorte Sorcerous Knacks during Hero Creation. However, they receive 5 HP less (95 HP, instead of 100 HP) for Hero Creation, and they may never use their sorcery to directly aid themselves or another member of the Lucani family. Lucani Heroes who do not take sorcery do not receive the extra Sorcerous Knacks, nor do they suffer the 5 HP penalty.

Mondavi

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Mondavi family may purchase the Ambrogia style of fighting (see the Ambrogia Swordsman School) for 20 HP. They must take a Hubris (chosen from their Destiny Spread), for which they receive only 8 HP (instead of the usual 10 HP).

Vestini

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Vestini family receive the Above Average Appearance Advantage for free. However, they must take the Hedonistic Hubris (even if

their Destiny Spread says otherwise) for their Arcana, for which they receive only 8 HP (instead of the usual 10 HP).

Villanova

General Heritage: Noble Heroes who belong to the Villanova family receive two extra Reputation dice when at court in Vodacce, but must purchase a 3-point Nemesis Background, representing the Vaticine Church's resentment against the family.

DESTINY SPREAD

Fate Witches have a particular form of reading they use to give their querent a general idea of what his destiny is like. They use a five-card spread from the Sorte (Tarot) deck, laid out in a cross formation, to accomplish this.

- The **first** card is the querent's **Strength**. This embodies his most noble quality.
- The **second** card is the querent's **Weakness**. This shows his greatest flaw.
- The **third** card is the querent's **Past**. This shows an important event that helped make him who he is.
- The **fourth** card is the querent's **Present**. This shows his current situation.
- The **fifth** card is the querent's **Future**. This shows him an important event that is fast approaching in his life that he should be prepared for.

Normally, the first and second cards are selected from the Greater Arcana, while the other three cards are selected from the two suits from the Minor Arcana that are the most significant to the querent. Fate Witches traditionally leave the Court Cards out of these readings, since they signify events that cannot be controlled.

The Destiny Spread in Hero Creation

To use this system properly, you need a Tarot deck, preferably the Rider-Waite edition. If you don't have access to a Tarot deck, then an alternative determination method using dice is given below.

Perform this reading right after assigning Traits and Nationality to your Hero, but before assigning anything else. Separate out the Major Arcana, shuffle them, and put them in one pile. Next, pull out the two suits that are most significant to your Hero's Country of Origin (see the specific sections for each nation below), leaving out the Page, Knight, Queen, and King cards. Shuffle the two relevant suits together into a pile. Next, lay out the Destiny Spread, in a cross formation, from bottom (Strength), to middle (Weakness), then from left (Past), to top (Present), then to right (Future).

Each Virtue and Hubris corresponds to a Major Arcana Tarot card (see the Arcana section in this Compendium). If your Hero possesses an Arcana, you may choose to skip the draw for Strength/Weakness and either choose an Arcana, or choose not to have an Arcana. In the latter, you may not go back and choose an Arcana later—this is your only chance for one. If you choose to run with Fate, then you must first choose to focus on either your Strength or your Weakness. If you choose your Strength, your Hero gains the Virtue corresponding to that card, and you pay 10 HP for performing the Destiny Spread. If you choose your Weakness, your Hero gains the Hubris corresponding to that card, and you gain 10 HP to build your Hero with. You will therefore end up with one of the following:

- No Arcana at all
- An Arcana (Virtue or Hubris) chosen by you
- An Arcana (Virtue or Hubris) determined by card draw

If you don't have a Tarot deck, and you desire a randomly drawn Arcana, you will have to determine whether you wish to have a Virtue or Hubris, reducing or increasing your Hero Point total accordingly, then the GM will make the draw for you randomly before start of play.

To reiterate, after this stage, you cannot go back and select or reselect Arcana, nor can you change your Arcana once chosen or randomly drawn. This is the only point in Hero Creation where you can gain a Virtue or a Hubris.

Finally, consult the Past, Present, and Future charts to see what your Hero gained (or lost) from those draws. These are always determined at random, either via card draw (if you have a Tarot deck) or by using the Alternative Destiny Draw Method below.

Alternative Destiny Draw Method

If you don't have a Tarot deck, it's hard to determine your Strength or Weakness at random: simply select one, or have your GM select one. Since this only applies to Heroes choosing an Arcana, it can be over-looked if you don't envisage a Virtue or Hubris for your Hero.

For results from the Past, Present, and Future charts, roll two non-exploding dice on each. The first die denotes the suit: odd=the first suit given for that nation, even=the second suit given. The second die is used to determine the card number, from one (Ace) through ten.

Example: Castille favors Cups and Swords as their Destiny suits. When determining a Hero's Past, a roll of 6 on the first die would indicate that the Hero's Past was chosen from the Swords suit. A second die result of 4 would mean that the Hero's Past was the Four of Swords.

Avalon

The people (and Heroes) of Avalon use the suits of Cups and Staves: Cups because Avalon is a land of deep and passionate myth, and Staves because its people hold fast to the ties between family and liege-lord.

The Past

These cards reveal the events that brought the Hero to his present position in the skein. In Avalon the past very much lives on in the present, and these doings will certainly affect the Hero's future...

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: Once when playing in the woods near your home as a youth, you met a young girl who became your playmate. You never knew her family or where she lived, but she always found you when you left your home. As you grew up the two of you fell in love and became lovers... that's when she told you her secret. She is a Seelie, and every day you remain lovers you risk the wrath of the Queen of the Sidhe. *You receive a 3 point Sidhe Lover Background for free.*

Two of Cups: Since before you were born, your parents swore that you would be married to the child of their close friends. As you grew to know her, you fell in love. It was to be a memorable event; even the Goodly Folke gave their blessing to this beautiful union. Unfortunately, a beautiful Unseelie swept through your lives, stealing her love away. *You receive a 3 point Lost Love Background for free.*

Three of Cups: In your veins runs the blood of the Sidhe. Unfortunately, your family fell out of favor with them sometime before you were born. *You receive a 2 point Sidhe Blood Advantage, but you may only choose a Curse. You do not receive any extra points for the Curse.*

Four of Cups: In your youth, you learned all about the Sidhe, and how to appease them. But your quick mind and sharp wit also attracted the attention of a traveling priest, who tried to teach you all the glories of Theus, and offered you a chance at the priesthood. You soul has become a battleground between the Church and the old ways. *You may choose either the Sidhe Blood or the Ordained Advantage. Once you commit to one side, however, the other will hold you in eternal scorn. You receive a 3 point Nemesis Background for free.*

Five of Cups: Once you had a brother and two sisters who helped fill your house with laughter. Then they vanished in the night. Friends and neighbors whispered that they were stolen away by the Unseelie. Your parents were devastated, but rallied around their only remaining child: you. *You receive three 1 point Lost Relative Backgrounds for free.*

Six of Cups: Where you grew up there was a girl who was just a little bit "off." She had visions and fits, frightening all the other children. The grown-ups said she was "touched by the Sidhe," but you didn't care. To you, she was the best friend in the world. You still see her sometimes... in your dreams. *You have a 3 point Connection to a woman who has Sidhe blood, if she ever needs your help, you'll know...*

Seven of Cups: You were taken by the Sidhe as a boy. To you it was a timeless moment of whirling colors and flavors. More than eight years passed in the mortal realm before you were discovered. Since then, mortal Glamour has been nothing more than a pale shadow, a weak reflection of the glory your soul hungers for. *You are less affected by mortal Glamour; all Nobles roll one fewer unkept die when trying to affect you. You also have a 3 point Moment of Awe Background driving you.*

Eight of Cups: While your family was fortunate for people of their station, somehow you were never satisfied. You turned your back on Avalon and left in search of a place where you could find a sense of belonging. You must pick another country that you call home. Though you hail from Avalon, you want nothing to do with it and purchase Advantages and Schools (except magic) as if you were from the country you now call home.

Nine of Cups: A rich uncle's thriving business let him shower his relatives with good fortune. He is responsible for your education and has seen to it that you have a good start in life. Unfortunately, the Vestenmannavnjar have marked him for death for trafficking with the Vendel. Don't be surprised if you wake up in a sack one day, to be ransomed to your uncle. *You start with an extra 500 Guilders, and a 1-point Hunted Background by association with your uncle.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: Your youth was a fairy tale of perfect happiness: loving parents, adoring siblings, everything you could possibly want provided for you. *You receive a 5 point Appearance Advantage, but you are shockingly naive about the intentions of others. Anyone trying to trick or misuse you receives two free raises on social rolls against you.*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: When you were a child you became very ill. No conventional medicine would ease your pain, so your parents took you to see a druid. After an obscure ritual, you were cured. The druid took a special liking to you and has kept a watchful eye on you ever since. *You receive a 3 point Connection Advantage to the druid.*

Two of Staves: You come from a very stubborn and headstrong family. Once you decide on a course of action, nothing short of death can change your mind. *You receive the Indomitable Will Advantage for free.*

Three of Staves: Your family has traditionally been very religious in nature. When you were young, they sent you away to learn about the church and its importance. As a result, you have

recently been ordained by the Avalon Church. *You receive the Ordained Advantage for free.*

Four of Staves: Your family has been nobility since the beginning of Avalon history. You can trace your lineage back to one of the first kings of Avalon. *You may take the Noble Advantage for only 5 points, or for free if you purchase Sorcery.*

Five of Staves: You were pressed into service aboard a pirate vessel as a youngster. You soon proved yourself and became a trusted member of the crew. Unfortunately, your ship was later sunk, leaving you as the sole survivor. *You begin the game with the Pirate Trick Advantage for free.*

Six of Staves: You spent your early adult life as a soldier in Queen Elaine's army. Your aptitude for leadership was noted and you were soon given command of a unit. *You receive a 4 point Commission Advantage for free.*

Seven of Staves: When you were growing up you cared little for the pomp and circumstance of Avalon life. You preferred just to have fun and do whatever you wanted to do. You enjoyed the freedom and excitement that the street life had to offer. Unfortunately, your actions earned you a bad reputation. *You receive the Scoundrel Advantage for free.*

Eight of Staves: You served on a Navy vessel in your youth. *Gain the Sailor Skill for free with one Basic Knack at Rank 3.*

Nine of Staves: When you were very young you were injured badly due to a careless mistake. Since your recovery you have been extremely cautious in everything you do. *You begin the game with the Keen Senses Advantage.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Your father was an incessant gambler and ran up quite a debt to an influential swordsman who will stop at nothing to collect what is owed him. With the recent death of your father, you have inherited his debts... and the wrath of the swordsman. *You receive a 3 point Debt Background for free.*

Present

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: The Graal represents the Living Covenant between the people of Avalon and the Sidhe, Your blood carries the burden of those ties. *You receive a 2 point Sidhe Blood Advantage for free.*

Two of Cups: You recently drew the attentions of a noble lady. She is impressed with your flair and style and seems to be smitten with you. As a token of her affection, she gave you a white silk handkerchief to keep near your heart. *The handkerchief is a charm with one Adept Level Glamour Knack (3 points) chosen by the GM.*

Three of Cups: Your family is very proud of you and your accomplishments. As a result, they have chosen you to be the bearer of the family heirloom. The heirloom is a sword given to your great-great-grandfather by the Sidhe. *You begin the game with the 5 point Advantage, Sidhe Sword. if you should ever lose the sword, you will gain the Cursed Background (as determined by the GM) until you retrieve it.*

Four of Cups: You are never satisfied with what life has to offer and are always seeking more. You want things to change, in a bi~ way, and you are looking for an opportunity to present itself. Your rebellious nature has drawn the attention of a powerful member of a secret society, who feels you would be perfect for their cause. *You begin the game with a 5 point Membership (Secret Society) Advantage for free.*

Five of Cups: Your family has recently fallen upon hard times. You have constant!) been there for them and are doing everything you can to help. *You begin the game with only one-third of your starting income and the eternal gratitude of your family.*

Six of Cups: You were recently traveling through Avalon and had occasion to help a druid reclaim a holy place from bandits. The druid was very pleased, and in return for your help he conducted a ritual to give you strength. *You begin the game with a Lesser Gesa of the GM's choice.*

Seven of Cups: Your father was recently accused of a heinous crime and executed. Now your family name carries the stain of his dishonor. You have sworn that you will disprove the allegations made against him and clear your family name. *Your starting Reputation is decreased by 5, but you gain a 3 point Hunting Background for free.*

Eight of Cups: You have spent your youth wandering, caring not for material things but seeking the secrets and meaning of life. *You begin the game with the Bard Skill and a 1 point Druid Secrets Advantage.*

Nine of Cups: Your father was a member of Avalon's elite: one of Queen Elaine's Knights. He served with great distinction and earned you a place among their ranks. *You begin the game with the Membership: Elaine's Knights Advantage and must follow their rules and restrictions.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: You recently met the love of your life and got married. Although you are very happy, her headstrong nature constantly leads her into trouble. *You gain a 3-point Romance Background with your wife.*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: You have always been driven by a quest for knowledge and you planned your life accordingly. You just graduated from Burke University and are ready to begin your career. *You receive the University Advantage for free.*

Two of Staves: You recently were surprised by an Unseelie Sidhe known as Jimmy Squarefoot. You remained calm, unfortunately for him, and actually tricked him by promising him fortunes untold. News of your triumph has gotten around. *Your starting Reputation is increased by 5.*

Three of Staves: You recently rescued an Avalon nobleman from a runaway coach. In thanks, he gave you a special reward. *You receive a 2 point Magical Item for free.*

Four of Staves: As a member of a respected and wealthy family, you like to be surrounded with servants. *You receive a 3-point Servant Advantage for free.*

Five of Staves: Your home country convicted you of something terrible. You were dragged through the streets with people shouting curses and hurling rotten garbage at you, and you were put on display for all to see. Then came the sentence... exile. Whether or not you actually did the things they say is between you and your GM. *The Hero receives a 2 point Exiled Background for free.*

Six of Staves: You have recently been inundated by odd looks, curses, and the occasional challenge to a duel. It seems that a notorious swordsman-turned-bandit looks just like you, and you are paying for his mistakes. *You receive a 2-point Mistaken Identity Background for free.*

Seven of Staves: You are searching for a famous swordsman who challenged your father to a duel and killed him before your eyes when you were but a boy. The man laughed at you when you cried out and tossed a coin on the ground at your feet. When you find this man you must make him pay. *You receive a 3-point Vendetta Background for free.*

Eight of Staves: You have just been hired by a very wealthy man to help him with some unspoken agenda. *You receive a 2 point Patron advantage for free.*

Nine of Staves: The last thing you remember was following a beautiful woman into a circle of trees somewhere in the forest.

You woke up on a hill with absolutely no knowledge of who you were. *You receive a 2 Point Amnesia background for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: You recently got yourself into a lot of trouble by offending a powerful priest. You went to your cousin for help and he took care of the problem for you. Unfortunately, his help has a price. He is a member of the Rilasciare, and he wants you to join. *You receive the Secret Society: Rilasciare Advantage for free.*

Future

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: You will soon be helped by an enigmatic figure. (Sidhe Ally 2)

Two of Cups: A dark figure will soon come into your life. (Rivalry 2)

Three of Cups: With patience comes great rewards. (Inheritance 3)

Four of Cups: Your dissatisfaction with your life will lead you into troubled waters. (Pressed Into Service)

Five of Cups: A man's word should not be given lightly. (Vow 2)

Six of Cups: Someone from your past will soon knock upon your door. (Sidhe Lover 2)

Seven of Cups: Even the best-laid plans of pure-hearted men will sometimes fail. (Defeated 2)

Eight of Cups: Your search for the truth will ultimately prevail. (Gain the Faith Advantage)

Nine of Cups: Your pride will be your undoing. (Nemesis 3)

Ten (Zero) of Cups: You will soon find something which will secure your future. (Treasure Map 2)

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: Inner peace is the key to happiness. (Moment of Awe 2)

Two of Staves: Only through direct action can one achieve one's goals. (Citation 4)

Three of Staves: Watch your possessions carefully, as some are more valuable than others. (Syrneth Artifact 2)

Four of Staves: Stay true to yourself and love will soon find you. (Romance 2)

Five of Staves: Your deepest darkest fears will soon come to light. (Fear 2)

Six of Staves: Victory comes only after many hardships. (Defeated 1 and Nemesis 1)

Seven of Staves: You will soon cross paths with a great evil. (Cursed 2)

Eight of Staves: You will soon lose someone you love. (Lost Relative 2)

Nine of Staves: Your prudent nature will soon pay off. (Connections 2)

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Someone you don't know will do you a favor. (Obligation 2)

Castille

Castille has a strong affinity for the suits of Cups and Swords: Cups because of their emotional and spiritual nature, and Swords because of their boldness.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: You come from a deeply religious family, and have been raised to follow that path in life. *You gain the Faith Advantage for free.*

Two of Cups: You grew up side-by-side with a good friend. You played together, got into trouble together, and matured together. Even now, he would do anything for you, and you would do the same for him. *You gain an Ally Connection Advantage for free.*

Three of Cups: You discovered the taste of alcohol earlier than most. Your body has built up quite a tolerance to it. *You gain the Able Drinker Advantage for free.*

Four of Cups: You come from a deeply religious family, but have lost your way. *You gain a 2-point Crisis of Faith Background for free.*

Five of Cups: Your older brother went to fight in the war with Montaigne, and his position was overtaken. No one knows his fate. He may be dead, he may have been captured, or he may have deserted. *You gain a 3-point Lost Relative Background for free.*

Six of Cups: You are fascinated by stories of the way things used to be. *You gain the Scholar Skill for free, along with an extra Rank in the History Knack.*

Seven of Cups: Your father considered you a daydreamer. You have become something of a black sheep in the family. *You gain a 3-point Dispossessed Background for free.*

Eight of Cups: You have traveled extensively, wandering from nation to nation, looking for adventure. *You gain the Montaigne and Vodacce Languages for free.*

Nine of Cups: When you learned to walk, you never stumbled. Now you have the potential to be one of the most agile and dexterous people in the world. *You gain the Legendary Trait (Finesse) Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: After years of dedication and service, you have secured a position in the Church of the Prophets. *You gain the Ordained Advantage for free.*

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: The War with Montaigne virtually wiped out your whole village. You found the commander who was responsible for the carnage, and he defeated you single-handedly. Ever since then, you have been trying to track him down and exact revenge for his villainous deeds. It has been some time, and your one consolation is that he is not getting any younger. *You gain a 3-point Defeated Background for free.*

Two of Swords: As a political favor, you received membership in the Swordsman's Guild. *You gain the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage for free, but you are considered less than a full member by many other members.*

Three of Swords: You learned to fight early; your uncle taught you how to fire a pistol when you were only nine years old. Since then, you have had to defend yourself often. *You gain the Firearms Skill for free.*

Four of Swords: You spent a year as a hermit, trying to make some sense of the world's injustice. *You begin the game with one free Rank in the Survival, Fishing, and Stealth Knacks of the Hunter Skill.*

Five of Swords: You were framed for a minor scandal a few years ago, and still bear the stain of dishonor. *You lose 5 points of Reputation and gain a 2-point Hunting Background for free.*

Six of Swords: Three years ago, you journeyed to Avalon, and learned the language. *You gain the Avalon Language for free, and speak it without a trace of accent.*

Seven of Swords: When you were a child, your aunt had you keep an eye on her rival. *You gain the Spy Skill for free.*

Eight of Swords: A few years ago, you were falsely arrested for stealing the ring of a nobleman. You escaped from prison after only a week, but have not been forgotten by the authorities. *You gain a 2-point Wanted Background for free.*

Nine of Swords: When you were an infant, you were seized by a horrible illness, which left its mark on you. Your growth was stunted. *You gain the Small Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: You got into some debt, but have paid it off. *Roll an exploding die. You begin the game with that many fewer Guilders than you otherwise would.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: You have just had an old debt repaid to you. *You begin the game with 2k2 extra Guilders.*

Two of Cups: You have just discovered the location of someone you loved, but whom you thought had died. *Gain a 2-point Lost Love Background for free.*

Three of Cups: You have just been awarded a medal for an act of courage. *You gain the Citation Advantage for free.*

Four of Cups: You have recently earned a position within the Church of the Prophets. *You gain the Ordained Advantage for free.*

Five of Cups: You have had a misunderstanding, and have lost contact with your family. *You gain a 2-point Dispossessed Background for free.*

Six of Cups: You have just returned from your cousin's wedding, which many members of your family attended. *You may either gain a 5-point discount on the Extended Family Advantage or gain an Ally Connection who owes you some form of obligation.*

Seven of Cups: You have a special sword. *You gain 2 points worth of the Castillian Blade Advantage for free.*

Eight of Cups: You have been studying religion. *You gain the Priest Skill for free.*

Nine of Cups: You have just gained the financial support of an influential noble. *You gain a Patron Advantage with 2 points of Wealth and 2 points of Generosity for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: You have a friend in whom you may confide. *You gain a Confidant Connection for free.*

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: Your frame can support much more muscle mass than it does. You have the potential to be one of the strongest men in Théah. *You have the Legendary Trait (Brawn) Advantage.*

Two of Swords: You have just been promoted. *You begin the game with 4 extra points in the Commission Advantage for free.*

Three of Swords: You are a naturally daunting person. You have a peculiar way of fixing your eyes upon someone and getting them to shift away from your gaze. *You receive two Free Raises whenever you are attempting an Intimidation Action using the Repartee system.*

Four of Swords: You have been relatively inactive of late, and have had a lot of time to catch up on your reading. *You are literate in Castillian for free.*

Five of Swords: You have had a string of bad luck recently, and have had to put forth an extra effort to make up for it. *You start the game with one fewer Drama Die than normal.*

Six of Swords: You have just returned from a journey along the river, where you stopped in Eisen. *Gain the Eisen Language for free.*

Seven of Swords: You are a shady character, with a reputation that is less than sterling. The local authorities have their eyes on you, but no one can prove anything. *You gain the Scoundrel Advantage for free.*

Eight of Swords: After a period of two years, you have just been released from prison. You were arrested for being involved in an illegal duel, which you won. *You receive the Fencing Skill for free.*

Nine of Swords: You have just recovered from a serious illness, and are still weakened from it. *All of your Brawn rolls have a -5 penalty during the duration of the first Story.*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: Your best friend was slain yesterday by a famous swordsman. You have sworn to avenge him. *Gain a 3-point Hunting Background for free.*

Future

These are events that loom in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague. Your GM will work out the specifics of how they come into play.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: You will experience something miraculous. (Moment of Awe 2)

Two of Cups: You will fall madly in love. (Romance 2)

Three of Cups: Be careful what promises you make, and to whom. (Vow 2)

Four of Cups: Your life will undergo a transformation. (True Identity 2)

Five of Cups: Better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. (Lost Love 2)

Six of Cups: Time will bring forgetfulness. (Amnesia 2)

Seven of Cups: There will be a time of great confusion in your future. (Mistaken Identity 2)

Eight of Cups: There will be trouble with your family. (Dispossessed 2)

Nine of Cups: Be careful when choosing your confidants. (Rival 2)

Ten (Zero) of Cups: Beware of a woman in a gray cloak. (Nemesis 2)

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: You will meet your enemy in single combat, and only one of you will walk away. (Nemesis 2)

Two of Swords: You will fall in love with a warrior. (Romance 2)

Three of Swords: Avoid entanglements with the children of vengeful nobles. (Hunted 2)

Four of Swords: Miracles do happen, as you shall see. (Moment of Awe 2)

Five of Swords: Losing a duel does not mean that life has to end. (Defeated 2)

Six of Swords: You shall have an undesired journey over water. (Pressed Into Service 2)

Seven of Swords: Even the best plans can be foiled. (Defeated 2)

Eight of Swords: You will come to owe a debt of honor to an important woman. (Obligation 2)

Nine of Swords: You will become separated from your romantic partner. (Lost Love 2)

Ten (Zero) of Swords: Money will evade you. (Debt 2)

Eisen

Eisen have a strong affinity to the suits of Staves and Swords: Staves because of the political turmoil of the nation, and Swords because of their military prowess.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Staves/Odd

Ace (One) of Staves: Your father was a respected officer, and he saw to it that you had every opportunity to follow in his footsteps. *You begin the game with the Academy Advantage for free.*

Two of Staves: When you were young, you stood up to the bullies in the town, even some of the adults. You now feel obligated to protect those who are weaker than you. *You gain the Indomitable Will Advantage for free, but must make a Resolve [20] roll to avoid interfering in a situation involving a bully.*

Three of Staves: One of your distant relatives died and left you part of his estate. *Your starting income is increased by 200G.*

Four of Staves: Your grandparents have given you and your cousin their farm. It is a small patch of land, barely capable of sustaining its occupants, but it is very comfortable, and you enjoy spending time there when you can. While you are away, your cousin tends to the farm. *You begin the game with the Merchant Skill and one extra Rank in either the Butcher or Cooking Knack for free, not to mention a home to which you can return.*

Five of Staves: There is a woman from your hometown whom you've never gotten along with. She always seemed to be just a little bit better than you were at everything. You wouldn't be so uptight about it, but you keep encountering her even when you visit other nations, and she's still showing you up. *Begin the game with a 2-point Rivalry Background for free.*

Six of Staves: You have performed an act of valor on the field of battle (whether or not you were actually serving in an army at the time). *Receive the Citation Advantage for free, and come up with a story stating exactly what you did to earn it.*

Seven of Staves: You were caught outside after dark one night, and a terrible monster made of shadows and mist appeared before you, but you put your trust in Theus and had no fear. You locked eyes with the creature and stared it down until it had to flee the rays of the sun. *You gain the Faith Advantage for free, but you are also a magnet for the attentions of monsters (GM's discretion).*

Eight of Staves: You were raised on horseback. You rode before you walked. Horses are your favorite companions. *You gain the Rider Skill with an extra Rank in the Ride Knack for free.*

Nine of Staves: Your local church was used as an emergency hospital following a battle in the War of the Cross. You volunteered to help with the treatment of the wounded as a stretcher bearer. However, due to short-handedness, you were asked to help with the surgical procedures, passing saws and bandages to the acting surgeon. *You gain the Doctor Skill for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: One night, you were having a drink with some friendly men in dashing uniforms who had invited you to join them. The next day, you woke up in their army. Since then, you have made the best of a bad situation and excelled at your job. *You receive a 2-point Commission Advantage for free.*

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: The War of the Cross virtually wiped out your whole village. Eager for revenge, you tracked down the commander who was responsible for the carnage, and he defeated you single-handedly. Ever since then, you have been trying to find him again and extract vengeance for his deeds. It has been several years since you last saw him, and your one consolation is that he is not getting any younger. *You receive a 3-point Defeated Background for free.*

Two of Swords: As a political favor, you received membership in the Swordsman's Guild. *You receive the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage for free, but will always be considered something of a joke by many of the other members.*

Three of Swords: Your grandfather and his brother were on different sides of the War of the Cross, and the families have feuded to this day. *You gain a 1-point Vendetta Background for free to represent your family's division.*

Four of Swords: You spent a year as a hermit, trying to make some kind of sense of the world's injustice. *You gain the Hunter Skill for free, but you must choose Survival, Fishing, and Stealth as your three free Basic Knacks.*

Five of Swords: No longer able to cope with the horrors she has seen, your lovely younger sister has retreated into a world that exists only within her mind. *You receive a 3-point Waisen Dependent Background for free.*

Six of Swords: When you were fourteen, you left home and found work aboard a riverboat. You worked as one of the crew for the next two and a half years. Along the way, you learned just about everything there is to know about the daily operations of a river vessel. *You gain the Riverboat Pilot Skill for free.*

Seven of Swords: When you were a child, an old man with an eye-patch paid you a few coins a week to sit beside the road and keep an eye on a particular building. You had to watch for a pale woman with black hair leaving a certain building. After nearly three months, she finally appeared. Then, you had to follow her all over town, which you did for over three weeks, without ever learning her name. You found the old man dead one night, and you never saw that woman again. *You receive the Spy Skill for free.*

Eight of Swords: A few years ago, you were falsely arrested of stealing a ring from a nobleman. You escaped from prison after only a week, but you have not been forgotten by the authorities. *You start play with a 2-point Wanted Background for free.*

Nine of Swords: You were the child of a wealthy family, raised in comfort and warmth for many years. Then your home was burned to the ground and your parents were killed, leaving yourself and your siblings to the mercy of strangers. *You receive a 3-point Orphaned Background for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: The encounter with the Thing was so terrifying that it altered the course of your life forever. You still wake up screaming in the night when you dream about its smoky tentacles wisping towards you, twisting at your soul. *If you chose your Weakness, your Past and Future cards are canceled and you instead receive a 3-point Fear Background for free. If you chose your Strength, your Past and Future cards are canceled and you instead receive 2-point Crisis of Faith Background and a 3-point Fear Background for free. However, until these two Backgrounds are resolved to your GM's satisfaction, you must pay two Drama dice to activate your Virtue instead of one.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Staves/Odd

Ace (One) of Staves: You recently had to make a long overland journey! Although unused to physical exertion, you found that you enjoyed it, and began exercising every morning. Now, you are in excellent shape, ready for anything that may come your way. *You receive the Athlete Skill for free.*

Two of Staves: You have recently served as the leader of a company of mercenaries. However, due to circumstances beyond your control, you had to disband the organization. *You receive the Commander Skill for free.*

Three of Staves: You've been taking lessons from a panzerhand expert recently, and you've shown so much talent that he has promised to introduce you to a man he knows in the Freiburg Guardsmen if you so desire. *You receive the Panzerhand Skill for free, and you have a favorable letter of introduction to the Captain of the Freiburg Guardsmen.*

Four of Staves: For the last two months, you've been working as a taster at a brewery. This has built up your resistance to alcohol a great deal. *You receive the Able Drinker Advantage for free.*

Five of Staves: You are a very fast runner and you have been competing in races against some of the fastest men in Eisen to earn your keep. *If you purchase the Athlete Skill during Hero creation, you receive two free Ranks in the Sprinting Knack.*

Six of Staves: You recently won a gentleman's wager on a horse race. *Roll one exploding die and increase your starting income by that many Guilders.*

Seven of Staves: Lately, you have been helping out the town watch by acting as one of their night watchmen on a volunteer basis. As thanks, one of the older guards has been teaching you how to use a spear. *You receive the Polearm Skill for free.*

Eight of Staves: Last week, you found an inky black shard of metal lying near the road. When you picked it up, it dissolved in your hand, and the world seemed to stop for a moment. Then, everything began moving again, a little slower than before. You found that you now had reflexes like a cat's. *You receive the Combat Reflexes Advantage for free, and you always roll and Keep one extra die when performing an Active Defense. However, the shard has had some unpleasant side effects as well. You find yourself unable to sit still, and you are concerned that you may be growing older at an accelerated rate. You roll and Keep one fewer die when making checks that require you to sit still (such as Stealth, Unobtrusive, and occasionally, Etiquette). In addition, you age two years for every year that passes.*

Nine of Staves: You've just finished a year's stint as a road builder. You spent all day breaking rocks in the hot sun and were often bruised and sore by the end of the day. However, you are now much more resistant to pain and weariness than before. *You gain the Toughness Advantage for free, and you may use the extra die it gives you to resist falling asleep or other forms of exhaustion.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: A letter arrived from your sister today. She says that her son has disappeared, and that he may have run away from home to see you. *You receive a 2-point Lost Relative Background for free.*

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: While traveling in Avalon last year, you came across a small man pinned underneath a fallen tree. Straining, you managed to lift it while he slid out from underneath. As a reward, he waved his hand over you, and you felt dizzy for a moment. The man said, "There. You can be one of the strongest men (or women) in Théah, if you so choose." Then, right before your eyes, he turned into a deer and disappeared into the woods. *You receive the Legendary Trait (Brawn) Advantage for free.*

Two of Swords: In exchange for services that you have rendered her, a young noblewoman has hired a bodyguard for you. He is sworn to protect and aid you, and she pays his fees. *You receive the Eisen Bodyguard Advantage for free.*

Three of Swords: You were recently caught in the woods after dark. You lost track of time, and only noticed the dimming light as the sun was disappearing. You ran along the trails in an effort to get out of the forest before it got too dark to see, but along the way, you were bitten by an odd snake that seemed to be made of shadows. Feeling strange, you managed to stagger back to the village. Since then, you have found that you can fix your eyes on someone and force them to look away from your gaze nervously. *You receive two Free Raises whenever you are attempting an Intimidation Action. However, you are concerned that this is only the first effect of the snake's venom and that other, more pronounced effects, may follow (GM's discretion).*

Four of Swords: You have been relatively inactive of late, and have had time to catch up on your reading. *You receive literacy in Eisen for free.*

Five of Swords: You have been on a string of bad luck recently, and have had to put forth extra effort to make up for it. *For the duration of your first Story, you may not spend any Drama dice. However, you receive 5 extra XP at the end of the Story.*

Six of Swords: You have just returned from a journey along the river, where you stopped in Castille while repairs were made to the ship. You ended up staying for almost two months and picked up much of the language. *You receive the Language: Castille Advantage for free.*

Seven of Swords: Just two weeks ago, you saw some men forcing a young girl into a carriage against her will. Unwilling to allow this, you drew your sword and drove off the ruffians. It turned out that the girl's father was a powerful noble, and as a reward for saving his daughter's life, he gave you a Dracheneisen dagger. Overwhelmed by his gratitude, you swore that you would be there whenever he had need of you. *You receive a Dracheneisen dagger (see the Dracheneisen Advantage) and a 1-point Obligation Background for free. Unless you purchase the Dracheneisen Advantage normally, however, you do not receive any discount on the Noble Advantage.*

Eight of Swords You were arrested for being involved in an illegal duel, which you won. After a period of two years, you have just been released from prison. *You receive the Fencing Skill for free, but now have a criminal record.*

Nine of Swords: You have just recovered from a serious illness, and are still weakened by it. *All of your Brawn checks have their TN increased by 5 for the duration of the first Story.*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: Your best friend was slain yesterday by a famous swordsman You have sworn to avenge him *You receive a 3-point Hunting Background for free.*

Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague; your GM will work out the specifics of how they come into play.

Staves/Odd

Ace (One) of Staves: You stand to inherit something wonderful some day. (Dracheneisen Heir 2)

Two of Staves: You will avenge your father's death. (Vow 2)

Three of Staves: You will have an exciting opportunity to seek your fortune. (Treasure Map 2)

Four of Staves: You will find marital bliss. (Romance 2)

Five of Staves: Be wary of old acquaintances. (Rivalry 2)

Six of Staves: Beware of strangers. (Nemesis 2)

Seven of Staves: You will come into conflict with unique authority. (Wanted 2)

Eight of Staves: You may wish to change your travel plans. (Exiled 2)

Nine of Staves: There are those who would do you harm if the truth becomes clear. (True Identity 2)

Ten (Zero) of Staves: You will meet with death and disaster. (Orphaned 2)

Swords/Even

Ace (One) of Swords: You will meet your enemy, but only one of you will walk away. (Nemesis 2)

Two of Swords: You will fall in love with a warrior. (Romance 2)

Three of Swords: Avoid entanglements with the children of vengeful nobles. (Hunted 2)

Four of Swords: Miracles do happen, as you shall see. (Moment of Awe 2)

Five of Swords: Losing a duel does not mean that life has to end. (Defeated 2)

Six of Swords: Do not travel over water. It will only bring you ruin. (Cursed 2)

Seven of Swords: Something very important to you will be stolen. (Hunting 2)

Eight of Swords: You will owe a debt of honor to an important woman. (Obligation 2)

Nine of Swords: An old flame will reenter your life, much to your sorrow. (Lost Love 2)

Ten (Zero) of Swords: You will lose a loved one, perhaps forever. (Waisen Dependent 2)

Montaigne

Montaigne have a strong affinity for the suits of Coins and Staves: Coins because of their great wealth, and Staves because of their enormous political power.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: Every year a member of your family hosts a grand ball for the nobility. This year the responsibility has fallen on your shoulders. Your family has provided you with a stipend to help cover the expenses, but should the ball flop they will never help you again. *You begin the game with an extra 200 Guilders and a 2-point Obligation Background for free.*

Two of Coins: For over a year now you have been wooing an influential member of the court. At first, your interests were pragmatic—your would-be lover's powerful social position could bolster your courtly influence. But somewhere along the way, you fell in love with him or her. Unfortunately, he or she has shied away from your latest attempts, preferring the company of a more prestigious courtier than you. *You receive a 3-point Lost Love Background for free.*

Three of Coins: A few years ago you lent money to an acquaintance who since that time has avoided you like the plague. Recently, you and a few bodyguards collected on the debt. *You begin the game with an extra 500 guilders and a 1-point Nemesis Background for free.*

Four of Coins: When you were a small child you caught the White Plague. Although you survived, you have always been a

little sickly and were frequently bed-ridden while growing up. *Your Resolve is reduced by 1, and your Wits is increased by 1.*

Five of Coins: A year ago you borrowed money from a rich and powerful nobleman. You invested it, along with your savings, to fund a privateer captain who promised you more gold than you could imagine. You never saw him again. Worse yet, the nobleman wants his money back. *You begin the game with a 3-point Debt Background for free.*

Six of Coins: As a child you shunned your noble playmates, not caring for their shallow machinations. Instead you would sneak out and play with the peasant children. You loved their innocence and zeal for life. You would bring them food, toys, and, when you were older, money. You are well known among the peasantry as charitable and honorable, with their best interests at heart. *You receive one extra Reputation die when dealing with commoners.*

Seven of Coins: As a child, you were betrothed to the child of a respected courtier. Unfortunately, you and your betrothed can't stand each other. Your betrothed has assured you that if you were to marry him or her, he or she would make your life miserable. *You begin the game with a 3-point Obligation Background for free. If you do not marry your betrothed and fulfill the Obligation Background within 3 months, it becomes a 3-point Nemesis background (with the father) instead.*

Eight of Coins: Since you were young you have loved to read books. You had a tendency to avoid any physical training so that you could sit down and study. As a result, your father sent you to a university when you came of age. *You receive the University Advantage and literacy in Montaigne for free.*

Nine of Coins: Your family has had a long and distinguished service in the Montaigne military. You have carried on that tradition by rapidly rising through the ranks. *You receive a 4-point discount when purchasing the Commission Advantage.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: For as long as you can remember, you have had an excellent sense of fashion. It wasn't that you could predict the directions that fashion would take in the coming months, it was that you chose the direction fashion would take. You have always been on the cutting edge of style, and the other nobles look to you for direction. *You begin the game with the Courtier Skill and Rank 3 in your Fashion Knack for free.*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: You were always close to your extended family. You grew up with a cousin who was like a brother to you. Throughout your childhood, you came to his aid more times than you can count, and he came to yours. Now he is a respected man in a powerful position, and he will never forget his childhood friend. *You receive a 3-point Close Family Member Advantage for free.*

Two of Staves: You are a member of the gentry. You have no land to speak of, but you have money. You travel from place to place relying on other nobles to house and support you. You are always on the lookout for a good investment opportunity. *You receive a 4-point discount when you purchase the Gentry Advantage, or receive it for free if you also purchase Sorcery.*

Three of Staves: You grew up knowing that you were different. There was just something about you that attracted members of the opposite sex. No matter what you did, or how well you did it, you were surrounded by people eager to catch your eye. Now you know how to play the game, and your skills have been exceptionally useful in court. *You receive the Dangerous Beauty Advantage for free.*

Four of Staves: As a child, you studied under a renowned artist. You were mainly a helper, but you did have a bit of natural talent that blossomed into true skill. *You begin the game with the Artist Skill and Rank 3 in one of its Basic Knacks for free.*

Five of Staves: When you were a child your family was condemned as traitors. Your father was captured and hanged, but your mother escaped and fled the country with you. You have returned to clear your family name. If anyone finds out who you truly are, however, you will probably be executed. *You begin the game with a 2-point Exiled Background and a 2-point True Identity Background for free.*

Six of Staves: You come from a long line of duelists, soldiers, and mercenaries. Your father drilled you in weapons and tactics from the time you were old enough to walk. When you surpassed his training, he sent you to a military academy in hopes that you would make him proud. *You begin the game with the Academy Advantage for free.*

Seven of Staves: Long ago you were beaten badly at what you do best. Worse yet, the person who showed you up was a good friend of yours. Word has gotten around that you are a pale shadow of your friend and no one takes you seriously. *You begin the game with a 2-point Defeated Background for free.*

Eight of Staves: Your father was an ambassador to many different kingdoms over his lifetime. As a child, you often accompanied him when he traveled abroad, and you picked up several different languages along the way. *You begin the game with the Linguist Advantage for free.*

Nine of Staves: Your entire childhood was spent in preparation for the time you would represent your family in court. You excelled in your studies and became the epitome of grace and dignity. During your first visit to court, however, you were utterly humiliated by a family enemy in front of the most influential people in Montaigne. Now you are afraid to show your face in court. *You gain a 2-point Fear Background for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Since you were a child, trouble has had a way of finding you. No matter what you did, no matter how many problems you solved, more would follow. You have always been plagued with more than your fair share of problems and adventure. *You begin the game with the Foul Weather Jack Advantage for free.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: You recently did a favor for one of your contacts at court. In thanks, he has acquired a Montaigne Puzzle Sword for you. *You must roll on the Montaigne Puzzle Sword Advantage charts as normal, but with a 2-point discount on the final cost of your sword.*

Two of Coins: Due to a recent faux pas at court, you have fallen out of favor with the head of your family. As a result, he has cut you off from the family funds. *You begin the game with half of your starting money. In addition, your monthly income is reduced by half until you can appease your family patriarch.*

Three of Coins: You recently had occasion to impress an esteemed gentleman while attending court. This man introduced you to his friends, who in turn invited you to join their social club. *You begin the game with a 3-point Social Club Advantage of the GM's choice or creation for free.*

Four of Coins: You have been shrewd in your investments and business transactions. You have never taken unnecessary risks with your money, and never spent a guilder unwisely. *As a result, your starting income is increased by 50% for free.*

Five of Coins: A few nights ago you entered a tavern with a light heart and a full purse. You ate, drank, engaged in games of chance, and drank some more. You were invited into a game by a

man who kept buying you drinks. When you woke up, you were in the alley behind the tavern with no money, no sword, and rags for clothes; but you will never forget the face of the man who cheated you. *You begin the game with no starting money and a 3-point Vendetta Background for free.*

Six of Coins: Last week, you saw a poor old blind man begging for money in the street. Those who walked by either avoided him or took no notice of him whatsoever. You strolled up to him and placed a bag of Guilders in his hand. In thanks, he gave you the only possession he had—a marble-sized steel ball with a 2-inch metallic shaft running through its center. You had no idea what it was, but you slipped it in your pocket for further study. *You begin the game with a 2-point Syrneth Artifact Advantage for free. The marble has unknown properties.*

Seven of Coins: A courtier of great renown has presented you with an expensive gift. In his eyes this is a favor, and you are of course now in his debt. *You begin the game with one item of your choice which costs 1,000G or less. In addition you receive a 3-point Obligation Background for free.*

Eight of Coins: You have a long tradition of letting others foot your bills. If other nobles want to support you for the pleasure of your company, who are you to argue? *You begin the game with the Courtier Skill and Rank 2 in the Mooch Knack for free.*

Nine of Coins: Ever since you were a small child you had a dream—to be a Musketeer like your father. Now your dream is at hand. You have just completed your training and have been sent out into Montaigne to carry out the justice of *l'Empereur*. *You begin the game with the Musketeers Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: While attending court recently, you were mercilessly ridiculed by one of your chief rivals. You became the laughing-stock of the entire evening, much to the pleasure of your rival. *Your starting Reputation is lowered by 5 and you receive a 2-point Ridiculed Background for free.*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: You recently came of age and have ventured out to make a name for yourself. However, your parents insisted that you take along a servant as befits your station. *You receive a 4-point Montaigne Servant Advantage for free.*

Two of Staves: Your family can trace its lineage back to royalty. It is one of the oldest and most powerful in Montaigne, and is very influential at court. *You may purchase the Noble Advantage for 5 points, or gain it for free if you purchase Sorcery.*

Three of Staves: The conclusion of a business deal has brought you prosperity. *You begin the game with 150G extra starting money and a 2-point Connection Advantage for free.*

Four of Staves: Being the youngest son of a powerful noble, you stood to inherit very little. A few years ago you struck out on your own, having little or no contact with your family and living by any means necessary. You tasted street life and found it wasn't for you. You have recently been allowed back home, though you were given an icy welcome. *You gain the Scoundrel Advantage for free.*

Five of Staves: A long time ago you were in love. This person was absolute perfection, everything you always wanted... until the next person caught your eye. Your jilted lover moved away without saying so much as a word to you. Well, now he (or she) is back and intends to ruin you forever. *You receive a 3-point Lost Love Background for free.*

Six of Staves: You recently visited court and dazzled the nobility with your wit. You were the life of the party. After arriving with the most astonishing attire of the evening, you proceeded to grant a few favors, make a few introductions, and gossip like there was no tomorrow. *Your starting Reputation is increased by 5.*

Seven of Staves: Two months ago you angered a Fate Witch by ridiculing her in open court. Since then, odd things have begun to happen to you. You have a tendency to get choked up and stutter whenever you are involved in a social situation. *You start the game with two Curse dice linked to Staves (see the Sorte Sorcery rules).*

Eight of Staves: During your recent travels, you unwittingly foiled a plot perpetuated by the Inquisition. Now they want you. You always seem to have someone following you, but when you turn to look, they are gone. You feel as if you are being watched at all times, and you grow more nervous by the day. *You receive a 2-point Hunted Background for free.*

Nine of Staves: You know what it's like to be beaten down. It seems that your life has been nothing but hard times. You know what hard work and labor is all about, as well as pain and physical punishment. You never let it get you down, however, and things have started getting better. *You receive the Toughness Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Recently, a good friend of yours was killed in battle right next to you. As he lay dying in your arms he asked you to grant him one request—take care of his wife and son. *You receive a 2-point Vow Background for free.*

Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague. Your GM will work out the specifics of how they come into play.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: With patience comes prosperity. (Treasure Map 2)

Two of Coins: The true and good always prevail. (Cursed 2)

Three of Coins: You will soon meet an influential friend. (Rivalry 2)

Four of Coins: Luck is on your side, but beware what is hidden. (Treasure Map 1, Rivalry 1)

Five of Coins: Hang on to your special moments. They are fleeting. (Lost Love 2)

Six of Coins: Your acts of kindness will be rewarded. (Romance 2)

Seven of Coins: Something you love will soon be lost. (Hunting 2)

Eight of Coins: You will one day know perfection. (Moment of Awe 2)

Nine of Coins: Your dreams of travel will soon be fulfilled. (Pressed Into Service 2)

Ten (Zero) of Coins: You will become famous, (Wanted 2)

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: Someone you know will soon take a trip. (Lost Relative 2)

Two of Staves: Never make a promise you can't keep. (Vow 2)

Three of Staves: You will find something you have been looking for. (Hunting 2)

Four of Staves: Accept the next proposition offered you. (Exiled 2)

Five of Staves: Revenge is a path that should not be traveled lightly. (Vendetta 2)

Six of Staves: Beware the one who loves you most. (Rivalry 2)

Seven of Staves: It is important that you always accept responsibility. (Obligation 2)

Eight of Staves: Do not be afraid of that which is unknown. (Fear 2)

Nine of Staves: Beware your true face. (True Identity 2)

Ten (Zero) of Staves: You will forget something very important. (Vow 2)

Pirate Nations

Pirates have a strong affinity for the suits of Swords and Coins: Swords because of their violent lifestyle, and Coins because of their preoccupation with material possessions.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Swords/Odd

Ace (One) of Swords: When you were young, you were apprenticed to a craftsman and showed great promise. Unfortunately, he went bankrupt, and you were forced to look for other work. *You receive the Merchant Skill for free, with Rank 4 in one Basic Knack.*

Two of Swords: You once went exploring some ruins with a friend. There was a cave-in, and the two of you were forced down different paths. After three days of wandering in the tunnels, you emerged to discover that he had told everyone that you were dead, and had discovered a fortune in artifacts. *You receive a 3-point Vendetta Background with your rich ex-friend for free.*

Three of Swords: A ship you were sailing on was boarded by pirates. One of them wounded your shoulder and it never healed correctly. That arm was permanently weakened, but the experience of rehabilitation toughened the rest of your body. *Your Brawn is reduced by 1, and your Resolve is increased by 1.*

Four of Swords: You were once marooned on a peaceful island—almost a paradise. You spent several pleasant months there living off the land, and a ship eventually picked you up. During those months, you became quite a hunter. *You receive the Hunter Skill for free, but must choose Survival as one of your Basic Knacks.*

Five of Swords: You were gambling in a tavern frequented by sailors when a muscular man accused you of cheating and pulled a knife on you. Grabbing a nearby bottle, you broke it over his head, and were shocked to realize you'd killed him. Worse, it turned out that his brother was an infamous pirate, and you've been keeping a wary eye out for him ever since. *You receive a 2-point Hunted Background for free.*

Six of Swords: You traveled quite extensively, and picked up several languages. *You receive 3 extra HP that you can only spend on the Language Advantage.*

Seven of Swords: You once came across a lonely cave on an island while out sailing. Entering it, you discovered a cache of pirate loot. Worried about getting caught in their cave, you just grabbed something and ran. The pirates caught a glimpse of you as you were sailing away, and they've been looking for you ever since. *You receive a 2-point Syrneth Artifact Advantage and a 1-point Hunted Background for free.*

Eight of Swords: When exploring an island with several members of the crew you were with at the time, you were ambushed by some natives and shot with darts coated in a paralyzing poison. You watched helplessly as the other crewmen died, but when the natives got to you, they saw the strange necklace your grandfather gave to you years ago, and ran screaming into the woods. Eventually, you made it back to the ship and left the island, but you've always wondered about the significance of the necklace. *You receive a 3-point Syrneth*

Artifact Advantage for free. It is a silver necklace with unknown properties.

Nine of Swords: When you were five years old, your father took you to a Fate Witch to have your destiny foretold. She said that you would bring death to everyone in your family. Your father called her a liar and stormed out, but you caught the White Plague two months later. Although you survived, the rest of your immediate family died from it. You've lived with the (undeserved) guilt ever since. Someone from your extended family raised you. *You are immune to the White Plague, but your immediate family is dead.*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: Your mother raised you alone, and always claimed that your father was a wealthy noble. When you were eighteen, she became ill and you went to him to ask for money. He refused to acknowledge you as his son, and when you persisted, he hired a press gang to carry you off to sea. By the time you managed to jump ship and return home, your mother had died of her illness, and your father had left town for undisclosed reasons. *You receive a 3-point Vendetta Background for free. You are looking for your father. When you find him, it's going to be hard not to kill him.*

Coins/Even

Ace (One) of Coins: An uncle you haven't seen in years died recently, leaving you his sea chest. Opening it, you found a piece of a treasure map inside. *You receive a 2-point Treasure Map Background (worth 3 points, but a Villain has a piece of the map) for free.*

Two of Coins: You have knocked around so many ports that you can't remember all of them. A fortunate side effect of all this travel is that you know how to order a beer in every seaport pub in Théah. *You receive Language Acquaintance in: Avalon, Castille, Eisen, Montaigne, Vendel, and Vodacce.*

Three of Coins: Over the years, you've made several connections in the underworld, the most notable of which is a Fence whom you can trust. *You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free.*

Four of Coins: You have earned yourself a miserly reputation through careful saving. *You receive double your normal starting money, but your starting Reputation is lowered by 5.*

Five of Coins: Your father was sailing home to bestow the family sword upon you when pirates attacked the ship. They didn't hurt anyone, but they took the sword from him by threatening to kill a lady passenger if he didn't hand it over. The only lead he could give you was the name of their ship, the Wild Goose. *You receive a 2-point Hunting Background for free. The family sword, if you recover it, is a fencing weapon that adds 1 unkept die to all Damage Rolls.*

Six of Coins: You have earned a reputation as a generous person through your contributions to charity. *You receive half your normal starting money, but your starting Reputation is increased by 5.*

Seven of Coins: A woman's voice yelling for help caught your attention not long ago. Running to her aid, you fought off three muggers who had attacked her. It turned out that she was wealthy, and gave you a healthy reward for your assistance. *You start with one item of your choice valued at or under 500G.*

Eight of Coins: You have thrown yourself into the study of a particular subject and your efforts have paid off. *After you buy all your Knacks, choose one of your Civil Knacks. You receive for free a number of experience points in it equal to half what you need to advance it. These experience points cannot be spent elsewhere.*

Nine of Coins: Throughout all of your travels, you've always had one place you could return to in order to hide out. Your

friend, the owner of this safe-house, would never betray you, even on pain of death. *You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free. The only assistance this Connection can provide is to hide you while you're in town for awhile, but sometimes that's exactly what you need.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: Several years ago, a secret society approached you and invited you to join up. Naturally, you accepted. *You receive up to 5 points of Membership in a Secret Society of your choice for free.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Swords/Odd

Ace (One) of Swords: You seem to have a guardian angel watching over you. *You begin your first adventure with 3 additional Drama dice.*

Two of Swords: You are currently walking a fine line. You've managed to acquire two noble Patrons, neither of which know about the other. As long as you can keep the situation quiet, you can collect money from both of them, but if word gets out, you're in a lot of trouble. *You receive two 2-point Patron Advantages for free. If they find out about each other, you lose these Advantages, and gain two 1-point Nemesis Backgrounds for free instead.*

Three of Swords: An old flame has tracked you down and is dead set on making your life miserable. *You receive a 2-point Lost Love Background for free.*

Four of Swords: Your life has been placid lately. While this is great as far as you're concerned, it's taking the edge off your skills that constant danger provides. *Reduce the values of all of your Backgrounds by 1, to a minimum of 1.*

Five of Swords: You recently offended a powerful noble. It was an accident, to be sure, but the noble has taken the slight on his honor very seriously, and seems out to bring you down now. *You receive a 3-point Nemesis Background for free.*

Six of Swords: While clearing out some of your family's old papers, you ran across an odd document. *Upon reading it, you realized that it was signed by the Headmaster of the local Explorer's Society, and was good for one passage anywhere on Théah on one of the Society's ship for the bearer and his companions.*

Seven of Swords: You were recently the victim of a pickpocket. *Before purchasing your starting equipment, roll two exploding dice and subtract that many Guilders from your starting money.*

Eight of Swords: Someone has been attacking your good name. Some say that he's a singer, others that he's a famous playwright. You aren't sure which story to believe yet, but you know that you have to put a stop to his activities pretty soon. You're already starting to get odd looks whenever you introduce yourself. *You lose 1 Reputation point every two weeks until you deal with the problem.*

Nine of Swords: Through a series of misadventures, you inadvertently insulted a skilled Swordsman. You are scheduled for a duel to the death with him in exactly one month. It's not a lot of time to prepare for death, but hopefully it'll be enough. *If you back out of the duel, your reputation will be ruined forever, and no one will take you seriously ever again (-10 Reputation Points).*

Ten (Zero) of Swords: The last ship you served on left port rather suddenly while you were out on the town. They took all your money and possessions with them. *You receive no starting*

money and no possessions, except those you have paid for with Hero Points (such as Synchronic Artifacts, Dracheneisen, etc.).

Coins/Even

Ace (One) of Coins: Recently, in return for saving a merchant's life, he gave you a small interest in his shop. *Your share of the profits works out to be worth 2 exploding dice of Guilders per month.*

Two of Coins: You took out a loan from a powerful merchant, and (perhaps unwisely) invested it in a fairly risky venture. *You receive a 2-point Debt Background for free. The profits from the venture are worth 3 exploding dice of Guilders per month, while the noble wants you to pay a minimum of 3 exploding dice of Guilders per month. If Chance works against you, you could be in a lot of trouble.*

Three of Coins: You recently did some artisan work for the Church of the Prophets. Whether or not you agree with their religion, they certainly pay well. *You receive the Artist Skill for free and 100G extra starting money.*

Four of Coins: You've saved your money carefully for years. Unfortunately, a burglar recently stole your savings, leaving a distinctive calling card behind (decide with your GM what it was). Within a month, the trail will be too cold to follow. *You receive a 1-point Hunting Background for free.*

Five of Coins: When visiting a gambling hall recently, you did very poorly, while your friends all did very well. *Take half of your starting money and split it up among the other Heroes in the group. They can give it back to you, if you can talk them into it.*

Six of Coins: You recently gave money to a young woman who had obviously fallen on hard times: she turned out to be a Fate Witch. *You start the game with two Blessing dice linked to Coins (see the Sorte Sorcery rules).*

Seven of Coins: Your younger sister was stolen away by pirates as a little girl. After years of searching, you've finally stumbled upon the trail. *You receive a 2-point Lost Relative Background for free.*

Eight of Coins: Thanks to a lucky break, your income is due to increase very soon. *After one month, it will go up by 25%.*

Nine of Coins: An inheritance left to you by your great-aunt is going to be released to you in three months. *It is worth 1,500G.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: You recently became reacquainted with your brother after years of absence. While he was gone, he became a member of the Explorer's Society. *You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free.*

Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague. Your GM works out the specifics of how they come into play.

Swords/Odd

Ace (One) of Swords: You will soon meet the love of your life. (Romance 2)

Two of Swords: Soon, you will be forced to choose between your loyalties. (Obligation 2)

Three of Swords: An ancient ill caused by your family will soon settle upon your shoulders. (Cursed 2)

Four of Swords: You will glimpse perfection and spend your whole life seeking it once again. (Moment of Awe 2)

Five of Swords: You will form a strong rivalry with a friend. (Rivalry 2)

Six of Swords: You will travel widely and meet exotic people. (Pressed Into Service 2)

Seven of Swords: A past life of yours will soon come to light. (True Identity 2)

Eight of Swords: A vow you have taken will cause you great harm. (Vow 2)

Nine of Swords: A dark figure from your past will soon return to face you again. (Defeated 2)

Ten (Zero) of Swords: You will soon be betrayed by someone you love. (Lost Love 2)

Coins/Even

Ace (One) of Coins: Your life will soon take an unexpected turn. (Wanted 2)

Two of Coins: A wealthy man will soon pay you a visit. (Debt 2)

Three of Coins: The efforts of an old acquaintance will soon pay off. (Hunted 2)

Four of Coins: Caution is wise, paranoia foolish. (Fear 2)

Five of Coins: You can never go home again. (Exiled 2)

Six of Coins: Your charity will come back to haunt you. (Nemesis 2)

Seven of Coins: Persistence will result in great rewards. (Treasure Map 2)

Eight of Coins: Something you have created will slip from your grasp (Hunting 2)

Nine of Coins: You will find acceptance with strangers. (Mistaken Identity 2)

Ten (Zero) of Coins: You will soon be reunited with a lost loved one. (Lost Relative 2)

Ussura

Ussurans have a strong affinity for the suits of Cups and Staves: Cups because of their powerful emotions, and Staves because of their deep respect for Matushka.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: What started as an amusing contest of wits turned embarrassing for your father when someone of lower status outsmarted you. As a result you were sent away from home for more education. *You gain the University Advantage and a 1-point Defeated Background for free.*

Two of Cups: A foolish squabble in the height of winter cost you the heart of the one dearest to you. *You gain a 1 point Lost Love Background for free.*

Three of Cups: You gained a reputation for telling a good tale on those long winter nights. Your audiences showed their appreciation with drinks, but to tell a good tale you've got to be able to hold the liquor till it's done. *You gain the Able Drinker Advantage for free.*

Four of Cups: The only things that have ever excited you were discovering new things and places. *You gain the Linguist Advantage for free.*

Five of Cups: Trouble seems to follow you like snow follows the north wind. You've grown used to it but it can still spell disaster for others. *Gain the Foul Weather Jack Advantage with your choice of Background for free.*

Six of Cups: As a child, you became lost in the woods in spite of the warnings against wandering too far from home. You were found by a very old woman - at first, you were terrified that Matushka had come to punish you! As it turned, out the old woman was a Tibesti; she and her people took you in. You lived

with them for some time as they traveled, and ever since you have had a touch of wanderlust in your heart. *You gain a 3-point Fhideli Connection Advantage for free.*

Seven of Cups: When you were a child, people used to think you were always dreaming. You've always found it easy to be on your own, and the creativity just flows through you. *Should you purchase the Artist Skill, gain one additional point in the Knack of your choice for free.*

Eight of Cups: As a youth, you loved to spend your time hunting. It was while hunting that you met the young Tibesti. Your friendship grew into love, but when you suggested that your lover leave the Tibesti and come live with you, it all fell to pieces. *You gain a 1-point Gadjo Background and a 2-point Lost Love Background for free.*

Nine of Cups: As a youth, you possessed a beautiful voice, so you were sent away for training. *Gain the Performer skill with an additional point in the Singing Knack for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: You've always had an affinity with the outdoors and nature, so it came as no surprise to your parents when you displayed unusual knowledge of animals. *You may purchase Pyeryem sorcery for 5 HP less than the listed cost (minimum of 0 HP).*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: When you were a child your sister disappeared. No one talks about it much—it is whispered that Matushka took her—but you are determined to find her some day. *You gain a 2-point Hunting Background for free.*

Two of Staves: You were adopted. Your family never told you, but you are sure of this anyway. Someday you're going to find out who your parents were. *You gain a 3-point True Identity Background for free.*

Three of Staves: You were once the object of some humiliating jokes, and ever since one particularly unpleasant event you have been afraid of parties. *You gain a 1-point Fear Background for free.*

Four of Staves: Your father was a priest in the Ussuran Orthodox Church, and he wanted you to follow in his footsteps, so you have spent your life preparing to serve. *You gain the Ordained Advantage for free.*

Five of Staves: With five older siblings, you knew you would have to make your own way, so you asked early on for an apprenticeship with a fisherman. *You gain the Sailor Skill for free.*

Six of Staves: As a child one of your most vivid memories is of your grandfather berating your mother for trying to curb your use of your left hand. Because, of his words you have never been ashamed since. *Gain the Left-handed Advantage for free.*

Seven of Staves: You were a very sick child. Your father had the resources to call for the very best healers and none of them were able to help. Then a Tibesti woman offered to help and in his desperation your father agreed, offering her anything she wished that was in his power to give. She said, "Let's wait and see." After weeks of labor your health returned, and your Father then thanked her and asked her to leave. Her response was cryptic: "I pray you guard this child well, for no other child of yours shall live to see its sixth year." You have had eight siblings since then all of whom have died before turning five. The ninth, your youngest sister, is now five. *You gain a 2-point Obligation Background for free.*

Eight of Staves: You have a bad habit of not knowing when to keep your mouth shut. Consequently, as a youth you made an enemy who used his power to deplete your family's wealth. *You gain a 3-point Nemesis Background for free.*

Nine of Staves: You vowed as a child to never complain about anything. As a result, you have an unusually high tolerance for pain. *You gain the Toughness Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Your mother was afraid for you as a child, but would not tell you why. She died before you could persuade her to speak. Ever since then, there has been only one thing that trips you in life. You are stricken with an inability to speak when you most desperately need to. *You have a free 2-point Cursed Background.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find ~ himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: Your uncle has just named you heir over your brother and his own son. *You gain a 1-point Inheritance Advantage (which may be raised with Hero Points) and a 1-point Nemesis Background.*

Two of Cups: People have always found you riveting. Making friends and lovers has always been easy for you, but so has making enemies. Just recently, though, your love has abandoned you for your enemy. *Gain the Dangerous Beauty Advantage, a 1-point Lost Love Background, and a 1-point Nemesis Background.*

Three of Cups: After deciding to pursue life as a bogatyr, you thought you would have to wander a great deal before finding patronage, but you have found an employer who values your service. *Gain a 4-point Patron Advantage and a 1-point Vow Background.*

Four of Cups: You spent last winter working outdoors. It was grueling work, but it seems to have thickened your skin. *Gain the Toughness Advantage.*

Five of Cups: Six months ago you woke up in the middle of a Tibesti caravan with no memory of your past. The Tibesti took you in but they had no idea who you were. *Gain a 1-point Fhideli Connection Advantage and a 1-point Amnesia Background.*

Six of Cups: You recently made some new friends, but they aren't well liked. Their reputation seems to be rubbing off on you. *Gain the Scoundrel Advantage.*

Seven of Cups: Six months ago you were accused of a serious crime. As a result, you spent a great deal of time in a very dark prison cell before your innocence was proven. *Gain the Keen Senses Advantage.*

Eight of Cups: You always had a soft heart. Last week you helped out a poor servant in need. You didn't know he was a thief who stole several valuable objects from his Master's home. Now they're looking for you as well. *Gain a 2-point Hunted Background.*

Nine of Cups: Out of boredom, you recently left home. On your way to Vodacce, you met a Tibesti who bears a striking resemblance to you. The resemblance was uncanny—even your own father would mistake this fellow. Ever since you left his company you've been running into people who mistake you for him—and it seems he's in trouble of some sort. *You gain a 3-point Mistaken Identity Background.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: Design and artistry have been your passions for years. This week you were commissioned to create an impressive public work to be presented at your town's five hundredth anniversary. It is a great honor and they have given you some of the money up front to pay for supplies. *Gain 200 Guilders in additional income and a 2-point Obligation Background.*

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: Just recently you have vowed to serve a Voevod. Your duties remain simple but are clear. *Gain a 3-point Vow Background.*

Two of Staves: You never used to have trouble drinking liquor, but last night you woke up outside your stable and you have no memory of how you got there. Your purse was stolen as well as some family papers of great importance, so now you must track down the thief. *Gain a 1-point Hunting Background.*

Three of Staves: You have a gift for making mountains out of molehills that Matushka might even envy. Just recently, your beloved tried to kill you—and this isn't the first crazy thing life has thrown at you. *You have the Foul Weather Jack Advantage with the Background of your choice.*

Four of Staves: You spent this last winter with those wandering people, the Tibesti. They have a very interesting outlook on life and you have struck up a fine rapport with them. *Gain a 1-point Tibesti Connection Advantage.*

Five of Staves: A brawl in an inn turned more violent than you had anticipated, and now you're wanted by a boyar for the death of one of his retainers. *Gain a 3-point Hunted Background.*

Six of Staves: After helping a traveler to fight off some brigands, in gratitude he gifted you with a thin bladed dagger (he called it a "dirk" in his foreign tongue). *You gain a MacEachern Blade. MacEachern blades have the power to damage supernatural creatures.*

Seven of Staves: As a bogatyr you have lately been bound to serve a powerful family. In addition to your other duties, your lord has charged you with a long-term mission: find his daughter, who disappeared from her rooms almost ten years ago. *You gain a 2-point Hunting Background.*

Eight of Staves: After many years of study and dedication you have finally earned your place in the world. *Gain the Ordained Advantage.*

Nine of Staves: You've been working hard in the fleet for years and your dedication has finally paid off. *You gain the Ship Ownership Advantage.*

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Inadvertently, you have irritated the wrong person. Just what they intend to do about it remains to be seen. *You gain a 1-point Nemesis Background.*

Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past or the choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague. Your GM will work out the specifics of how they come into play.

Cups/Odd

Ace (One) of Cups: A passion to last a lifetime will come to you. (Romance 2)

Two of Cups: Sometimes those who are most like you can only inspire you to greater heights. (Rivalry 2)

Three of Cups: You must face your fears if you are to survive. (Fear 2)

Four of Cups: Sometimes being indebted to someone can be good. (Debt 1)

Five of Cups: Sometimes, losing a friend will break your heart; other times it inspires great heroism. (Vendetta 1)

Six of Cups: You will receive an invitation to join something larger than yourself. (Membership Advantage)

Seven of Cups: Romance may not be a good project for you. (Lost Love 2)

Eight of Cups: Revelations do not come easily. (True Identity 2)

Nine of Cups: Proving your innocence is sometimes difficult. (Hunted 2)

Ten (Zero) of Cups: When friends turn to foes it is wise to start choosing your enemies. (Nemesis 2)

Staves/Even

Ace (One) of Staves: Only perseverance will help you find what you're looking for. (Hunting 2)

Two of Staves: Life presents unexpected twists. (Mistaken Identity 2)

Three of Staves: Business acumen can earn you more than wealth. (Nemesis 2)

Four of Staves: Someone will find you worthy. (Inheritance Advantage)

Five of Staves: There is very little that cannot be undone. (Curse 2)

Six of Staves: Recognition comes with responsibility. (Obligation 2)

Seven of Staves: Someday all will know your worth. (Citation Advantage)

Eight of Staves: Look for friends in unexpected places. (Tibesti Connection Advantage)

Nine of Staves: Give your trust If you wish to receive it. (Vow2)

Ten (Zero) of Staves: Everyone strives for something. (Defeated 2)

Vendel/Vesten

Neither of these two nations utilize the standard Sorte Destiny Spread. Vesten use rune draws to determine their Destiny, while Vendel refer to the stars via astrology to achieve the same goal. Because of the difference in mechanics used, at this stage, refer to your GM to determine your Destiny Spread for Heroes of this Country of Origin.

Vodacce

Vodacce has a strong affinity for the suits of Coins and Cups: Coins because of their strong trading ties throughout Théah, and Cups because of the web of emotions and deceit that runs throughout the nation.

Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: When you were a child, you received a gift of money by a noble to be held in your name until you were older. *Your starting income is increased by 500G.*

Two of Coins: You have been betrothed to someone who is not certain of their feelings for you. Sometimes they seem to love you; other times they seem to hate you. *You receive a 3-point Betrothed Background for free.*

Three of Coins: You have found that you have a great deal of talent in a particular craft, and you enjoy practicing it. *You receive the Merchant Skill for free. In addition, whenever you use the Basic Knack that you chose to receive for free when taking the Skill, you receive a Free Raise to your roll.*

Four of Coins: You found early on that you enjoy having money—not because of what it can bring you, but because of the feeling you get when you hold it in your hands. *If you take the Greedy Hubris (which you may choose to do now if you haven't already done so yet, replacing any different Hubris you may have*

chosen, and meaning you can't also have a Virtue, as usual) you receive 15 HP instead of 10 HP. In any event, your starting income is increased by 50G.

Five of Coins: You once unintentionally angered a Fate Witch, and she cursed you to be unlucky with money. *You start out with two Coins Curse dice (see the Sorte Sorcery rules). In addition, you receive a 1-point Nemesis Background with a Fate Witch for free. If you purchase the Free Agent Advantage, ignore the Curse dice.*

Six of Coins: You once offered charity to a poverty-stricken family. In return, they asked you to take their daughter as a servant. *Your starting income is halved. However, if you take the Vodacce Valet Advantage, then your Valet has Full-Blooded Sorte in addition to her normal abilities.*

Seven of Coins: One day while browsing the library, you came across a book that explained the mechanics of acquiring and holding on to power, something very near and dear to your heart. You have taken the book's philosophy to heart and become one of its most skillful practitioners. *If you purchase the Scarovese Advantage, your Reputation can drop 10 points lower again than the Advantage would normally allow before you become a Villain.*

Eight of Coins: When you were young, you fell in love with another bright-eyed Vodacce. Unfortunately, they've since been betrothed to someone they hate, and you find yourself in the same situation. *You receive a 2-point Betrothed Background and a 3-point Romance Background for free.*

Nine of Coins: Your great-aunt, a powerful Fate Witch while she was still alive, presented you with a beautiful sword while you were young, and it has saved your life many times since, sometimes seeming to have a life of its own as it twists in your hand to parry an incoming attack. *You receive a 6-point Twisted Blade Advantage (with three Destiny dice) for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: You are ambidextrous. *You never suffer an off-hand penalty, no matter which hand you fight with, and you receive the Left-handed Advantage for free.*

Cups/Even

Ace (One) of Cups: Your family has always been devoutly religious, and you are no exception. *You receive the Faith Advantage for free.*

Two of Cups: One of your closest friends has grown up to be a Governor, and the two of you still visit with one another frequently. *You receive a 3-point Connection with the Governor of a city for free.*

Three of Cups: You never lacked friends while growing up. *You receive two 2-point Connections and one 1-point Connection for free.*

Four of Cups: Early on, one of the Vodacce Princes saw your potential and made you a member of his Hand. On one occasion, you saved his life, and your Prince does not forget such deeds. *You receive the Membership: Lord's Hand Advantage for free.*

Five of Cups: When you were barely grown up, your parents fell upon hard times and you had to become a courtesan in order to support your family. Your family's finances have since recovered, and you learned a lot from the experience about Vodacce nobility. *You receive the Courtesan Skill and two 2-point Connections for free.*

Six of Cups: Your family has always had a distinguished lineage, and you can capitalize on that if you so desire. You receive a 5 HP discount on the Noble Advantage (if you decide to purchase it).

Seven of Cups: When you were born, the Fate Witches were unable to foretell your future, and their powers don't work right on you. This caused them some distress, but you've since often

used it to your own advantage. *When Sorte magic is used on you, roll a die to determine what type of strand the Fate Witch has actually affected (1-2 Cups, 3-4 Coins, 5-6 Swords, 7-8 Staves, 9-0 None). Do not make a destiny card for your Future.*

Eight of Cups: You have traveled widely and seen things that most people your age only dream of. *You never suffer the -2 unkept die penalty for being in a strange city or culture, and you receive 4 HP to spend on foreign Languages.*

Nine of Cups: Growing up, you found that sharp senses and an awareness of your surroundings were your most reliable protection in Vodacce. *You receive the Keen Senses and Combat Reflexes Advantages for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: When you were a child, a Fate Witch cursed you to “live in interesting times”. Since then, events have swirled around you, usually out of your control. *You receive the Foul Weather Jack Advantage for free.*

Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: Recently, you discovered talents you never knew you had. *You receive two Skills of your choice for free.*

Two of Coins: Lately, you’ve had more romance than you can handle. Three separate people have shown interest in you, and you’re not sure which of them you actually like the best. *You receive three 1-point Romance Backgrounds for free.*

Three of Coins: Your hard work has been noticed by your superiors, and they intend to reward you for it. *Your monthly income is doubled for three months.*

Four of Coins: You have recently come into a great deal of money. Technically, you should’ve shared it with one of your relatives, but you chose instead to keep it all for yourself. *You receive a 3-point Inheritance Advantage and a 2-point Rivalry Background for free.*

Five of Coins: You’ve been through some hard times recently, but you’ve come out of them stronger than ever. *You receive the Toughness Advantage for free.*

Six of Coins: Recently, a handsome man saved you from certain death, and the two of you became friends. He has invited you to join his organization, but you have yet to give him an answer. *You may take the Membership: Rose and Cross Advantage for free. If you choose not to, you receive a 3-point Connection within the Knights.*

Seven of Coins: You have received the position of Governor in your town. However, now that you have risen to a position of such notoriety, you are more frightened than ever that your family’s taint will be discovered. *You receive the Governor Advantage and a 2-point Lorenzo Background for free. However, you must have an Arcana, and this will be your Weakness as a Hubris; you cannot choose your Strength as a Virtue.*

Eight of Coins: Just last week, you were in a duel with a noble, and he brought a Fate Witch to the duel. Halfway through, she started to tug on your strands, then screamed and fled into the night. *You have a Fear Rating of 3 with respect to Fate Witches. When they look at your strands, they always see a Black Strand stretching from you to them. It is up to the GM to determine the reason for this.*

Nine of Coins: You have blossomed into a very attractive person. *You receive the Above Average Appearance Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Coins: Your family ensured that your education was the most complete they could give you. *You receive both the Academy and University Advantages for free.*

Cups/Even

Ace (One) of Cups: You have recently joined the clergy. *You receive the Ordained Advantage for free.*

Two of Cups: A wealthy friend of yours has recently given a servant to you. This friend pays the servant’s wages, and takes care of everything the servant needs. *You receive a 2-point Connection and the Servant Advantage for free.*

Three of Cups: You have found that building a reputation as a dangerous rebel has increased the number of people pursuing romantic relations with you. *You receive both the Scoundrel and the Dangerous Beauty Advantages for free.*

Four of Cups: You have recently been made two very tempting offers, but you can only accept one of them. *You receive either a 5-point Inheritance or Membership in a Secret Society of your choice.*

Five of Cups: An older Vodacce recently took you under their wing and taught you everything he knew about his trade. *You receive a Skill of your choice and 3 HP to spend in it for free.*

Six of Cups: After recently joining the military, you’ve acquired a stubborn streak that makes you unpopular with your commanders. *You receive the Indomitable Will Advantage and a 2-point Commission Advantage for free.*

Seven of Cups: You have always been an extremely intelligent and versatile person, and that strength has recently come to the forefront of your personality. *You receive both the Legendary Trait (Wits) and Linguist Advantages for free.*

Eight of Cups: One of the Princes has taken a personal interest in you, and taken you under his wing. *You receive an 8-point Patron for free, but you must beware the political machinations of the other Princes.*

Nine of Cups: Recently, you performed a valiant deed that everyone’s talking about. *You receive the Citation Advantage for free.*

Ten (Zero) of Cups: You’ve heard that a suitor of yours has hired a Fate Witch to make you fall in love with them. You’ll have to stay on your guard against any manipulation of your emotions. *You receive a 2-point Romance Background. You don’t particularly like your suitor, who has a Vodacce Valet with Full-Blooded Sorte magic.*

Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero’s future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are all purposefully vague. Your GM will work out the specifics of how they come into play.

Coins/Odd

Ace (One) of Coins: Gifts are often wrapped in strings. (Obligation 2)

Two of Coins: Be careful what you agree to. (Betrothed 2)

Three of Coins: You will soon meet a tall, dark stranger. (Romance 2)

Four of Coins: Learn to let things go. (Hunting 2)

Five of Coins: Keep your hands off other peoples’ property. (Hunted 2)

Six of Coins: Words once spoken cannot be recalled. (Code of Honor 2)

Seven of Coins: Secrets have a way of becoming common knowledge. (Lorenzo 2)

Eight of Coins: Embark on spiritual journeys only with caution. (Vow 2)

Nine of Coins: Choose, and choose soon. (Romance 1 and Betrothed 1)

Ten (Zero) of Coins: Your family is always there for you, so be sure to return the favor. (Obligation 2)

Cups/Even

Ace (One) of Cups: The Church will soon take someone from you. (Lost Love 2)

Two of Cups: Be careful how you behave around your friends. (Rivalry 2)

Three of Cups: A dark force moves through your life sowing discord. (Nemesis 2)

Four of Cups: Temptation is best resisted, but giving in doesn't mean the end of the world. (Defeated 2)

Five of Cups: You will soon agree to something you'll regret forever. (Obligation 1 and Debt 1)

Six of Cups: You are not what you seem. (True Identity)

Seven of Cups: People see what they want to see. (Mistaken Identity)

Eight of Cups: Your heart will cross blades with your mind. (Vendetta 1 and Romance 1)

Nine of Cups: Keep your opinion to yourself. (Cursed 2)

Ten (Zero) of Cups: Ignorance is bliss. (Amnesia 2)

Vodacce Heroes and Destiny Spreads

Vodacce Heroes are more tied to the strands of Fate than most. In fact, the Fate Witches have been tinkering with the strands for so long that plots started over a century ago may suddenly come to fruition with the aid of a Vodacce Hero. These plots culminate in what's known as a Fate Knot, and each Vodacce Hero secretly has one of these Knots urging him or her onwards towards their Fate. Only Vodacce Heroes with the Unbound Advantage are exempt from this.

Fate Knot Chart

For each Vodacce Hero who used the Destiny Spread and who doesn't have the Unbound Advantage, the GM rolls a die and consults the following chart, recording the result secretly:

1-2 Betrayal: The Hero is Fated to betray someone close to him. Whoever created this Fate Knot hated the person he will betray and wants them to suffer greatly.

3-4 Murder: The Hero is Fated to kill someone he may or may not know. Whoever created this Fate Knot is using the Hero as a tool to get rid of an enemy.

5-6 Justice: The Hero is Fated to solve a mystery. In doing so, he will discover that someone close to him was the culprit, and did something abominable in the past. Whoever created this Fate Knot wants vengeance, and is using the Hero's friendship to make the criminal pay for his crime.

7-8 Discovery: Something that is lost will be discovered by the Hero. However, whoever created this Fate Knot wants the object back, and plans on reclaiming the object as soon as the Hero recovers it.

9-0 Task: The Hero is Fated to perform a specific task, such as pulling a sword out of a stone, breaking a thousand-year-old curse, or rescuing a captive. Obviously, whoever created this Fate Knot will benefit from the successful completion of the task.

Fate Knots in the Game

A Fate Knot is an event that the Hero is secretly being pushed towards. In 7th Sea, this works something like a Hubris that the Hero can't oppose, and isn't even aware of. You as the GM should spend a Drama die whenever you introduce an element to

your campaign that urges the Hero towards his Fate. This includes side adventures that help set the stage, characters who will be involved in the final act, and items that the Hero must have for the plot to complete itself. These dice aren't lost: they're merely stored up until such time as you've spent enough of them to close the trap (15 or more). During the session you've decided to bring the character's Fate Knot to a conclusion, take those spent Drama dice and add them to your normal pool for the session. If the players complain, thank the player whose Hero is about to meet his Fate, and point out the warning under the Vodacce Destiny Spread to them.

During this session, you can do the following special things with your Drama dice:

Cancel: (1 Drama die) You may cancel one Drama die spent by the Fated Hero.

Failure: (1 Drama die) When the Fated Hero attempts an Action, roll an exploding die. Subtract your roll from the Hero's die roll.

Catastrophe: (2 Drama dice) Something goes horribly wrong near the Fated Hero. This could be anything from the Hero's ship springing a leak to the Hero stumbling backwards into the person he was defending... and accidentally pushing them over the edge of a cliff. These catastrophes shouldn't kill or maim Heroes or other characters out of hand—merely make the Hero work harder to avoid that eventuality.

SKILLS

Skills represent the training your Hero has acquired. If Traits define who your Hero is, then Skills define what he knows. Unlike Traits, not everyone has the same Skills. Just as everyone lives a different story, we all learn different lessons, even from similar experiences.

Skills are divided into two categories—**Martial** and **Civil** Skills. **Martial Skills** are learned in military academies and are generally used in time of war, or at least in duels. **Civil Skills**, on the other hand, are those learned and used in less combat-orientated situations.

When your Hero purchases a Skill, he picks up a wide range of abilities. After all, when he attends a military academy, he learns more than just how to command; he learns to position artillery, to surprise the enemy, and to incite the men to fight more effectively. These “minor Skills” are called **Knacks**. Skills themselves do not have Ranks like Traits, but Knacks do. In that sense, Heroes who have trained under the same merchant, for example, can learn different lessons and come away with completely different abilities.

Example: Two Heroes apprenticed under the same blacksmith could have Merchant Skills that look something like this:

- First Hero (Merchant): Blacksmith 3, Appraising 2
- Second Hero (Merchant): Blacksmith 3, Haggling 2

Skills have two kinds of Knacks—**Basic** and **Advanced**. In the previous example, Blacksmith is a Basic Knack, while Appraisal and Haggling are Advanced Knacks. Basic Knacks are abilities you pick up with only rudimentary training. Advanced Knacks are a little more sophisticated and specialized, and sometimes provide you with additional abilities.

Purchasing Skills

Unless otherwise stated, when you purchase a Skill, it costs 2 HP and you get +1 Rank in each of the Basic Knacks listed under that Skill. Certain Skills, like Artist and Merchant, modify this cost structure. You cannot buy any Knack without first buying the associated Skill.

Additional Basic Knack Ranks (to a maximum of Rank 3) cost 1 HP each. Advanced Knack Ranks (to a maximum of Rank 3) cost 3 HP each. After Hero Creation, Advanced Knacks are the same cost to increase as Basic Knacks—effectively 3 HP each.

It is worth noting that some Advantages change the cost structure of Skills and Knacks, and should be considered if you are interested in playing a “well rounded” Hero.

Combining Knacks

When purchasing Skills, watch to see if any two Skills give you the same Knacks. Two Knacks are considered the same as long as they have the same name and there isn't a different weapon or fighting style listed in parentheses after each.

Example: Footwork is the same under both Pugilism and Athlete, but Attack (Fencing) and Attack (Knife) are different Knacks.

If a Skill lists a Knack that you already have, consider it an increase to that Knack—not a separate knowledge of it. You can gain up to 3 Ranks in this way—any additional Ranks in excess of 3 are lost. No Hero may start the game with more than 3 Ranks in a given Knack.

Example: For instance, Singing is listed under both the Performer and Artist Skills. If you took it under Artist, it would be Rank 2, and again from Performer would be another +1 Rank—therefore giving you Rank 3. If you took another Skill

that gave you Singing, you would lose the 4th Rank—the highest Knack Rank you can have is 3 when starting play.

Civil Skills

Civil Skills encompass everything you do that does not involve combat.

Acrobat

Similar to Performer, the Acrobat Skill represents the ability to perform dexterous feats such as tumbling, tightrope-walking, and juggling. Though primarily intended as a form of entertainment, the Acrobat Skill can come in handy during more pressing circumstances, such as the need to cross a chasm using only a thin line or the ability to leap from a building with minimal harm.

Basic Knacks

Balance: When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapons aren't, while on a relatively stable surface. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack, even if you don't have a weapon.

Advanced Knacks

Break Fall: Adventurers tend to do a lot of falling, but you've learned how to do it right. You know how to absorb impact with your shoulders and how to roll with the fall (of course, that won't help you if you fall into a spiked pit). For every Rank in this Knack, one less Damage die is taken when a fall is incurred (to a minimum of zero Damage dice).

Circus: You have some training in several of the traditional circus acts: perhaps fire eating, sword swallowing, fortune telling or juggling. Of course, their use has been carefully rehearsed beforehand, and is much less effective on the spur of the moment. Thus, you might be able to juggle to impress a crowd using this Knack, but could not easily (and intuitively) snatch a knife thrown by an assassin out of the air. Circus may replace any Athlete Knack at a +10 to +20 TN penalty.

Contortion: A performer with this Knack can bend and twist his body into shapes that Theus surely never intended. While primarily used to amaze and amuse an audience, the character may also use this to get into or out of tight spots.

Juggling: This Knack is very easy to learn, but can still astound the uninitiated. It represents your Hero's ability to keep a number of objects in the air, seemingly defying gravity. Juggling three balls is easiest, with a TN of 10. More difficult tricks (such as more items, larger, oddly shaped, or even dangerous items, or complicated maneuvers) count as calling a Raise for each new factor added to the trick.

Example: Juggling five knives one-handed would require 4 Raises (one for each item over three, one for the danger, and one for one-handed).

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people. This can often come in handy when exploring dusty tombs or

fleeing across rooftops. You use this Knack as your Defense Knack while Leaping.

Lifting: There's a right way and a wrong way to lift heavy weights. Do it the wrong way, and you're liable to hurt yourself quite badly. This Knack allows you to lift great weights with less risk to yourself.

Rolling: Whether sliding or rolling across the floor, this is the Knack you use. This can be handy to use tables momentarily as cover, or slip under a descending wall. While sliding or rolling, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Stunt: One of the most important aspects of an acrobatic performance is the teamwork and precision with which the entertainers move. A character with this Knack has learned to depend upon, and be depended on, when it comes to timely catches, throws, and assists.

Swinging: You have learned to swing adroitly from ropes, chandeliers, etc. If someone attacks you while you are in mid-swing, you must use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Archæologist

Restrictions: Only available to those with the Membership: Secret Society (Explorer's Society) Advantage; Not available to Vaticine scholars

While other scholars dabble with the knowledge left behind by the Synchron, Archæologists are scholars specialized in the study of the old races.

Basic Knacks

Excavate: This is the ability used by the Archæologists and diggers of Théah to unearth and discover the items of the past. Any old pirate can dig a hole in the ground and drag out a chest, but that's not what this Knack represents. It indicates how carefully and how quickly a character can remove the surrounding medium from an object. In addition to the physical grubbing around in the earth, Archæologists and their counterparts are able to date an object which they have unearthed, or at least seen *in situ* themselves. Use this Knack for this purpose. If the item has been taken away from the site, then the History and Research Knacks are more appropriate for uncovering its story.

Excavate should be used when it's important to get at an object trapped within another substance and not damage their value, either with the Finesse or Wits Traits, depending on the exact situation. This means, without damaging beyond what's necessary, either the item itself, or the substance it's embedded in. This could mean a simple ceramic jug from some silt bed, to an ancient sword blade in a piece of equally valuable marble facade.

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained—where to look and who to ask.

Society Lore (Explorer's Society): This Knack represents your knowledge of the associated Secret Society, its members, activities and secrets. The higher your Knack Rank, the more secrets are made available to you.

All characters with the Membership: Secret Society Advantage can purchase this Knack as a Basic Knack for their particular Society. You must have the appropriate Membership: Secret Society Advantage in order to learn this Knack.

Advanced Knacks

Artifact Evaluation: One of the most important Knacks an Archæologist can have is the ability to determine the function of a Synchron artifact. Using this Knack, the Archæologist plays around with the device in the hopes of getting a response. This is a Wits+Artifact Evaluation [20] roll. Failure means that the artifact has backfired on the Archæologist, with varying effects determined by the GM. Success reveals one function of the device—of course, if it was a one-shot function, then it's wasted. Every Raise reveals an additional function. A Wits+Artifact Evaluation [15] roll will reveal the device's area of origin.

Synchron Lore: While Occult is the study of Sorcery, Synchron Lore represents your knowledge of the old races. With even a single Rank in this Knack, you know that there were more than one old race, and even know some of their names.

Trap Lore: The Synchron were very careful with their valuables. This Knack is used to both spot and avoid traps by adding unkept dice to the Perception check to spot a trap.

Example: A Hero with Wits 2 and Trap Lore 3, has a Perception check of 5k2 to spot traps.

Arsonist

It takes more than just lethal intentions and a barrel of gunpowder to demolish a building. You have to know where to plant the explosives, how a fire might spread, and what points are most vulnerable to attack. Arsonists have a strong understanding of flammable chemicals and combustibility, as well as things like building foundations and load-bearing walls. While a Bomb-maker can construct the explosives, the Arsonist knows where to put them to cause the most damage.

Basic Knacks

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say, and you are sure that they're right. Measurements, navigation, troop movements and even trade negotiations all require math. Isn't it fortunate that you paid attention in class? Mathematics can be used to calculate dimensions (height, distance, time elapsed, depth, weight, etc.). It is also useful to know this Knack when calculating how far you have to run to beat an explosion.

Street Navigation: Racing through the streets at night is no time for you to acquaint yourself with the layout of the city. Without this Knack you may quickly find yourself lost or cornered in a dead end alley. Successful Street Navigation rolls will grant you information about the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Advanced Knacks

Architecture: You understand the structure of buildings, from the barest mud huts to the grandest Vaticine cathedrals. You know how to construct a building to specification, and how to direct other men in the task. Using this Knack allows you to locate foundations, stress points, and other vital information about a building. It may even allow you to determine if there is a hidden room or passage in the building, although it cannot tell you how to access it.

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case,

your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a –5 to –10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Conceal: A woman with a dagger in her bodice has a means of defense, even though she may appear helpless. If you wish to get a pistol into a well-guarded ballroom, plant a powder keg where it won't be found until it goes off, or smuggle a lockpick into a jail cell, you need this Knack. Conceal is the ability to hide objects where they won't be easily found. To use this Knack, you must first make a Simple roll with it. The result becomes the TN for anyone nearby attempting to see through the concealment. Anyone specifically searching you or the concealed area, receives a Free Raise. Objects hidden in dark or hard-to-reach places add +5 to the TN.

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world, such as gravity and inertia. You can create compound chemicals such as acid, gunpowder, or weak steel, provided you can remember the formulas. This Knack can also be used to determine if some strange occurrence of physics or chemistry is of natural or magical origin.

Artist

You specialize in one of the fine arts, perhaps composing love sonnets for your beloved or painting portraits for the nobility. Artists are a special breed and can make a living with their work, which has the potential to elicit emotion and manipulate the masses, or focus upon one individual and change his heart forever.

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you receive 1 Basic Knack at Rank 2. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each.

Basic Knacks

Composer: Within your mind flow endless streams of melody, a gift from Theus few can master. This training is the first step toward that goal, including knowledge of tempo, harmony, instrumentation, and a host of other elements.

Drawing: A piece of chalk or charcoal can become the tool that you use to bring your imagination to life. Ancient runes or carvings can be copied with accuracy or a delicate flower can be sketched for a lady friend.

Musician (Instrument): When playing your selected instrument, you can transport your audience to other worlds, or evoke a range of sentiment from sheer ecstasy to bitter tragedy. No dinner party is ever closed to those skilled at an instrument.

Sculpting: Your hands can mold soft clay or hard marble into sculptures capable of conveying not only the image of a person or an object, but its presence and bearing as well. In the hands of a talented sculptor, a statue can entice the eye like no simple, two-dimensional portrait. Skilled sculptors are approached with work not only by the nobility, but frequently by the Church as well.

Singing: A voice as clear as crystal is only part of your secret. Breath control and enunciation count for just as much. This Knack gives you the training to use your voice to the fullest.

Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or call the people to arms. Your words can turn beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Advanced Knacks

This Skill has no Advanced Knacks.

Bard

Restrictions: Avalon only

Bard Heroes wander the Avalon countryside seeking adventures, stories, and the world's riddles. While they descend from the Druids, one does not have to be a Druid in order to practice the Bard Skill. Musicians and storytellers are as plentiful as grain.

Basic Knacks

Etiquette: While it might be acceptable to throw the bones of your meal upon the floor in some regions, it is certain that other nobility would faint upon seeing some ruffian throw a greasy bone on their new rug. You have learned the niceties of events sponsored by the nobility and can avoid such social faux pas. When using this Knack in a place where you are unfamiliar with the customs, you are at a two unkept dice penalty.

History: More than just knowing what has come before, history has a great many lessons for those willing to listen. Tragic military defeats have been transformed into glorious victories by a schooled historian, and more than a few of them have learned from failed political maneuvers as well. You know the ways of the past and how to learn from them today.

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity, Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Singing: A voice as clear as crystal is only part of your secret. Breath control and enunciation count for just as much. This Knack gives you the training to use your voice to the fullest.

Advanced Knacks

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Herb Lore: You have a strong knowledge of plants, and can tell which ones are edible and which ones have a medicinal value. This is not the same as First Aid, since you cannot bind wounds. However with enough time, and in the proper environment, you can find the right plants to keep from starving or to prevent a wound from becoming infected.

Riddles: You understand the nature of riddling and the secret wisdom which riddles impart. This is more than just being able to answer them; it's realizing the message behind the words and applying it to your own life.

Sidhe Lore: You have had experience with the Sidhe; you've learned some of their wisdom and know some of their secrets. You can identify different types of Sidhe by the way they look and know how to act in order to stay on their good side.

Bomb-maker

Bomb-makers know how to manufacture grenades, gunpowder bombs, and other types of explosives—a dangerous and highly technical occupation. Creating a bomb takes the right chemicals, plenty of time, and steady nerves.

Basic Knacks

Blacksmith: You can forge simple metal utensils and tools for sale. This includes nails, hinges, horseshoes, and axe-heads, among other things (grenade casings, and the like). While a smithy requires a large outlay for tools in the beginning, and certainly isn't a portable trade (furnace, bellows), it brings in a comfortable income. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Cooper: You can make casks, barrels, and other similar wooden objects, including gunpowder kegs. While not as watertight as metal casings, they do the job for much less.

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say, and you are sure that they're right. Measurements, navigation, troop movements and even trade negotiations all require math. Isn't it fortunate that you paid attention in class? Mathematics can be used to calculate dimensions (height, distance, time elapsed, depth, weight, etc.). It is also useful to know this Knack when calculating how far you have to run to beat an explosion.

Advanced Knacks

Fuses: You know how cannon fuses work and can tell which ones burn faster than others. A fast-burning fuse stands out to you like a sore thumb, and you know how to lengthen a fuse in order to achieve the desired effect. For every Rank you have in this Knack, you may add or subtract one Phase from the burn time of any fuse you have spent at least ten minutes modifying. With long-burning fuses, you may add or subtract one minute per Knack Rank from the burn time. The GM may penalize you as circumstances dictate (you can't lengthen a short fuse without a replacement, for instance).

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world, such as gravity and inertia. You can create compound chemicals such as acid, gunpowder, or weak steel, provided you can remember the formulas. This Knack can also be used to determine if some strange occurrence of physics or chemistry is of natural or magical origin.

Poison: When diplomacy fails and a military victory is impossible, an ounce of arsenic will sometimes suffice. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as well as how to handle it safely.

Captain

Captains are similar to Commanders, except for one very important difference. Instead of learning how to fire artillery, which is useless aboard ship, they learn the art of bribery. Armed with that Knack, they're always ready to handle an unethical harbormaster or a corrupt tariff collector.

Basic Knacks

Strategy: Strategy lets you formulate battle plans and movements on a large scale. You know when to have your ship turn towards the enemy, and what waters are easiest to defend. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Tactics: Tactics lets you command a group of men in battle, following the orders of your superior (whom you hope has the Strategy Knack). You can get the men to change formation, inspire them to charge the enemy or lead them through firing drills. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed

themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Bribery: Money, when applied properly, can grease the wheels of bureaucracy, open doors, or cause guards to shift their loyalties. You know where, when, and how much to apply.

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Gunnery: The pitch and roll of a ship takes a lot of getting used to, especially when trying to fire a cannon on board. Sailors using this Knack have worked out the tricks and timing involved. When artillery, such as a cannon, is fired from on board a ship, the crew commander uses Gunnery for the Attack roll. *If the artillery is on land, the commander's Artillery Knack should be used instead of this one.*

Incitation: You can inspire men to victory. They listen to your words before and during the battle, and they know that they cannot be defeated. They know that you will make the right decisions, and that they won't lay down their lives for nothing. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Leadership: Once you have used the Incitation Knack to make men believe in you this Knack will help you live up to your words. You can fit the best man to a task; give advice on how to perform better without getting in their way. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Logistics: Wars often come down to who has the best fed and most rested troops. The Logistics Knack lets you determine how much supplies will be consumed, and how best to get them where they're needed. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Courtesan

Restrictions: Female characters only (men may not learn this Skill)

Courtesans are more than simple jennys. Clever, witty, and well-educated, they advise, seduce, and entertain their male clients, providing companionship on every level. They also learn to manipulate others to their advantage, for they lack the protection of family or marriage. Of all the nations, Vodacce courtesans in particular are the most charming to a fault—and as dangerous as they are alluring.

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you receive 3 Basic Knacks at Rank 1. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each.

Basic Knacks

Acting: Slipping in and out of character is your forte. You can pretend to be a member of a different social class, exhibiting the humility of a beggar or the arrogance of a king. Of course, this is much more effective when combined with the proper costume. Acting may be used in place of the Sincerity Knack at a +15 TN penalty.

Dancing: You ease your way around the dance floor with grace and poise. Ballroom dancers with great skill are in high demand at noble balls, while ballet dancers can earn a decent living performing at stage shows and paid recitals.

Etiquette: While it might be acceptable to throw the bones of your meal upon the floor in some regions, it is certain that other nobility would faint upon seeing some ruffian throw a greasy bone on their new rug. You have learned the niceties of events sponsored by the nobility and can avoid such social faux pas. When using this Knack in a place where you are unfamiliar with the customs, you are at a two unkept dice penalty.

Fashion: When appearing before nobility, it is an affront to their gentle senses to be ill-attired. The conscientious courtier keeps careful tabs on the latest trends in fashion, no matter how ridiculous. With enough knowledge, you can quickly throw together a presentable outfit, even if the materials at hand are less than satisfactory. Make a Panache+Fashion [15] roll to gain a Reputation Point (plus one for each Raise made) for a given social event. These Reputation Points leave with the party. Fashion may be used in place of the Disguise Knack (for appropriate costumes) at a +20 TN penalty.

Jenny: The courtly art of escort and the less refined variants thereof. Jenny may be used in place of the Seduction Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Masseur: You can give expert massages, a skill often in demand among nobility. Each Raise made gives a Free Raise to a subsequent use of the Seduction Knack by the Masseur on the person being massaged.

Unobtrusive: Sometimes a servant's best Knack is remaining unnoticed while his employer works off a fit of rage. This is not actually hiding, but rather blending in with the background. It plays upon a noble's tendency to ignore servants, and so works best against them. Like the Stealth Knack, an Unobtrusive roll is used to generate a TN that those about the Servant must make a Contested Wits roll against to notice him.

Advanced Knacks

Cold Read: This is the art of deducing things about a person from his or her appearance and mannerisms. Handedness might be determined from a callus upon a knuckle, while a nervous twitch could reveal much to an observant eye. With this Knack you can always enter a conversation with at least a little information about the other person. More often than not, this Knack is used in Contested rolls against the Resolve of another, or against one of his Knacks. Each Raise made with this Knack gives a Free Raise to Sorte attempts relating to the same subject.

Conceal: A woman with a dagger in her bodice has a means of defense, even though she may appear helpless. If you wish to get a pistol into a well-guarded ballroom, plant a powder keg where it won't be found until it goes off, or smuggle a lockpick into a jail cell, you need this Knack. Conceal is the ability to hide objects where they won't be easily found. To use this Knack, you must first make a Simple roll with it. The result becomes the TN for anyone nearby attempting to see through the concealment. Anyone specifically searching you or the concealed area, receives a Free Raise. Objects hidden in dark or hard-to-reach places add +5 to the TN.

Gossip: A rumor flies faster than the swiftest arrow and bites twice as deep. Gossips are always near the rumor mill and get the latest news before anyone else, but with this Knack, you also have the ability to determine which are true and which are important.

Mooch: With a combination of entertaining conversation, hollow promises, and sheer audacity, you can convince others to provide for your needs. Care must be taken not to do this in one place too long, however, as even the most flattering guest must eventually wear out his welcome.

Poison: When diplomacy fails and a military victory is impossible, an ounce of arsenic will sometimes suffice. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as well as how to handle it safely.

Politics: Politics is power, and the truly clever courtier understands this. You can sense the ebb and flow of a noble's influence and determine whose coattails represent the quickest ride to the top. Make a Wits+Politics [15] roll to determine a noble's reputation. If the noble is not known to you, or isn't from your Country of Origin, then add a +5 to +15 TN penalty.

Seduction: The breathy whisper of a sultry woman has thrown more than one empire into chaos. Armed with this Knack, you have the potential to be more dangerous to the stability of a nation than a hundred soldiers. Seduction may be used in place of the Jenny Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Sincerity: Even the most adept lie is useless if the listener detects a tremor of fear or a pair of downcast, nervous eyes. While Oratory allows you to utter glib words for entertainment or impact, Sincerity puts the ring of truth behind them, concealing even the most bold-faced lie behind a veneer of honesty.

Courtier

Courtiers are skilled in the diplomatic arts. As a member of this esteemed profession you can dine with kings, chat pleasantly with Cardinals or, when required, pull state secrets from your own lovers' lips.

Basic Knacks

Dancing: You ease your way around the dance floor with grace and poise. Ballroom dancers with great skill are in high demand at noble balls, while ballet dancers can earn a decent living performing at stage shows and paid recitals.

Etiquette: While it might be acceptable to throw the bones of your meal upon the floor in some regions, it is certain that other nobility would faint upon seeing some ruffian throw a greasy bone on their new rug. You have learned the niceties of events sponsored by the nobility and can avoid such social faux pas. When using this Knack in a place where you are unfamiliar with the customs, you are at a two unkept dice penalty.

Fashion: When appearing before nobility, it is an affront to their gentle senses to be ill-attired. The conscientious courtier keeps careful tabs on the latest trends in fashion, no matter how ridiculous. With enough knowledge, you can quickly throw together a presentable outfit, even if the materials at hand are less than satisfactory. Make a Panache+Fashion [15] roll to gain a Reputation Point (plus one for each Raise made) for a given social event. These Reputation Points leave with the party. Fashion may be used in place of the Disguise Knack (for appropriate costumes) at a +20 TN penalty.

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity,

Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Advanced Knacks

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Gaming: Nobles dabble with intricate, time-consuming amusements, from verbal jousts to inane, overcomplicated games of chance. You must have studied these games in order to understand their subtle interplay and the almost invisible insight they provide into the minds of the players.

Gossip: A rumor flies faster than the swiftest arrow and bites twice as deep. Gossips are always near the rumor mill and get the latest news before anyone else, but with this Knack, you also have the ability to determine which are true and which are important.

Lip Reading: A whispered secret hides nothing when betrayed by the visible motion of your mouth. With this Knack you can discern plots and schemes from across the room. Of course, cautious or experienced courtiers often carry fans or veils to prevent just such an eventuality. Attempting to read the lips of someone hiding their face behind a fan adds +10 to +20 to the TN.

Memorizing: This Knack is used to recite, repeat, play, or mimic something that has played, sung, spoken, or performed in front of the character. The TN to memorize something is the same as the TN to perform it in the first place. Obviously, the longer the original piece, the harder it is to memorize; a bawdy tavern joke would be TN 10—both to tell and to memorize—while the entire content of a historical drama would be TN 30.

Mooch: With a combination of entertaining conversation, hollow promises, and sheer audacity, you can convince others to provide for your needs. Care must be taken not to do this in one place too long, however, as even the most flattering guest must eventually wear out his welcome.

Politics: Politics is power, and the truly clever courtier understands this. You can sense the ebb and flow of a noble's influence and determine whose coat-tails represent the quickest ride to the top. Make a Wits+Politics [15] roll to determine a noble's reputation. If the noble is not known to you, or isn't from your Country of Origin, then add a +5 to +15 TN penalty.

Seduction: The breathy whisper of a sultry woman has thrown more than one empire into chaos. Armed with this Knack, you have the potential to be more dangerous to the stability of a nation than a hundred soldiers. Seduction may be used in place of the Jenny Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Sincerity: Even the most adept lie is useless if the listener detects a tremor of fear or a pair of downcast, nervous eyes. While Oratory allows you to utter glib words for entertainment or impact, Sincerity puts the ring of truth behind them, concealing even the most bold-faced lie behind a veneer of honesty.

Criminal

Criminals operate outside the law. They rob others, scam them out of their money and occasionally even set someone else up to

take the fall. In short, they'll do anything it takes to get what they want.

Basic Knacks

Gambling: The odds always favor the house. You know how to play those odds, placing careful wagers and studying the faces of your opponents. This Knack isn't the same as cheating: you never actually break the rules of the game, you simply play the odds as closely as possible.

Shadowing: You have been trained to blend in with crowds and unobtrusively follow your targets in a city or other urban setting. Done properly, the target will never even notice your presence. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Cheating: Dim alleys with crowds of men throwing dice are your haunt. Using weighted dice, marked cards, or simple diversions and sleight of hand, you unfairly turn the odds in your favor.

Lockpicking: Doors wouldn't have locks if there weren't valuable things to protect. Armed with this Knack and some wire or a set of lockpicks, you can bypass locked doors that present an obstacle to you.

Pickpocket: Armed with a feather-light touch and an arsenal of distractions, you are skilled at divesting passersby of their possessions without their knowledge. Your training could just as easily be used to plant evidence on an unsuspecting target or to quietly palm an item off a table. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Prestidigitation: Small magic tricks such as making coins disappear and reappear, stacking decks of cards, and producing flowers out of thin air are all examples of prestidigitation. You can earn a living by giving shows, or simply impress the ladies at a noble ball. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits. Porté sorcerers may use this Knack with a blooded object for a Free Raise (plus one Free Raise for each Raise made when blooding the object).

Quack: Specializing in "invisible" cures (such as sugar pills and colored water) that do more for the patient's ego than his body, you know how to make people feel like they're getting better. If they get some benefit from this, wonderful. If not, you will likely have moved on already.

Scrounging: You know where potentially useful trash is thrown. While it is unlikely for you to scrounge up a diamond, you would certainly know where to find food, a change of clothes, or a makeshift weapon. Successful Scrounging rolls will grant you items or resources found within the city, as determined by the GM.

Doctor

Doctors are trained in the professional art of healing (and sometimes the not-so-professional arts of mangling for the "betterment" of the patient). They use just about anything to cure their charges, including medicines, bandages, cauterization, or even obscure folk remedies.

Basic Knacks

Diagnosis: Feeling for broken bones and listening for punctured lungs is a doctor's most elementary Knack. Without making a diagnosis, how can you possibly hope to treat your patients? The TN for using the Diagnosis Knack is 5, plus 5 times the number of Dramatic Wounds the patient has suffered). Success with this Knack reduces the TN for Surgery (see the Surgery Knack). Diagnosis requires one Action to use, and can only be used once per patient, per Act.

First Aid: Even without formal training, you can administer simple treatment if the ailment allows for it. This includes sewing and cauterizing a wound, or mixing a chest balm for respiratory problems. The TN for using First Aid is equal to the number of Flesh Wounds the patient has suffered. Success eliminates all current Flesh Wounds. First Aid requires one Action to use and may not be used more than once per patient, per Scene. Heroes with First Aid may use it on themselves, with the same restrictions, but they must make at least one Raise because of the difficulty of bandaging themselves.

Advanced Knacks

Dentist: It's hard to win a duel or counsel a king with a toothache. When skilled in dentistry, you can clean decay and make use of metal fillings or artificial dentures. This is more a professional Knack than a healing one, and serves to improve your income.

Examiner: Traces of blood or evidence left behind after a fight can be an unexpected source of information. Also, the remains of the old races (i.e., bone fragments and such) can be loosely classified (mostly by their known qualities and probable area of origin).

Quack: Specializing in "invisible" cures (such as sugar pills and colored water) that do more for the patient's ego than his body, you know how to make people feel like they're getting better. If they get some benefit from this, wonderful. If not, you will likely have moved on already.

Surgery: While a Doctor's surgical skills are limited at best, they can make the difference between life and death. You can amputate infected limbs, remove bullets from wounds, and properly sew up a patient. Use of this Knack may heal Dramatic Wounds with a successful Wits+Surgery roll. The TN is ten times the patient's Dramatic Wounds total (a successful Diagnosis roll reduces this TN to five times the patient's Dramatic Wounds total). Success heals one Dramatic Wound, plus one for every two Raises the Doctor makes. You may only attempt to perform Surgery on a patient once per Act.

Veterinarian: An animal, especially a horse or cow, is often a family's most valuable possession. If the animal becomes sick or hurt, it's a family emergency. With the ability to diagnose and treat these poor creatures, you are a valued member of any community you choose to live in.

Engineer

Engineers are often hired by royalty to make their construction dreams a reality. Military fortifications, artillery, and civil architecture are all planned by engineers of various sorts.

Basic Knacks

Architecture: You understand the structure of buildings, from the barest mud huts to the grandest Vaticine cathedrals. You know how to construct a building to specification, and how to direct other men in the task. Using this Knack allows you to locate foundations, stress points, and other vital information about a building. It may even allow you to determine if there is a hidden room or passage in the building, although it cannot tell you how to access it.

Drafting: Without a plan, you'll get nowhere with your designs. Drafting is the art of translating the ideas in your head onto the page in a manner that others can understand.

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say, and you are sure that they're right. Measurements, navigation, troop movements and even trade negotiations all require math. Isn't it fortunate that you paid attention in class? Mathematics can be used to calculate dimensions (height, distance, time elapsed, depth, weight, etc.). It is also useful to know this Knack when calculating how far you have to run to beat an explosion.

Advanced Knacks

Accounting: Use of this Knack allows you to track the income and expenditures of a large household or business with accuracy. It can be used to detect fraud, or to "cook the books."

Cannonsmithing: You know how to build cannons and other forms of artillery, if provided with a team of laborers and plenty of metal. This Knack is particularly in demand in Castille and Montaigne, where artillery is desperately needed to wage the war.

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world, such as gravity and inertia. You can create compound chemicals such as acid, gunpowder, or weak steel, provided you can remember the formulas. This Knack can also be used to determine if some strange occurrence of physics or chemistry is of natural or magical origin.

Explorer

Explorers are trained, mainly through a mentor, and are experienced in the areas of expertise necessary to survive the rigors of uncharted lands and dangerous sites. They train physically and learn the tricks necessary to stay alive in hostile environments. They have access to Skills that are relevant to many other trades and professions and are thus quite versatile.

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you begin with 3 Basic Knacks at Rank 1. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each.

Basic Knacks

Balance: When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain.

Climbing: You understand how to find hand- and foot-holds, how to use climbing gear, and how to seek out the easiest path to climb in the first place. If you are attacked while climbing, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

First Aid: Even without formal training, you can administer simple treatment if the ailment allows for it. This includes sewing and cauterizing a wound, or mixing a chest balm for respiratory problems. The TN for using First Aid is equal to the number of Flesh Wounds the patient has suffered. Success eliminates all current Flesh Wounds. First Aid requires one Action to use and may not be used more than once per patient, per Scene. Heroes with First Aid may use it on themselves, with the same restrictions, but they must make at least one Raise because of the difficulty of bandaging themselves.

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations.

Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained—where to look and who to ask.

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Survival: Foraging for berries and nuts isn't exciting, but it's often necessary during the winter or in unfamiliar territory. With this Knack you can always find enough food to survive on, although it may include such delicacies as mice, grubs, and termites.

Tracking: You know the signs that animals and people leave behind as they move through the woods: a broken twig, a crushed leaf, or a muddy footprint. More difficult, but much more impressive, is determining how long ago the signs were made. Tracking rolls are used against a TN generated by use of the target's Stealth Knack when he last passed through the area.

Advanced Knacks

Cartographer: Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Lockpicking: Doors wouldn't have locks if there weren't valuable things to protect. Armed with this Knack and some wire or a set of lockpicks, you can bypass locked doors that present an obstacle to you.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Side-step: Whenever you successfully use Active Defense, you may lower your next Action die by your Knack Rank. You may not reduce the Action die to a number lower than the current Phase.

Falconer

The ancient sport of Falconry is dying out in Théah, except in Ussura, where it continues to thrive among Ussura's boyars. You know how to handle and train falcons and other birds of prey. You can care for them, raise them, and keep them healthy. You know how to hunt with them and can procure meat in the wilderness. You can also entice your bird to perform more "civilized" tricks, such as flying through a hoop (or an open window).

Basic Knacks

Bird Handling: This Knack allows you to care for birds, in particular game birds such as falcons. It also allows you to use a

trained falcon for hunting. It is a measure of your knowledge and technique in using the tools of the trade, such as hoods, falconer's gloves and the signaling devices used during the hunt.

Advanced Knacks

Animal Training: This Knack allows you to domesticate animals and train them to perform tricks, or to attack on command.

Fence

A Fence is a middle-man who can transfer stolen goods to a prospective buyer. The Liberation Guild often needs Fences to move the art it steals, and legitimate thieves require their services as well. Most Fences have legitimate occupations and rarely dabble in crime directly. Keep in mind that displaying a stolen object in Théah is much less risky than displaying it in our world. The low population and lack of easy transportation means that very few people who see a work of art will be aware that it is stolen. This makes the Fence's job much easier, and makes it less likely that he will be caught.

Basic Knacks

Appraising: Judging the approximate worth of an item is an important part of a Merchant's (or Fence's) occupation. Unless you buy low and sell high, you'll soon be out of business.

Socializing: Knowing where to meet the right kind of people can be vitally important. You seem to know where every diplomat goes for beer, and what taverns to go to when you need to hire a ship's crew or to find foreign collectors. Note that Socializing covers the more reputable inhabitants of the city (see Underworld Lore for the less reputable inhabitants). Successful Socializing rolls will grant you contacts within the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Advanced Knacks

Haggling: This is different from Shopping in that it doesn't allow you to find what you're looking for. It allows you to talk the buyer or seller into a good deal, once you've found it. Being able to barter is only the beginning for a person who wishes to become a successful procurer of valuable goods. You must also know how to Haggle—remain aware of all the elements of a bargaining discussion at any time, and be able to use them to your advantage. Of course, you must be better at it than your opponent, for he is reading the same signs you are...

Shopping: You have dealt with many of the local merchants in the past and know who will give you the best bargains. When combined with Bartering, you can get some truly good deals. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Underworld Lore: In every city there's at least one place the city guard fears to tread. Muggers, assassins, and bandits make their homes there, and you can contact them. Successful Underworld Lore rolls will grant you contacts within the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Forger

Many criminals can forge documents, but it takes a professional to truly excel at it. Trained Forgers know how to locate specific documents, what kind of paper to use, and how to slip documents in and out of guarded locales.

Basic Knacks

Calligrapher: You can write in a very formal, decorative hand, and illuminate the pages of a book. This Knack is only useful for

those Languages that you can read and write, or those which share a common alphabet with those you do. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Forgery: Signatures and wax seals are the only assurance that a statesman has of the authenticity of a letter. As a forger, you have learned to falsify these things.

Paper Maker: You can make sturdy paper on which to write. You can also identify different types of paper and the places where they can be found.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained—where to look and who to ask.

Advanced Knacks

Conceal: A woman with a dagger in her bodice has a means of defense, even though she may appear helpless. If you wish to get a pistol into a well-guarded ballroom, plant a powder keg where it won't be found until it goes off, or smuggle a lockpick into a jail cell, you need this Knack. Conceal is the ability to hide objects where they won't be easily found. To use this Knack, you must first make a Simple roll with it. The result becomes the TN for anyone nearby attempting to see through the concealment. Anyone specifically searching you or the concealed area, receives a Free Raise. Objects hidden in dark or hard-to-reach places add +5 to the TN.

Cryptography: When messages must be sent in the most discreet manner possible, ciphers are often used to prevent them from being read by those who aren't in the know. They usually follow a specific formula, which trained professionals can eventually decipher. This Knack makes you one of those trained professionals.

Fortune Teller

This Skill consists of various means of divining the future—palm reading, card reading, knowledge of omens—as well as ways to convince a paying customer that the divinations are true. Unlike the techniques used by Sorte strega, Fortune Telling is non-sorcerous, relying on traditional folk techniques rather than any supernatural power. There is no guarantee that any predictions gleaned by use of this Skill will come true, and practitioners learn to speak in vague terms, allowing their subjects to fill in the particulars.

Note: The Fate Witches of Vodacce rarely use the Fortune Telling skill. They consider a low-class aping of their very real sorcerous powers (the Sorte ability). A Fate Witch who uses Fortune Telling is like a world-renowned ballerina dancing on a street corner for change.

Basic Knacks

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity, Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Palm Reading: This Knack involves knowledge of what each of the specific lines on the hand mean—not just the head, heart and life lines, but the more obscure marks determining such details as children and financial success.

Advanced Knacks

Bones: Casting the Bones involves careful selection of the Bones (usually by the client), then applying the Fortune Teller's knowledge of the meaning of the patterns created and the

interaction between them. This is possibly the oldest medium for Fortune Telling, and one of the most difficult. It is also often used in diving omens.

Card Reading: Reading the cards requires knowledge of the traditions and symbols, and of course some understanding of the dual nature of each card. The ability to extrapolate is also helpful, as it is in most other Fortune Telling Knacks. Note: This Knack has no connection to the card reading powers of Vodacce Fate Witches. Though similar on the surface, it uses entirely different techniques which do not readily translate from one form to another.

Cold Read: This is the art of deducing things about a person from his or her appearance and mannerisms. Handedness might be determined from a callus upon a knuckle, while a nervous twitch could reveal much to an observant eye. With this Knack you can always enter a conversation with at least a little information about the other person. More often than not, this Knack is used in Contested rolls against the Resolve of another, or against one of his Knacks. Each Raise made with this Knack gives a Free Raise to Sorte attempts relating to the same subject.

Haggling: This is different from Shopping in that it doesn't allow you to find what you're looking for. It allows you to talk the buyer or seller into a good deal, once you've found it. Being able to barter is only the beginning for a person who wishes to become a successful procurer of valuable goods. You must also know how to Haggle—remain aware of all the elements of a bargaining discussion at any time, and be able to use them to your advantage. Of course, you must be better at it than your opponent, for he is reading the same signs you are...

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Omens: This involves predicting the future on a grand scale. It must encompass events and choices far larger than any one person, so a proper omen is often sweeping and obscure.

Other Reading (Specify): This is a catch-all Knack that covers many varied methods for divining the future, from tea-leaves to rune-stones, from entrails to bumps on the client's skull.

Guardsmen

Guards are everywhere in Théah. Whether they stand on the doors of some Nobles mansion, support the work of the tax collectors or just defend the countless wagons that travel the roads, Guardsmen make up a fair portion of the waged class. Not to mention the fact that every fantasy castle or city wall has some of military watch force to defend the inhabitants from bandits and marauding beasts. These Guardsmen are often untrained and simple thugs, but after long years performing the thankless task they've often picked up a thing or two about the world about them.

Hero Creation: Guardsmen are afforded the same level of income as someone with a Merchant Skill when determining Wealth at Hero Creation.

Basic Knacks

Bribery: Money, when applied properly, can grease the wheels of bureaucracy, open doors, or cause guards to shift their loyalties. You know where, when, and how much to apply.

Grab: You are well versed in spotting and apprehending those who are trying to slip past to places they shouldn't. Whether it's a curious errand boy, some dirty urchin prowling the bazaars or a dockside jenny, none get past the master guard. As an Interrupt Action the you may make a Grapple Attack, but use your Grab

Knack rather than Grapple for the initial Attack roll. Either may be used in subsequent Phases.

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Socializing: Knowing where to meet the right kind of people can be vitally important. You seem to know where every diplomat goes for beer, and what taverns to go to when you need to hire a ship's crew or to find foreign collectors. Note that Socializing covers the more reputable inhabitants of the city (see Underworld Lore for the less reputable inhabitants). Successful Socializing rolls will grant you contacts within the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Advanced Knacks

Alert: You are constantly on the ready for trouble to spark off, but it's often the sneaky approach which rewards most would-be thieves, spies and assassins. You have, through many hours patience and careful observation, learned to spot the tell-tale sign of a potential troublemaker. In any Contested roll made by the character against a TN generated by the use of the Conceal, Disguise, Stealth or Unobtrusive Knacks, you gain a Free Raise to your Perception roll to spot the dodgy behavior.

Interrogation: Psychological warfare and brutality can draw a man's attention as well as any woman's gentle touch. You are trained to interrogate, knowing every man's limit, and how to spot their lies.

Unobtrusive: This is not actually hiding, but rather blending in with the background. Like the Stealth Knack, an Unobtrusive roll is used to generate a TN that those about the character must make a Contested Wits roll against to notice him.

Guide

Most major cities are bewildering mazes of narrow streets and towering buildings. Foreigners constantly complain about difficulties in getting around, and city visitors often find themselves lost the instant they arrive. Many natives hire themselves out as guides, offering to lead travelers wherever they need to go. Most guides are familiar with one particular city, which they know like the back of their hand. They sometimes double as gondoliers (in Vodacce) or coach drivers when tourist traffic is low.

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you begin with 2 Basic Knacks at Rank 1 and Street Navigation at Rank 1. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each.

Basic Knacks

Climbing: You understand how to find hand- and foot-holds, how to use climbing gear, and how to seek out the easiest path to climb in the first place. If you are attacked while climbing, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Ride: This Knack is what you use for ordinary horseback riding. The GM may call for Ride rolls when you do unusual things such as gallop the horse (TN 10), stay seated on a rearing mount (TN 15), or jump the horse over a hurdle (TN 20). A well-trained mount may give the rider a Free Raise.

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Street Navigation: Racing through the streets at night is no time for you to acquaint yourself with the layout of the city. Without this Knack you may quickly find yourself lost or cornered in a dead end alley. Successful Street Navigation rolls will grant you information about the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Survival: Foraging for berries and nuts isn't exciting, but it's often necessary during the winter or in unfamiliar territory. With this Knack you can always find enough food to survive on, although it may include such delicacies as mice, grubs, and termites.

Tracking: You know the signs that animals and people leave behind as they move through the woods: a broken twig, a crushed leaf, or a muddy footprint. More difficult, but much more impressive, is determining how long ago the signs were made. Tracking rolls are used against a TN generated by use of the target's Stealth Knack when he last passed through the area.

Trail Signs: Hunters have a private language all their own, in the form of carefully bent twigs, stacked rocks, and notched limbs. You can leave a trail for others to find and follow later, warn of danger, or indicate a good fishing hole. Success use of this Knack means that the person you are signaling automatically sees the Trail Signs when he passes by it.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Direction Sense: You are able to keep yourself mentally oriented with respect to true north, provided you've had an opportunity to use the stars or sun to determine it and haven't since been spun around in the dark. This can also allow you to retrace your steps through an unfamiliar city or forest, although identical or darkened passages are much harder to remain orientated in.

Navigation: Using nautical charts and a set of navigator's tools, you can plot courses that will take a ship out of sight of land without getting hopelessly lost, and communicate that information to the pilot of the ship. Success with this Knack steers a vessel onto the correct course. Failure could result in you being keel-hauled for getting everyone lost.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Hunter

The hunter makes his home in the forest. He knows its paths and ponds as well as any cutpurse knows the alleys of his city. He has learned to make a living off the land, feeding himself and using the excess to trade for other essential supplies.

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you begin with 3 Basic Knacks at Rank 1. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each.

Basic Knacks

Fishing: Knowing where to cast a net or how to thrust a spear has saved the life of more than one starving hunter or sailor. It allows you to supplement your diet with fish and sell any excess, or dry it for later use.

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Skinning: Using this Knack you can skin and tan the hide of an animal in preparation for use or sale. This keeps the skin from rotting and increases its value.

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Survival: Foraging for berries and nuts isn't exciting, but it's often necessary during the winter or in unfamiliar territory. With this Knack you can always find enough food to survive on, although it may include such delicacies as mice, grubs, and termites.

Tracking: You know the signs that animals and people leave behind as they move through the woods: a broken twig, a crushed leaf, or a muddy footprint. More difficult, but much more impressive, is determining how long ago the signs were made. Tracking rolls are used against a TN generated by use of the target's Stealth Knack when he last passed through the area.

Trail Signs: Hunters have a private language all their own, in the form of carefully bent twigs, stacked rocks, and notched limbs. You can leave a trail for others to find and follow later, warn of danger, or indicate a good fishing hole. Success use of this Knack means that the person you are signaling automatically sees the Trail Signs when he passes by it.

Traps: Small snares and deadfalls can be constructed by a hunter trained in their use. These are not typically capable of harming a person, but animals may find escape impossible. In areas of plentiful game, you can easily make a living selling hides from trapped animals.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Animal Training: This Knack allows you to domesticate animals and train them to perform tricks, or to attack on command.

Merchant

As long as something can be sold, even if it's a service, there will be merchants. They are a powerful collective, guided to

some degree by the Vendel League and/or the Vodacce Merchant Princes (see the Membership: Merchant Guild Advantage).

Hero Creation: When you buy this Skill, you do not receive all the Basic Knacks at Rank 1. Instead, you receive 1 Basic Knack at Rank 2. You may purchase additional Basic Knacks for 1 HP each. Also, most of these Knacks affect a Hero's income (see Determining Hero Wealth).

Basic Knacks

Apothecary: This Knack is used to make mixtures of ingredients for medicinal purposes.

Baker: This Knack is used for making baked goods such as bread and cakes.

Barber: You are skilled at cutting and styling hair to suit the patron's tastes. Each Raise made with the use of this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Courtier, Performer or Jenny roll, to be used at an upcoming social event.

Blacksmith: You can forge simple metal utensils and tools for sale. This includes nails, hinges, horseshoes, and axe-heads, among other things (grenade casings, and the like). While a smithy requires a large outlay for tools in the beginning, and certainly isn't a portable trade (furnace, bellows), it brings in a comfortable income. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Brewer: This Knack is used for making beer and ale.

Butcher: You are adept at preparing meats for consumption.

Calligrapher: You can write in a very formal, decorative hand, and illuminate the pages of a book. This Knack is only useful for those Languages that you can read and write, or those which share a common alphabet with those you do. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Carpenter: This Knack is useful when constructing wooden furniture and other land-bound structures. *This Knack is not used for building ships (see the Shipwright Knack).*

Ceramics: You have knowledge of how to sculpt and fire objects made of clay or other similar materials. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Chandler: You are skilled in the dipping of beeswax and tallow candles. Often the candles are scented or carved. You may also supplement your income by selling honey from your beehives.

Cobbler: This Knack is used for making or repairing shoes and boots.

Confectioner: This Knack is used for making candies and snacks.

Cooking: No servant is as beloved as a fine chef. Employers will bend over backwards to avoid losing such a person, while others will try to steal one away if he is truly skilled. In short, a skilled cook is guaranteed a steady income.

Distiller: This Knack is used when distilling spirits, such as brandy, whisky, and vodka.

Dyeing: You can prepare dyes and are proficient in their use.

Embalmer: You can preserve a corpse, whether animal or human.

Fletcher: You know how to make and repair arrows. This includes the shaft and the fletching on the back, but not the arrowheads. Usually, a Blacksmith forges the arrowheads for you. This Knack is very useful to archers, and stretches out their limited supply of arrows. After each battle in which you fire your bow, make a Wits+Fletcher roll. For every full ten points you make the roll by, you retrieve one of the arrows fired during the battle in a usable condition.

Florist: This Knack is used to grow flowers and make floral arrangements.

Furrier: You make, repair, and clean furs and fur garments. Each Raise made through the use of this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Courtier, Performer or Jenny roll, to be used at an upcoming social event.

Gardener: You are capable of laying out, planting, and maintaining a decorative landscape.

Glassblower: You make items out of glass. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Gunsmith: This Knack is used to make or repair firearms.

Hatter: This Knack is used to make or repair hats.

Innkeeper: You can manage the day-to-day chores for running an inn.

Jenny: The courtly art of escort and the less refined variants thereof. Jenny may be used in place of the Seduction Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Jeweler: You are skilled in cutting, polishing, and setting gems. Each Raise made through the use of this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Courtier, Performer or Jenny roll, to be used at an upcoming social event. This Knack may also be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Mason: This Knack is useful when constructing structures from stone, brick, concrete or cement.

Masseur: You can give expert massages, a skill often in demand among nobility. Each Raise made gives a Free Raise to a subsequent use of the Seduction Knack by the Masseur on the person being massaged.

Miller: You are capable of operating and repairing a mill.

Paper Maker: You can make sturdy paper on which to write. You can also identify different types of paper and the places where they can be found.

Perfumer: This Knack is used in the creation of pleasing scents and perfumes.

Potter: You are capable of creating fine pots with the aid of a wheel and a kiln. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Printer: This Knack is used to operate a printing press, allowing you to make things such as books and leaflets.

Sail Maker: You are able to sew sails to meet the needs of sailors.

Scribe: You can carefully and neatly write, either copying from a book or taking dictation. This Knack is only useful for Languages that you can read and write, or are in a common alphabet that you know.

Seamstress: You can mend clothes and other fabrics, and weave various materials into clothing, throw rugs, and other useful items. Each Raise made through the use of this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Courtier, Performer or Jenny roll, to be used at an upcoming social event.

Shipwright: This Knack is used to build and modify ships.

Spinner: You can spin carded wool or other materials into cloth.

Steward: You are able to manage a household: buying food, directing servants, etc.

Tailor: You are able to make, repair, or alter clothing to fit your customers. Each Raise made through the use of this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Courtier, Performer or Jenny roll, to be used at an upcoming social event.

Tinker: This Knack indicates a practical knowledge of repairing or constructing mechanical objects. It can be used to fix or

improve small items such as clocks or musical boxes, as well as constructing new objects from abstract designs.

Vintner: You are able to produce wines.

Weaver: You can take thread and weave it into cloth. A more skilled weaver is capable of tapestries and similar creations. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Wigmaker: This Knack is used to make and repair wigs.

Advanced Knacks

Accounting: Use of this Knack allows you to track the income and expenditures of a large household or business with accuracy. It can be used to detect fraud, or to “cook the books.”

Appraising: Judging the approximate worth of an item is an important part of a Merchant's (or Fence's) occupation. Unless you buy low and sell high, you'll soon be out of business.

Architecture: You understand the structure of buildings, from the barest mud huts to the grandest Vaticine cathedrals. You know how to construct a building to specification, and how to direct other men in the task. Using this Knack allows you to locate foundations, stress points, and other vital information about a building. It may even allow you to determine if there is a hidden room or passage in the building, although it cannot tell you how to access it.

Bartending: As a tavern-master, you have the ability to serve drinks, not only to satisfy your customers' orders, but to do so with style. This Knack allows not only the running of a drinking establishment, but the flair with which to gain a Reputation in the process.

Haggling: This is different from Shopping in that it doesn't allow you to find what you're looking for. It allows you to talk the buyer or seller into a good deal, once you've found it. Being able to barter is only the beginning for a person who wishes to become a successful procurer of valuable goods. You must also know how to Haggle—remain aware of all the elements of a bargaining discussion at any time, and be able to use them to your advantage. Of course, you must be better at it than your opponent, for he is reading the same signs you are...

Tinker: This Knack indicates a practical knowledge of repairing or constructing mechanical objects. It can be used to fix or improve small items such as clocks or musical boxes, and when constructing new objects from abstract designs.

Performer

Performers earn their living by making crowds of people laugh, cry, and cheer. Whatever comes back when they pass the hat is often all they have to eat with that night. Because the take is so small (or maybe just because they can), some Performers turn their talents to other (less honest) purposes.

Basic Knacks

Acting: Slipping in and out of character is your forte. You can pretend to be a member of a different social class, exhibiting the humility of a beggar or the arrogance of a king. Of course, this is much more effective when combined with the proper costume. Acting may be used in place of the Sincerity Knack at a +15 TN penalty.

Dancing: You ease your way around the dance floor with grace and poise. Ballroom dancers with great skill are in high demand at noble balls, while ballet dancers can earn a decent living performing at stage shows and paid recitals.

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may

be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity, Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Singing: A voice as clear as crystal is only part of your secret. Breath control and enunciation count for just as much. This Knack gives you the training to use your voice to the fullest.

Advanced Knacks

Animal Training: This Knack allows you to domesticate animals and train them to perform tricks, or to attack on command.

Circus: You have some training in several of the traditional circus acts: perhaps fire eating, sword swallowing, fortune telling or juggling. Of course, their use has been carefully rehearsed beforehand, and is much less effective on the spur of the moment. Thus, you might be able to juggle to impress a crowd using this Knack, but could not easily (and intuitively) snatch a knife thrown by an assassin out of the air. Circus may replace any Athlete Knack at a +10 to +20 TN penalty.

Cold Read: This is the art of deducing things about a person from his or her appearance and mannerisms. Handedness might be determined from a callus upon a knuckle, while a nervous twitch could reveal much to an observant eye. With this Knack you can always enter a conversation with at least a little information about the other person. More often than not, this Knack is used in Contested rolls against the Resolve of another, or against one of his Knacks. Each Raise made with this Knack gives a Free Raise to Sorte attempts relating to the same subject.

Disguise: Cloaked figures can draw more attention than they intend. A dab of soot in your hair, a stooped walk, some ratty clothes, and this Knack can help you become just another innocent bystander in a crowded room. To use this Knack you must first make a Simple roll with it, and the result becomes the TN for anyone nearby to see through the disguise. Disguise may be used in place of the Fashion Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Juggling: This Knack is very easy to learn, but can still astound the uninitiated. It represents your Hero's ability to keep a number of objects in the air, seemingly defying gravity. Juggling three balls is easiest, with a TN of 10. More difficult tricks (such as more items, larger, oddly shaped, or even dangerous items, or complicated maneuvers) count as calling a Raise for each new factor added to the trick.

Example: Juggling five knives one-handed would require 4 Raises (one for each item over three, one for the danger, and one for one-handed).

Memorizing: This Knack is used to recite, repeat, play, or mimic something that has played, sung, spoken, or performed in front of the character. The TN to memorize something is the same as the TN to perform it in the first place. Obviously, the longer the original piece, the harder it is to memorize; a bawdy tavern joke would be TN 10—both to tell and to memorize—while the entire content of a historical drama would be TN 30.

Prestidigitation: Small magic tricks such as making coins disappear and reappear, stacking decks of cards, and producing flowers out of thin air are all examples of prestidigitation. You can earn a living by giving shows, or simply impress the ladies at a noble ball. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits. Porté sorcerers may use this Knack with a blooded object for a Free Raise (plus one Free Raise for each Raise made when blooding the object).

Shill: The Shill is an accomplice to the Performer, planted in the crowd to make the Performer look good. Sometimes a crowd may need a little prompting for applause; sometimes a convenient question from the throng can spark apparent

brilliance on stage and occasionally, onlookers need to be convinced that someone can win at the cups and balls.

Storytelling: Seated around a flickering fire, all attention is on you. Your voice and mannerisms are calculated to enthrall your audience completely. Storytellers can, in addition, sometimes collect small sums of money for telling their tales. Each Raise made with this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Glamour attempt.

Priest

Priests are the foundation of a strong religion, in one form or another. They provide comfort to grieving practitioners and answers to those who seek enlightenment. Someone with the Priest Skill isn't necessarily ordained (and vice versa), but he has a strong grasp of what it takes to become one. You must have the Ordained Advantage in order to be an ordained priest.

Basic Knacks

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity, Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Philosophy: Beyond facts there are ideas, and those ideas can change the world. Theoretical debates are a hobby of yours, and with this Knack you might well win them. Two Scholars can make Contested Resolve+Philosophy rolls; the loser is confused and becomes incapable of making decisions until the end of the Scene.

Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or call the people to arms. Your words can turn beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Advanced Knacks

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Mooch: With a combination of entertaining conversation, hollow promises, and sheer audacity, you can convince others to provide for your needs. Care must be taken not to do this in one place too long, however, as even the most flattering guest must eventually wear out his welcome.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject—everyone feels that he or she is right. You, however, have studied all the faiths dispassionately, looking for correlations and unseen connections, regardless of your own beliefs. You know who they all pray to, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of it.

Professor

Professors are academics who have decided to spread their knowledge to the best and the brightest students in Théah. Rather than spending their lives locked in laboratories or libraries, they dedicate their time to instructing classrooms full of eager young scholars. They write textbooks, give lectures, and see to it that their courses receive adequate financial support.

Basic Knacks

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity,

Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained—where to look and who to ask.

Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or call the people to arms. Your words can turn beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Advanced Knacks

Law: Laws differ from country to country, sometimes from day to day as well. Even the most clearly written can be twisted against you unless you understand them. With this Knack, not only are the current laws of a country known to you, but you also know how to manipulate them to your favor in order to extricate yourself from sticky situations.

Mooch: With a combination of entertaining conversation, hollow promises, and sheer audacity, you can convince others to provide for your needs. Care must be taken not to do this in one place too long, however, as even the most flattering guest must eventually wear out his welcome.

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world, such as gravity and inertia. You can create compound chemicals such as acid, gunpowder, or weak steel, provided you can remember the formulas. This Knack can also be used to determine if some strange occurrence of physics or chemistry is of natural or magical origin.

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Politics: Politics is power, and the truly clever courtier understands this. You can sense the ebb and flow of a noble's influence and determine whose coat-tails represent the quickest ride to the top. Make a Wits+Politics [15] roll to determine a noble's reputation. If the noble is not known to you, or isn't from your Country of Origin, then add a +5 to +15 TN penalty.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject—everyone feels that he or she is right. You, however, have studied all the faiths dispassionately, looking for correlations and unseen connections, regardless of your own beliefs. You know who they all pray to, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of it.

Tinker: This Knack indicates a practical knowledge of repairing or constructing mechanical objects. It can be used to fix or improve small items such as clocks or musical boxes, as well as constructing new objects from abstract designs.

Riverboat Pilot

The sailors who pilot the mighty rivers of Théah are a very different breed from those who ply the open sea. While their seafaring brethren sneer at these “mud skippers”, they know that only a Riverboat Pilot can assure a safe voyage through the temperamental river waters, which are filled with submerged rocks and logs.

Basic Knacks

Balance: When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the

Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain.

Knotwork: With this Knack you can tie all the essential knots a sailor needs to know, and you can tell the difference between a sheepshank and a two-half-hitches knot.

Rigging: You understand the intricacies of a ship's rigging. You know what a jib is, where the mainsail can be found, and how to batten down the hatches and trim the sails. Moreover, you can help to repair a shattered mast or a torn sail.

River Navigation: You have learned everything important there is to know about a fifty-mile stretch of a specific river. You know where all the submerged rocks and logs are, and you never need to make a Piloting check when sailing a ship through this area. You can learn one more fifty-mile stretch for each additional Knack Rank you gain.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Bribery: Money, when applied properly, can grease the wheels of bureaucracy, open doors, or cause guards to shift their loyalties. You know where, when, and how much to apply.

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Pilot: Using a compass, the setting sun, or the stars, you are able to steer a ship on a specific course given to you by the Navigator, and are capable of spotting submerged hazards and shallow waters. You are also familiar with the tricks of keeping a ship afloat during a storm.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Weather: Whether it's because your corns start to hurt, your joints begin to ache, or you've learned to identify the signs, you know when a storm is coming, and you can quickly get an idea of just how bad the storm is going to be.

Sailor

Sailors work on ships. More specifically, they understand the wind and how it affects the rigging; they learn how to sail by the stars and how to plot a course; they know how to fire a cannon at an enemy ship. In short, they learn a lot of things that, when taken together, allow them to crew a ship.

Basic Knacks

Balance: When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain.

Climbing: You understand how to find hand- and foot-holds, how to use climbing gear, and how to seek out the easiest path to climb in the first place. If you are attacked while climbing, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Knotwork: With this Knack you can tie all the essential knots a sailor needs to know, and you can tell the difference between a sheepshank and a two-half-hitches knot.

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Rigging: You understand the intricacies of a ship's rigging. You know what a jib is, where the mainsail can be found, and how to batten down the hatches and trim the sails. Moreover, you can help to repair a shattered mast or a torn sail.

Advanced Knacks

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people. This can often come in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. You use this Knack as your Defense Knack while Leaping.

Navigation: Using nautical charts and a set of navigator's tools, you can plot courses that will take a ship out of sight of land without getting hopelessly lost, and communicate that information to the pilot of the ship. Success with this Knack steers a vessel onto the correct course. Failure could result in you being keel-hauled for getting everyone lost.

Pilot: Using a compass, the setting sun, or the stars, you are able to steer a ship on a specific course given to you by the Navigator, and are capable of spotting submerged hazards and shallow waters. You are also familiar with the tricks of keeping a ship afloat during a storm.

Sea Lore: You know the legends and stories that sailors tell among themselves. If a particular island is reputed to be haunted, you might know the tale connected with it.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Weather: Whether it's because your corns start to hurt, your joints begin to ache, or you've learned to identify the signs, you know when a storm is coming, and you can quickly get an idea of just how bad the storm is going to be.

Scholar

Théah's scholars are responsible for her current social and technological level. Some of them are bookish types, locked away in libraries and laboratories, while others brave the deadly Ssyneth ruins in search of lost truths.

Basic Knacks

History: More than just knowing what has come before, history has a great many lessons for those willing to listen. Tragic military defeats have been transformed into glorious victories by a schooled historian, and more than a few of them have learned from failed political maneuvers as well. You know the ways of the past and how to learn from them today.

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say, and you are sure that they're right. Measurements, navigation, troop movements and even trade negotiations all require math. Isn't it fortunate that you paid attention in class? Mathematics can be used to calculate dimensions (height, distance, time elapsed, depth, weight, etc.). It is also useful to know this Knack when calculating how far you have to run to beat an explosion.

Philosophy: Beyond facts there are ideas, and those ideas can change the world. Theoretical debates are a hobby of yours, and with this Knack you might well win them. Two Scholars can make Contested Resolve+Philosophy rolls; the loser is confused and becomes incapable of making decisions until the end of the Scene.

Research: What is unknown can prove to be the most valuable part of any endeavor, and you know how to ferret out vital information. You have studied the ways that knowledge is gained—where to look and who to ask.

Advanced Knacks

Astronomy: Knowing the names and locations of the stars can provide entertaining banter over dinner, or it can save a ship lost at sea. You can read the heavens like a book, using them to understand the passage of time, or the distance between locations, or to impress a lady friend.

Law: Laws differ from country to country, sometimes from day to day as well. Even the most clearly written can be twisted against you unless you understand them. With this Knack, not only are the current laws of a country known to you, but you also know how to manipulate them to your favor in order to extricate yourself from sticky situations.

Natural Philosophy: Natural philosophy is the study of both chemistry and physics. You have an understanding of the (mostly) immutable laws that govern the physical world, such as gravity and inertia. You can create compound chemicals such as acid, gunpowder, or weak steel, provided you can remember the formulas. This Knack can also be used to determine if some strange occurrence of physics or chemistry is of natural or magical origin.

Occult: With the occult, there is precious little hard knowledge to be learned. You have acquired some of it and know how to use it, be it a trivial fact about a certain brand of sorcery or the solution to an ancient puzzle.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject—everyone feels that he or she is right. You, however, have studied all the faiths dispassionately, looking for correlations and unseen connections,

regardless of your own beliefs. You know who they all pray to, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of it.

Servant

Nobles and merchants are demanding employers. A servant must tread softly and work diligently to meet their standards.

Basic Knacks

Etiquette: While it might be acceptable to throw the bones of your meal upon the floor in some regions, it is certain that other nobility would faint upon seeing some ruffian throw a greasy bone on their new rug. You have learned the niceties of events sponsored by the nobility and can avoid such social faux pas. When using this Knack in a place where you are unfamiliar with the customs, you are at a two unkept dice penalty.

Fashion: When appearing before nobility, it is an affront to their gentle senses to be ill-attired. The conscientious courtier keeps careful tabs on the latest trends in fashion, no matter how ridiculous. With enough knowledge, you can quickly throw together a presentable outfit, even if the materials at hand are less than satisfactory. Make a Panache+Fashion [15] roll to gain a Reputation Point (plus one for each Raise made) for a given social event. These Reputation Points leave with the party. Fashion may be used in place of the Disguise Knack (for appropriate costumes) at a +20 TN penalty.

Menial Tasks: This Knack allows you to perform all the common labors that any Servant must perform in service to his lord (e.g., cleaning and taking care of his estate, doing laundry, answering doors, etc.) Failure with this Knack will likely result in unemployment, or worse...

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Unobtrusive: Sometimes a servant's best Knack is remaining unnoticed while his employer works off a fit of rage. This is not actually hiding, but rather blending in with the background. It plays upon a noble's tendency to ignore servants, and so works best against them. Like the Stealth Knack, an Unobtrusive roll is used to generate a TN that those about the Servant must make a Contested Wits roll against to notice him.

Advanced Knacks

Accounting: Use of this Knack allows you to track the income and expenditures of a large household or business with accuracy. It can be used to detect fraud, or to "cook the books."

Drive Carriage: Driving a carriage is different from riding a horse. The animals must be hitched up, prevented from scraping the carriage along a wall, and kept calm in a dizzying swirl of people, dogs, and other animals. Worse still, the carriage is bulky and difficult to stop, so it presents a hazard to pedestrians who are not quick on their feet. You have learned to deal with all these things.

Drive Sleigh: Driving a sleigh is different from riding a horse or driving a carriage. The animals must be hitched up, prevented from scraping the sleigh along obstacles, and made to work as a team. Worse, the sleigh can be difficult to stop, so it presents a danger to those who are not quick on their feet. You have learned to deal with all these things.

Gossip: A rumor flies faster than the swiftest arrow and bites twice as deep. Gossips are always near the rumor mill and get the latest news before anyone else, but with this Knack, you also

have the ability to determine which are true and which are important.

Haggling: This is different from Shopping in that it doesn't allow you to find what you're looking for. It allows you to talk the buyer or seller into a good deal, once you've found it. Being able to barter is only the beginning for a person who wishes to become a successful procurer of valuable goods. You must also know how to Haggle—remain aware of all the elements of a bargaining discussion at any time, and be able to use them to your advantage. Of course, you must be better at it than your opponent, for he is reading the same signs you are...

Seneschal: You are privileged—for a Servant, anyway. You have shown acumen with organization and an attention to detail. You are, or have had experience as, a noble's administrator, someone who collects his taxes, oversees the other servants in his household, and generally handles all the minor details he feels are too minute to bother with.

Valet: Your goal is your lord's presentation to others. You buy his clothes, carry his possessions when he tours other regions, and carry messages to others in his name. You are, or were, a Hand Servant, and this Knack encompasses all the various trivialities that accompany that position.

Skald

Restrictions: Vesten only

A Skald is a storyteller and a keeper of history. The Skalds keep the Vestenmannavnjar traditions alive. They pass their wisdom on to the others by singing or telling epic poems. They ask riddles, the keys to which are found in the old legends. They also make new legends, by writing poems and singing songs about the great deeds of their contemporaries.

Basic Knacks

History: More than just knowing what has come before, history has a great many lessons for those willing to listen. Tragic military defeats have been transformed into glorious victories by a schooled historian, and more than a few of them have learned from failed political maneuvers as well. You know the ways of the past and how to learn from them today.

Oratory: Sweet words of praise flow as easily from your lips as whispered words of poison. Oratory allows you to convince your listeners more easily of the truth of any argument. Oratory may be used in place of the Diplomacy, Mooch, Politics, Sincerity, Storytelling, Bribery, Socializing, or Incitation Knacks with a +10 to +40 TN penalty.

Singing: A voice as clear as crystal is only part of your secret. Breath control and enunciation count for just as much. This Knack gives you the training to use your voice to the fullest.

Writing: Your quill flies across the page with the gift of prose, setting down words that can entertain the reader, outrage the nobility, or call the people to arms. Your words can turn beggars into kings or topple the most entrenched tyrants. This Knack encompasses poetry, plays, and other written works.

Advanced Knacks

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Incitation: You can inspire men to victory. They listen to your words before and during the battle, and they know that they cannot be defeated. They know that you will make the right decisions, and that they won't lay down their lives for nothing. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Riddles: You understand the nature of riddling and the secret wisdom which riddles impart. This is more than just being able

to answer them; it's realizing the message behind the words and applying it to your own life.

Rune Lore: You have a deep understanding of the mythology of the Vestenmannavnjar, and know the stories behind each of the runes. Whenever you need to know the mythological story of a specific rune, you may use this Knack.

Storytelling: Seated around a flickering fire, all attention is on you. Your voice and mannerisms are calculated to enthrall your audience completely. Storytellers can, in addition, sometimes collect small sums of money for telling their tales. Each Raise made with this Knack gives a Free Raise to any Glamour attempt.

Theology: Divine will is a difficult subject—everyone feels that he or she is right. You, however, have studied all the faiths dispassionately, looking for correlations and unseen connections, regardless of your own beliefs. You know who they all pray to, how they worship, and how their daily lives have changed because of it.

Spy

Spies eat away at the stability of a nation from the inside, like a worm in an apple. They skulk about, bribe underlings, steal secrets, and assassinate leaders. The outcome of an entire war can rest on their shoulders.

Basic Knacks

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Shadowing: You have been trained to blend in with crowds and unobtrusively follow your targets in a city or other urban setting. Done properly, the target will never even notice your presence. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Advanced Knacks

Bribery: Money, when applied properly, can grease the wheels of bureaucracy, open doors, or cause guards to shift their loyalties. You know where, when, and how much to apply.

Conceal: A woman with a dagger in her bodice has a means of defense, even though she may appear helpless. If you wish to get a pistol into a well-guarded ballroom, plant a powder keg where it won't be found until it goes off, or smuggle a lockpick into a jail cell, you need this Knack. Conceal is the ability to hide objects where they won't be easily found. To use this Knack, you must first make a Simple roll with it. The result becomes the TN for anyone nearby attempting to see through the concealment. Anyone specifically searching you or the concealed area, receives a Free Raise. Objects hidden in dark or hard-to-reach places add +5 to the TN.

Cryptography: When messages must be sent in the most discreet manner possible, ciphers are often used to prevent them from being read by those who aren't in the know. They usually follow a specific formula, which trained professionals can eventually decipher. This Knack makes you one of those trained professionals.

Disguise: Cloaked figures can draw more attention than they intend. A dab of soot in your hair, a stooped walk, some ratty

clothes, and this Knack can help you become just another innocent bystander in a crowded room. To use this Knack you must first make a Simple roll with it, and the result becomes the TN for anyone nearby to see through the disguise. Disguise may be used in place of the Fashion Knack at a +10 TN penalty.

Forgery: Signatures and wax seals are the only assurance that a statesman has of the authenticity of a letter. As a forger, you have learned to falsify these things.

Hand Signs: Words can be overheard and lips can be read, but a system of extremely subtle gestures and finger twitches developed by the Vodacce has cut down on such activity. With this Knack you can communicate information to a contact without ever saying or writing a word.

Interrogation: Psychological warfare and brutality can draw a man's attention as well as any woman's gentle touch. You are trained to interrogate, knowing every man's limit, and how to spot their lies.

Lip Reading: A whispered secret hides nothing when betrayed by the visible motion of your mouth. With this Knack you can discern plots and schemes from across the room. Of course, cautious or experienced courtiers often carry fans or veils to prevent just such an eventuality. Attempting to read the lips of someone hiding their face behind a fan adds +10 to +20 to the required TN.

Memorizing: This Knack is used to recite, repeat, play, or mimic something that has played, sung, spoken, or performed in front of the character. The TN to memorize something is the same as the TN to perform it in the first place. Obviously, the longer the original piece, the harder it is to memorize; a bawdy tavern joke would be TN 10—both to tell and to memorize—while the entire content of a historical drama would be TN 30.

Poison: When diplomacy fails and a military victory is impossible, an ounce of arsenic will sometimes suffice. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as well as how to handle it safely.

Sincerity: Even the most adept lie is useless if the listener detects a tremor of fear or a pair of downcast, nervous eyes. While Oratory allows you to utter glib words for entertainment or impact, Sincerity puts the ring of truth behind them, concealing even the most bold-faced lie behind a veneer of honesty.

Streetwise

The streetwise man is well acquainted with a particular city. He may know where to shop for the best deals, where to make contact with criminals or mercenaries, or what path to take when fleeing from the city guard in the middle of the night.

Basic Knacks

Perception: Awareness, spot hidden, call it what you will, this Knack represents experience of life as well as being a generally aware person, i.e. you know what to listen for, or what you are likely to spot as being odd or out of place in various situations. Perception is generally used with Wits, or perhaps Resolve if the Hero is particularly tired or stressed, or Panache if it's to spot a human emotion.

Socializing: Knowing where to meet the right kind of people can be vitally important. You seem to know where every diplomat goes for beer, and what taverns to go to when you need to hire a ship's crew or to find foreign collectors. Note that Socializing covers the more reputable inhabitants of the city (see Underworld Lore for the less reputable inhabitants). Successful Socializing rolls will grant you contacts within the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Street Navigation: Racing through the streets at night is no time for you to acquaint yourself with the layout of the city. Without this Knack you may quickly find yourself lost or cornered in a dead end alley. Successful Street Navigation rolls will grant you information about the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Advanced Knacks

Scrounging: You know where potentially useful trash is thrown. While it is unlikely for you to scrounge up a diamond, you would certainly know where to find food, a change of clothes, or a makeshift weapon. Successful Scrounging rolls will grant you items or resources found within the city, as determined by the GM.

Shopping: You have dealt with many of the local merchants in the past and know who will give you the best bargains. When combined with Bartering, you can get some truly good deals. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Underworld Lore: In every city there's at least one place the city guard fears to tread. Muggers, assassins, and bandits make their homes there, and you can contact them. Successful Underworld Lore rolls will grant you contacts within the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Urchin

When you're raised in the streets or wilds with nobody to take care of you, you pick up certain Skills, such as finding discarded food and begging for handouts. This sort of life often teaches a moral flexibility that says survival is more important than honesty.

Basic Knacks

Stealth: Stealth is the art of going unnoticed. You can use it to enter places you're not allowed, hide from your pursuers, or avoid being caught in a compromising situation. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Street Navigation: Racing through the streets at night is no time for you to acquaint yourself with the layout of the city. Without this Knack you may quickly find yourself lost or cornered in a dead end alley. Successful Street Navigation rolls will grant you information about the locale, as determined by the GM. You are at a two unkept dice penalty when using this Knack in a city that you are unfamiliar with.

Survival: Foraging for berries and nuts isn't exciting, but it's often necessary during the winter or in unfamiliar territory. With this Knack you can always find enough food to survive on, although it may include such delicacies as mice, grubs, and termites.

Advanced Knacks

Conceal: A woman with a dagger in her bodice has a means of defense, even though she may appear helpless. If you wish to get a pistol into a well-guarded ballroom, plant a powder keg where it won't be found until it goes off, or smuggle a lockpick into a jail cell, you need this Knack. Conceal is the ability to hide objects where they won't be easily found. To use this Knack, you must first make a Simple roll with it. The result becomes the TN for anyone nearby attempting to see through the concealment. Anyone specifically searching you or the concealed area, receives a Free Raise. Objects hidden in dark or hard-to-reach places add +5 to the TN.

Pickpocket: Armed with a feather-light touch and an arsenal of distractions, you are skilled at divesting passersby of their

possessions without their knowledge. Your training could just as easily be used to plant evidence on an unsuspecting target or to quietly palm an item off a table. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Scrounging: You know where potentially useful trash is thrown. While it is unlikely for you to scrounge up a diamond, you would certainly know where to find food, a change of clothes, or a makeshift weapon. Successful Scrounging rolls will grant you items or resources found within the city, as determined by the GM.

Sincerity: Even the most adept lie is useless if the listener detects a tremor of fear or a pair of downcast, nervous eyes. While Oratory allows you to utter glib words for entertainment or impact, Sincerity puts the ring of truth behind them, concealing even the most bold-faced lie behind a veneer of honesty.

Waylay

This Skill is the ability to attack a foe from a position of surprise. The two components of this ability are the ability to plan an ambush and the skill required to make everything go off without a hitch.

Basic Knacks

Lie in Wait: The element of surprise is essential to an ambush; the Hero must wait undetected for hours until his target is in place. This Knack represents the patience required for such waiting, as well as the knowledge to select a proper spot. It can involve anything from knowing how to conceal oneself in the shadows, to blending in with the tall grass along an open country road. It also means that the Hero has the ability to remain perfectly still while in hiding—no matter what distractions he may have to endure.

Set Traps: Numerous snares and traps can aid in an ambush, all of which must be set beforehand—trip-wires, pit traps, self-locking doors, and the like. This Knack enables the Hero to design and set these devices properly. It differs from the Traps Knack in that its targets are human beings, not small animals, and require different techniques to properly construct.

Shadowing: You have been trained to blend in with crowds and unobtrusively follow your targets in a city or other urban setting. Done properly, the target will never even notice your presence. This Knack is commonly used as a Contested roll against the victim's Wits.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Camouflage: The ability to blend in is very important if one wishes to conduct a successful ambush. This represents a knowledge of proper clothes, an instinctive feel for shadow patterns, and the use of nearby twigs and grasses on one's person in order to blend in with the scenery. A successful use of this Knack may lower the difficulty of a Lie In Wait check, depending on the TN and the GM's discretion. This Knack functions best in the countryside, and the GM may disallow its use in urban environments.

Land on Target: The best way to surprise someone is to land on them from above. This Knack enables the Hero to leap from a tree, a wall, or a building onto his target—anything from a Knight-Inquisitor to a stack of barrels to a waiting horse. It represents the ability to time jumps properly, ensuring that the Hero arrives at the right place at exactly the right moment.

Snatch and Grab: This Knack represents the ability to lean down and grab something from the ground while riding on horseback. The difficulty increases as the size of the object to be snatched decreases.

Whaler

On Théah, Whalers have a much more difficult time plying their trade. The whales are guarded by the fearsome leviathans, who attack not only anyone they sense harming a whale, but any ship that smells of a whale's blood. Whalers are usually fearsomely strong, completely unafraid of anything, and expert swimmers.

Basic Knacks

Balance: When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain.

Knotwork: With this Knack you can tie all the essential knots a sailor needs to know, and you can tell the difference between a sheepshank and a two-half-hitches knot.

Throw (Harpoon): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. When you throw (or attack with) this weapon, you must use this Knack. The range of a thrown harpoon is 5, plus two times your Brawn, yards.

Advanced Knacks

Leaping: You can jump higher and farther than most people. This can often come in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. You use this Knack as your Defense Knack while Leaping.

Poison: When diplomacy fails and a military victory is impossible, an ounce of arsenic will sometimes suffice. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as well as how to handle it safely.

Sea Lore: You know the legends and stories that sailors tell among themselves. If a particular island is reputed to be haunted, you might know the tale connected with it.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Weather: Whether it's because your corns start to hurt, your joints begin to ache, or you've learned to identify the signs, you know when a storm is coming, and you can quickly get an idea of just how bad the storm is going to be.

Martial Skills

Martial Skills are separate from Civil Skills because they follow a slightly different buying pattern, and because some of them are applied differently. More physical than Civil Skills, Martial Skills tend to favor activities of a more combative nature.

Archer

An archer has spent many years honing his marksmanship with the bow. His skill is welcome in any army, and he can almost always provide meat for his table. Archers from Avalon, in particular, are famed for their skill with the bow.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Bow): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. Attacks with all bows normally require one Action to load (nock or notch) the arrow, and one Action to fire. *Use the Horse Archery Knack when attacking with a bow from horseback.*

Fletcher: You know how to make and repair arrows. This includes the shaft and the fletching on the back, but not the arrowheads. Usually, a Blacksmith forges the arrowheads for you. This Knack is very useful to archers, and stretches out their limited supply of arrows. After each battle in which you fire your bow, make a Wits+Fletcher roll. For every full ten points you make the roll by, you retrieve one of the arrows fired during the battle in a usable condition.

Advanced Knacks

Horse Archery: This replaces the Attack (Bow) Knack when firing a bow from horseback. In all other ways, it functions the same way as the Attack (Bow) Knack.

Snapshot: When skilled enough, some marksmen focus on speed as much as, or sometimes more than, accuracy. With this Knack, you require only one Action to reload and fire, but you must make two Raises in order to do so. When firing and reloading as a single Action, Snapshot replaces the Attack Knack. *This Knack cannot be used from horseback.*

Trick Shooting (Bow): You are skilled at making difficult shots. For each Rank of Trick Shooting, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (for range, cover, etc.). Trick Shooting cannot lower the shot's TN below the target's base TN to be Hit.

Example: If a target has a TN to be Hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, an Archer with Trick Shooting 5 would negate all 15 points of modifiers, but he would not lower the base TN to be Hit (which remains at the original 15).

Athlete

Athletes put in long hours making themselves faster, stronger, or more agile than most people. Their skills are often needed in the exploration of trap-riddled Synchronic tombs.

Basic Knacks

Climbing: You understand how to find hand- and foot-holds, how to use climbing gear, and how to seek out the easiest path to climb in the first place. If you are attacked while climbing, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapons aren't, while on a relatively stable surface. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack, even if you don't have a weapon.

Sprinting: When danger rears its head, you are capable of putting on an incredible turn of speed. You can't maintain it very long, but for that short period few can keep up with you. When running, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Throwing: You can throw things farther and with greater accuracy than an untrained person. This can come in handy when you need to toss a gun to someone else, or place a grappling hook where you want it. *This Knack may not be used to attack (see the Throw Knack, which allows thrown attacks).*

Advanced Knacks

Break Fall: Adventurers tend to do a lot of falling, but you've learned how to do it right. You know how to absorb impact with your shoulders and how to roll with the fall (of course, that won't help you if you fall into a spiked pit). For every Rank in this Knack, one less Damage die is taken when a fall is incurred (to a minimum of zero Damage dice).

Catch: Catch is the art of grabbing a thrown object (knife, spear, or similar) from the air before it hits you. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack whenever someone throws a weapon at you.

Long Distance Running: You have learned to run great distances without collapsing. You know how to pace yourself, and how to breathe properly when running.

Lifting: There's a right way and a wrong way to lift heavy weights. Do it the wrong way, and you're liable to hurt yourself quite badly. This Knack allows you to lift great weights with less risk to yourself.

Rolling: Whether sliding or rolling across the floor, this is the Knack you use. This can be handy to use tables momentarily as cover, or slip under a descending wall. While sliding or rolling, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Side-step: Whenever you successfully use Active Defense, you may lower your next Action die by your Knack Rank. You may not reduce the Action die to a number lower than the current Phase.

Swimming: Provided you aren't too heavily weighted down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding).

Swinging: You have learned to swing adroitly from ropes, chandeliers, etc. If someone attacks you while you are in mid-swing, you must use this Knack as your Defense Knack.

Blunt Weapons

This Skill encompasses the use of weapons which don't fall under the category of Fencing, nor are they true Heavy Weapons. It's generally used for mace, morning star, cudgel or hammer attacks, which don't fall under any of the other Skill categories (although the Dirty Fighting Knack can be used for items like a cudgel).

Basic Knacks

Attack (Blunt Weapon): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. Note that most blunt weapons inflict 2k2 Damage.

Parry (Blunt Weapon): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a blunt weapon.

Advanced Knacks

Bash: Using the weight of the weapon to unbalance a foe you can make a Bash Attack instead of a normal Attack. Use Finesse+Bash to hit your opponent. Any Active Defense rolls they choose to make require them to make a Raise in order to avoid the attack if they use a Parry Active Defense. If the Bash attack is successful, then add your Knack Rank to the target's lowest Action die. If this is pushed over ten then it is discarded, as they become bruised and unbalanced. Damage rolls are made as normal.

Buckler

Anyone can hold up a buckler, but a soldier trained in its use can turn it into an offensive weapon as well. Due to the similarities between bucklers and shields, you may use half of your Parry (Shield) Knack, rounded down, instead of the Parry (Buckler) Knack when using a buckler, whichever is higher. The reverse applies to using a shield as well.

Basic Knacks

Parry (Buckler): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are using a buckler.

Advanced Knacks

Attack (Buckler): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. A buckler inflicts 1k1 Damage when used as a weapon.

Cloak

In the hands of a trained fighter, the cloak can be more than simply a decorative garment. It can serve as a shield, and can entangle an opponent. Its primary drawback is that—unlike many other off-hand weapons—it cannot be used to attack.

Basic Knacks

Parry (Cloak): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you have a cloak wrapped around your off-hand.

Advanced Knacks

Entangle: This attack is designed to blind and confuse your opponent temporarily. In order to use it, you must be wielding a cloak in your off-hand. You declare that you are using Entangle, and then roll using this Knack to attack. If the attack is successful, it inflicts no damage, but forces your target to increase his next Action die by two, plus one for each Raise you made. If this increases that Action die higher than ten, the Action die is discarded.

Commander

Wise rulers know just how important capable commanders are to the survival of their country. A general is the glue that binds an army together; without his diplomatic and strategic skills, it all falls apart.

Basic Knacks

Strategy: Strategy lets you formulate battle plans and movements on a large scale. You know when to have your ship turn towards the enemy, and what waters are easiest to defend. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Tactics: Tactics lets you command a group of men in battle, following the orders of your superior (whom you hope has the Strategy Knack). You can get the men to change formation, inspire them to charge the enemy or lead them through firing drills. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Advanced Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own.

Artillery: You know how to handle land-based artillery, such as cannons. When a crew fires artillery, the crew commander uses this Knack for the Attack roll. *If the artillery is on board a ship, the Gunnery Knack should be used instead of this one.*

Cartographer: You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of Cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps of oceans or coastlines. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

For those who also have the Architecture Knack, it can be used on a smaller scale: drawing the layout of a building or other edifice, and pointing out where the weaknesses are. In this case, your Cartographer Rank is limited by your Architecture Rank (use the lower of the two). You must spend at least 2 hours observing the building in order to draw a map of it; if you cannot enter the building, the GM may assign a -5 to -10 TN penalty to reflect the lack of knowledge of the building's interior. Success with this use of the Cartographer Knack creates a legible, accurate map of the building. Failure could give you a flawed map that leaves you trapped in a blind corner as the guards close in...

Diplomacy: The art of Diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm all but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs—in your veins.

Gunnery: The pitch and roll of a ship takes a lot of getting used to, especially when trying to fire a cannon on board. Sailors using this Knack have worked out the tricks and timing involved. When artillery, such as a cannon, is fired from on board a ship, the crew commander uses Gunnery for the Attack roll. *If the artillery is on land, the commander's Artillery Knack should be used instead of this one.*

Incitation: You can inspire men to victory. They listen to your words before and during the battle, and they know that they cannot be defeated. They know that you will make the right decisions, and that they won't lay down their lives for nothing. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Leadership: Once you have used the Incitation Knack to make men believe in you this Knack will help you live up to your words. You can fit the best man to a task; give advice on how to perform better without getting in their way. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Logistics: Wars often come down to who has the best fed and most rested troops. The Logistics Knack lets you determine how much supplies will be consumed, and how best to get them where they're needed. This Knack is normally used in Mass Combat.

Crossbow

Crossbows, while rapidly falling out of style, still hold attraction for soldiers and assassins alike. Their operation and ease of use are their main advantages.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Crossbow): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. Most crossbows take six Actions to reload.

Fletcher: You know how to make and repair quarrels. This includes the shaft and the fletching on the back, but not the arrowheads. Usually, a Blacksmith forges the arrowheads for you. This Knack is very useful to archers, and stretches out their limited supply of quarrels. After each battle in which you fire your crossbow, make a Wits+Fletcher roll. For every full ten points you make the roll by, you retrieve one of the quarrels fired during the battle in a usable condition.

Advanced Knacks

Reload (Crossbow): You are able to reload a missile weapon quicker. For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for crossbows is reduced by one Action. Someone with Rank 5 in this Knack has mastered the art of cocking the crossbow in a single Action.

Dirty Fighting

The niceties of pugilism are not for everyone. Some folks think that fair play is a good way to get killed.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Dirty Fighting): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. A bare-handed attack inflicts 0k1 Damage.

Advanced Knacks

Attack (Improvised Weapon): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. This Knack is used when wielding a weapon that does not conform to any other established weapon Attack Knack (like a table, a chest, or another human).

Eye-gouge: This attack is designed to blind your opponent temporarily. In order to use it, you must have at least one empty

hand. You declare that you are using an Eye-gouge, and then roll using this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack. If the attack is successful, it inflicts the normal bare-handed 0k1 Damage and forces your target to increase his next Action die by one, plus one for every Raise you make. If this increases that Action die higher than ten, the Action die is discarded.

Kick: This Knack is used as your Attack Knack when kicking your opponent. A Kick inflicts 0k2 Damage, but increases the TN that you are trying to hit by ten. You must declare a Kick before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack.

Parry (Improvised Weapon): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are using any weapon that does not conform to any other Knack (like a table, a chest, or another human).

Throat Strike: Using this Knack, you strike your opponent squarely across the throat. You declare that you are making a Throat Strike, and roll to attack using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by 15 when using this Knack, but if it's successful (and not avoided with Active Defense) you inflict an automatic Dramatic Wound to your target, rather than rolling for damage.

Throw (Improvised Weapon): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. When you throw an improvised weapon (any weapon not conforming to any other Knack), you must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack. The range of a thrown Improvised Weapon will vary with its weight, but will usually (for an object the size of a wine bottle or smaller) be 5, plus two times your Brawn, yards.

Fencing

Those trained in Fencing have a basic understanding of the theories and techniques of modern swordplay. This Skill trains in the use of fencing weapons such as the rapier, foil, smallsword, and epee. It is the foundation for most of the training presented in Théah's Swordsman Schools.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Fencing): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. The typical fencing weapon is the rapier. See the Weapons section in this compendium for descriptions of typical fencing weapons. *Use the Cavalry Attack Knack when attacking with a sword from horseback.*

Parry (Fencing): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a sword.

Advanced Knacks

This Skill has no Advanced Knacks.

Firearms

While the pistol and musket are new weapons, they are rapidly becoming the most popular in the world. They are still fairly inaccurate, which is perhaps their greatest flaw.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Firearms): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. It takes twenty Actions to reload a pistol, and thirty Actions to reload a musket (in other words, don't bother while you're in the middle of a fight; the combat will generally be over long before you can reload). In addition, this Knack is used to fire a grappling gun. The TN to successfully hook the grapple is equal to 5+Range Modifiers.

Advanced Knacks

Reload (Firearms): You are more effective at reloading firearms. For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for muskets and pistols is reduced by two Actions.

Gunner

The gunner on a ship fires, maintains and repairs the cannons.

Basic Knacks

Lifting: There's a right way and a wrong way to lift heavy weights. Do it the wrong way, and you're liable to hurt yourself quite badly. This Knack allows you to lift great weights with less risk to yourself.

Reload (Cannon): You are able to reload a missile weapon quicker. Most ship's gunners know this Knack. For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for cannons is reduced by three Actions.

Advanced Knacks

Artillery: You know how to handle land-based artillery, such as cannons. When a crew fires artillery, the crew commander uses this Knack for the Attack roll. *If the artillery is on board a ship, the Gunnery Knack should be used instead of this one.*

Blacksmith: You can forge simple metal utensils and tools for sale. This includes nails, hinges, horseshoes, and axe-heads, among other things (grenade casings, and the like). While a smithy requires a large outlay for tools in the beginning, and certainly isn't a portable trade (furnace, bellows), it brings in a comfortable income. This Knack may be used with the Lærdom Inscribe ability. For each successful Raise made with this Knack, gain a Free Raise to the Inscribe attempt.

Gunnery: The pitch and roll of a ship takes a lot of getting used to, especially when trying to fire a cannon on board. Sailors using this Knack have worked out the tricks and timing involved. When artillery, such as a cannon, is fired from on board a ship, the crew commander uses Gunnery for the Attack roll. *If the artillery is on land, the commander's Artillery Knack should be used instead of this one.*

Mathematics: "Numbers define the world," they say, and you are sure that they're right. Measurements, navigation, troop movements and even trade negotiations all require math. Isn't it fortunate that you paid attention in class? Mathematics can be used to calculate dimensions (height, distance, time elapsed, depth, weight, etc.). It is also useful to know this Knack when calculating how far you have to run to beat an explosion.

Hand Axe

While no longer commonly used in most nations, the hatchet remains a staple weapon in Ussuran combat. Those who practice this skill are proficient with hatchets, throwing axes, and other one-handed axes. Many of them learned to use it as a practical tool, and found it relatively easy to transfer their knowledge for combat purposes.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Hand Axe): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. The hand axe, or hatchet, is a 2k2 weapon.

Parry (Hand Axe): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a hand axe.

Advanced Knacks

Throw (Hand Axe): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. You may throw a hand axe as an attack. When you do so, use this Knack instead of your Attack

(Hand Axe) Knack. The Range for such an attack is 5+Brawn yards.

Heavy Weapon

Not everyone has switched over to the more modern and analytical style of swordsmanship. This skill trains the Hero in the use of heavy swords (any swords not covered by use of the Fencing Skill), and axes. Just because it's no longer in vogue doesn't mean it's ineffectual. A Heavy Weapon requires both hands to use, thus precluding the use of a shield.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Heavy Weapon): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. Most heavy weapons inflict 3k2 Damage.

Parry (Heavy Weapon): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a heavy weapon.

Advanced Knacks

This Skill has no Advanced Knacks.

Knife

Knives are more easily concealed than swords, but are commonly perceived as less of a threat. Sailors are often very proficient with knives, since they use them frequently in their daily tasks.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Knife): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Parry (Knife): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a knife.

Advanced Knacks

Catch: Catch is the art of grabbing a thrown object (knife, spear, or similar) from the air before it hits you. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack whenever someone throws a weapon at you.

Throw (Knife): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. When you throw this weapon as an attack, you must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack. The Range with a knife is 5, plus two times your Brawn, yards.

Panzerhand

The Eisen frequently fight with heavy iron gloves on their left hand, using them to grab weapons away from their opponents. This Skill trains the user in that art.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Panzerhand): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Parry (Panzerhand): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a panzerhand.

Advanced Knacks

Uppercut: An Uppercut is an aggressive bare-handed attack that leaves your defense momentarily open. When you declare a Uppercut, use this Knack as your Attack. You roll an extra two unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase only, and you may not use any Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Polearm

On the battlefields of Théah, polearms such as pikes see frequent use alongside muskets. They allow the soldiers to keep their enemies at bay while the musketeers reload.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Polearm): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. *Use the Lance (Polearm) Knack when attacking with a polearm from horseback.*

Parry (Polearm): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are wielding a polearm.

Advanced Knacks

Set Defense: When using your polearm against charging cavalry or infantry, you may choose to Set Defense instead of attacking normally. You declare that you are using Set Defense and roll your attack using this Knack. If the attack is successful, you add the target's current Initiative Total to the damage.

Pugilism

Pugilism is the gentleman's art of unarmed self-defense. A gentleman often needs to defend himself from scoundrels who would do him harm, and this Skill goes a long way towards that.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Pugilism): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. A bare-handed attack inflicts 0k1 Damage.

Footwork: Footwork is the art of putting yourself where your enemy's weapons aren't. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack even if you don't have a weapon.

Jab: When you use this Knack, you are making two quick bare-handed attacks against your opponent, one right after the other. You must declare that you are Jabbing before you attack, and then roll the two attacks using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by ten when you are using Jab.

Advanced Knacks

Ear Clap: Using this Knack, you clap your hands on your opponent's ears, causing him to become disoriented and lose his balance temporarily. You declare that you are making an Ear Clap and roll to attack using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by fifteen, but if the Ear Clap is successful (and not avoided with Active Defense) you inflict an automatic Dramatic Wound to your target, instead of rolling for damage.

Uppercut: An Uppercut is an aggressive bare-handed attack that leaves you open for a moment. When you declare a Uppercut, use this Knack as your Attack. You roll an extra two unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase only, and you may not use any Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Rider

A Hero with this Skill can climb on nearly any trained horse and ride with minimal effort. However, advanced training teaches some spectacular skills.

Basic Knacks

Ride: This Knack is what you use for ordinary horseback riding. The GM may call for Ride rolls when you do unusual things such as gallop the horse (TN 10), stay seated on a rearing mount (TN 15), or jump the horse over a hurdle (TN 20). A well-trained mount may give the rider a Free Raise.

Advanced Knacks

Animal Training: This Knack allows you to domesticate animals and train them to perform tricks, or to attack on command.

Mounting: There are certain times when it is necessary to mount your horse and ride away in a hurry. This Knack allows you to mount your horse both while running (TN 15) and while leaping off a one-story building (TN 20).

Trick Riding: This Knack is what you use for stunt riding, or similarly difficult riding maneuvers. Trick Riding lets you stand while riding (TN 15), do handstands on horseback (TN 20), hang off one side of the horse for cover (TN 20), and other flashy tricks. A well-trained mount may give the rider a Free Raise.

Shield

Anyone can hold up a shield, but a soldier trained in its use can turn it into an offensive weapon as well. Due to the similarities between bucklers and shields, you may use half of your Parry (Buckler) Knack, rounded down, instead of the Parry (Shield) Knack when using a shield, whichever is higher. The reverse applies to using a buckler as well.

Basic Knacks

Parry (Shield): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are using a shield.

Advanced Knacks

Attack (Shield): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy. A shield does 1k1 Damage when used as a weapon.

Whip

While not often used in combat, a whip can still make an effective weapon. It has a long reach, and its speed can give a slight edge over other weapons.

Basic Knacks

Attack (Whip): Attack is simply the ability to hit your enemy.

Advanced Knacks

This Skill has no Advanced Knacks.

Wrestling

Often seen as entertainment for commoners, wrestling has more practical uses as well. A wrestler, if he can get past an opponent's weapon, has a natural advantage over an untrained fighter.

Basic Knacks

Grapple: A grapple is the basic move used by all wrestlers. They get in close and grab hold of their opponent, preventing him from acting. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Grapple your opponent, and then roll to attack using Finesse+Grapple against your opponent's TN to be Hit. If successful, you have momentarily Grappled him. While grappled, your opponent can only attempt to break your hold, Head Butt you, or perform an Action that requires very little motion, such as pulling the trigger on a pistol.

To try to break your hold, your opponent must spend one Action (remember the rules for Interrupt and Held Actions), and then make a Contested roll with his Brawn+Wrestling versus your Brawn+Wrestling. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise, it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice (again, remember the rules on Interrupt and Held Actions) to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you one

free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold.

Advanced Knacks

Bear Hug: You grasp your opponent firmly with both arms and attempt to squeeze him into submission. Whenever your opponent attempts to break a Bear Hug you have placed him in and fails, or a Round ends, roll a number of dice equal to your Knack Rank, and Keep one. Your opponent takes that many Wounds, which he must immediately make a Wound Check against.

Break: Using this Knack, you can cause injury to an opponent's arm or leg. First, you must first successfully Grapple your target. You then declare which limb you are attempting to injure and then make a Break roll. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by ten when using this Knack, but if successful, you inflict an automatic Dramatic Wound, rather than rolling for damage. The current Grapple hold is also broken if this attempt is successful.

Escape: When you are attempting to break a Grapple that you have been placed in, each Rank in this Knack negates one Free Raise your opponent has gained from improving his hold.

Head Butt: This is an unarmed attack that causes a great deal of damage to your opponent, at the expense of hurting yourself as well. This attack can be used only when you are in a Grapple with your target. It doesn't matter if you are being grappled or if you are grappling him. If the attack is successful, it inflicts a bare-handed 3k1 attack on your opponent, and a bare-handed 1k1 attack on yourself (remember to add your Brawn to both). If your opponent takes a Dramatic Wound as a result of the Head Butt, and is grappling you, his hold is broken.

ADVANTAGES

You cannot take the same Advantage multiple times unless specifically stated. The game effect of each Advantage is detailed after the description. The cost of the Advantage in HP is also given, along with variations in that cost for other considerations. Any restrictions (other Advantages, nationality, Secret Society, etc.) are shown below the cost.

Able Drinker

Cost: 1 HP

You can really put the liquor away. This could be due to a naturally high constitution, or maybe just a lot of experience.

Effect: However much you drink, liquor never affects any of your rolls.

Academy

Cost: 4 HP (2 HP if Eisen)

There are institutions across Théah devoted to the broader topics of martial training, including tactics and strategy, leadership and command, and a wide variety of athletic techniques. These are much different from a Swordsman School, and do not teach you the secret moves you would learn at such a School.

Effect: You have attended one of Théah's military academies, and can buy Martial Skills for 1 HP, instead of 2 HP, at Hero Creation time.

Accurate Archer

Cost: 3 HP (2 HP if Ussuran)

You are a natural with the bow, and rarely miss your targets. Tears of practice have left you able to judge distances and the wind accurately.

Effect: You gain a Free Raise for all Attacks made with a bow, whether on foot or from horseback.

Age and Wisdom

Cost: 1 HP (Middle-aged) or 2 HP (Old)

The character is older than most starting characters (who are generally assumed to be between 16 and 25).

Effect: The character is affected by the penalties and bonuses for the age bracket chosen. In addition, the character gains one Free Raise per Hero Point spent (1 HP or 2 HP) for all rolls involving the following Knacks: First Aid, Hagglng, History, Leadership, Storytelling, Weather.

Alchemist

Cost: 10 HP

Much like Faith, true alchemy relies on the utter conviction that it actually works. For this reason, nearly all dabblers in the art meet with nothing but failure. With the systematic debunking of alchemy by some of the Invisible college's greatest minds, the practice of true alchemy has become even more rare.

The devout practice of alchemy revolves around the transformation of the spirit, a technique first developed through the transformation of base matter. The true Alchemist realizes that turning lead into gold, and other myths ascribed to alchemy, may not even be possible, but that such transformations aren't actually the point. By transforming his surroundings, the Alchemist hopes that he too will be transformed.

Effect: Characters with the Alchemist Advantage may eventually achieve a true transformation in themselves. Choose one Trait at

Hero Creation. The maximum limit of this Trait is increased by 1, to a maximum of 6.

In addition, alchemy forms the basis of Alvara Arciniega's "bastard science," Blood Science. The Alchemist advantage is required to successfully perform extractions and prepare viable Blood Science formulas. For details of Blood Science, see the Invisible College sourcebook [IC:94].

Ambidextrous

Cost: 5 HP

You can write and perform any tasks requiring co-ordination, strength or manual dexterity equally well with both hands.

Effect: You may use either your left or right hand as your main hand or "on-hand" and may freely switch between the use of the two. The off-hand penalty is negated (whichever hand you happen to be using as your off-hand) and, should you choose to fight left-handed, you gain all of the normal benefits of the Left-handed Advantage.

Androgynous

Cost: 2 HP (1 HP if Montaigne)

Restrictions: Characters with this Advantage cannot also have the Dangerous Beauty Advantage.

With your not entirely feminine, not entirely masculine features, and a little makeup, you can easily pass as a member of the opposite gender.

Effect: Gain +2 unkept dice for all Disguise rolls.

Animal Affinity

Cost: 2 HP (1 HP if Ussuran)

You get along very well with animals and vice versa. While this will not save you from an angry bear, it will help you train a domesticated animal.

Effect: You gain a Free Raise to all Animal Training rolls.

Appearance

Cost: 5 HP (Above Average) or 10 HP (Stunning)

Physically you are appealing to others. This can take the form of something blatant (like a perfectly sculpted face), or something more subtle (like a radiant pair of eyes). Regardless of the cause, however, the game modifiers are the same.

Effect: Characters with Above Average Appearance add 1 unkept die to all Social rolls. Characters with Stunning Appearance add 2 unkept dice to all Social rolls.

Area Knowledge

Cost: 3 HP

You have an intimate familiarity with the region in which you live, and know the best places to set up ambushes or hide from searchers. Knowledge of a particular locale can be extremely useful when being chased through the countryside, or when trying to find the perfect spot from which to observe without being seen.

Effect: Select a particular city, town, or segment of the countryside. The character rolls an extra unkept die when making Ambush checks, and receives a Free Raise on any Chase rolls he makes in that particular area.

Arthritis

Cost: 2 HP

At odd moments, your joints ache, acting almost as a sixth sense.

Effect: You gain +2 unkept dice to all Weather, Ambush and Street Navigation rolls. However, the GM may spend a Drama Die to require you to make a Raise on *all* your Finesse rolls for the remainder of the Scene.

Astrologer

Cost: 10 HP

Restrictions: Vendel only

You have an innate ability in observing the stars and planets and interpreting their arrangements to predict the future and understand the present.

Effect: By making a Wits+Astronomy [15] roll, you may use your gift to aid or hinder someone.

If you hinder someone, you find some astrological factor acting against him. Any rolls the target makes on the Mass Combat Chart are reduced by 2 (minimum of 1) for the duration of a battle, and the Target Numbers of all of his rolls are increased by 3 for the remainder of the Scene. For two Raises, you can make the penalty last for the Act.

If you aid someone, you find an astrological factor that is acting for him. Any rolls he makes on the Mass Combat Chart are increased by 2 for the duration of a battle, and the Target Numbers of all of his rolls are reduced by 3 for the remainder of the Scene. For two Raises, you can make this bonus last for the Act.

Only one Astrologer's effect can influence someone at a time. When one Astrologer tries to influence someone already affected by another Astrologer, he rolls as normal, and if he makes more Raises than the previous Astrologer did, his effect takes precedence. Raises made to extend the duration of an Astrologer's effect do not count for this purpose.

Avalon Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Avalon only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way that a person speaks that indicates he's from a particular area.

Effect: Only a Hero fully proficient in a given language can identify accents; Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and non-Avalons may never have an accent. There are three primary accents in Avalon: Avalon, Inis, and Highland. In addition, Avalons can learn an older form of their language, Cymru. Avalon Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language table below:

Avalon Language Table

	Avalon	Inis	Highland
Avalon	0	0	0
Cymru	1	1	0
Inish	1	0	1
Castille	2	2	2
Crescent	3	4	4
High Eisen	2	2	2
Eisen	1	1	1
Montaigne	2	3	2
Théan	3	3	3
Teodoran	3	3	3
Ussura	2	3	3
Vendel	1	1	2
Vodacce	2	3	3

Avalon: Those with this accent are from Avalon itself. This is the Avalon accent described in the 7th Sea Players' Guide.

Inis: This accent is found among those who hail from the Emerald Isle. Those from here follow the old traditions more closely, making knowledge of the old tongues more accessible. Plus, the Inish have their own language.

Highland: While the inhabitants of the Highland Marches would like to be more cultures, the remoteness of the their islands inhibits this. Like the Inish, they tend to have a closer affinity with the old ways and customs.

Barterer

Cost: 1 HP

Nations such as Ussura still depend on the bartering system (although Duomas have local currency and the Guildler has begun to make inroads). Haggling occurs in every marketplace, and experienced shoppers can bargain for hours. You have a combination of experience and persistence that naturally lends itself to such proceedings.

Effect: You gain a Free Raise to any Haggling rolls you make.

Bearsark

Cost: 15 HP

Restrictions: Vesten only

You have climbed to the top of the world, where you spoke with the North Wind and became a fearless berserker. Now, when you call on your gift, it sends you into a bloody rage that no mortal man can stop. It also ages you whenever you use it.

Effect: You are immune to Fear at all times. Prior to a battle, you may spend a Drama Die to go berserk. When you do so, you become overwhelmed by a mindless rage which lasts as long as you have enemies remaining active on the field. Your mouth starts to froth, and you feel no pain. While you are berserk, you are immune to the effects of being Crippled, but not to being Knocked Out. Your Wits Rank is reduced to zero while you are berserk. You receive a +5 bonus to all Brawn rolls (including Wound Checks) and Damage rolls. Furthermore, you gain an increase to your Fear Rating (if any) equal to one-third your Panache (rounding up).

When in Mass Combat, an enraged berserker is always considered Heavily Engaged. While berserk, it is hard to tell friend from foe. It requires a Wits [5] roll (remember, your Wits Trait is zero at the moment...) to recognize that someone is a friend in combat. While berserk, you will attack anyone that you do not recognize as a friend. Upon going berserk, you age by a week for every Round of combat until the battle stops.

Once the battle stops, your Wits returns to its normal Rank, you lose the bonuses you received to Brawn and Damage rolls, and your Fear Rating goes back to its normal level. The effects of being Crippled also affect you now, if you have taken enough damage to have them apply to you.

Beginning Swordsman

Cost: As per Swordsman School, -10 HP (see Effect below)

There are many would be swordsmen in Théah who, for whatever reason, failed to complete their basic training. Some students cannot handle the pace of learning at a formal school; others are expelled for showing poor discipline or behavior; many lack the finances to complete their training and leave the establishment to search for a sponsor. Of course there are also those who lose their teacher in one of Théah's more bloody duels.

Those students who do leave before their training is complete know little more than the bare basics of the style.

Effect: You may purchase a Swordsman School for 10 HP less than it's normal cost, but you are not afforded the normal benefits of learning the style. Instead:

- You begin at Beginner Level (Mastery Level 0) and therefore do not automatically learn the Apprentice Technique of that School.
- You receive the Basic Curriculum of the School as normal.
- You do not receive free Membership to the Swordsman's Guild (or the equivalent for Schools not granting this benefit). You may still, however, purchase the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage in the normal fashion at Hero Creation by spending 3 HP.
- You may select two Swordsman School Advanced Knacks at Rank 1, excluding Exploit Weakness, and the remaining Knacks begin at Rank 0.
- During Hero Creation, you may not increase any of the Swordsman Knacks belonging to this School unless they also belong to another School which you have studied to at least Apprentice Level.

Once game play has started you may increase all Swordsman Knacks as normal using Experience Points. Once all of the Swordsman Knacks (including Exploit Weakness) are advanced to Rank 1, you become an Apprentice of the school and gain the Apprentice Technique.

From this point on the School is treated just like any other. Until you attain this level however, all other students of the style (excluding other Beginners) treat their Exploit Weakness Knack as being 1 Rank higher when using it against you.

You may be a Beginning Swordsman in as many Schools as you have Hero Points to do it.

Bodyguard

Cost: 7 HP (6 HP if Vendel)

You have hired a skilled soldier to act as a Bodyguard. He will remain loyal to you so long as you do nothing to seriously upset him and he isn't offered a significantly better wage to work for someone else.

Effect: The Bodyguard is considered a Henchman, and is built as other Henchmen are. The Bodyguard receives one Swordsman School of your choice, in addition to the normal 75 HP a Henchman is designed with.

Bought Weapon

Cost: Varies

Restrictions: Vendel only

The Vendel do not have any special weapons that they employ. Instead, they buy, barter, or steal from the other nations. Sidhe weapons from Avalon, puzzle swords from Montaigne, Castillian blades, twisted blades from Vodacce, and even rune weapons from the Vestenmannavnjar, are all available to the Vendel. Dracheneisen is not available, nor have the Vendel had success in getting anything special from Ussura.

Effect: Vendel may obtain any of these weapons by spending 2 HP more than the Advantage would cost a Hero from its native Country of Origin.

Example: A Vendel Hero who wants a Soldano Blade will pay 8 HP for it.

Brilliant

Cost: 3 HP

This character's mind works in amazing ways. He is constantly making intuitive leaps of logic that allow him to devise new technologies and branches of science.

Effect: He rolls an extra unkept die when he makes Conception checks (see the Invention rules in the Invisible College sourcebook [IC:85]).

Castillian Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Castille only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way that a person speaks that indicates he's from a particular area.

Effect: Only a Hero fully proficient in a given language can identify accents; Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and non-Castillians may never have an accent. There are five primary accents in Castille: Aldana, Gallegos, Soldano, Torres, and Zepeda. Castillian Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language table below:

Castillian Language Table

	Aldana	Gallegos	Soldano	Torres	Zepeda
Avalon	2	3	3	1	2
Castille	0	0	0	0	0*
Crescent	2	1	1	3	3
Cymru	3	4	4	2	3
Eisen	2	2	3	3	3
High Eisen	3	3	4	4	4
Inis	3	4	4	2	3
Montaigne	1	1	2	0	1
Teodoran	4	3	3	4	4
Théan	2	2	2	2	1
Ussura	3	2	2	3	3
Vendel	2	3	3	1	2
Vodacce	1	1	0	2	2

Aldana: Those with this accent are from Aldana. This is the Castillian accent described in the 7th Sea Players' Guide.

Gallegos: This accent is found among Castillians from Gallegos. It has a great deal of influence from the Crescent Empire, and as a result, its speakers pronounce *j* as *zh*. Speakers with this accent are considered a bit unusual by Castillian standards. Eastern languages are easier for the people of Gallegos to learn, while northern languages are more difficult.

Soldano: The speech of the people of Soldano is heavily influenced by Vodacce. Their pronunciation of *o* is much softer, as in *store*. This accent is often associated with great lovers. The people of Soldano speak Vodacce as a second language, and many eastern languages are easier for them to learn. Far northern languages, such as Avalon and Vendel, on the other hand, are very difficult for them.

Torres: The long association and recent subjugation of Torres by the Montaigne has lent it several aspects of the Montaigne language. The most noticeable of these is the tendency to pronounce *ch* as *sh*. Because of the war, Castillians with this accent are viewed with some suspicion. Castillians from Torres learn northern languages easily, and speak Montaigne as a second language, but have a difficult time with eastern languages.

Zepeda: One of the most isolated areas of Castille, Zepeda has slowly drifted away from the mother language, picking up some idiosyncrasies that confuse other Castillians. The strangest of these is the tendency to pronounce *j* as *h*. Those with this accent are considered pious. The people of Zepeda spend much of their time in study, and are therefore literate in Castillian for free. They are also able to learn the scholarly language of Théan more easily. However, their isolationist attitude makes it hard for them to learn languages which derive from other sources.

Castillian Blade

Cost: Varies (see Blades below)

As every Castillian knows, the finest blades in the country come from his home province. Of course, it might be argued that the people of Soldano are the most “correct” in this belief, but there can be no doubt that Castille is the home of some truly fine bladesmiths.

Effect: A Hero may only buy one of the following Castillian Blades. Castillians pay -1 HP less if they purchase this blade from their home province.

Blades

Aldana Blade

Cost: 3 HP

The Aldana Blades are light and flexible, excellent for quick strikes and rapid parries. When found in the hand of a skilled Swordsman, an Aldana Blade is almost as dangerous as a Soldano.

Effect: An Aldana Blade is a 2k2 Fencing weapon and allows you to lower the result one of your Action dice by -1 at the start of each Round.

Gallegos Blade

Cost: 3 HP

Gallegos Blades are well-balanced and durable. They can be bent nearly double and will spring straight again.

Effect: A Gallegos Blade is a 2k2 Fencing weapon and adds +2 to any Attack rolls made with it. In addition, +5 is added to the TN of any attempt to break a Gallegos Blade.

Soldano Blade

Cost: 6 HP

The fine Soldano steel is forged by the best Castillian blacksmiths into blades of truly exceptional worth. These swords hold an edge longer, are harder to break, and are better balanced than most others.

Effect: A Soldano Blade is a 2k2 Fencing weapon at adds +2 to any rolls made with it. This includes Attack rolls, Damage rolls, Parry Active Defense, and any Swordsman Knacks that involve Fencing. In addition, +5 is added to the TN of any attempt to break a Soldano Blade.

Torres Blade

Cost: 3 HP

The Torres Blade is known for its extraordinary keen edge. This allows the blade to cut deeper and do more damage in general.

Effect: A Torres Blade is a 2k2 Fencing weapon that adds +3 to any Damage rolls made with it.

Zepeda Blade

Cost: 2 HP

Zepeda Blades are generally considered to the least valuable of the Castillian Blades. Although they are lighter and sharper than a typical sword, they pale in comparison to the magnificent Soldano Blades.

Effect: A Zepeda Blade is a 2k2 Fencing weapon that adds +1 to any Attack or Damage roll made with it.

Castillian Education

Cost: 10 HP

Restrictions: Castille only

Perhaps as a result of their lost sorcery, the Castillians have devoted a great deal of effort toward furthering their minds. When purchasing the Advantage, you are devoting a fair number

of HP to your heritage. In this way, the Advantage works similarly to sorcery in other nations—it qualifies for the reduced cost of the noble Advantage, and signifies a connection of some kind to the royalty of the nation (to be worked out between the player and the GM).

Effect: Those Castillian Heroes who purchase this Advantage may buy all their initial Civil Advanced Knacks at a cost of 1 HP per Rank. Note that this only applies during Hero Creation. Advanced Knacks bought during game play with Experience Points must be paid for according to the normal costs. In addition, the Hero can speak, read, and write the Théan Language for free.

Castillian Squire

Cost: 7 HP (6 HP if Castille)

Great Heroes of Castillian legend are often remembered as much for their faithful squires as for their valiant deeds. Often, a deep friendship will form between master and servant, resulting in a much more beneficial relationship between the two.

Effect: A Castillian Squire is a Henchman with Rank 2 in all Traits, and 20 HP that the player may distribute, subject to the same limitations Heroes face during Hero Creation. In addition, the player may choose three Civil Knacks that the Squire has at least one Rank in to be the Squire’s “Knacks of Expertise.” Whenever the Squire is assisting the Hero in an activity using one of his Knacks of Expertise, his master may add +1 Rank to his Knack for his roll.

Example: For instance, if Research is one of Ramon’s Knacks of Expertise and he is helping his master, Rodriguez, to search a library for a specific book, then Rodriguez adds +1 Rank to his Research Knack for this roll.

Cast-Iron Stomach

Cost: 1 HP

Your character never gets seasick. Ever.

Effect: In conditions that may have everybody else on that ship hanging over the side or otherwise incapacitated, he will be completely unaffected. It may be due to ancestry, or years of nautical experience, or something else entirely. Note that this advantage does not protect against other illnesses, injury, or drowning.

Citation

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: You may not also take the Scoundrel Advantage.

There are many Citations a Hero may receive, including medals, awards, letters of marque, ribbons, titles, and other recognitions. Most will be gained during game play through inventive or successful roleplaying, however, you have the opportunity now to purchase one (and only one) citation as part of your pre-game history. Both the player and the GM should agree upon a good story for how you came to acquire the honor, so be prepared to do a little work for this Advantage.

Effect: Your starting Reputation is increased by 10, which is worth one Reputation die.

Close Family Member

Cost: Varies (May be purchased up to 3 times)

Restrictions: Montaigne only

The Hero has a particularly close family member who will go out of his way to assist him.

Effect: The Hero may call upon him no more than once every three months (bloods is only so thick, even in Montaigne). The cost of this Advantage is determined by the relative’s profession

and usefulness to the Hero, and the exact relationship between them is up to the player. Noble Heroes should be familiar with the various noble family descriptions for some famous people that they can be related to (see the Montaigne sourcebook [MN:14]).

Family Member

Commander: (5 HP) This relative has a high-ranking position in the Montaigne army or navy, and is capable of pulling strings for the Hero when called upon. This can be used to permit the Hero to cross restricted areas, to arrange for a loan of a few men for some official purpose, or even to make some army equipment “disappear.”

Courtier: (3 HP) This relative is well-known at court, and is capable of providing one 3-point, or smaller, favor (excluding money lending) to the Hero when called upon.

Duelist: (4 HP) This relative is a talented duelist (Master of one of the Swordsman Schools), and is capable of standing in for the Hero for one fight when called upon. For each additional point in this Advantage, your relative receives another Mastery Level in a Swordsman School.

Example: Sébastien Valroux du Martise, who is a Master of three Schools and a Journeyman in two others, would cost an extra 10 HP, for a total of 14 HP. You can be assured that your enemies would quake in fear when he showed up to fight for you...

Family Head: (10 HP) This relative is the head of your family, and plans to leave the position to you when he or she dies. In addition, he or she is capable of calling on any of the other relatives listed here (up to 8 points in value) for the Hero when called upon.

Priest: (2 HP) This relative is highly placed in the Church, and is capable of interceding on behalf of the Hero when called upon. This can convince even the Inquisition to let the Hero go.

Scholar: (1 HP) This relative is a renowned scholar capable of researching the answer to an obscure question or riddle for the Hero when called upon.

Skilled: (3 HP) This relative is very skilled in a single non-Sorcerous Knack (a 5 in both the Knack and the appropriate Trait, for a roll of 10k5), and will use this ability in the Hero's service when called upon. Good choice for the skilled Knack include: Blacksmith, Tracking, Seduction, Socializing, Underworld Lore.

Society Member: (3 HP) This relative is a member of one of the Secret Societies, and can call in favors from the Society for the Hero when called upon.

Sorcerer: (2 HP) This relative, a powerful Porté mage, can transport the Hero and his friends wherever they need to go when called upon.

Wealthy Merchant: (3 HP) This relative is a well-to-do merchant and can loan the Hero money or equipment (up to 1,000G). This must be paid back, or the equipment returned, within three months or this Advantage is lost for good.

Cold Climate Conditioning

Cost: 2 HP (1 HP if Ussuran, Highlander or Vesten)

You are used to cold weather.

Effect: When you take Wounds from the effects of cold weather, you roll one less unkept Damage die. Unfortunately, you are not used to warm climates. When you take Wounds from hot weather, you roll one extra unkept Damage die.

Combat Reflexes

Cost: 3 HP

You have honed your martial acumen to a fine HP, and can react to (often unexpected) developments in combat without hesitation.

Effect: After Initiative is rolled for any Combat Round, you may reroll one of your Action dice, but you are forced to take the new roll, even if it is worse.

Connections

Cost: Varies (see Connection Types below)

A Connection is someone willing to assist you when you need help. They are usually no more powerful or influential than you, but the GM may let you take a more powerful Connection if you can supply a good reason. When you purchase a Connection, you should consider how you made the acquaintance in the first place, how he or she feels toward you now, and any other details you feel are relevant.

Effect: You may have as many Connections as you have Ranks in Panache. Also, for an additional 2 HP, a Connection may have an obligation of some form to you (worked out in conjunction with the GM before start of play, to be effective).

Connection Types

There are three types of Connection, as follows:

Ally: (3 HP) In general, Allies are close friends who would walk through fire for you. They should never be more powerful than you at the start of the game, though their power level can change quickly (and unpredictably) over the course of a campaign.

Confidant: (2 HP) Confidants are people you trust, but are not “friends.” If they were forced to choose between you can their own hide, they'd be more likely to choose the latter. Confidants will never have more influence than you at the start of the game.

Informant: (1 HP) Informants are only interested in one thing—money. Pay them what they want, and they'll get you what you need. They never start out with more influence than you.

Commission

Cost: Varies (2 HP less if Montaigne, to a minimum of 1 HP)

Your family has a long history of military service, and the duty of carrying on the family tradition has fallen on your shoulders. The Commission Advantage is more than just a purchased position. It represents your family's long and respected history with the service—one which you have inherited. Anyone can buy a place in the military, but you've earned it. The men in your command know and respect you, and will follow your orders with precision and passion.

Effect: Your rank in the military branch you wish to join determines the HP cost of this Advantage:

HP	Army Rank	Navy Rank
2	Corporal	Sailor
4	Sergeant	Mate
6	Lieutenant	Petty Officer
8	Captain	Lieutenant

Heroes in the Army or Navy can expect many advantages. First, they always have a retinue of allies, all wearing the same uniform. Second, they are always well-equipped. Lastly, Heroes in the military can command a great deal of influence and respect from their respective countries. They cannot, however, expect to be bailed out of every situation by their fellow soldiers, and adventuring parties never get a military company to use as cannon fodder.

The Army

Corporal: Corporals are enlisted men, and are generally under direct command of sergeants. Their salary is 8 Guilders per month.

Sergeant: Sergeants are non-commissioned officers, generally in charge of from ten to thirty men. Their salary is 20 Guilders per month.

Lieutenant: Lieutenants are officers who have several sergeants at their disposal. Their command commonly includes about one hundred men. Their salary is 50 Guilders per month.

Captain: Captains are officers who have a lieutenant or two in their personal staff. Their command includes up to five hundred men. Their salary is 75 Guilders per month.

The Navy

Sailor: Sailors are the most experienced and well-trained sailors of the navy. Their rank is considered about equal to corporals in the army. Their salary is 10 Guilders per month.

Mate: Mates are sailors with specialized Skills. They are usually under direct command of *first mates*. Their salary is 25 Guilders per month.

Petty Officer: Petty officers are the men in charge of specific duties. The *first gunners' mate*, for example, is in charge of firing the cannons. Their salary is 60 Guilders per month.

Lieutenant: Lieutenants make up the high officers of the ship. Each lieutenant is in charge of a specific group of men. The two ship lieutenants are the *ship's master* and *boatswain*. Their salary is 90 Guilders per month.

Cymbr Connection

Cost: 3 HP

Either through birth or some past deed, you have earned the trust of the wandering Cymbr people. You know the location of several Cymbr villages and understand the signs they use to communicate with each other. You can use those signs to recruit help if you wish, or hide from pursuit by taking shelter in one of their permanent enclaves.

Effect: Though you receive no tangible benefits, the Cymbr know and trust you, and will be considered friendly to you and your companions (provided you do nothing to break that friendship).

Dangerous Beauty

Cost: 3 HP

You have a certain something about you that attracts members of the opposite sex.

Effect: You always roll an extra two unkept dice for any seduction attempts.

Debater

Cost: 2 HP

You were born to argue. nothing thrills you more than a heated debate, and you love winning the way a General loves victory in battle.

Effect: You receive a Free Raise to your Oratory Knack during Contested Social rolls or any form of verbal argument.

Dracheneisen

Cost: 10 (Petty Nobility) or 20 (Minor Nobility) or 40 HP (Full Nobility)

Restrictions: Eisen only

The Eisen have never had sorcery, but their land is riddled with veins of ore they call Dracheneisen (or "Dragon's Iron"). It is a superior grade of iron-bearing ore unseen anywhere else in

Théah, and an entire group of Eisen's smiths (see the Nibelung Advantage below) have devoted their lives to crafting items from it. The process is long and difficult, but the end results are impressive.

When purchasing this Advantage, you devote a large number of HP to your heritage. In this way, the Advantage works similarly to sorcery in other nations—it qualifies for the reduced cost of the Noble Advantage, and signifies a connection of some kind to the royalty of the nation.

Effect: You may choose from either Full, Minor, or Petty Nobility. Each has a different HP cost, and provides Dracheneisen points.

Nobility Equivalents

Full Nobility: (40 HP) This gives you 16 Dracheneisen points to spend on the Dracheneisen Equipment table and on Panzerhand Modifications.

Minor Nobility: (20 HP) This gives you 6 Dracheneisen points to spend on the Dracheneisen Equipment table.

Petty Nobility: (10 HP) This gives you 3 Dracheneisen points to spend on the Dracheneisen Equipment table.

Dracheneisen Equipment Table

Name*	Cost	Effect
<i>Armor</i>		
Arm Guard (2)	2	2 Armor points each
Boot (2)	1	1 Armor point each
Breastplate (1)	6	6 Armor points
Buckler (1)	4	1k1 Buckler; +1 unkept die when using Buckler Knacks
Gauntlet (1)	2	2 Armor points
Helmet (1)	3	3 Armor points
Leg Guard (2)	2	2 Armor points each
Panzerhand (1)	6	3 Armor points; +1 unkept die when using Panzerhand Knacks
<i>Weapons</i>		
Crossbow	4	-5 to opponent's TN to be Hit; Range is increased by 20 yards
Fencing weapon	3	2k2 Fencing weapon; +1 unkept die when using Fencing Knacks
Heavy Weapon	4	3k2 Heavy Weapon; +1 unkept die when using Heavy Weapon Knacks
Knife	2	1k2 Knife; +1 unkept die when using Knife Knacks
Musket	7	-5 to opponent's TN to be Hit; Range is increased by 20 yards
Pistol	5	-5 to opponent's TN to be Hit; Range is increased by 20 yards
Polearm	5	3k2 Polearm; +1 unkept die when using Polearm Knacks
Zweihander	6	3k3 Zweihander; +1 unkept die when using Heavy Weapon Knacks
<i>Miscellaneous</i>		
Lock	2	An unbreakable padlock
Raw Dracheneisen	2	3 Units of Dracheneisen (see the Nibelung Advantage for details)

* Numbers in parentheses are the maximum number of items of this type that may be purchased.

After the number of Armor points is determined (by adding the total benefit of all pieces you have purchased with your Dracheneisen points), the bonus to your TN to be Hit and Damage rolls made against you can be found on the Dracheneisen Armor Modifiers Table.

Dracheneisen Armor Modifiers Table

Armor HP	TN Modifiers	Damage Reduction
1-6	None	-1 to attackers Kept dice (min. of 0)
7-12	+5	-1 to attackers Kept dice (min. of 0)
13-18	+5	-2 to attackers Kept dice (min. of 0)
19-24	+10	-2 to attackers Kept dice (min. of 0)

These benefits are total, not cumulative. TN bonuses gained from Dracheneisen cannot be negated normally, so a surprised or prone Eisen with +5 to his TN would still have a TN to be Hit of 10.

Panzerhand Modifications

You must have purchased a Dracheneisen panzerhand to purchase any of these modifications. There is a limit of one modification per panzerhand.

Locking Grip: (3 HP) When using the Bind (Panzerhand) Knack, your opponent may not break your grip, and you may use the Disarm (Panzerhand) Knack or the Eisenfaust Journeyman ability. It requires a key and 3 Actions to release your grip, and until then, your off-hand cannot be used for anything else.

Mounted Crossbow: (4 HP) A 1k3 crossbow is built into the panzerhand. The crossbow is normal in all ways except for size and damage.

Built-in Pistol: (5 HP) A pistol is built into the panzerhand. When loaded (20 Actions), the first successful use of the Attack (Panzerhand) Knack causes it to go off, inflicting 4k3 Damage, +1 unkept die for every Rank of Brawn the wearer possesses.

Spikes: (2 HP) The panzerhand has spikes built into it, increasing its damage to 2k2.

Weighted Knuckles: (1 HP) The panzerhand is fused shut in a fist, and possesses heavy weighted knuckles. This increases its damage to 2k2, but it cannot be used for anything except punching, including the Bind (Panzerhand) and Disarm (Panzerhand) Knacks, unless the GM deems it possible.

Drago

Cost: 6 HP (5 HP if Vendel)

You have a Vendel Drago (a paid guide and secretary) in your employ at the start of the game.

Effect: Besides his normal duties, he is skilled at carrying messages at your request. The Drago is considered a Henchman and is built as other Henchmen are. He receives Rank 3 in each Guide Knack, in addition to the normal 75 HP a Henchman is designed with.

Dual Nationality

Cost: 10 HP

Many citizens of Théah can claim dual nationality based on grounds of mixed parentage or having lived in a foreign land for many years. For example the bastard son of a Montaigne noble and his Vodacce Fate Witch lover or the daughter of a Vendel ambassador living abroad in Eisen. While some nations may, in many cases, consider a person of dual nationality as something of an outcast this status carries many benefits.

Effect: Choose two home nationalities. You are in most respects considered to have both of these nationalities. This includes:

- Cost and availability of Advantages.
- Cost of Swordsman Schools.
- Available Sorceries.
- You must choose one of the national Trait bonuses; you may not take both.
- You can Speak both nations' Languages for free.
- If you choose to take Twice-Blooded Sorcery in the Sorceries of both of your home nations then you receive a -5 HP

discount to the cost of the Twice-Blooded Sorcery Advantage.

- When purchasing Languages you may choose which table to take the Advantage cost from, but you must purchase all languages using this table; you may not choose the most beneficial cost for each language. You may, however, have two "Accent" Advantages.

Eagle Eyes

Cost: 2 HP

The Hero can see further than most people.

Effect: You receive two Free Raises for Perception checks involving seeing something far away.

Eisen Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Eisen only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way a person speaks that indicates he's from a particular area. Only a Hero fully proficient in the language can identify accents, and non-Eisen may never have an accent. There are five primary accents in Eisen: North, South, Hainzl, Republic, and Freiburg. Eisen Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages.

Eisen Language Table

	South	North	Hainzl	Freiburg	Republic
Avalon	1	2	2	0	2
Castille	2	1	3	1	2
Crescent	3	3	2	2	3
Cymru	2	3	3	1	3
Eisen	0	0	0	0	0
High Eisen	1	1	1	2	0
Inis	2	3	3	1	3
Montaigne	2	2	3	1	3
Teodoran	3	3	2	2	3
Théan	3	3	3	2	2
Ussura	2	2	1	1	2
Vendel	1	2	2	0	1
Vodacce	2	1	1	1	2

North: This accent indicates that the speaker is from Pösen or von Wische. This is considered a regal accent in Eisen. Speakers have a tendency to pronounce the end of a word with a soft exhalation. Northern languages are easier for North Eisen to learn, while southern languages are more difficult.

South: Those with this accent are from Fischler or Sieger. This accent is often seen as a sign of common birth. This is the Eisen accent described in the 7th Sea Player's Guide.

Hainzl: This accent is found among Hainzl folk, and is believed to signify a worldly, cultured person. It is strongly influenced by Ussuran, and those who speak with it use many Ussuran words in everyday conversation. Northern languages are harder for Hainzl Eisen to learn, while Southern and Eastern languages are simpler.

Freiburg: This accent is found among speakers from the city of Freiburg. It is easily recognized because of the generous use of various foreign words in everyday conversation. Other Eisen are often suspicious of them, due to Freiburg's reputation as a den of thieves and heathens. Since they are exposed to many different languages, Heroes from Freiburg learn foreign languages more easily, however, they may not take the Linguist Advantage.

Republic: This accent is associated with speakers from the königreich of Heilgrund, and is believed to indicate a traditional, conservative background. Because of their traditional views, Heroes from Heilgrund shun the languages of those countries that are mistrusted by the Eisen. On the other hand, even the

peasants are tutored in the High Eisen tongue, and receive it for free.

Eisen Bodyguard

Cost: 6 HP (5 HP for Eisen)

You have hired a skilled Eisen soldier to be a bodyguard. He will remain loyal so long as you do nothing to seriously upset him and he isn't offered a significantly better price to betray you.

Effect: The Bodyguard receives an Eisen Swordsman School in addition to the normal 75 HP a Henchman is built with.

Extended Family

Cost: 5 HP

Restrictions: Castille only

You can always expect a hot meal and a place to stay from your family, not to mention the occasional bit of assistance. Moreover, they've spread to every corner of Théah, so that even in the wilds of Ussura you're liable to come across someone who's married to your third cousin, twice removed.

Effect: When you want to use this Advantage, roll a die and consult the table below. If you roll equal to or less than the Frequency Target Number listed next to the nation you're currently in, you remember a family member who lives in the area. Otherwise, you must travel at least 100 miles away before attempting to use this Advantage again. Since your family moves around a lot, you won't always find a family member in the same place twice.

Extended Family Table

Nation	Frequency
Castille (Home Province)	10
Castille (Other Province)	9
Vodacce	8
Eisen (Vaticine Province)	7
Eisen (Objectionist Province)	6
Avalon	5
Vendel	4
Montaigne	3
Crescent Empire	2
Ussura	1
Other Lands	Never

Faith

Cost: 5 HP

It doesn't matter if you are a Vaticine, Objectionist or Orthodox, you are a devout believer in the message of the Prophets. You believe that life is a riddle, that it can be Sorted out and those who do so come closer to the Creator.

Effect: You aren't really sure what this Advantage does. In fact, it may not do anything at all. The GM may have some ideas on what this does, but that's up to him. Is it worth it? You'll just have to exercise some Faith and find out.

Fhideli Connection

Cost: 3-5 HP (see Effect below)

At one point your character spent some time with (or was possibly adopted by) the Fhideli. This means that you have spent some time in Ussura if not originally from that country.

Effect: The potency of this Advantage determines how much your character really knows about the Fhideli's life and how welcome he would be back among them.

3 HP: The Fhideli know and trust you, and you are considered a friend at nearly any of their camps.

4 HP: You were actually adopted into a vitzi and learned to live as a Fhideli. The Language: Fhideli advantage costs you 2 HP (instead of 4 HP).

5 HP: Not only were you adopted by a vitzi, but they also entrusted you with their deepest secrets. You may take the Language: Fhideli Advantage for 2 HP, and you know the truth about Vayu. A word to the wise, however; a Hero this respected who betrays the Fhideli may earn themselves a 3-point Cursed Background, subject to GM approval.

Foul Weather Jack

Cost: 5 HP

Whether you like it or not, excitement has a way of finding you. Princesses come to you seeking a rescuer, and old girlfriends turn up after years, only to be involved in plans to take over the world with your best friend. Never let it be said that you lead a boring life.

Effect: You receive one free 4 HP Background at the start of the game. This is the only way you can invest more than 3 HP in a single Background. You cannot take any other Backgrounds besides this one, but should you ever resolve it, you receive a new 4 HP Background to replace it.

Friend at Court

Cost: 1-3 HP per Friend (may be purchased up to 3 times)

This Advantage allows a Hero to begin the game with a connection at court.

Effect: For every point put into this Advantage, the Hero may divide 3 points among the Like and Usefulness boxes of the connection. This Advantage may be purchased up to three times, each for a different connection.

Gentry

Cost: 8 HP (4 HP if you have purchased Sorcery)

Restrictions: Montaigne only

Your Hero is a member of the gentry, an unlanded noble who wanders from house to house.

Effect: As a result of your inheritance, you receive 10,000G as starting money, but you have no monthly income unless you create it through investments. Gentry receive a Free Raise when using the Mooch Knack. Finally, while exercising your visitation rights with another noble, you must roll a die once per month on the following chart, subtracting 1 for every month beyond the first you've been living off your current host's hospitality:

2 or less: Your host is angry with you and you are asked to leave. You must move yourself to another noble's house. Every week on your own costs you 100G in living expenses. You cannot visit this noble again for two years, and it is considered a 2-point favor to move into a noble's house (see Courtly Intrigue in the Montaigne sourcebook).

3-8: No effect.

9 or more: You are invited to stay at another noble's house. For the first month, add +2 when rolling on this chart. After that, the modifier to the roll diminishes by 1 every month as usual (+1, +0, -1, -2, etc.).

Gesa

Cost: 3 HP (Lesser Gesa) or 5 HP (Greater Gesa)

Gesa are powerful spells cast on Heroes (and Villains).

Effect: Only Heroes and Villains may have Gesa; Henchmen and Brutes are not eligible for Gesa. The number of HP varies, depending on the Gesa cast; Lesser Gesa cost 3 HP, while Greater Gesa cost 5 HP. See the Druid School section in the Avalon sourcebook [AV:98] for more information, and specific Gesa.

Glamour-imbued Weapon

Cost: 1-3 HP (Apprentice = 1, Adept = 2, Master = 3)

Restrictions: Sidhe Weapons only

Some Sidhe Weapons (see the Sidhe Weapon Advantage) are imbued with additional Glamour when they are forged. Such weapons are generally given a name, and are always melee weapons of some form.

Effect: This has the effect of providing an additional capability to the weapon similar to that of the abilities of a specified Glamour Knack. Regardless of how many imbuelements the weapon possesses, only one Glamour ability can be used once per Act, and is automatically assumed to provide the minimum number of Glamour or Drama Dice (as appropriate) to achieve the effect. The cost of the Glamour is based on the Mastery Level that the ability is gained at under that Glamour Knack, and is in addition to the cost of the weapon. Note that only the ability provided at that Mastery Level is imbued into the weapon. Multiple Glamour abilities may be imbued into the same weapon, but no more than 3 HP total can be invested in this Advantage per weapon (i.e. a weapon could have a maximum of three Apprentice Degree abilities, one Apprentice and one Adept Degree ability, or one Master Degree ability). In any other circumstances, consider the effect to be the same as if a Glamour mage had used the ability (for purposes of magic suppression, etc.).

Glamour-mere

Cost: Varies (Up to 40 HP, in 8 HP increments)

Restrictions: Glamour mage only

A Glamour mage with a good relationship to the Sidhe can possess a special Sidhe item that allows him to double the number of Knacks he may possess per Trait (to a new maximum of 2 Knacks per Trait). This item is known as a Glamour-mere. Glamour-meres come in many shapes and sizes. The physical manifestation of the item is determined by the GM.

Effect: The sorcerer must “invest” another 40 HP (or 120 XP) in the item, either at Hero Creation or during the game, and loses the ability to use those extra Knacks if he loses the item. The Glamour-mere may be “invested” gradually—gaining +1 new Knack for each 8 HP (or 24 XP) placed in the item—in excess of the normal cost to obtain/increase a Knack.)

Governor

Cost: 6 HP

Restrictions: Vodacce only

You control a portion of territory on the Vodacce mainland, governing it for the ruling family. Each month, you receive a certain amount of money from your Prince for the purposes of bettering the province: building roads, employing guardsmen, and handling various and sundry problems. While the office has many perks, it is also hard work, and most governors are deeply entrenched in the Great Game. Step carefully if you wish to prosper.

Effect: You receive 1,000G in starting income. Your monthly income, on the other hand, is not set. You receive 50G a month normally, but you may attempt to embezzle extra money from your Prince. If you do so, you must make a Wits+Accounting roll against a TN of 5, plus 5 for each additional 50G you are attempting to embezzle that month. If you fail the roll you get caught, and your GM will determine what happens then.

Grotesque

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take either of the Appearance or Dangerous Beauty Advantages.

You have some form of deformity, ailment, or scarring that utterly horrifies people.

Effect: You have a Fear Rating of 1, which can be canceled by a successful Wits+Disguise [15] roll.

Handy

Cost: 3 HP

Similar to being Brilliant, this character has a natural aptitude towards building things. He instinctively understands how to put things together and can transform an abstract diagram into a practical object with little more than a few tools.

Effect: This Advantage gives a Free Raise to any Construction Checks the character makes (see the Invention rules in the Invisible College sourcebook [IC:85]).

Hemophiliac

Cost: 2 HP or 4 HP if bought twice (see below)

Restrictions: Porté mage only

Hero Creation: This advantage may be bought twice (4 HP; 5 items per Mastery Level; a +20 TN penalty to First Aid rolls).

Your blood is thinner than most; there is recent theory that this is due to your Noble lineage.

Effect: You can bleed 4 items per Mastery Level (as opposed to the normal 3 item). However, all First Aid rolls made on you are at a +10 TN penalty.

Home Neighborhood: City+Neighborhood

Cost: 2 HP

You’ve lived in your home city for many years—long enough to become familiar with the people in your neighborhood and the area itself. Choose a neighborhood from your home city. Generally, this is simply a case of choosing a geographical area such as Southern district, Western District, the Slums, etc. This area is your Home Neighborhood.

Effect: While you are in your Home Neighborhood, you receive a Free Raise to all Social rolls. In addition, your Streetwise Knack is considered to be two Ranks higher, even if you don’t possess that Knack, as long as you remain in the neighborhood. Finally, any public knowledge about the area is available to you at the GM’s discretion.

Hook-hand

Cost: 2 HP

At some HP, and for some reason, the Hero has had one of his hands cut off at the wrist. This is now been replaced with a wooden hand wielding a Hook of some (usually vicious) variety.

Effect: The Hook can be wielded in Combat with the Knife or Dirty Fighting Skills, dealing 1k2 Damage and, short of having it cut off again, the Hero can’t have the Hook disarmed. Obviously possessing a Hook-hand might have its social downsides, however...

Idiot Savant

Cost: 3 HP

Your brain works in markedly different ways from most.

Effect: Add 2 Kept dice on all Gambling, Gaming, or Mathematics rolls, or other rolls involving memory. However, your social graces leave something to be desired. As such you suffer a –2 unkept dice penalty on any Repartee rolls.

Indomitable Will

Cost: 3 HP

You are a stout soul, set in your ways and hard to convince; you can stand in a room of bickering nobles and never feel the need to side with any of them.

Effect: Roll +2 unkept dice when resisting Contested Social rolls.

Inheritance

Cost: 1-10 HP (see Inheritance Table below)

You have been gifted with something of value. Perhaps it was left to you by a late relative, or perhaps you have recently grown into a trust fund. Or maybe—if you're willing to risk having a dependent—it was even a dowry or gift from your spouse's parents. It could be a cherished heirloom, handed down through your family for generations, or simply a large sum of money. Regardless, it belongs to you now, free and clear.

Effect: The Inheritance Table should give you an idea of the worth of your Inheritance, so that the specifics can be worked out with the GM. Note that "common" valuables—like jewelry and art—are not included, as their HP cost should be easily derived from the Monetary Value column.

Inheritance Table

HP Cost	Monetary Value	Example Items
1	500G	One well-made musket
2	1,000G	One well-trained riding horse
3	1,500G	One indentured servant (for life)
4	2,000G	One small swivel-gun, or one ship's cannon
5	2,500G	One small library
6	3,000G	One obligation from a supernatural creature
7	3,500G	Minor position on your nation's ruling council
8	4,000G	One large cannon, or one Synchron artifact
9	4,500G	One well-trained racing or war horse, or a very small parcel of well-irrigated land
10	5,000G	One fancy coach, a very small (and likely) remote island, or a small business

Jarl

Cost: 8 HP (4 HP if you have purchased Sorcery)

Restrictions: Vesten only; You cannot also take the Thrall Advantage.

You are a jarl, a member of the warrior caste of the Vestenmannavnjar. You are an unlanded, untitled member of this caste, and must live as a supporter of other jarls. You essentially act as a minor officer in the army of another jarl, but with higher pay.

Effect: You start the game with 500G and have a monthly income of 100G. Also, you hold a rank equivalent to lieutenant, but do not receive any extra income from it.

Keen Senses

Cost: 2 HP

You have very acute senses, making you more likely to spot a small mark on the floor or detect the faint taste of almonds in your tea.

Effect: You receive +1 unkept die for any Perception checks that involve one of your senses, as well as any Surprise checks.

Language

Cost: Varies (see Languages Table below)

You can speak more than one language.

Effect: Use this Advantage if you want to pursue languages in a "general" sense, otherwise check with the various nation's "nation" Accent Advantages in these rules for more specific

language costs. The points costs listed here are those for the default accent for each nation. The HP cost for different languages can be found on the Languages Table. Find your native country along the top, then find the language you want to speak in the left column and where they intersect is the HP cost. Note that literacy (the ability to read and write, rather than just speak) increases the cost of a language by +1 HP.

Languages Table

	Avalon	Castille	Eisen	Montaigne	Ussura	Vendel	Vodacce
Avalon	0	2	1	2	2	1	2
Castille	2	0	2	1	3	2	1
Crescent	3	2	3	4	2	3	4
Cymru ¹	1	3	2	3	3	2	3
Eisen	1	2	0	2	2	1	2
High Eisen ²	2	3	1	3	3	2	3
Inis ³	1	3	2	3	3	2	3
Montaigne	2	1	2	0	3	2	1
Teodoran ⁴	3	4	3	4	1	3	4
Théan ⁵	3	2	3	2	4	3	2
Ussura	2	3	2	3	0	2	3
Vendel	1	2	1	2	2	0	2
Vodacce	2	1	2	1	3	2	0

¹ Cymru was the prevalent language in Avalon prior to the Montaigne invasion.

² High Eisen was developed in order to speak privately in front of dignitaries from other countries.

³ Inis is spoken in Inismore, but is rarely spoken outside of there.

⁴ Théan was the official language of the old Republic (1 AUC to 340 AV). Mass and most scripture of the Church of the Prophets, as well as some less mainstream scholarly texts, use this language today.

⁵ Teodoran is the language from which modern Ussuran is descended. Today it has become an obscure language spoken only among scholars, and occasionally used to conceal messages.

Acquaintance: A Hero who only wants to learn the basics of a language can become acquainted with it for 2 HP less than normal (minimum cost of 1 HP). The Linguist Advantage is cumulative with this discount. Heroes acquainted with a language understand only the basic concepts of the language, such as common verbs, nouns, etc. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said, roll a die. On an 8 or less, he makes out what's being said. On a 9 or 0, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero is only acquainted with the language, put an ACQ next to it on your Hero Sheet.

Pidgin: When two languages are in long-term contact with one another, such as at major ports, a pidgin—an odd mixture of the two languages—often results. A Hero can purchase a pidgin by selecting the two languages to be mixed, and paying 3 HP less for each of them (minimum of 1 HP for both languages together). A Hero who knows a pidgin understands only the simplest concepts of the two languages. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said, roll a die. On a 5 or less, he makes out what's being said. On a 6 or higher, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero only understands a pidgin of the languages, put a PDG next to the two languages on your Hero Sheet.

Language: Fhideli

Cost: 4 HP (2 HP if Naditi)

The language the Tibesti speak among themselves grew along completely different paths than those spoken by the rest of modern society until three hundred years ago, and since then it has absorbed and adapted pieces of almost every other language on Théah. As a result it is a difficult tongue for the gadjo to master but Fhideli can pick up new languages fairly easily considering their differences.

Effect: Written Fhideli is a cryptologist's nightmare, since it is always written phonetically in the language of the host nation. Therefore, an Ussuran Fhideli script would seem like gibberish to a native Ussuran.

Second, a Fhideli character begins the game with two languages; Fhideli and the language of his or her host country (almost always Ussura).

Language: Old Fhideli/Naditi

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: Fhideli only; Spoken only

This is the language that was spoken by the Fhideli in ancient times. These days it is only used in vayu rituals, and occasionally by obstinate sanats.

Effect: No written form of Naditi survives today.

Large

Cost: 5 HP (3 HP if Vesten)

Restrictions: You cannot also possess the Small Advantage.

You are a big person (about six inches to one foot taller than average).

Effect: All of your Damage and Intimidation rolls gain +1 unkept die.

Left-Handed

Cost: 3 HP (1 HP if Vodacce)

Not so much the inability to wield a weapon with your right hand as proficiency with your left hand, this means that you have—either by birth or training—managed to overcome the natural handicap of working and fighting with your left hand. Since most other fighters (even other left-handers) are trained to fight right-handed Swordsmen, they have a bit more trouble dealing with you.

Effect: All Attack rolls you attempt with your left hand are made with +1 unkept die. Your right hand is now considered to be your off-hand.

Legendary Trait

Cost: 3 HP (1 HP if Avalon)

Somehow, your potential with one of the five basic Traits has been boosted. You might just be special, or you might have devoted your entire life to one particular characteristic.

Effect: When you purchase this Advantage, nominate a single Trait. You may, when you have the Experience Points, improve that Trait to Rank 6. This does not change your starting Trait limit of 3 (or 4 for Country of Origin bonus).

Linguist

Cost: 2 HP (1 HP if Vendel)

Restrictions: Eisen originating from Freiburg cannot take this Advantage.

You have a natural ability with languages; you look at foreign words and can work out the common denominator between them. This makes you an invaluable commodity across Théah, as an interpreter if nothing else.

Effect: All languages cost –1 HP less to purchase (to a minimum of 1 HP, unless it would normally cost you 0 HP). You are also literate in the language of your Country of Origin for free.

Local Hero: City

Cost: 2 HP

Not only have you been to this (specific) city before, but you've also made a great impression on the people there. Maybe the local paper featured you in an article, or maybe some of your heroism found its way into the gossip mills, but any way you look at it, you're famous—here, at least.

Effect: While in this city, you receive an extra Reputation die.

Lucky

Cost: 5 HP

Plain and simple, you're just a little bit luckier than most people are.

Effect: You receive an additional Drama Die each story. This acts as a normal Drama Die in all ways, including giving you XP if unused.

Instead of taking a Drama Die, you may use your luck to reroll a month's income if you are a merchant gaining profits through a business or occupation. If the reroll is worse than the original result then you may choose to keep rerolling until you obtain a better result.

MacCodrum Heritage

Cost: 5 HP (Avalon only)

The MacCodrums are descended from selkies and, as such, they have a specialized version of the Sidhe Blood Advantage.

Effect: MacCodrum Heritage imparts the following Blessings and Curses:

- Appearance: Stunning
- Child of the Sea
- Slow Aging and Immunity to Disease
- Sea Bound
- Iron Vulnerability
- Cold-Hearted

MacEachern Heritage

Cost: 10 HP (Avalon only)

Thought to have been destroyed by the Sidhe long ago, the MacEacherns remain hidden among their fellow highlanders. Heroes with MacEachern Heritage keep a deep secret: the art of killing the Sidhe.

Effect: All MacEacherns know how to form MacEachern Weapons, although they cannot forge them without blacksmithing Skills.

In addition, all MacEacherns have an increased resistance to Glamour and Sidhe magic. They always roll and Keep an extra die in all tests made when resisting Glamour. MacEacherns are always considered to have 1 Drama Die (which they cannot spend) when it comes to Sidhe Sorcery, meaning that all effects cast on a MacEachern last only until morning. Likewise, if they surround themselves with an unbroken circle of twelve iron knives, no Sidhe magic (either Seelie or Unseelie) can affect them.

By the way, the Sidhe will kill you if they ever learn your true heritage. Don't let on unless you'd enjoy dying a horrible, gruesome death.

MacEachern Weapon

Cost: 5 HP

You have fallen into possession of a MacEachern blade, although you don't know exactly where it's from. The cold-iron weapon was crafted using the secret techniques of the MacEachern Clan, and can be any type of blade, from a knife to a claymore.

Effect: If a MacEachern Weapon strikes a Sidhe, roll for Wounds as usual. However, the Sidhe does not make a Wound Check. Instead, divide the total Wounds by 5. The result is the number of Dramatic Wounds the Sidhe suffers. Sidhe suffer no penalties for damage, although they can feel the pain more intensely than any mortal can dream. Most have 7 Dramatic Wounds before being slain (see *Combat With The Sidhe* [AV:88]).

There are no limits to the number of MacEachern Weapons you may have. However, if there's more than one in your party, the Sidhe can detect you wherever you go...and squash you like a bug at their leisure. One blade per party is the best way to stay healthy.

Man of Will

Cost: 25 HP

Restrictions: Characters with any kind of magical ability may not take this Advantage.

Some of the greatest warriors have learned to rule their emotions and their bodies. You are one of them. Your mind is a fortress, unaffected by the sea of emotions surrounding all other people. Peer pressure, emotional manipulation—even mind-altering sorcery is shrugged off and ignored. You are inhumanly calm. Not fearless or reckless, simply calm.

Effect: You may not take a Hubris, but a Virtue costs you only 5 HP if you decide to take one. By taking this Advantage, you are:

- Immune to mind-altering magic, including Sorte manipulation of the Cups or Staves strand, emotion-affecting runes, and magical effects that deceive or beguile, even Sidhe illusions.
- Immune to the effects of the Repartee system.
- Immune to the effects of Fear.
- Immune to the effects of being Crippled. You still feel the pain, but you don't let it slow you down.

Membership

Cost: Varies

You have gained Membership in one of the powerful organizations that control Théah. Ultimately, each provides you significant benefits for being a member, while asking for either dues, services, or both in return. Some can be adventurous (like the Swordsman's Guild), while others can be dangerous (like the Invisible College), but all represent a philosophy that you must adhere to during your Membership.

Alcalde

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: Castille only

You are a member of the Alcalde, assigned to uphold the law in Castille.

Effect: Refer to the section on Alcalde in the Castille sourcebook [CA:59] for more details.

Elaine's Knights

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: Avalon only

You belong to the Order of the High King, a member of the elite cadre assigned to carry out Queen Elaine's wishes. While not as well-known as Montaigne's musketeers, they are beloved throughout Avalon as paragons of courage and honor.

Effect: Belonging to Elaine's Knights means that the crown provides your clothes, weapons and lodgings, along with a small stipend of 10 Guilders per month. You may also claim sanctuary at any Avalon diplomatic post (although the consequences of

doing so may come back to haunt you). Other members of the Order will defend you and come to your aid if need be—but they in turn will depend on you for the same courtesy.

Other benefits of, and drawbacks to, belonging to the Order are detailed below.

The Order of the High King

The Order of the High King has nearly two hundred members, and while the highest Twelve have been dealt with in the Avalon sourcebook, there's no reason why a player can't portray another member. The Order trains its members itself, selecting from the best and the brightest Avalon has to offer. Particularly noteworthy Heroes may be asked to join later in life, after performing some great service to the crown. Each knight takes a vow before Queen Elaine, which he is expected to uphold for the rest of his life. The following conditions apply to anyone joining the Order:

- Only Avalons, Highlanders and Inish may join. Members must swear an oath of allegiance to Queen Elaine (see the Vow of the Order of the High King below), promising to defend the people of Avalon from any threat.
- All Members must purchase the Membership: Elaine's Knights Advantage.
- All Members must belong to the Donovan, MacDonald or Goodfellow School, or else practice Glamour magic. Druids and members of other Swordsman Schools may not join the Knights.
- All Members work under a patron, a specific member of the Twelve who gives them orders and sends them on missions. Although Knights generally many not choose who they serve under, players may suggest which of the twelve they'd like their Heroes to serve. Members gain the Patron Advantage for free, reflecting the Knight they serve under. These Patrons provide no income, but can be sought out for advice and guidance.
- All Members are expected to adhere to a strict code of honor at all times. If a Knight's Reputation ever drops below 5, he is stripped of his title and expunged from the Order. Those who continue to cause trouble afterward may receive an unwelcome midnight visit...
- No Member may belong to another knightly order, including the Rose & Cross. Elaine's Knights and the Rose & Cross have developed a friendly rivalry with each other, but both sides wish to keep their membership "pure."

In exchange for these conditions, a Knight receives the benefits outlined in the Membership: Elaine's Knights Advantage. He is expected to honor Avalon, fight for justice, and do all the things expected of such a noble order. Those who do are rewarded with glory as only the Glamour Isles can bring.

Vow of the Order of the High King

Before Her Majesty the Queen and all the Triple Kingdoms, I solemnly swear to:

- *Defend justice wherever I find myself, be it land, sea, or sky;*
- *Uphold the laws of Avalon and protect her from her enemies;*
- *Protect the innocent and those incapable of protecting themselves;*
- *Exemplify the honor and nobility of the Glamour Isles in my thoughts, words and deeds;*
- *And defend Her Majesty the Queen from all foes, foreign and domestic.*

This I vow in the name of the High King, Her Majesty, and the Triple Kingdoms.

Iron Guard

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: Eisen only

You are a member of an Eisenfürst's Iron Guard. Each Iron Guard unit has slightly different entry requirements (in addition to purchasing this Advantage) and grants slightly different benefits.

Fischler: The Wily Foxes

Fischler's Iron Guard are skilled hunters and trackers, and often venture into the Schwarzen Walden to rescue lost woodsmen or destroy some abomination. They wear black uniforms with green trim and arm themselves with heavy weapons.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Wits and Finesse of at least 3
- At least 10 HP spent in Knacks from the Hunter Skill
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Fischler
- Obey Eisenfürst Fischler's orders
- Watch the Schwarzen Walden and report any activity

Benefits:

Wily Foxes have their equipment, room, and board all paid for by Faulk Fischler. In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G per month. Finally, they may appeal directly to the other Wily Foxes for assistance in times of trouble.

Freiburg: The Freiburg Guardsmen

Trägue's Iron Guard often serve wealthy merchants as bodyguards in order to pay the salaries of Freiburg's police force. They wear black uniforms with white trim and arm themselves with a pair of panzerhands, one on each hand.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Brawn and Resolve of at least 3
- 5+ HP invested in Knacks in the Panzerhand Skill
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Freiburg
- Obey Eisenfürst Trägue's orders (not that he gives any)
- Act as a bodyguard when hired out to private citizens

Benefits:

Freiburg Guardsmen have their equipment, room, and board all paid for—either by the city or by private funds. In addition, they receive a stipend each month. Exactly how much they make during a given month is determined by rolling a die and consulting the following chart:

D10 Result	Monthly Stipend
1	Nothing
2-3	10G
4-7	20G
8-9	30G
0	40G

Finally, they may appeal directly to the other Freiburg Guardsmen for assistance in times of trouble.

Hainzl: The Steel Warriors

Hainzl's Iron Guard all receive Dracheneisen arms and armor. They wear black uniforms with grey trim and arm themselves with heavy weapons.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Wits and Finesse of at least 3
- At least 10 HP spent in the Dracheneisen Advantage
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Hainzl
- Obey the Hainzl family's orders
- Guard the mines against thieves

Benefits:

Steel Warriors have their equipment, room, and board paid for by Georg Hainzl (indirectly, at least). In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G per month. Finally, they may appeal directly to the other Steel Warriors for assistance in times of trouble.

Heilgrund: The Ghosts

Heilgrund's Iron Guard are skilled in staying out of sight. They don't speak much, and it is difficult to notice them even when they're standing in plain sight; they even seem to blink less often than normal people. They wear black uniforms and arm themselves with heavy weapons.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Resolve and Finesse of at least 3
- Rank 3+ in the Unobtrusive Knack
- Rank 3+ in the Stealth Knack
- Rank 3+ in the Shadowing Knack
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Heilgrund
- Obey Eisenfürst Heilgrund's orders
- Speak to no one of Stefan Heilgrund's activities

Benefits:

Ghosts have their equipment, room, and board all paid for by Stefan Heilgrund. In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G (in Marks) per month. Finally, they may appeal directly to the other Ghosts for assistance in times of trouble.

Pösen: The Swamp Dogs

Pösen's Iron Guard are one of the most elite fighting forces in the nation. They wear black uniforms with blue trim and carry an assortment of weapons at all times. These men train at the Gelingen Academy before being permitted to join the Guard, and they know a number of methods to defeat non-human opponents.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Wits and Brawn of at least 3
- Belong to the Gelingen Swordsman School
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Pösen
- Obey Eisenfürst Pösen's orders
- Patrol and kill any encountered monsters

Benefits:

Swamp Dogs have their equipment, room, and board all paid for by Fauner Pösen. In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G per month. Finally, they may appeal directly to the other Swamp Dogs for assistance in times of trouble.

Sieger: The Clenched Fists

Sieger's Iron Guard are considered some of the most vile men around. They are typically murderers, thieves, and worse. They wear black uniforms trimmed with red, and always wield a

panzerhand and carry a small spiked club (a 2k2 Fencing weapon).

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Brawn of at least 4
- A Reputation of -10 or less
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Sieger
- Try not to kill anyone important
- Obey Eisenfürst Sieger's orders

Benefits:

Clenched Fists have their equipment, room, and board all paid for by Erich Sieger. In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G (in Marks) per month. Finally, they possess absolute authority within Sieger, and are immune to legal punishments there, although appeals to the other Clenched Fists for assistance in times of trouble are liable to be laughed at. GMs should remember that a Hero becomes an NPC when his Reputation reaches -30.

Wische: The Roaring Drachen

Wische's Iron Guard are known as loyal, steadfast men. Even though they have been paid with IOUs for the last six months, many still remain on duty. Out of respect for their loyalty, many of Wische's citizens have accepted the IOUs as legal tender, even though they never expect to be reimbursed. The Roaring Drachen wear black uniforms trimmed with gold, and carry zweihanders. They are all skilled in the Drexel style of fighting, and most prefer the use of the Metzger stance.

Membership Requirements:

- Eisen Nationality
- Brawn and Finesse of at least 3
- Belong to the Drexel Swordsman School
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Enforce the law within Wische
- Obey Eisenfürst Wische's (or rather, his Regent's) orders
- Protect the people of Wische above all else

Benefits:

Roaring Drachen have their equipment, room, and board all paid for by Reinhard von Wische (again, through his Regent). In addition, they receive a stipend of 20G per month in the form of IOUs, which are accepted in about 20% of all the shops in Wische. Finally, they are greatly respected by the people (+5 Reputation Points), and can appeal to the other Roaring Drachen in times of need.

Lord's Hand

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: Vodacce only

You serve as the instrument of your Prince's will, conducting various actions in his name. You have received a personal reprieve for all criminal actions in Vodacce, provided you act solely in the name of your Prince. Lord's Hands have certain responsibilities; in exchange, they may act without fear of legal reprisal (though personal reprisals are another matter entirely).

Membership Requirements:

- Vodacce Nationality
- Wits and Panache of at least 3
- At least 10 HP spent in Knacks from the Courtier Skill
- No fewer than three Martial Skills

Duties:

- Obey their Prince's orders
- Report treachery to their Prince

Benefits:

All Lord's Hands have their equipment, room, and board paid for by their Prince. In addition, while acting under orders from their Prince, they are exempt from punishment by the law in Vodacce. Any trouble someone has with the Hand's actions must be taken up with their Prince.

Merchant Guild

Cost: 4 HP for each Guild joined

You are a member in one of the Merchant Guilds. You can practice its trade legally (to do so without Membership—your "license"—is a high crime, punishable by hanging), and generally have a steady income as a result. When you purchase this Advantage, you must choose a Knack with which you make your living, such as Cooking or Veterinarian. When determining monthly income, that will be the Knack you use.

Effect: The Hero is considered a Journeyman (just above an Apprentice), with his own shop and monthly revenue. Heroes may join more than one Guild, but receive income from only one Guild in any given month. Members know the secret code of signs and passwords for their particular Guild, and can use them to discreetly communicate with fellow members if they wish.

A Hero reaches Master status when he or she reaches Rank 5 in the appropriate Knack matching their Membership: Merchant Guild Advantage. His Reputation increases by 10, and he also gains the ability to take on an Apprentice should he wish. Other members of the Guild will look upon him with respect, and he may be called upon to solve intra-guild political disputes if necessary.

Musketeers

Cost: 5 HP (4 HP for Montaigne)

Montaigne's musketeers are known throughout Théah for their courage and devotion. As a member, you mete out the Empereur's justice.

Effect: All of your needs are provided by the Empereur. Your clothes, weapons and lodgings are all provided for. You also have a bond with the other Musketeers and can count on them for assistance. However, they also count on you...

Secret Societies

Cost: 5 HP

Restrictions: You may purchase Membership in only one Secret Society.

Hero Creation: This Advantage gives you +1 free Rank in the Society Lore Knack for your chosen Secret Society. You may purchase additional Ranks in the Society Lore Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.

There are many groups within Théah that can claim to be "secret." You belong to one. These organizations may not be hidden away in some tower plotting a coup of the throne (in fact, they may not be hiding at all), but by being a member in one, you are taking on a sizable responsibility. It is not only part of the game to maintain the profile of your Secret Society—you must fulfill their goals as well. And as some of the groups show, this is not always as easy as it sounds.

Secret Societies

- Explorer's Society
- Die Kreuzritter
- Invisible College
- Knightly Order of the Rose and Cross

- Los Vagos
- Rilasciare (Free Thinkers)
- Sophia's Daughters

Social Club

Cost: Varies (see below)

The Hero is a member of one of the many social clubs found in Théah. These are small groups that meet to share a common interest of some sort, or simply to socialize.

Effect: The benefits of this Advantage vary depending on which social club the Hero joins. Two of the most influential and interesting Montaigne social clubs are provided below:

The Venerable Order of Esteemed Gentlemen

Cost: 3 HP

The Venerable Order of Esteemed Gentlemen is a group of some of the wealthiest men from across Théah, who meet weekly in Paix. Their meeting house is lavish and the staff caters to their every whim. Without exception, they joined the Order because they were bored with their lives. The main pastime of the members is gambling—on a grand scale. One member, or a group of members, will propose an outrageous endeavor or adventure, then the others all bet on whether or not they can accomplish it. Fortunes are often wagered on seemingly impossible tasks, and rare indeed is the bet for less than 5,000G. While the bet is underway, the other members of the group keep track of the adventuring party's progress as best they can.

A Hero must have a minimum monthly income of 200G or savings in excess of 10,000G to join the Order. Members of the Order have access to a group of very wealthy men who are willing to bet enormous sums of money on unusual or interesting adventures.

Mode du Lac

Cost: 3 HP

Mode du Lac is the fashion dictatorship of Montaigne. Apart from the Empereur and Empress, Mode du Lac and its members determine what everyone will be wearing next season. The members meet weekly in Crieux and discuss the latest fashions over an exquisite brunch.

A Hero must have a minimum Rank of 3 in both his Fashion Knack and his Panache Trait, as well as a minimum monthly income of 100G or savings of at least 5,000G, in order to join Mode du Lac. Members of Mode du Lac have advance knowledge of the latest fashions, and always receive two Free Raises when using their Fashion Knack.

Stelets

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: Ussura only

You belong to the Gaius' elite guards, charged with enforcing his laws throughout Ussura. Though most spend their lives within the nations' borders (and some never even leave Pavtlow), the Gaius has sent a select few into foreign nations on important missions. Such stelets make excellent Heroes, pursuing the Gaius' interests across the face of Théah. Stelets wear green uniforms emblazoned with Ussura's golden sigil. Units from different provinces sometimes sew their native crest onto their shoulders.

Membership Requirements:

- Ussuran nationality
- Brawn and Resolve of at least 3
- 10+ HP (5+ if belonging to the Bogatyr School) in the Hunter skill, including a Survival Knack of at least 2
- No fewer than three Martial skills

The Gaius prefers members who are proficient in the Bogatyr school, the Buslayevich school, or any Schools originating in Eisen, but this is not a requirement for membership.

Duties:

All stelets are expected to enforce the Gaius' laws throughout Ussura, defend the Ussuran people from all threats, protect the Gaius himself from harm, and pursue Ussuran interests abroad.

Benefits:

The Gaius pays for the stelets' room, board, and equipment for as long as they serve him. In addition, they receive a stipend equal to 20G per month. They serve as the law within Ussura's borders, and can expect a modicum of respect from both the boyar and muzhik. Finally, they can appeal to other stelets in time of need, though they are also expected to return the favor if a stelet comes to them asking for assistance.

Swordsman's Guild

Cost: 3 HP

You have the exclusive right to initiate duels. The wording of the previous sentence is very important; a member of the Swordsman's Guild has the right to initiate duels, but any man has the right to defend himself. Members of the Swordsman's Guild generally dueling with pistols vulgar, ungentlemanly and cowardly.

Effect: Any character who has attended a Swordsman School is considered to gain this Advantage for free, unless their School's description states otherwise.

Thieves' Guild

Cost: 6 HP

Throughout each nation, and particularly in Vodacce, there are groups of the socially unacceptable who make their way in life via the loss of others. While each of these has distinct personalities, philosophies, and methods, they are collectively referred to as Thieves' Guilds. Each Thieves' Guild is different, but commonly has a hierarchical infrastructure and county wide influences (some of the larger ones have state wide power).

Effect: Membership costs 6 HP at Hero Creation, and is usually only earned after an arduous initiation rite, many of which require the would-be crook to risk life, limb and name. After joining, the thief is trained in the guild's secret methods of larceny, defalcation, debauchery, or (the ever popular) highway robbery. The guild's philosophy and attitudes are ingrained upon the disciple (although the student likely agreed with them before joining), and soon the burglar is a full-fledged member of the institution's ranks.

Each Thieves' Guild has three Thieves' Knacks attributed to them. Upon joining a particular guild, the character gains a bonus Rank in each of these Knacks. This may raise the character's rank beyond normal starting levels, allowing a Rank 4 Knack at character creation or a Rank 6 Knack maximum.

Goodfellow's Merry Men

Area of Control: Avalon proper

Hundreds of tales about the famed Robin Goodfellow and his Merry Men abound throughout Avalon, but what the nobles fear most is true: his Merry Men are still around. Experts of the bow, these highway robbers are flippant, irreverent, complete ruffians—and the heroes of the people.

Philosophy: Goodfellow's Merry Men exist to right wrongs and bring about justice. They only strike at those who do not deserve what they have, and often use their resources to aid the needy. Anyone who is pure of heart but poor of luck is welcomed into their ranks, after showing himself trustworthy and fit.

Initiation: New members are usually tempted in some fashion with material wealth and worldly pleasures in order to test their values. A convincing actor is usually placed close to the prospective neonate who then befriends him or her. When the moment is right, the initiate's loyalties and values are called into question by his or her new best friend. Those who choose right over their own wants are considered members.

Organization: All members are considered equal brothers, with no one member's say weighing more than any other's. This is the occasion for the most turmoil within the outfit, but their has often been a peacemaker of Goodfellow's fashion who keeps the flames low.

Thieves' Knacks: Ambush, Stealth, Survival

Black Orchid Gang

Area of Control: Most of Vodacce

The mafia known as the Black Orchids are Vodacce's most powerful street gang. Rumors of which merchant prince actually controls the gang abound, but every Vodacce citizen knows not to go out at night in Black Orchid territory.

Philosophy: The Black Orchids are taught to pick their targets wisely, finding the most profit for the least work. Lower echelon members are told that only certain people are off limits, but they would know them when they see them.

Initiation: Initiation into the Black Orchid gang is simple: interrogation for three days straight, without food, light, or sleep. If the initiate survives and proves to be strong of character, he has passed his first test. The second test is survival within the Gang itself, which lasts a lifetime - however long that may be.

Organization: The Black Orchids are rigorously organized into tiers, with the upper ranks being obscured to all but the highest ranked members. Lower tier members are referred to as Boys, Thugs, or Blackjacks, while more prominent members simply have pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Thieves' Knacks: Attack (Dirty Fighting), Pickpocket, Sincerity

l'Oeil du Soleil

Area of Control: Occupied Castille, Southern Montaigne

Originally an unnamed espionage guild, l'Oeil du Soleil quickly became the most popular firm for dispensing invaluable courtly and otherwise information when Montegue began to use them for conducting his war against Castille.

Philosophy: Holding loyalties to no individual, house, or nation, a member of l'Oeil du Soleil has no problem for meeting with a client to both hock his wares and pick up some new tidbits of information for future use. They hold fierce loyalty to each other and a policy of self-defense only, but all else is fair game.

Initiation: Initiation is a complex game that tests the initiate's wits, perception, guile, and ambitions. They are fed through a Montaigne court ball, and later questioned upon their observations. If the answers are satisfying, the member is then asked to do a job freelance. If the job is satisfying to the powers that be, the initiate is allowed into the guild; otherwise, he or she is asked to remain freelance and never hears from l'Oeil du Soleil again.

Organization: The infrastructure of l'Oeil mirrors Montaigne's feudal society, with the newest members being referred to as "serfs" until they can obtain a more noble title. The function is mostly for the filtering of the most sensitive secrets from the less established members.

Thieves' Knacks: Bribery, Lip Reading, Politics

Tyomny

Cost: 2 HP

You belong to Somojez's Dark Guards, the Tabularius's personal military and defenders of the Orthodox faith. The

Tyomny train in the city of St. Andresgorod before moving on to duties under either the Patriarch or the Somojez Knias, and serve the Church tirelessly all across Ussura. Technically, the Knias has final say over the Tyomny's activities, but his decisions rarely conflict with the Patriarch, and few Tyomny are foolish enough to disobey their spiritual leader's dictates.

Membership Requirements:

- Wits and Resolve of at least 2
- Ordained Advantage (Ussuran Orthodoxy only)
- Fencing Skill, with Attack (Fencing) and Parry (Fencing) Knacks at least at Rank 3

Duties:

Defend the Orthodox Church from its enemies, obey the Somojez Knias, and protect the faithful from all threats.

Benefits:

All Tyomny have room, board, and equipment paid for by Ussuran Orthodoxy. In addition, they may claim sanctuary in any Ussuran Orthodox Church in the world, and may request assistance from other Tyomny in times of trouble. As representatives of the Somojez Knias, they may enforce the laws in his province, arresting and detaining criminals if necessary. Finally, as ordained priests, they may perform weddings, baptisms, and other functions designated for Church officials.

Merchant Patron

Cost: Varies (1 HP less if Vendel: minimum 1 HP)

You act as a patron to a merchant, and are thus entitled to a share of his profits. Of course, it takes money to make money, so the profits generated by a merchant depends on the amount and frequency of your own investment.

Effect: The more frequently you invest, the more frequently you get money back. The total cost of this Advantage is equal to the sum of the points spent on the amount of the Profits and the Frequency of the investment.

HP	Investment	Profits
1	10G	5G
2	20G	8G
3	40G	10G

HP	Frequency
0	Once a month
1	Twice a month
2	Once a week

Miracle Worker

Cost: Varies (5 HP per Miracle die)

There are those who believe that Theus works miracles through them. However, Theus works in subtle ways, and the benefactors of a miracle are never able to conclusively prove any such divine intervention.

Effect: This Advantage costs 5 HP per Miracle die. You may purchase a maximum of 3 Miracle dice.

Miracles

A Hero with the Miracle Worker Advantage gives his Miracle dice to the GM at the start of each Story. The GM controls when, and if, these dice are activated. Each die activated causes a miracle to occur. These miracles can be anything the GM desires, remembering that Theus leaves no physical evidence of intervention after a miracle. A Hero receives 2 XP for each unspent Miracle die at the end of a Story.

Several examples of miracles follow:

Healing Wind: The Hero feels a gentle wind blow through his body, and suddenly his wounds don't bother him as much anymore. Two of the Hero's Dramatic Wounds are healed. They

look just as bad as ever, but the bleeding slows to a stop and the Hero is no longer impeded by them.

Righteous Fury: Just as the Hero is about to fail miserably, he feels a flush of heat they gives him a push that may help him succeed. After the Hero has failed an important roll, this Miracle die turns into 3 Drama Dice that are immediately rolled and added to the total.

Shield of the Faithful: When looking death in the eye, a chill wind blows past the Hero and those around him. Then, a miraculous event occurs that may allow him to cheat death for a little while. When a Villain attacks the Hero, this Miracle die causes the Villain to automatically miss. In addition, the villains remaining Action dice for the Round are discarded.

Strength of Theus: When the Hero thinks he's exhausted his last reserves of strength, energy fills him and the power of his belief keeps him going. After the Hero has spent the last of his Drama Dice, this Miracle die turns into +2 additional Drama Dice.

Montaigne Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Montaigne only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way a person speaks that indicates he's from a particular area. Only a Hero fully proficient in the language can identify accents. Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and non-Montaigne may never have an accent. There are six primary accents in Montaigne: North, South, West, Bascone, Dechaine, and Paix. Montaigne Heroes with an accent pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language table, below.

Montaigne Language Table

	North	South	West	Bascone	Dechaine	Paix
Avalon	1	2	1	3	1	1
Castille	2	1	1	2	2	0
Crescent	5	4	3	5	4	3
Cymru	2	3	2	4	2	2
Eisen	1	2	3	3	1	1
High Eisen	2	3	4	4	2	2
Inis	2	3	2	4	2	2
Montaigne	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teodoran	5	4	5	5	5	3
Théan	1	2	1	3	2	1
Ussura	4	3	4	4	4	2
Vendel	1	2	1	3	1	1
Vodacce	2	1	1	2	2	0

North: This accent indicates that the speaker is from Doré, Crieux, Aur, or Arrent, and is considered the mark of a well-traveled Montaigne. Those with this accent do not roll their r's. Northern and eastern languages are easier for Northern Montaigne to learn, while southern and exotic languages are more difficult.

South: Those with this accent are from Charouse, Sices, Paroisse, Gloyure, or Surlign, and are considered to be aristocratic. This is the Montaigne accent described in the 7th Sea Players' Guide.

West: This accent is found among Montaigne from Verre, Martise, Toille, Ratchetise, and Rogue, and is believed to signify a good education. This accent is easily recognized for its Castillian sounding of b and v, which makes these letters sound nearly identical, as if they were being slurred together. Because of their position on the coast, Vendel, Crescent (which is related to Castillian), Théan (which is a common trade tongue) and Avalon are all less expensive to Heroes from West Montaigne. However, the eastern languages are all more expensive.

Bascone: This accent is associated with provincial speakers from the province of La Motte. Often considered to be indicative

of a country bumpkin, the accent is identified by the speaker's pronunciation of ai as the ie in "pie." Because of their xenophobic tendencies, it is hard for Heroes from La Motte to learn to speak foreign languages. However, they are traditionally well read (even the peasants) and pick up Literacy in Montaigne and two other languages for free.

Dechaine: A Dechaine accent is found only among those raised in the town of Dechaine. Those with this accent pronounce their a's as in "awe", like the Vendel and Vestenmannavjar do, and are believed to be somewhat slow by the rest of the country. Northern and eastern languages are less expensive for Heroes with this accent, while southern and far eastern languages are more expensive.

Paix: This accent indicates that the speaker was raised in the town of Paix. Speakers have a tendency to pronounce their h's, even at the beginning of a word. This accent is very popular with members of the fair gender. Because of the frequent travelers in Paix, Montaigne Heroes with this accent have an easy time learning foreign languages, and in fact, speak up to 3 HP of languages besides Montaigne for free. They also receive the Dangerous Beauty Advantage to simulate their attractive accent. However, they cannot take the Linguist Advantage, and they receive only 95 HP to begin with instead of the normal 100 HP.

Montaigne Servant

Cost: Varies (see Servant Types below)

Restrictions: Montaigne only

Since servants are so important to the Montaigne lifestyle, Montaigne Heroes have several more options available to them when purchasing the Servant Advantage.

Effect: Unless otherwise stated, Servants are subject to the same limitations as Heroes when being created.

Servant Types

Bodyguard: (5 HP) All Traits are 2 except Panache, which is 3. The Bodyguard has all Fencing, Knife, and Firearms Knacks at 3. He also receives another 25 HP that the player may distribute, but no Civil Knacks may start above 2. A soldier, duelist, or gunner can also be built with this servant type.

Lackey: (5 HP) All Traits are 2 except Panache, which is 3. The Lackey receives all Servant Knacks at 3. He also receives another 25 HP that the player may distribute, but no Martial Knacks may start above 2. A maid, butler, or valet can also be built with this servant type.

Porté Messenger: (5 HP) All Traits are 2 except Panache, which is 3. The Messenger receives Half-Blooded Porté, and the Bring Knack at 4. His brother or sister remains at the Hero's home base, and the two of them hand off (described under Handing Off an Object in the Porté Sorcery rules) a Blooded chalkboard to each other that messages can be written on.

Servant Upgrades

Able Fighter: (3 HP) The maximum that the servant's Martial Knacks may be raised during creation is raised by 1 (to 4, normally).

Connected: (1 HP) The servant receives the Streetwise Skill and Rank 5 in the Socializing Knack for free, and always rolls and Keeps one extra die when using Streetwise Skills.

Extremely Loyal: (3 HP) The servant will never abandon or betray you.

Sycophant: (1 HP) The servant adores the ground the Hero walks on and would give his life to save him at any time. Of course, the rest of the time, the Hero has to endure the servant's constant toadying remarks and almost smothering attitude.

Very Organized: (2 HP) The maximum that the servant's Civil Knacks may be raised during creation is raised by 1 (to 4, normally).

Nibelung

Cost: 20 HP

Restrictions: Eisen only

You are a Nibelung, one of the few entrusted with the secret of forging Dracheneisen into useful items.

Effect: This grants you several benefits (see below):

Dracheneisen Forging

If provided with raw Dracheneisen, you are capable of forging it into items. Each unit (1 lb.) of raw Dracheneisen is equivalent to 1 HP on the Dracheneisen Equipment Table.

Example: Thus, it takes 3lb of raw Dracheneisen to forge a Fencing weapon. It requires two months and 1,000G per unit of Dracheneisen to create such a weapon.

Nibelung's Hammer

Every Nibelung forges a blacksmith's hammer as their final test for acceptance into the Order. This hammer uses the Heavy Weapons Knack and deals 3k2 damage, but only requires one hand to wield. In addition, it marks its holder as a member of the Order of Nibelungen.

Membership in the Order of Nibelungen

The political and social power of the Nibelungen should not be overlooked. Outside of Eisen, they possess little authority, but within her borders, no leader would dare oppose them, fearing that they might be cut off from their supply of Dracheneisen forever.

Brew Dracheneisen Solvent

The Nibelungen have one final secret weapon—a solvent that will dissolve Dracheneisen in a matter of moments. Each vial costs 600G and requires one month to brew. When thrown onto an opponent wearing or wielding Dracheneisen (requires a Finesse + Throwing roll against the victim's TN to be Hit, ignoring any bonuses from armor), it will utterly destroy one of their Dracheneisen items (selected at random, or the Nibelung may use a Called Shot to hit a particular item). The affected item turns green with corrosion before becoming brittle and useless. If the object is completely immersed in water within 2 Phases, the process can be stopped without serious damage.

Night Trained

Cost: 4 HP

This Advantage gives the Hero better night sight and more awareness of his surroundings in the dark.

Effect: The Night Trained advantage reduces the Hero's penalties to act in low-light conditions by half. Thus, he loses only 1 Kept die in Dim Lighting, and 2 Kept dice in Total Darkness.

Noble

Cost: 10 HP (5 HP if you have any of the Sorcery, Dracheneisen, or Church Education Advantages).

You are a member of a royal family with good standing. This is different from simply purchasing Sorcery. Heroes who purchase Sorcery, but not the Noble Advantage, have lost their good standing in the family, or their family has lost its good standing in noble society.

Effect: You have a single manor house, complete with one seneschal (a grounds "administrator"), ten general staff (butlers,

maids, stable boys, etc.) and a small population of serfs who work the land. You will be held accountable for the protection and welfare of these peasants, as well as the land you govern.

Land Management

If you are playing a noble, and wish to manage your properties in more depth, then use the following system.

The basic properties a noble receives from the Noble Advantage include:

- 500 Guilders a month in taxes (above and beyond expenses)
- 6 General staff (butlers, maids, stable boys, etc. They may be considered Threat 1 Brutes with no combat Skills and a TN to be Hit of 10.)

Noble properties can also be augmented with Hero Points by purchasing any of the following items:

Farm: (1 HP) Each manor house has at least one farm, but for 1 HP (or 3 XP) the manor has an additional farm, which provides more income and thus, more taxes.

Holding: (2-4 HP) There are many kinds of Holdings, and each provides the manor with new taxes. A noble who governs a manor with a blacksmith has an exploitable resource for new armor and arms. Creative nobles can find a benefit in any kind of Holding, from wineries to brothels.

Holdings are either Basic (2 HP, or 6 XP), Fine (3 HP, or 9 XP) or Excellent (4 HP, or 12 XP). For each additional point spent on the Holding, the quality of merchandise they provide is just that much better. Basic Holdings provide just what they promise: merchandise that sells. Fine Holdings have a bit of a reputation for providing memorable and striking quality. Excellent Holdings, on the other hand, provide merchandise that is known throughout the country, and perhaps throughout the world. Some examples of Holdings include: Blacksmith, Mine (gold, silver, copper, etc.), Winery, and Brothel.

Followers: (2 HP) Sometimes, nobles acquire a retinue of soldiers to assist them in managing a particularly difficult area. Characters can build a retinue of soldiers, commissioned to their service. These soldiers will serve the noble's commands faithfully. Every 2 HP, or 6 XP, spent on Followers gains the noble 6 followers (Threat 1 Brutes with a Rank 2 in one weapon Skill). Followers can also include house staff such as maids, butlers, etc. The player can divide his followers up as he sees fit.

Harvest and Taxes

At the beginning of each month, the noble collects income from his holdings and taxes.

Expenses: Expenses are normally already deducted from the noble's income.

Events: Before rolling for income, nobles roll once on the Harvest Event Table below to determine any events that may affect the month's income:

Harvest Event Table

Roll	Result
1	Catastrophe! (receive no income this year and roll below): 1—9 Death (lose 1 follower to illness, an accident, etc.) 0 Famine (lose 1 farm)
2—3	Bandits! (lose (100 X 2 dice) Guilders)
4—7	No Event
8—9	Supernatural (A monster moves in, ghost shows up, etc.)
0	Good Harvest (Roll 2 dice for each farm, keeping one.)

Income: The noble rolls 1 exploding die for each farm on his land, and multiplies the result by 50 Guilders. Add 300 Guilders to the result for each Basic Holding, 400 Guilders for each Fine Holding and 500 Guilders for each Excellent Holding.

Odd Sleeping Habits

Cost: 1 HP

This character has grown accustomed to an unusual sleeping pattern. Perhaps he takes five one-hour naps during a 24-hour period rather than sleeping at night, or perhaps he sleeps four hours a night and takes a two-hour nap during the afternoon. In any case, he needs less sleep than the average character to get by, and has additional study time because of it.

Effect: This character gets a Free Raise to all his rolls involving the Research Knack.

Old Name

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: Vesten only

Your name is an old and honored one among the Vestenmannavnjar.

Effect: If you take the Scoundrel Advantage, your Reputation is reduced to -16. Otherwise, you gain 6 points of Reputation.

Ordained

Cost: 4 HP

You've obtained a position in the Church of the Prophets, a position that brings you a great deal of influence and advantage (most likely that of a priest).

Effect: You receive the Scholar Skill for free. You also gain a Free Raise in all social situations with NPCs and Heroes who are adherents to your faith, at the GM's discretion. In addition, being a member of the Church means you get three square meals a day, a stipend of 30 Guilders per month, and all of your basic needs taken care of.

Pain Tolerance

Cost: 4 HP (3 HP if Ussura)

You are highly resistant to pain.

Effect: You become Crippled when you have taken a number of Dramatic Wounds that is one higher than, rather than equal to, your Resolve. The number of Dramatic Wounds needed to render you unconscious is unaffected. In addition, you get a Free Raise to all efforts to resist interrogation based on torture.

Parlor Trick

Cost: 10 HP

Perhaps there's just a touch of magic somewhere in your family that doesn't get expressed much. Maybe you did a big favor for someone in a position to reward you for it (Sidhe, Matushka, Vesten avatars, etc.). Whatever it is, you can perform one thing (and only one); you can work with strands from one knack, or you can use one rune, or talk to animals, or make a pocket in space. Something.

Effect: You have one Knack from one (and only one) Sorcerous Heritage. You start game play with Rank 1 in the chosen Knack, but may improve it with Experience Points as normal.

Patron

Cost: Varies (see Effect below)

When you're talented and don't have any money, what do you do? You find a patron. Patrons are wealthy individuals who sponsor struggling artists, poets, playwrights, swordsmen, and rogues. The number of points you spend determines how wealthy your Patron is, and how willing he is to spend some of that wealth on you. But remember, your Patron's money isn't your money, and many Patrons are little more than rich, snotty nobles that are so easily offended... Work with your GM to determine who your Patron might be.

Effect: Determine your Patron's Wealth and Generosity, and total the costs together to get the HP cost of this Advantage.

Wealth

1 HP: 10 Guilders

2 HP: 20 Guilders

4 HP: 40 Guilders

Generosity

1 HP: Once per month

2 HP: Twice per month

4 HP: Once per week

Pirate Trick

Cost: 3 HP

The Hero has spent some time in the company of pirates.

Effect: The Hero has learned one, and only one, of the Pirate Tricks listed for students of the Rogers Swordsman School. He may never learn another without learning the fighting style itself, in which case he loses this Advantage and it becomes his Apprentice level Pirate Trick. Heroes who have learned the Rogers style may not take this Advantage.

Poison Immunity

Cost: 1 HP (May be purchased multiple times)

Either through natural immunity or gradual exposure, you have no fear of a specific type of poison; it is no more harmful to you than children's milk.

Effect: Select a single type of poison. You may ignore all effects of that poison when you are exposed to it. You may purchase this Advantage as many times as you like.

Property

Cost: Varies (1 HP per 5,000G value)

You have acquired a home in a city through fair means or foul. You may have just moved in, or you might have lived there for years (in which case you might like to consider the Home Neighborhood Advantage as well).

Effect: In order to purchase this Advantage, talk with your GM about what properties are up for sale in the desired area, then pay 1 HP for every 5,000G the building is worth. When you take the Property Advantage, you are only receiving ownership of the building. Unlike the Noble Advantage, you receive no servants or income from this Advantage.

Published

Cost: 1 HP or 2 HP

One or more of your theories has been published, increasing your reputation among your colleagues. Those in the right circles recognize your name, and your work receives more attention than it would if it were unpublished.

Effect: For every point you spend in this Advantage, your Reputation increases by 5 points and you gain a small stipend of 10G, representing sales of your text.

Puzzle Sword

Cost: 2 HP, 5 HP or 10 HP

Restrictions: Montaigne only

A Hero who takes this Advantage has received one of the infamous Montaigne Puzzle Swords.

Effect: Begin designing the sword by rolling on the Montaigne Puzzle Sword tables following. Follow the instructions on the chart, paying HP when instructed to do so. A Puzzle Sword's HP cost varies depending on its maker. Once you begin rolling, you must pay any costs the chart instructs you to; you cannot opt not

to roll on the next chart to avoid the HP cost for doing so. Therefore, it is advisable to set aside 10 HP for this Advantage until after you roll.

Heroes from the western provinces (Verre, Toille, Martise, Rachtisse, Rogue, and La Motte) subtract 1 from all rolls on the Puzzle Sword Charts. Heroes from the northern provinces (Doré, Crieux, Aur, and Arrent) add 1 from all rolls on the Puzzle Sword Charts. Heroes from the southern provinces (Sices, Charouse, Pourisse Gloyure, and Surlign) do not modify their rolls.

Roll Result

0-5 Roll on the Renard Puzzle Swords Chart. Pay 2 HP
6-11 Roll on the Loup Puzzle Swords Chart. Pay 2 HP

General Rules for Puzzle Swords

Many Puzzle Swords have hidden switches, buttons, etc. These switches are subject to the following rules:

- It takes a Wits Check against a TN 30 to discover them unless the user is familiar with the switch already.
- It takes no Actions to push a button, release a catch, etc., assuming that the person doing so is holding the sword in his hand.

Many Puzzle Swords have detachable parts such as darts, oil reservoirs, etc. The removal or emptying of these things throws off the delicate balance of the sword. When a Puzzle Sword is off-balance, its wielder is at a penalty of one Kept die to all Attack rolls and Active Defenses made with the sword.

Uncommon Swords Chart

Roll Result

0-5 Roll on the Créer Puzzle Swords Chart
6-11 Roll on the Détruire Puzzle Swords Chart

Renard Puzzle Swords

0. Garrotte Hilt: The sword hilt conceals a garrotte. With a successful attack from the rear, the victim cannot make a sound and begins to suffocate (use the Drowning rules). The victim is considered to be Grappled (as in the Wrestling Knack) and can attempt to break free normally.

1. Solid Grip: The sword's well-crafted grip allows its wielder to make tricky feints. Add 5 to the TN of anyone Actively Defending against an attack from this sword.

2. Disguised Sheath: The sword appears to be a cane or a walking stick when sheathed. Add two Free Raises to all rolls to Conceal it.

3. Well Balanced: The sword's balance is so good that it increases the Attack rolls of anyone wielding it by 1 (e.g., raising a 19 to a 20)

4. Blade Catcher: The details on the hilt of the sword catch incoming attacks. The sword increases its wielder's Active Defense by 2 when used to Parry (e.g., raising a 19 to a 21)

5-6: Roll again on this chart, ignoring further 5-6 results. Then spend 3 HP and roll on the Uncommon Swords chart (above).

7. Long Reach: The wielder always adds +5 to his Initiative Total.

8. Locksmith's Hilt: The hilt of the sword conceals a hidden set of lockpicks (Wits [40] roll to find them). These lockpicks are of such high quality that they give the user a Free Raise when using his Lockpicking Knack.

9. Secret Compartment: The pommel of the sword has a tiny secret compartment concealed in it. Messages, jewels, and other small but useful objects may be completely concealed inside this compartment, which can be found only by rolling a Wits [40] roll.

10. Rustproof: The sword is immune to the effects of age and weather. It does not rust, tarnish, or otherwise corrode.

11. Locking Sheath: There is a catch on the sheath that holds the sword firmly in place unless a hidden latch is released. It cannot be pulled free with less than a Brawn of 6, which breaks the sheath as the sword is forced loose.

Loup Puzzle Swords

0. Serrated Blade: The sword's blade is designed to make ragged, painful cuts. When its wielder successfully makes a Raise on his TN to hit, the resulting Damage roll is increased by 2 (e.g., 18 becomes 20) for each Raise (in addition to the normal extra unkept die of damage).

1. Flamberge Blade: When making Damage rolls for wounds inflicted with this sword, the wielder may reroll any ones. He may continue to do so until no ones remain.

2. Light Sword: The sword is extremely light. When making a Riposte, you receive one Free Raise to your Attack roll (assuming your Active Defense is successful).

3. Unbreakable: The sword cannot be broken and always straightens when bent to any angle.

4. Barbed Guard: The sword's guard is decorated with filigree designed to catch on blades, and gives one Free Raise to its wielder's Disarm attempts.

5-6: Roll again on this chart, ignoring further 5-6 results. Then spend 3 HP and roll on the Uncommon Swords chart (above).

7. Keen Blade: The sword's edge is so sharp that it increases the Damage rolls of anyone wielding it by 1 (raising a 19 to a 20, for instance).

8. Spiked Guard: The sword's guard is decorated with several sharp spikes. Pommel Strikes performed with the sword inflict 2k2 damage instead of 0k2.

9. Never Dull: This sword never loses its keen edge. It never needs to be sharpened, cared for, or otherwise maintained, though it may still rust or be broken.

10. Heavy Blade: The sword has a particularly weighty blade, and gives two Free Raises to its wielder when using the Beat Knack.

11. Dagger Hilt: A dagger blade pops out of the sword's pommel when a hidden catch is pushed. This allows the wielder to use his Attack (Knife) Knack even if his opponent has his sword in a Bind. The dagger blade inflicts 1k2 damage like a normal knife and automatically breaks the Bind the wielder's sword is in upon dealing damage.

Créer Puzzle Swords

0. Smoke Cloud: The sword sprays smoke in a 10' radius when a concealed button is pressed, plunging the area into total darkness for 10 Phases. The sword contains enough smoke for one use, then must be refilled with a mixture of oil and common herbs (costing 1G) using 5 Actions. When the reservoir is empty, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

1. Articulated Grip: The sword's grip fits the wielder's palm precisely. The wielder may use Action dice to Parry as though they were one Phase lower than they actually are.

2. Lizard's Tail: The sword has a false tip that it can "shed." After a successful Parry against the sword's wielder, the tip falls off. The target must then reroll the Parry. If it's successful a second time, the attack is blocked; otherwise the trick succeeds and the attack gets through after all. It takes 5 Actions to reattach the tip properly; without the tip, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

3. Coiling Hilt: The hilt of this sword springs shut on its wielder's hand one Phase after being picked up unless a hidden

catch is released. It takes a 5 Brawn to pry the victim's hand loose once the hilt has sprung shut. The victim must roll under his Resolve on one die or the hand is broken for one month (giving him a penalty of -1 Finesse). The hilt can be opened by pushing the hidden catch.

4. Grasping Hilt: The sword's hilt is a form-fitting design that wraps around the wielder's hand. When grasped, it locks into place. This has two benefits. First, the wielder cannot be disarmed of his sword. Secondly, the catch to release the hilt is hidden, which means that users unfamiliar with the sword will find that it traps their hand like a vise.

5-6: Roll again on this chart, ignoring further 5-6 results. Then spend 3 HP and roll on the Maître Swords chart (below).

7. Adjustable Hilt: The hilt of this sword can be shortened or lengthened, for use as either a Fencing (2k2) or a Heavy Weapon (3k2), by spending one Action. Using it as a Heavy Weapon requires both hands, while the Fencing Weapon form requires only one hand.

8. Grappling Hilt: The hilt of the sword can be used as a grappling gun. It has 20 feet of strong cord in it, and takes 10 Actions to rewind, if used as a weapon while the cord is unwound, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

9. Healing Touch: At the touch of a concealed switch, the sword injects a liquid into the wielder that heals him of 15 Flesh Wounds. The formula for this liquid is known to the wielder and costs 5G per dose, but is only effective if injected. Only one dose per day will work on a single person, and the sword's reservoir holds only one dose. Afterwards it must be refilled, which takes 25 Actions. When it is empty, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

10. Loyal Hilt: A poisoned needle jabs into the base of the holder's thumb one Phase after picking it up unless a hidden latch is released. The poison may be either arsenic or knock-out drops, at the owner's option. Heavy gloves, gauntlets, or a panzerhand on the wielder's sword hand will defeat this security measure. The poison reservoir must be refilled after each use, but is not large enough to affect the sword's balance.

11. Blade Breaker: The blade breaker is a device designed to strike an opponent's blade at a weak spot and shatter it. This is only useful when an opponent has just Parried the puzzle sword. The wielder then depresses a hidden button, and part of the sword's hilt smashes down, attempting to break the other blade. This works similarly to the Eisenfaust Journeyman ability, with the sword having Brawn 4 for this purpose. Once sprung, a mechanism must be rewound in the sword, requiring 10 Actions, before the ability can be used again. Until then, the weapon is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

Détruire Puzzle Swords

0. Pistol Hilt: There is a single-shot concealed pistol built into the hilt of the sword, which can be fired by depressing a hidden button. If the button is pressed when the sword has just caused damage to an opponent, the pistol automatically hits, dealing damage as normal (4k3). Otherwise, the wielder needs to make a successful Attack (Firearms) roll with one Raise in order to hit.

1. Firebreather: When the sword is swung and a concealed button is pressed, the sword sprays oil from its tip and ignites it with a built-in flint. This results in a two-foot arc of flame extending from the blade's tip. The arc can be avoided by its target with a Finesse+Rolling [20] roll (this does not require spending an Action). Failure results in two dice of fire damage. The sword holds enough oil for one use, and must be refilled afterward, taking 25 Actions. When it is empty, the sword is off-

balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

2. Blinding Spray: The sword has a reservoir of liquid that can be sprayed into an opponent's face at the touch of a hidden button. This requires a successful Attack roll with two Raises. Instead of suffering damage, the victim is blinded (as if in Total Darkness) until the liquid is washed out of their eyes or one hour has passed, whichever comes first. The sword holds only enough liquid for one use, and takes 5 Actions to refill (using water and herbs available for 50c). When the sword's reservoir is empty, it is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

3. Dart Hilt: The sword can fire a small dart out of its pommel up to 10' when a hidden button is pressed. This requires a successful Attack roll with three Raises. Deadly poisons or knock-out drops are typically smeared on the dart. If the dart is lost, a skilled Blacksmith (Rank 4+ in the Knack) is required to replace it at a cost of 10G. When the dart is missing, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above). Poison must be reapplied to the dart after each use.

4. Strange Metal: The sword is made from metal so light that the wielder may lower one of his Action dice by one Phase or add +10 to his Initiative Total during Phase 1.

5-6: Roll again on this chart, ignoring further 5-6 results. Then spend 3 HP and roll on the Maître Swords chart (below).

7. Spreading Blade: This sword is designed with a powerful spring between two half blades. When a hidden button is pushed, the two halves of the sword are forced apart. This often results in broken ribs and other horrifying wounds to the victim. After a successful attack, the Hero may activate this ability to inflict an additional two dice of Wounds to the target (applied separately after the sword wound itself has been taken). However, the sword's TN to be broken is 5 lower, and once it has been sprung, it is useless until 10 Actions have been spent resetting it.

8. Poison Reservoir: There is a small watertight compartment inside the sword's hilt. When a certain decoration is twisted on the pommel, it opens up this compartment, allowing whatever is inside to flow out. If the sword is being held tip down when this is done, the liquid will flow down it, coating it liberally. This takes one Action. However, until the end of the Round (or until the first successful attack with the weapon), the liquid will cling to the blade and seep into any wounds it makes. Typically, deadly poisons or knock-out drops are placed in the reservoir. The sword holds enough poison for one use and must afterward be refilled, taking 25 Actions. When it is empty, the sword is off-balance (see General Rules for Montaigne Puzzle Swords above).

9. Collapsing Hilt: If the sword is drawn from its sheath without pressing a hidden catch, roll a die. That many Phases later, the sword falls apart in the wielder's hands, taking (10-Wits) Actions to reassemble.

10. Tainted Metal: When an opponent fails a Wound Check after being struck by this sword, he may only erase a number of his Flesh Wounds equal to his Wound Check roll.

Example: If he had 87 Flesh Wounds and rolled a 42 for his Wound Check, he would suffer 3 Dramatic Wounds (1+2 for failing by more than 40) and still be left with 45 (87-42) Flesh Wounds.

11. Razor Edge: For every 10 the sword's wielder Keeps when making Damage Rolls with the sword, it automatically inflicts one Dramatic Wound to its target. The 10s do not Explode, nor are they counted toward the Damage Roll total, but neither do they cause existing Flesh Wounds to go away.

Example: If the wielder rolled a 9 and a 10 for damage, the target would suffer one Dramatic Wound, then add 9 Flesh

Wounds to his current total and make a Brawn test against the new total.

Maitre Puzzle Swords

0-1. The Eager Blade: This sword can instantly leap to its owner's hand whenever he wills it, from any distance. Should he ever hand the sword to another person hilt-first, the sword will begin to obey that person's commands. If the owner dies, the first person to touch the sword becomes its new master.

2-3. The Ghostly Blade: No one but the sword's owner can pick up this weapon. Everyone else's hands simply pass right through it. While the wielder holds it in his hand, the sword is solid and can be touched by others (and touch them in return) but if he lets go of it, the sword once again resumes its ghostly behavior. Should he ever hand the sword to another person hilt-first, the sword will then allow only that person to pick it up. If the owner dies, the sword becomes solid, and the first person to touch it becomes its new master.

4-5. The Grasping Blade: Once per Act, this sword can cut at great distances. If the wielder can see a person, he can attack him with the sword, no matter how far away he is—the blade disappears into the air and emerges near the target. The target can still use Passive and Active Defenses as usual. Of course, a Surprise check (with the wielder receiving two Free Raises) is in order if the target was unaware of the blade's wielder.

6-7. The Shimmering Blade: Once per act, this sword may "shimmer." It begins to waver in the air like a mirage, and until the beginning of the next Round, it ignores armor and cover and cannot be Parried (either Actively or Passively).

8-9. The Greedy Blade: This sword's wielder may spend one Action in order to cut open a hole in the air with the sword, and reach in with his other hand. This allows the wielder to act as though he had the Porté Pocket Knack at Rank 3, but objects inside never vanish.

10-11. The Thirsty Blade: Once per Act, this sword can draw some of the blood out of an opponent. The wielder declares that he is activating the blade before rolling for damage. He may then double the value of any one Kept Damage die.

Example: If one of the dice Exploded and rolled a 15, he could use this ability to double it to 30, in addition to any other dice he was Keeping for Damage.

Roving Don

Cost: 6 HP (3 HP with the Castillian Education Advantage)

Restrictions: Castille only

Your Hero is a low-ranking Don. You have lost your lands to the Montaigne, but managed to salvage most of your savings. Unfortunately, until the Montaigne are beaten back, you have no other source of income, so you are forced to live off your savings.

Effect: Your starting income is 6,000G, but you have no monthly income, and you must spend 50G per week to maintain your high standards of living. Should the war against Montaigne be won, it is likely that you will regain your lands and become a full Noble once again.

Rücken

Cost: 8 HP (6 HP if Eisen)

An Eisen has sworn to be your Rücken. Whenever the two of you are fighting together, you can absolutely trust him to cover your back, but you must be willing to do the same for him.

Effect: Your Rücken is considered an absolutely loyal 100 HP Henchman, unless you betray or abandon him, in which case you lose this Advantage and he turns into a 3 HP Nemesis.

Rune Weapon

Cost: Varies (see Effect below)

Restrictions: Vesten only

You have a weapon or other object that has a rune inscribed upon it. It may be any of the twenty-four Lærdom runes.

Effect: You must name the weapon. The cost of this Advantage depends on the kind of rune inscribed on it. Weather runes cost 1 HP, plus 1 HP per Raise that they have on them, up to three Raises. Runes that Add Dice cost 4 HP. A permanent rune costs twice as much as an ordinary rune of its type.

Scarovese

Cost: 1 HP or 3 HP (see Effect below)

All Vodacce study the works of Cristoforo Scarovese, but you have a keen insight into his work. You can use his lessons to hide your tracks, deflect blame, and generally prosper in the folds of the Vodacce Great Game.

Effect: By spending 1 HP in this Advantage, your Reputation may drop to -40 before you become an NPC. By spending 3 HP in this Advantage, your Reputation may drop to -50 before you become an NPC.

Scoundrel

Cost: 3 HP

Restrictions: You may not also have the Citation Advantage.

You have a reputation for being bad, for consorting with the "criminal element," and for knowing and doing things that only the bold or forsaken care to. It may be true (if you'd like), or you might just have been in the wrong place at the wrong time once too often. But, as some say, "Having a bad reputation is better than having no reputation at all."

Effect: You gain the Streetwise Skill for free. Your Reputation begins at -10, giving you 1 Reputation die to roll when making Reputation Actions.

Sensitive Bones

Cost: 2 HP

At some point, you suffered a serious injury. Although it has healed now, it is sensitive to changes in atmospheric pressure.

Effect: You Keep an extra die (+0k1) when rolling for the Weather Knack.

Servants

Cost: 3 HP (may be purchased multiple times)

You have one or more servants in your employ at the start of the game. They are not particularly loyal (beyond the desire to be paid), but they can be a help if you need something (or someone) finished.

Effect: Servants are classified in two groups—Henchmen and Brutes—following the standard NPC creation and combat rules. 3 HP invested in this Advantage buys one Henchman (designed by the GM) or six Brutes (all Threat Rating 1).

Showmanship

Cost: 5 HP (3 HP if Fhidelì)

You have flawless timing and an ability to work crowds that borders on the uncanny. You long ago determined that anything worth doing was worth doing stylishly. You move, speak, fight, and even eat with flair. While this has obvious uses on the stage or working a crowd, it also has applications elsewhere.

Effect: Any Action performed in front of an audience that would earn the character one or more Reputation Points, earns one extra point. Additionally, you gain a Free Raise on any use of the

Repartee system that succeeds. In other words, if the roll would fail, it fails, but if it succeeds, it counts as if you had called a Raise. When attempting to affect more than one person, you must choose whether to take a Free Raise or affect an additional target.

Sidhe Ally

Cost: 2 HP (Avalon only)

You've gained an ally in the Sidhe court.

Effect: This is a double-bladed advantage. While occasionally he's able to help you out, every once in a while he needs a helping hand himself. While his troubles often outweigh your own, he's saved your life more times than you can count in the past.

Sidhe Blood

Cost: Varies (Minimum of 1 HP; see below)

Restrictions: Avalon only

Heroes with Sidhe Blood are the bearers of both benefits and hindrances.

Effect: The cost of this Advantage varies, depending on which traits you inherited from your Sidhe side. The Blessings cost HP, while the Curses give you HP back.

Blessings

These are the benefits you have received from your Sidhe heritage. Each Blessing may be taken only once.

Existing Advantage

Cost: Varies (see Effect below)

Effect: One of the following Advantages may be taken as part of your Sidhe Blood Advantage for the listed cost:

- Appearance: Above Average (4 HP)
- Appearance: Stunning (8 HP)
- Dangerous Beauty (2 HP)
- Keen Senses (1 HP)
- Large (4 HP)
- Small (1 HP)

Child of the Earth

Cost: 2 HP

You have an affinity for Avalon's bountiful earth.

Effect: You can feel the heart of the mountains slowly beating beneath you. You can sense impending earthquakes like an animal, and when you take Falling Damage the surface you land on is always considered to be one category softer than usual.

Child of the Sea

Cost: 2 HP

You have an affinity for the sea.

Effect: You can smell the sharp tang of the salt air no matter how far inland you travel. You can sense impending storms, and if you ever get into a Drowning situation, your Resolve is considered +3 Ranks higher.

Fearful Countenance

Cost: 1 HP

There's something about you that's unsettling. Your face reveals something that is both fascinating and repulsive.

Effect: You gain +2 unkept dice on all Intimidation rolls.

Good Standing

Cost: 2 HP

The Sidhe side of your family is in good standing with the Queen's court.

Effect: You receive +1 Reputation die when dealing with the Seelie Court. In addition, those with Good Standing may purchase the Sidhe Weapon Advantage for -1 HP less.

Slow Aging and Immunity to Disease

Cost: 2 HP

Because of your Sidhe heritage, you age more slowly than you should and you are never affected by disease.

Effect: Halve your age (round down), for Aging purposes. You are immune to all diseases, including the White Plague—they simply don't affect you.

Smell Glamour

Cost: 3 HP

Because of your Sidhe heritage, you can "smell" Glamour.

Effect: Pick a distinctive smell, like ripe oranges, wintergreen, or brimstone. This smell fills your nostrils when a Sidhe or Glamour mage is using his powers within 10 yards of you. Some Heroes with Sidhe Blood "hear" Glamour, and a very few can even "taste" it.

Curses

These are drawbacks you received from your Sidhe heritage. Like Blessings, each Curse may be taken only once.

Cold-Hearted

Cost: 2 HP

Your Sidhe heritage has left you with a hard heart. You may never experience True Love (except through magical means), and any romances you get involved in are doomed to fail once you get bored with your lover.

Effect: Any romances your Hero gets involved in must be ended by the beginning of the next Story. Each ended romance reduces your Reputation by -3 Points. Worst of all, you begin the game with a Lost Love Background (2 Points), for which you never receive bonus XP.

Diurnal

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take the Nocturnal Curse.

You grow weak when shielded from the light of the sun.

Effect: Unless you are in direct sunlight, you suffer a -2 unkept dice penalty on all rolls.

Gifts

Cost: 2 HP

The giving of gifts is a powerful ritual in the lands of the Sidhe. Your heritage has made it a curse.

Effect: Whenever you accept a gift, you must return the favor as quickly as possible. For every day that you do not, you lose one unkept die to all your rolls. This effect is cumulative.

Iron Susceptibility

Cost: 1 HP

You are susceptible to cold iron, but to a much lesser degree than some of your cousins.

Effect: Touching cold iron with your flesh causes minor discomfort, but no actual penalties. If you are struck with a weapon made from cold iron, your opponent rolls +1 unkept Damage die. Lastly, if you are struck by a MacEachern Weapon, your opponent rolls +1 Kept Damage die.

Iron Vulnerability

Cost: 2 HP

Your Sidhe heritage has left you vulnerable to cold iron.

Effect: Whenever the dreaded metal comes into contact with your flesh, you suffer extreme pain and lose -1 unkept die from

all your rolls until the end of the Scene. If you are struck with a weapon made from cold iron, your opponent rolls +1 Kept Damage die. MacEachern Weapons affect you as if you were a full-blooded Sidhe.

Land Bound

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take the Sea Bound Curse.

You are left feeling weak whenever you can't feel solid earth under your feet.

Effect: When you are more than ten miles from any body of land, all your rolls are at a -2 unkept dice penalty.

Nocturnal

Cost: 1 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take the Diurnal Curse.

You have trouble functioning in direct sunlight

Effect: When in direct sunlight, all your rolls are at a -1 unkept die penalty.

Running Water

Cost: 1 HP

Running water holds a strange repulsion to you.

Effect: You cannot voluntarily cross running water without a bridge. You can't explain why. You wish you could; maybe that would help you get over it.

Sea Bound

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take the Land Bound Curse.

You are left feeling weak whenever you can't feel the salt spray of the sea on your skin.

Effect: When you are more than ten miles from any body of salt water, all your rolls are at a -2 unkept dice penalty.

Sidhe Weapon

Cost: 1-5 HP (1-10 HP for Sidhe Heroes)

Restrictions: Avalon only

Some Heroes have been blessed with a weapon forged by the Sidhe.

Effect: Unless the character is a Sidhe Hero, only one such weapon may be purchased. Normally, Heroes may spend no more than 5 HP on a Sidhe Weapon, however, Heroes with both the Sidhe Blood Advantage and the Good Standing Blessing can purchase a Sidhe Weapon for -1 HP less. Sidhe Heroes purchase Sidhe Weapons for -1 HP less, and can spend up to 10 HP on Sidhe Weapons. In addition, characters can also purchase Glamour imbuelements for their weapon (see the Glamour-imbued Weapon Advantage).

Weapons

Sidhe Sword

Cost: 4 HP

A Sidhe Sword is as light as smoke and as deadly as fire. Sidhe Swords can be wielded by anyone with Fencing weapon or Heavy Weapon Skills.

Effect: These blades are 4k2 weapons in Avalon, 3k2 weapons elsewhere. When rolling for Initiative, the user may lower the result of one of his Action dice by -1 at the start of the Round.

Sidhe Bow and Arrows

Cost: 3 HP

The Sidhe Bow and Arrows is a special gift, with the bow resembling a normal bow, but made of a supple wood, and the arrows arranged in an ornately decorated quiver.

Effect: A Sidhe Bowstring can never be broken, and the 6 Arrows that come with the Sidhe Bow can always be retrieved after firing. Those struck a killing blow with a Sidhe Arrow do not die, but instead fall into an enchanted sleep, which lasts as long as the GM sees fit (a single night is normal, but periods of up to one hundred years are known).

Sidhe Dagger

Cost: 2 HP

As light as its larger counterpart, a Sidhe Dagger is just as deadly.

Effect: The Sidhe Dagger is a 2k2 weapon in Avalon, 1k2 elsewhere, and shares the same qualities as the Sidhe Sword, including the Initiative bonus.

Small

Cost: 2 HP

Restrictions: You cannot take the Large advantage.

You are six inches to one foot shorter than average.

Effect: You gain +1 unkept die to all Stealth and Shadowing rolls. You drop -1 Damage die from your first Damage roll each combat. You cannot take the Large Advantage.

Spark of Genius

Cost: 2 HP

The character has an intuitive understanding of one academic field. He is able to solve difficult problems related to that field without the use of scratch paper or referring to his notes.

Effect: Pick one of the following Knacks: Accounting, Astronomy, Cartography, Composer, Cryptography, Drawing, History, Law, Logistics, Mathematics, Musician, Natural Philosophy, Occult, Philosophy, Sculpting, Singing, Strategy, Tactics, Theology, Writing. Whenever you make a roll based on this Knack, you get a Free Raise.

Specialty

Cost: 1 HP (Basic Knack) or 3 HP (Advanced Knack)

Restrictions: You may purchase this Advantage up to three times. Swordsman and Sorcery Knacks cannot be purchased with this Advantage (see the Specialty: Swordsman Knack Advantage).

You have trained yourself to be skilled in one very narrow area of expertise, bypassing the schooling you would ordinarily need.

Effect: You gain +1 Rank in a Knack that is not found inside a Skill you already possess. Knacks purchased in this manner may be increased normally after Hero Creation and must obey normal limitations.

Specialty: Swordsman Knack

Cost: Varies (see Effect below)

Restrictions: Counts toward limit of three Specialty Knacks, but may only be purchased one.

Although the special skills of swordsmen are very closely guarded secrets there are many mercenaries and sell-swords that have no regard for secrecy. To a mercenary the only thing that is important is money; if the money is right then there are few who would refuse to teach the art of combat, this includes passing on the knowledge of swordsman knacks.

Effect: This advantage is treated in many respects as a regular Specialty, i.e. it counts toward the limit of three Specialty Knacks (see the Specialty Advantage). In any case, only one Swordsman Knack may be purchased as a Specialty. Even Swordsmen may learn an additional Knack that they don't already know.

A Swordsman Knack purchased in this fashion may be advanced to a maximum of Rank 3 unless the student later learns a Swordsman School of which the Specialty Knack is a part, in which case it may be advanced normally to Rank 5. The HP costs are given below:

Student	Knack Type	Cost per Rank
Swordsman	Any Knack	4 HP
Non-Swordsman	Orders	4 HP
Non-Swordsman	Weapon/Combat Knack	5 HP
Non-Swordsman	Exploit Weakness	6 HP

Sympathetic Healer

Cost: 20 HP

Restrictions: Vesten only

Certain Vestenmannavnjar have the ability to heal people by taking their wounds and illnesses into their own bodies.

Effect: By touching someone and spending a Drama Die as an Action, you may attempt to take their wounds from them. Make a Resolve [10] roll. If successful, you absorb all of that person's Flesh Wounds, plus one Dramatic Wound per Raise you made on your roll. You must immediately roll your Brawn to see whether the sudden absorption of Flesh Wounds gives you any Dramatic Wounds.

Sympathetic Healers may also take illnesses or poisons from someone else's body and into their own. No roll is necessary to do this. The healer merely touches his patient and spends one Drama Die, and one dose of poison or one illness transfers from the patient to the healer, who immediately suffers its effects.

In times of desperation, a Sympathetic Healer may try to transfer injuries, poison, or disease to another person. To do this, he must touch that person and spend a Drama Die. If he wishes to transfer a poison or a disease, then he must make a Resolve [20] roll. If he succeeds, one illness or dose of poison transfers to him from his patient. If he wishes to inflict injuries upon someone, he must make a Resolve [15] roll. If he succeeds, he loses one Dramatic Wound and inflicts a 2k2 attack that acts as if it had been fired from a Firearm for purposes of inflicting wounds.

Syrneth Artifact

Cost: Varies

Somehow you've obtained one or more Syrneth Artifacts, whether found, stolen, purchased or inherited.

Effect: The Hero begins the game with a Syrneth Artifact in his possession. The player chooses an artifact from the following list for the HP cost listed.

Artifacts

Golden Marble

Cost: 2 HP

You found this marble in a field near your childhood home. You discovered, quite by accident, that if you tap it with your fingernail, carry it somewhere else, and then drop the marble on the ground, it begins to roll back towards the place where you tapped it.

Effect: It only "remembers" the last place it was tapped, and the marble never "forgets" a location as long as it isn't tapped again. When rolling, it moves back along the path it has traveled since then at a slow walking rate. It is possible to pick the marble up while it is retracing its path, take a break, and then drop it and have it resume its journey later. If the marble reaches water, it stops at the edge, and if carried across and dropped again, will continue on its way.

Green Bracelet

Cost: 3 HP

You found this bracelet in a net while fishing one day. You put it on, and later, when you were getting a fish, your knife slipped and cut open your hand. The bracelet flashed a pale green, and the wound closed of its own accord.

Effect: Once per Scene, this bracelet heals its wearer of 10 Flesh Wounds. These are always the first wounds inflicted on the wearer during the Scene, and they close instantly, so they are never counted when you make a Wound Check.

Grinning Armband

Cost: 2 HP

This wide golden armband has a small silvered animal skull inset in it. You bought it from a wizened old sailor, who claimed it once belonged to Captain Rogers himself.

Effect: When you wear it and tense your arm rapidly two times, the skull's mouth opens and a bony hand, trailing a thin silver cable, fires out of it. The hand can extend up to 50 feet, and tightly grabs anything it hits. After the hand has a firm grasp, the cable retracts, swinging you over to where the hand is hooked. This operates like a grappling gun, except that it is simpler to use (TN 10 instead of TN 15), and you never need to worry about slipping and falling off the rope.

Heavy Knife

Cost: 2 HP

You bought this strange gray knife from a shady man in an alley. You found that cuts inflicted by it are deeper and take longer to heal.

Effect: The knife inflicts +3 additional Flesh Wounds whenever it hits.

Mechanical Hand

Cost: 2 HP

This hand is composed of a strange reddish metal. When you found it, you had lost your own off-hand in a fight. Curious, you pressed it against the stump, and it attached itself to you.

Effect: It has proven to be no stronger or more dexterous than your normal hand, but it never gets tired. It can be damaged as easily as a real hand, but it repairs itself after a few days, and if it gets cut off, it can be reattached (simply press it up against the stump again).

Ornate Glove and Throwing Knife

Cost: 5 HP

You received this pair of artifacts as a gift from an archaeologist friend of yours. The silver filigreed glove has a concealed dagger sheath which contains a bluish knife, balanced for throwing.

Effect: Whenever you pull your gloved hand back as though you were about to throw a knife, the dagger appears in your hand. You can only throw the dagger once per Phase; otherwise it returns to your hand before hitting its target. In addition, the knife must be left in its sheath at least two hours every day, or it loses its returning property until so recharged. The glove itself seems to draw its energy from being worn. You must wear it at least ten hours each day, or the dagger stops returning to the glove until this requirement has been met.

Reddish Cutlass

Cost: 2 HP

This cutlass washed up on the beach one day. Noting its unusual design, you rightly guessed that it was a Syrneth Artifact and kept it. The blade seems to be able to duplicate an earlier move used against an opponent to similar effect.

Effect: Once per Scene, after you hit and deal damage to an opponent with this cutlass, you may use your next Action and spend a Drama Die to activate the cutlass' power. The cutlass imitates the earlier attack exactly, including the Attack roll and Damage roll (assuming that this attack is successful).

Shining Belt

Cost: 1 HP

When clasped around your waist, this segmented belt begins to glow with a pale white light.

Effect: The light illuminates 5 yards in all directions, and leaves your hands free. Once the belt has been fastened, only the wearer can remove it. The belt stops shining when exposed to direct sunlight or is unclasped.

Silvery Box

Cost: 3 HP

When you first picked up this box, it opened at your touch. Since then, you have been the only person able to open it.

Effect: The box has proven impervious to all ordinary attempts to force it open or destroy it, although perhaps another Synchron Artifact could accomplish the task. The box's innermost cavity measures 4" x 2" x 1" so you only keep your smallest, most prized possessions in it.

Tarnished Mug and Tap

Cost: 2 HP

You purchased these items from a traveling merchant who didn't realize what he had. The tap is a type similar to that typically used for tapping a keg of beer. The mug is a tall, narrow vessel, with a handle much too thick for human hands to hold properly.

Effect: Both it and the tap seem impervious to ordinary damage. When the tap is in place on a barrel or keg, and opened, nothing comes out. However, if someone then attempts to drink from the mug, liquid from the tapped container appears in the mug. The liquid only flows if someone drinks from the mug; it cannot be spilled out of the mug. The tap only works if it has been inserted in a container. Simply throwing it into a freshwater lake would not guarantee endless drinking water.

Tenure

Cost: 2 HP

The character has a permanent position at one of Théah's universities.

Effect: He draws a regular income, even when on sabbatical. The income is 15 Guilders per month and the player should decide which university his Hero belongs to. Strong candidates include: La Ciencia University in Castille, Dionna University in Vodacce, *Le Grande Université* in Montaigne, Bedegrane University in Avalon, and the University of Kirk in Vendel.

Thrall

Cost: 1 HP

Restrictions: Vesten only; You cannot also take the Jarl Advantage

You were a Thrall, a member of the servile class of the Vestenmannavjar society. Your jarl lost all of his land and money to the Vendel, and his life ended shortly thereafter. You had nowhere else to turn, and have thus become a free man.

Effect: You gain the Servant Skill for free, and you start the game with 5 Guilders that you have scrounged up along the way.

Time Sense

Cost: 2 HP

Your Hero has an innate and uncanny understanding of the passing of time.

Effect: At any occasion your Hero knows what time it is to within a small margin or error, you are also aware of how much time has passed over a given period.

Example: You know that it's about 6 pm after spending all day in court wrangling; or that after being locked in a dungeon for three weeks, it's actually the twelfth of Primus; or that those fifteen minutes you were told to wait before lighting the fuse are up.

This Advantage makes you invaluable onboard a ship, where you are able to aid in judging the ship's longitude remarkably accurately.

Toughness

Cost: 5 HP (3 HP if Ussura)

Whether it's due to a thick skin (or a thick skull) you have always had a high pain threshold.

Effect: All of your Wound Checks are made with +1 Kept die.

Trained Duelist

Cost: 10 HP

Restrictions: You must be a student of a Swordsman School. You must also be a member, in good standing, of the Swordsman's Guild (must have the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage).

You have had a duelist's upbringing. You know everything there is to know about dueling, including: duel etiquette, rules and stipulations for different types of duels, when a second or replacement is valid in a duel, whether a duel challenge is valid or not, and what weapons are permitted in a given type of duel. In your vast experience of dueling you have also encountered many different fighting techniques and have practiced your own techniques until they have become almost second nature to you.

Effect: You are afforded the following benefits:

- You know all but the most obscure knowledge about anything specifically pertaining to duels. If a roll needs to be made to test or use this knowledge, you roll +2 Kept dice.
- At Hero Creation you may select foreign Swordsman Schools as though they are from your own Country of Origin. Only Schools that offer Membership to the Swordsman's Guild may be purchased in this way.
- Whenever you enter a duel you can automatically tell what style your opponent is fighting in, even if you have not studied the School yourself.

Trained Spider

Cost: 2 HP (1 HP if Vodacce Fate Witch)

The spider is a natural embodiment of the Vodacce Fate Witch, and many women train spiders to serve a variety of purposes. You have acquired one of these specially-bred spiders, ranging in size from a fingernail to a dinner plate. Spiders are considered Brutes with a threat rating of 1. They cannot engage in extended combat and are considered pets, not servitors. It fulfills a single specific duty; choose one or make a Simple roll on the list below:

1. Glow: You have a small globe filled with tiny spiders which produce a bright phosphorescent glow. The globe can illuminate an area of 10' by 10'.

2. Poison: This spider can be trained to bite anyone who enters a specific area no larger than a single room. The bite is intensely

painful and causes 3k2 Wounds, but can only be administered once per day.

3. Theft Mark: This spider has been trained to bite anyone who touches a specific object. While not fatal, its poison causes the skin to swell like a balloon. The effects last for several days, making it very easy to spot the thief.

4. Door Marks: This spider has been trained to spin webs across doors, windows, and other entrances, allowing the owner to know when intruders have crossed them. It takes the spider ten minutes to “mark” a single entrance. Once marked, the owner will know with a single glance if anyone has passed by.

5. Tough Lines: This spider produces a very strong thread, which may be used as thin rope. It takes one week to spin fifty feet of thread, which can support up to 250 pounds.

6. Retrieval: This large spider has been trained to retrieve small items—pens, rings, sheaves of paper, etc.—and return them to its owner. The items cannot weigh more than one pound, and the spider is limited in what it can retrieve to either one single type of item (pen, ring, etc), or an item which the spider has had an opportunity to mark with its scent.

7. Message Transfer: The spider’s bite can effect a brief transfer of information from one subject to another. The message transfer must be fifteen words or less and compose a single sentence. The information only travels one way (from a sender to a subject) and cannot be transferred to more than one person. Keep in mind that an unwilling subject may not realize what the spider is up to and squash it before it can bite. The spider may only use this ability three times per week.

8. Tracking: The spider can track a specified person, leaving a distinctive thread on buildings and other landmarks for its mistress to follow. Distance is no object; the spider can follow its subject for hundreds of miles if necessary. The tracking ability only works if the subject is on foot: the spider is too slow to follow horses or wagons, and ships leaving no place to mark passage.

9. Hide Object: The spider can take a single object (weighing no more than a pound) and hide it in a secret place, cocooning it with thread and then retrieving it when ordered. The object is considered invisible for purposes of searching; it simply cannot be found by normal human means. The spider can hide up to three objects at a time with this ability.

0. Roll twice on this list, ignoring this result hereafter.

Twisted Blade

Cost: Varies

Restrictions: Vodacce only

Vodacce’s Fate Witches sometimes attach fate strands to newly-formed weapons, increasing their potency. These “Twisted Blades” are in high demand among Vodacce’s nobility. While witches usually “twist” swords, they can also influence knives, pistols, and other weapons if they choose.

Effect: For every 2 HP you spend in this Advantage, your weapon receives 1 Destiny die. You may purchase up to 5 Destiny dice for your weapon. You may spend these dice before making any roll that has something to do with the weapon (Attack rolls, Damage rolls, Swordsman Knacks, Active Defenses, etc.) with each spent die adding one Kept die to the roll. Your Destiny dice refresh at the start of each Act.

Fate Witch Heroes may Twist a weapon (see the Swords Spread under the Sorte sorcery rules).

Unbound

Cost: 15 HP

Restrictions: Male Vodacce only

Every generation, a handful of Vodacce men are born outside of the webs of Fate. No strands connect to them and Sorte sorcery slides off them like water off a duck. Any effort to read their fate in a Destiny Spread results in incomprehensible gibberish. “The Unbound,” as the Fate Witches call them, constitute some of the greatest heroes in Vodacce history, as well as the most reviled villains.

Effect: You are immune to all uses of Sorte sorcery. All Fate strands attached to you are considered Court Cards, whether they are actually that powerful or not. In addition, when facing a Fate Witch in combat, you have a Fear Rating of 2 in regards to her.

University

Cost: 4 HP (2 HP if Castille)

Like many martial Academies sprouting up across Théah, Universities—mostly funded and organized by the Vaticine Church of the Prophets, and offering a wide variety of scholarly training—are coming into fashion.

Effect: You have attended one of these Universities. As a result, Civil Skills cost you 1 HP (rather than 2 HP) to purchase during Hero Creation.

Ussuran Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Ussura only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way that a person speaks that indicates he’s from a particular area.

Effect: Only a Hero fully proficient in a given language can identify accents; Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and non-Ussurans may never have an accent. There are five primary accents in Ussura: Gallenia, Molhyna, Rurik, Somojez, and Veche. The wandering Fhidelis have their own language (with an easily identifiable accent) and do not fall into this Advantage. Ussuran Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language table below:

Ussuran Language Table

	Gallenia	Molhyna	Rurik	Somojez	Veche
Avalon	3	3	2	3	2
Castille	2	3	3	3	2
Crescent	2	2	2	1	2
Cymru	4	4	3	4	3
Eisen	3	2	2	2	3
High Eisen	3	3	3	3	3
Inis	4	4	3	4	3
Montaigne	3	2	3	3	3
Teodoran	2	2	1	1	2
Théan	3	4	4	3	3
Ussura	0	0	0	0	0
Vendel	2	2	2	2	3
Vodacce	2	2	3	2	2

Gallenia: This wild, foreign-sounding dialect is almost a language unto itself. It emphasizes soft, lilting sounds and its users speak with a clipped tone. Gallenia residents are considered enigmatic and wise, owing to their proximity to Cathay.

Molhyna: This accent has developed among the plains and steppes of far-eastern Ussura. It is guttural and sharp, and even other Ussurans consider it a bit uncouth. Because of their distance from other nations, Molhyna speakers are considered near-savages: foreigners on the edge of the world.

Rurik: This accent has developed in Ussura's heart, home of the Gaius and the meeting place of the Knias council. This is the Ussuran accent described in the 7th Sea Players' Guide.

Somojez: This accent reflects influences from Eisen and the Crescent Empire, as well as northern Vodacce. Other Ussurans consider residents of Somojez very cosmopolitan, and their accent is similar to those of western nations.

Veche: Veche has traditionally housed refugees and cast-offs from other areas in Ussura, brought there by war or the will of Matushka. Its accent is soft and flowing, representing the amalgamation of countless different speech patterns. Veche's frightening past has left its residents with a slightly sinister reputation. The accent is considered a cause for slight unease in the listener.

Vendel League Seat

Cost: 8 HP (5 HP if Vendel)

Every year, the Vendel League auctions off some of its League Seats. These carry a high price, but they bring great wealth to the people who hold them. You were able to secure one this year.

Effect: Your Reputation increases by 10 points and you gain an income of 100G per week. The income and Reputation gained from having a Vendel League Seat is lost when your seat goes up for auction again in three years, but both can be regained by winning a seat at that year's auction. While you have your Seat, you may cast a vote at the meetings of the League.

Vendel or Vesten Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Vendel or Vesten only

An accent is an identifying characteristic in the way a person speaks that indicates he's from a particular tribe. Only a Hero fully proficient in a given language can identify accents; Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and those who are not Vestenmannavnjar or Vendel may never have either accent. There are nine primary accents available to Vesten or Vendel characters: Aarensfolk, Bodilsfolk, Enhedsfolk, Handelsfolk, Jordsfolk, Larsfolk, Stjernasfolk, Tillitsfolk, and Vendel. Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language chart, below.

Vendel/Vesten Language Table

	Aarens	Bodils	Enheds	Handels	Jords
Avalon	2	1	1	1	0
Castille	3	2	3	2	3
Crescent	3	3	3	4	3
Cymru	3	2	2	2	1
Eisen	1	1	0	1	1
High Eisen	2	2	1	2	2
Inis	3	2	2	2	1
Montaigne	2	1	3	2	2
Teodoran	2	4	2	3	3
Théan	3	2	4	3	3
Ussura	1	3	1	2	1
Vendel	0	0	0	0	0
Vodacce	2	2	3	1	3

	Lars	Stjernas	Tillits	Vendel
Avalon	1	2	1	1
Castille	2	3	3	2
Crescent	4	3	3	3
Cymru	2	3	2	2
Eisen	1	1	2	1
High Eisen	2	2	2	2
Inis	2	3	2	2
Montaigne	1	2	2	2
Teodoran	3	3	2	3

	Lars	Stjernas	Tillits	Vendel
Théan	2	3	2	3
Ussura	3	1	2	2
Vendel	0	0	0	0
Vodacce	2	1	2	2

Aarensfolk: Aarensfolk's accent is noticeable by the way they pronounce the letter f as if it were v.

Bodilsfolk: The primary characteristics of the Bodilsfolk accent are the rapid pace of the speech and the tendency to slur their vowels.

Enhedsfolk: Enhedsfolk shorten their vowels and tend not to pronounce the letter g when it appears at the end of a word. Many of them travel to Eisen (especially Freiburg) in the hopes of finding allies against the Vendel.

Handelsfolk: Somehow, Handelsfolk seem to be growling softly as they speak. They emphasize the letters h, i., n, r, s, and v in their pronunciation.

Jordsfolk: The Jordsfolk accent owes much to the Inish who have aided the Vestenmannavnjar in their attacks on Vendel ships. Many members of the Jordsfolk tribe now speak at least a few phrases of Avalon.

Larsfolk: Members of the Larsfolk tribe speak with a nasal intonation, raising the pitch of their voices and lengthening their vowels.

Stjernasfolk: The accent of the Stjernasfolk people is typified by their pronouncing th as if it were a d or a dh. For example, instead of saying, "I'm thirty," they would say, "I'm dirty".

Tillitsfolk: The people of Tillitsfolk have preserved the ancient pronunciation of the language. They do not soften their vowels and emphasize the letters g, k, p, and t when they speak.

Vendel: The Vendel have softened the Vestenmannavnjar language, making it sound more like Eisen than it had in the past. This is the Vendel accent described in the 7th Seas Players' Guide.

Venerable

Cost: 6 HP

You've been around a while, and while you may not be the spry maiden or strapping young man you were a few years back, you've gained an insight into life that proves invaluable.

Effect: Gain +1 unkept die on either Wits or Resolve rolls (GM's discretion), but you also lose -1 unkept die on all Finesse rolls.

Vesten Bought-man

Cost: 7 HP (6 HP if Vesten)

You have hired a skilled Vesten warrior to guard you. He will remain loyal to you as long as you do nothing to seriously upset him.

Effect: His loyalty has been bought and his loyalty sworn, so he will not betray you no matter how much money he is offered. The Bought-man is considered a Henchman and should be built as other Henchmen. The Bought-man receives a Vesten Swordsman School (Halfdansson, Leegstra, or Siggursdottir) in addition to the usual 75 HP a Henchman is built with.

Vodacce Accent

Cost: 0 HP

Restrictions: Vodacce only

An accent is an identifying characteristic or characteristics in the way a person speaks indicating that he's from a particular area. Only a Hero fully proficient in the language can identify accents. Language Acquaintance and Pidgins are no help, and non-Vodacce may never have an accent. There are four primary

accents in Vodacce: Mantua, Teramo, Arenda Candide and Island. In addition, there are the wandering peoples of the Cymbr who have a distinct accent all their own. Vodacce Heroes with one of these accents pay slightly different costs to learn foreign languages. An explanation of each accent follows the language chart below.

Vodacce Language Table

	Island	Teramo	Mantua	Arenda	Cymbr
Avalon	2	3	1	2	3
Castille	1	1	2	2	2
Crescent	4	2	3	3	2
Cymru	3	4	2	3	4
Eisen	2	2	3	3	2
High Eisen	3	3	4	4	3
Inis	3	4	2	3	4
Montaigne	1	1	0	1	2
Teodoran	4	3	4	4	4
Théan	2	1	2	1	1
Ussura	3	2	3	3	3
Vendel	2	3	1	2	2
Vodacce	0	0	0	0	0

Mantua: Speakers with this accent hail from the region of Vodacce, near Eisen and Ussura. Their speech is harsher and shorter than most Vodacce residents, with clipped accents and heightened consonants. Northern languages are easier for Mantua citizens to learn, and they are considered fairly cosmopolitan for mainlanders.

Teramo: Teramo has always belonged to the Gallili and their descendants the Bernoullis. Its proximity to the Crescent Empire has given locals a soft, lilting voice with emphasis on the vowels. Because of their proximity to the Crescents, Teramo residents are considered strange and exotic; their accent is often construed as mysterious or romantic.

Arenda Candide: The heart of mainland Vodacce has changed hands countless times since the fall of Numa. Its people consider themselves “true Vodacce,” though other areas consider them somewhat backwards. Arenda Candide accents are pronounced and excitable, and supposedly the mark of a rural upbringing.

Island: This accent has developed on the Princes’ islands amid the cosmopolitan culture of the great cities. This is the Vodacce accent described in the 7th Sea Players’ Guide.

Cymbr: This distinct accent marks the wandering communities of the Cymbr. They hail from a wide variety of sources, and their speech patterns echo a mixture of Eisen, Crescent and traditional Vodacce sources. Strangely, they have retained a great deal of the original Théan in their speech, and find the formal language easy to learn. The Cymbr dialect has a rhythm all its own and even non-Vodacce can identify its distinctive pattern.

Vodacce Valet

Cost: 6 HP (5 HP if Vodacce)

You have a Vodacce valet in your employ at the start of the game. Besides his normal servant’s duties, he is skilled in the Vodacce Great Game, and can conduct covert activities at your request.

Effect: The Valet is considered a Henchman and should be built as other Henchmen are. He receives Rank 3 in all Criminal Knacks in addition to the normal 75 HP a Henchman is built with.

FLAWS

Heroic characters are not perfect. However, just because a character has a minor mental or physical flaw it doesn't make him or her any less heroic. The Flaws listed below are neither backgrounds—i.e. events in the Heroes past—nor Hubrises, though they are intended to fit in with and complement these.

In addition these flaws give back the player a number of Hero Points, but this should not be the driving factor for players to select them.

Heroes may have up to 5 Hero Points worth of Flaws, chosen from those listed below. For each point spent on a Flaw, you get 1 HP back for your character to use during Hero Creation. In summary, choose up to 5 points of Flaws, and add that amount of HP to your total to spend on creating your character.

Allergy

Cost: 1-3 HP

The character has an unfortunate allergic reaction to some substance or another, such as caffeine.

Effect: The more common the allergy, or the more severe the reaction is, the greater the cost.

Example: The character could be allergic to wine and gain 2 HP, or have an allergy to caffeine at 1 HP or even a linen allergy at 3 HP. Or perhaps a strong allergic reaction to wine for 3 HP. Or a life-threatening reaction to caffeine for 3 HP.

Try to avoid obviously silly substances like salt or distilled goats milk.

Animal Animosity

Cost: 2 HP

Dogs always bark and growl at you, horses shy away and may even kick out at you, and it always seems to happen at the most awkward moment.

Effect: Choose a particular type of animal—e.g. Dog, Horse, Hawk—which for some reason your character always seems to get on the wrong side of.

Branded

Cost: 3 HP

At some point in your past—perhaps linked to a Background—you have been Branded by some authority. Perhaps it is by the Church as an Adulterer, or maybe you were tortured by the Inquisition? Even the Musketeers might have scarred you for crimes past. Whatever the reason, the character bears the physical signs of some past infidelity he has committed.

Effect: If anyone sees this Brand and understands what it means then the Hero suffers a -2 unkept dice penalty to any Social rolls involving that individual.

Cursed

Cost: 4 HP

Restrictions: If you have the Unbound Advantage, you cannot choose this Flaw.

Your character has been Cursed by a Fate Witch at some point in his past.

Effect: You must chose which strand the Curse relates to; Coins, Cups, Staves or Swords. This works in exactly the same way as if the Hero has been cursed during game play, though the number of Curse Dice the player receives is always 2 (Ouch!).

Dependant

Cost: 4 HP

Your Hero begins the game with a dependant, this may be in the form of a spouse, or perhaps a child. It may even be that you have to look after your influential uncle's spoilt child. Whoever it is though is a burden on your time and resources. Consequentially you must spend time with them or suffer the effects.

Effect: The Dependant costs approximately 100 Guilders per month to support and also commands a fair portion of your attention. Children can't look after themselves, and a poor, old and infirm husband may well die if neglected for even a couple of days.

One-eyed

Cost: 5 HP

The character has lost an eye during his past, whether through an accident, or perhaps it was inflicted as a warning or punishment.

Effect: The Hero now has serious problems with noticing things out of plain sight, and with depth perception. They lose a Kept die from all Perception checks, and when using any ranged weapons, i.e. thrown knife, pistol, bow, musket, etc., he gets a -5 Short and -10 Long range penalty.

Phobia

Cost: 1-3 HP

The Hero has, for some reason, gained a phobia of an object or situation.

Effect: You may chose what your character is afraid of. It could be as simple as heights, or as obscure as string. In general the more impact upon the character's activities the Phobia may have, then the higher the point cost. Again the severity should also be reflected in the cost of this Flaw.

Poor Education

Cost: 5 HP

For whatever reason your Hero failed to learn all that he or she may have done. Maybe their family was too poor, or they were a bad student, then again the teacher could have taken a disliking to the Hero. This has left gaps in the finer points of their knowledge and has such it's hard for them to advance further.

Effect: When raising Civil Knacks, the cost is as if the Knack was one Rank higher.

Example: Improving a Knack from Rank 2 to 3 would normally cost 6 XP, but for a Hero with a Poor Education, it would cost 8 XP.

Ugly

Cost: 4 HP

The Hero is downright ugly. It's not that he doesn't wash or has an unfortunate scar, he's just foul of appearance, especially to the opposite sex.

Effect: You lose one unkept die on all Social rolls, and two unkept dice on Seduction attempts. This is in addition to the constant harassment the character is sure to receive from others.

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds cost from 1-3 HP. The more HP you put into the Background, the more dangerous the Background will be. If it becomes the focus (or significantly integrated) into a story, you receive double the HP cost in XP at the end of that adventure. Note: If you take the Foul Weather Jack Advantage, you will choose one of these for a 4 HP Background.

Acolyte Vows

You are seeking a position in the Vaticine Church, or another religious order. This may be an honor you have waited your entire life to undertake, or a curse forced upon you by a familial or social obligation. Regardless, you are held to all the key tenets, values, and disciplines of the faith, and are observed by your superiors, who will judge your progress.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines the complexity and severity of the vows you have taken (the Vaticine faith is a 2 HP Background), as well as the power and influence of the person or persons observing you.

Amnesia

You aren't quite sure who you are or why you happen to be here, but you are pretty sure that somebody does. After all, they wouldn't be trying to kill you if they didn't, right? The Amnesia Background doesn't limit any of your Traits, Skills or Knacks, but it does prevent you from remembering anything from your past. All the people you left behind are still out there, waiting for you to return... someday.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in Amnesia determines how many dangers linger in that smoky past of yours, just waiting for the moment for you to let your guard down, so they can put a bullet in that cloudy brain of yours.

Animal Animosity

Restrictions: Supernatural animals, such as Drachen and griffons, cannot be chosen for this Background; if you earn their enmity, you'll typically be dead within a month.

At some point, you did something to anger a very important member of one animal species. Now every member of this species is hostile to you.

Effect: If you know Pyeryem sorcery, under no circumstances can you try to obtain the spirit skin of a member of this species. The number of HP you invest in this Background determines the threat posed by the animal and its frequency. 1 HP animals include small, harmless creatures such as rabbits, songbirds, and mice. 2 HP animals include larger beasts with certain undesirable attributes, such as snakes and owls. 3 HP animals include the largest and most fearsome fauna, such as wolves and bears.

Assassin

A political rival has hired an assassin to kill you. There's nothing personal about it—you simply represent a threat to his power base and must be eliminated.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how skilled the assassin is, how soon he will strike, and whether or not your rival will hire another if the first fails.

Betrothed

Your parents have arranged for you to marry another Vodacce. You probably don't know this person very well, and might not have even have met him or her. The marriage represents a political alliance or a payment of goods, nothing more. While

you are not expected to love your betrothed (and can pursue other romances if you're a man), you must follow the tenets of marriage and fulfill your expected duties to the best of your ability.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how convenient the marriage is, whether or not it comes when you're ready, or how personable your future spouse is. The more points you spend, the less pleasant the marriage is likely to be.

Bloodsworn

Restrictions: Vesten only

You have sworn a sacred oath to do something. You must now either succeed or die trying.

Effect: The number of HP spent on this Background indicates how difficult it will be to accomplish your task. Consult with the Game Master to determine what you have sworn to do.

Code of Honor

Restrictions: Vodacce only

The Vodacce take honor very seriously (despite what others may say), and many would rather die than violate their code of ethics.

Effect: For each point in this Background, choose a rule from the "Vodacce Honor" section below, which you can't break. The GM may dock you a Drama Die if you violate this rule during the game. Consequently, if you follow the rule even when it hurts you in an adventure, the GM should grant you an additional XP or two.

Vodacce Honor

The Vodacce honor system is quite complex, balanced between the tenets of virtú and the realities of the Great Game (see the Vodacce sourcebook). It can be boiled down to a few basic rules, however, rules which every Vodacce knows by heart. While not all Vodacce follow these rules, all understand them, and noble Vodacce try their best to fulfill its edicts.

1. Never harm a child. Children are innocents and do not understand the Great Game. Therefore, they are immune to its rules.
2. Similarly, never harm a mother or an expectant mother. They must raise tomorrow's leaders.
3. The Vaticine Church is sacrosanct. Never do anything to harm it or damage its institutions.
4. Always meet a man's eyes unless he is clearly your superior. To do otherwise is an indication of cowardice.
5. Once you draw your sword, it must taste blood before it can be sheathed again.
6. Always repay your debts; a man who cannot return favors has no honor. Similarly, always collect what others owe you; a man who cannot collect his debts has no strength.
7. Family loyalty is more important than anything. An insult to a member of your family is an insult to you.
8. Never refuse a challenge. Cowardice achieves nothing.

Contentious Theory

Restrictions: You must have the Published Advantage to take this Background.

You have seen a deep secret of Theus' puzzle, a hint of things for which man has not yet found the words. You gathered your thoughts, researched your insight, put words to paper to describe

this powerful vision of the Truth. Then you published. Obviously other souls weren't ready for the Truth yet. They mocked your efforts, scorned your sources, and debated fine points of semantics until no one could hope to understand what you had discovered. But you'll show them. You'll show them all!

Effect: The more HP spent on this Background, the more widely distributed your work or the more bitter the opposition. It is up to you and the GM to decide whether your position is in fact the correct one. Staunchly defending a false or poorly conceived position has as many dramatic opportunities as championing a new truth.

Crisis of Faith

You used to be faithfully religious, but the horrors you have seen and endured have left you doubting your beliefs. Currently, you have yet to decide whether you will abandon your beliefs or return to the flock.

Effect: The number of HP in this Background determines how important religion used to be to you, and how conflicted you currently are.

Cursed

It could be something as simple as the inability to sustain serious relationships or something as complex as being doomed to live forever, until you fall in love. The victim may know every detail of the curse, or just that the same weird things happen to him over and over again. He may believe in the curse and think his fate unavoidable, or strive each time to prevent the inevitable from happening. Regardless, with the purchase of this Background, your curse is real, tangible, and inescapable (for now, anyway).

The Vodacce Fate Witches are a common origin for curses, but there are a slew of other options, from angry mistresses to vengeful lords, or even one-eyed vagrants. With every curse, three things need to be decided. First and second: what causes the effect (the trigger), and what, exactly, that effect is. The third is what can be done to end the curse—its penance (which may or may not be chosen exclusively by the GM, as both he and the player agree upon; some find it more intriguing to roleplay the discovery of a penance instead of simply working toward it). Curses are almost always specific, and tailored as mentioned above.

Effect: The number of HP spent in this Background determine the regularity of the curse's trigger, and how severe its effect is. 1 HP could result in simple social curses (e.g., "You will never be entirely happy in love" or "You will always be second-best at everything"), or forecasts of minor events. 2 HP is a little worse (e.g., "You will betray the one you love the most"), and 3 HP is life-threatening or extremely severe (e.g., "Everyone you touch will die a painful death"). Penance rarely figures into the point value of a Curse.

Debt

Being poor isn't good enough for you? How about indebting yourself to someone who has a lot of power and very little patience? The Debt Background puts you in liability with someone who'd have just as much fun breaking your legs as collecting his money.

Effect: The number of HP you spend on this Background influences how much money you owe, the power of the person (or persons) you are indebted to, and how diligent he is about collecting his money.

Defeated

At some point in the past, you were defeated, decisively and ignominiously, and you have lived with the shame of that moment ever since. Now you long to excel beyond that haunting memory, placing yourself in similar positions every day, hoping that your improved skill will prevail this time. Of course, this unfortunately places you in hazardous situations in which you must fight both history and your own inner demons.

Effect: Your HP investment in this Background determines the level of the ongoing challenge and your need to see it outlived.

Dispossessed

Someone has taken away your home and your lands. Perhaps the Montaigne are occupying it? Perhaps Eisen soldiers are squatting on it? Whatever the case, you want it back.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how dangerous the thieves are, and how impressive your holdings are. Until you recover your holdings, room and board are no longer free, and you must pay half of your monthly income towards food and rent.

Dracheneisen Heir

Restrictions: Noble Eisen only

You are the next in line to inherit a Dracheneisen item in your family. It could be a breastplate, a sword, or even a pistol. Whatever it is, it's part of your birthright, but you've got to wait until the relative who currently has it either dies or decides to pass it on to you.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background reflects the Dracheneisen point cost of the item (1 HP = 2 Dracheneisen points, 2 HP = 4 Dracheneisen points, 3 HP = 6 Dracheneisen points). You receive XP for this Background whenever the Story centers around the relative in question, and these XP all go towards the cost of the Dracheneisen item (see the Dracheneisen Advantage). When you've accumulated XP equal to three times the item's cost, you receive the item and lose this Background.

Exiled

You used to have a place you called home. Something happened, and you were forbidden to return upon pain of death. You must pick a nation when you take this Background—if you're ever caught there by someone who recognizes and doesn't like you, you'll be summarily executed.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how well known your Hero's offense is, and how hard it will be to get the sentence lifted.

Fear

Deep down where you live and breathe, you are terrified of something—the dark, open spaces, people, even magic.

Effect: Whatever the cause, the result is always the same—every Round you are in its presence, either:

1. Lose a number of Actions that Round equal to the HP invested in this Background, or;
2. Retain all your Actions, but all of them must be used toward escaping the cause or defending yourself (i.e., no other efforts, including attacks, are possible with them).

Gadjo

Restrictions: Non-Fhideli Ussuran only

You have interacted with the Tibesti and had an unfavorable result. They now have an exceedingly poor opinion of you, and the feeling is presumably mutual.

Effect: Several factors may have contributed to it, and the severity ranges from being considered an insensitive Gadjo (1 HP), to a dishonest abusive Gadjo who takes advantage of others' prejudices (2 HP), to a Gadjo who has actively tried to harm some Tibesti (3 HP).

Hated Relative

Restrictions: Vendel or Vesten only

You have a cousin who stands on the opposite side of the Vendel/Vesten schism. The two of you have long since given up trying to make each other see the light, and now feud with each other.

Effect: The number of HP spent on this Background indicates how powerful and dangerous he or she is.

Hunted

For some reason or another, someone wants you. They don't want your wealth or influence or anything like that, they just want you. Maybe you're an outlaw on the run from the law, or perhaps you skipped out on an extravagant wedding your parents set up for you. You're running from something, which wouldn't be so bad, if only they weren't so diligent about finding you and bringing you back.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background indicates just how diligently they're hunting you and what sort of resources they are willing to put toward bringing you back.

Hunting

You've lost something. Something very important. Perhaps it's a Syrneth artifact, passed down through the generations, that you've let slip through your hands. Maybe it's a bride who skipped out on your wedding. Maybe it's a man running from justice whom you've sworn you will hunt to the ends of the world.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how important it is you reach your objective, or just how dangerous (or determined) the person or thing you're hunting may be.

Loan

You have made a loan to someone, and they have not only defaulted, they have disappeared with the money. You need to get your money back, with interest.

Effect: The number of HP you spend on this Background indicates how much money you lent and how dangerous it will be to get it back.

Lorenzo

Restrictions: Vodacce only

You can trace your lineage back to the infamous Lorenzo family: brutal sadists who shocked even the jaded Vodacce. While you don't necessarily exhibit any of their characteristics, your reputation could be damaged beyond repair if knowledge of the connection came out.

Effect: The number of HP you spend on this Background determines how strong the connection is, and how much it could damage you if your enemies learn of it.

Lost Love

She used to be the light of your life, and now she's with your family's nemesis, wearing his ring on her left hand. He used to be the one you'd walk through the Abyss for, and now he's with her, that plotting and scheming shrew who ruined your family's name and reputation.

Lost Love is a dangerous Background, for it strikes at the heart of a Hero. You were once in love—perhaps you even thought it was true—and now it's gone. But that's not the worst of it. Your one true love is now your enemy, a situation that would be easy to rectify if only you weren't still in love with him.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines just how influential your new enemy is, and how much of that influence he's willing to devote to your ruin.

Lost Relative

Years ago, one of your close relatives disappeared or was kidnapped. Up until then, you had a very close relationship with them, and the event was so traumatic that you've dedicated your life to finding them once again.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how hard it will be to find your lost relative, and how strongly they will react (either positively or negatively) to you when you finally succeed.

Mistaken Identity

No matter how many times you try to tell them, they just don't listen to you. They're convinced you're the man they want, and you don't know how to convince them they're wrong. They think you know things you don't. They think you've got something you don't. Or maybe they want something, and they won't tell you what it is. Maybe they'll only be convinced when they've tortured you to death.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how mistaken your identity is.

Moment of Awe

Once, you saw something so beautiful—so moving—that you've spent your life trying to go back and see it again. Perhaps it was the 7th Sea, a beautiful woman on an uncharted island, or a dark and handsome stranger who breezed through your life one evening. Maybe it was even a golden city sparkling in the distance. Whatever it was, the everyday world has held less allure for you ever since.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how hard it will be to recreate that moment of awe, and how much of an impact (either positive or negative) the event will have on your life when you finally resolve it.

Nemesis

There's someone out there who's got a name on the top of a list, and that name is yours. You crossed him, and from that day forward, he's made it a point to thwart your efforts, to meddle in your affairs. Killing you isn't his objective; he only wants to make your life a mess. Of course, maintaining his own life takes precedence over meddling with yours, but whenever he gets the opportunity, he'll make sure you're squirming on the end of a hook.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how often your enemy shows his hand or how much power he has to devote to your discomfort.

Obligation

You owe someone something. Perhaps he saved your life or helped you out in the past. Now you must repay the favor. Or maybe, in a moment of drunken weakness, you blurted out your devotion to his cause. Regardless, you must fulfill your promise or suffer the consequences (in this case, the Background either becomes a Nemesis or you lose Reputation, per your GM).

Effect: HP spent on this Background determine both how difficult it will be to fulfill, and how powerful or influential the person trying to collect is.

On The Streets

You've lost your home for some reason. Maybe it burned down, maybe it was taken from you, or maybe you've lived on the streets your entire life. In any event, you must pay for your living expenses (food and shelter) unlike most Heroes.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how hard it is for you to find a place to live. The more HP you invest, the more you enjoy your roving lifestyle.

Orphaned

You were separated from your family, possibly in the War of the Cross. You don't know where they are now, or even if any of them are still alive, but their faces fill your dreams, and you'll never be happy until you find out what happened to them.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how difficult it will be to find your family, and how scattered they've become.

Pressed into Service

Restrictions: This Background can only be taken with the GM's permission.

You've been carried off by pirates. Right now, you're chained to an oar below decks, or serving the Captain unwillingly and waiting your chance to mutiny or jump ship. In a worst case scenario, you could even be serving aboard the Crimson Roger.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how hard it will be for you to escape or mutiny, and how dangerous the attempt will be.

Ridiculed

When you first went to court, one of the wits there made you his "special project" and humiliated you in front of the courtiers. Now every time you appear, he makes sure that you are the butt of his every joke.

Effect: The more HP you invest in this Background, the wittier and more powerful your tormentor is.

Rivalry

He isn't your enemy. In fact, he could be your best friend. Whoever he is, he's in direct competition for something that's very important to you. He could be a rival suitor for your true love's hand, he could be competing with you to get that position in the Lightning Guard, or he could just be a fellow duelist who's a touch better than you. He doesn't have to be your enemy, but after this many years of competition, how many rivalries stay friendly?

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how intense the rivalry is.

Romance

After many months of flirting, poetry and moonlit walks through the park, you've finally won the affections of a beautiful maiden or a handsome young man. Or so you think. It takes a great deal of effort to keep the fires of romance burning. If you neglect the hearth for even a short while, the fire can die. And neglecting your lover may cost you this Background and give you another...

The Romance Background is more than just wooing pretty maidens and handsome pirates. It also involves protecting your love from scheming rivals, defending her honor, and coming to

her aid when her own skills aren't enough to keep her out of trouble.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in Romance determines how often your lover needs your assistance, how demanding he or she is, and how many rivals you have for your love's affections.

Sidhe Lover

Restrictions: Avalon only

You've found yourself a lover among the Seelie. At first it was a simple dalliance, but a connection has grown between the two of you and his cold Sidhe heart is beginning to thaw. Now the trouble begins. The two of you must keep your romance a secret; the Queen doesn't appreciate one of her own slumming with mortals. Worse, many Sidhe set unusual strictures upon their romances, such as never looking at them in the light or never entering a certain room. Contravening their demands is asking for trouble, yet somehow their lovers always do so eventually. And eventually, the consequences of your romance will make themselves known.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how difficult it is to conceal your romance, and your lover.

Traitor

You had a moment of weakness. It could happen to anyone, right? The money was just too tempting. Of course, now they've got their hooks in you, and if anyone ever finds out about your betrayal, you're a dead man.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines the power of the people you betrayed, as well as how likely you are to be blackmailed by the people you helped. On the bright side, each HP in this Background grants you an extra +500 Guilders starting money. Now, hopefully you'll get a chance to spend it.

Treasure Map

Hero Creation: More than one Hero may invest HP in the same Background.

It doesn't matter where you got the map—perhaps you bought it from an old fortune teller, or it was handed down to you from your father—but it definitely leads to something. Several Heroes could all take this Background and have pieces of the same map.

Effect: If you want, you can pay -1 HP less for this Background (minimum of 1 HP) in order for a Villain to have part of the map. The number of HP you put into this Background determines how dangerous the map will be to follow, and how big a reward awaits you at the end.

True Identity

Whether you know it or not, you are actually someone else. You have left your true identity behind for the image you have created as a Hero. Who you were and why you left can be anything—you might have been the son of a murdered noble, now hiding among the masses from assassins, or you might have been a tortured Church scholar who devised something that you feel is too dangerous to ever see creation. You can never return to your former life—you have become the Hero—and you must always strive to keep your true identity a secret from the world at large. Good luck.

Effect: HP spent in this Background determine how important your former life was, if anyone seeks you as that person, and if so how powerful they are.

Vendetta

Don't call it revenge. Revenge is for suckers. Don't call it justice, because that's too forgiving. This is something altogether different. You owe somebody big time, and killing isn't enough. No, killing is merciful compared to what you have in mind. You have to hurt him, and hurt him, and hurt him. When you're done, Legion may be waiting for you, but you don't care. When they see what you've done to him, they'll welcome you with open arms.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines the power and influence of your target, and perhaps even how aware he is that you're coming for him... or how prepared.

Vow

A man's word is his honor, and his honor is his life. At least, that's what they taught you at the military academy. You believe in keeping your word, and you've made a promise to someone (perhaps even yourself) that you will not break... even if it costs you your life.

Effect: The number of HP invested in this Background determines how difficult the vow is to keep, or the magnitude of the obstacles deterring you.

Waisen Dependent

Restrictions: Eisen only

One of your relatives or a lover had the light in their eyes snuffed out. Something so terrible happened to them that they retreated completely inside their mind, leaving a blank stare and a shuffling body behind. You are responsible for their care and well-being. However, Waisen are unpredictable—sometimes they will wander off looking for something only they can see, or stand near a painting and idly pick flakes off of it. Still, you hope that someday you'll be able to restore their mind. Until then, or until you give up on them, you've got to keep them alive.

Effect: The number of HP you invest in this Background determines how close you were to the person before they became Waisen, and how far they've retreated into themselves.

Wanted

There is a price on your head. Bounty hunters, lawmen and Heroes alike are all on the lookout for your face—which is plastered up in every city.

Effect: The number of HP you put into this Background determines how much the authorities are willing to pay for your head: 1,000 Guilders per HP you've invested.

ARCANA

The Arcana available to you may be limited by the results of your Hero's Destiny Spread (see the Destiny Spread section of this Compendium for more details). Each Arcana is matched against one of the Major Arcana cards on a Tarot deck.

You can take only one Arcana—either a Hubris or a Virtue. Taking a Hubris costs you –10 HP (that is, it gives you an extra 10 HP at Hero Creation). Taking a Virtue costs you 10 HP.

Virtues

These cost your character 10 HP, and you may “activate” them at any time by spending a Drama Die. Unlike a Hubris, the GM cannot counter your Virtue—you have, after all, paid a huge HP cost for it!

Adaptable

[Death] You react to changing situations with lightning-quick mental reflexes. When someone leaps off of a balcony at you, you calmly step aside. When scything blades whip out of the floor and attempt to cleave you in two, you retain the presence of mind to dive out of the way.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to cancel the effects of Surprise. This Virtue applies only to you; no others can benefit from it.

Altruistic

[Hanged Man] You are always willing to help other people. In fact, you're more comfortable lending aid to someone else than working towards your own ends.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to reroll a failed test that you attempted in order to help someone else. You may do this only once for any particular test.

Comforting

[Empress] Other people are comfortable near you. You have a way of making them feel safe. Even though there's a hideous monster barreling down on the group, as long as you stay calm, your example will set the tone for the rest of the group.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to cancel the effects of one level of Fear on your party, including yourself until the end of the Scene. You may do this as many times as you like.

Commanding

[Imperator] You exude confidence and composure. This has a tendency to unnerve your opponents, since they feel that you must know something they don't.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to gain a Fear Rating of 1 for one Scene. Your GM has rules for Fear in his Guide.

Courageous

[Strength] Although there are some beasts on Théah that rouse supernatural horror in the hearts of men, you are immune to their powers, which makes you particularly dangerous to them. When a monster becomes used to people fleeing in terror from its presence, a hero who stands and fights makes it unsure of its power, wondering if it might be the prey instead of the predator this time around.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to reflect the effects of Fear back on one of your opponents. That is to say, the

creature's Fear level affects itself instead of you. The rest of your party is still affected by the creature's Fear level.

Creative

[Hierophant] You are prone to sudden flashes of inspiration. You might notice that there are the same number of wall frescoes as there are knobs on a mysterious artifact, which could well cause you to deduce that each of the frescoes contains a clue as to what each knob should be set to.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to get an idea from the GM. You tell the GM—in general terms—what it is that has you stumped, and he must give you an idea to help you solve the problem. This may take the form of a hint or further (though commonly easier) puzzle.

Exemplary

[Justice] You lead by example. You are very good at showing others how to imitate your movements and at getting them to coordinate their efforts with you.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to allow the rest of your group to use one of your Knack Ranks during a shared activity, such as sneaking through the forest. This is good for only one test.

Focused

[Hermit] You can concentrate all of your energy on a single task. Your world narrows until only the thing you are working on remains. This allows you to accomplish a great deal, using limited resources.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to transfer one Rank in any of your Traits to any other of your Traits for the duration of the Scene (for example, a Resolve 4 and Brawn 2 could become a Resolve 3 and Brawn 3). You may exceed your normal maximum Trait Rank with this Virtue. This transfer expires at the end of the Scene, and cannot be canceled prematurely. This Virtue may be used only once per Scene.

Fortunate

[Fortune] Those little annoying quirks of misfortune that haunt other people seem to always overlook you. Horses don't run underneath low branches when you're riding them, and you never fall into the water when making an easy leap aboard ship.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to reroll any failed roll whose TN is 20 or less. However, you may do this only once for any given roll: your luck is good, but sometimes even the luckiest people have a bad day.

Friendly

[Sun] You make friends easily and have an easygoing personality that endears you to most people. As a result, friends are constantly popping up just when you need help out of a tricky situation.

Effect: This Virtue costs 2 Drama Dice to activate, and grants you a Connection at some point within this Scene. The GM determines whether the Connection is an Ally, Informant, or Confidant, under what circumstances the Connection is met, and whether or not the Connection lasts after the Story ends.

Insightful

[Judgment] You understand human nature. You can quickly determine the defining characteristic of another person's

personality. This is often useful in ferreting out weaknesses or gaining forewarning of an enemy's strengths.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to determine which Arcana (if any) another Hero or NPC possesses. In addition, if you determine that a Villain has a Wile (as opposed to a Flaw), then you can spend dice to try to cancel that Wile, much as you might to prevent your Hubris from being activated.

Inspirational

[Star] Being around you spurs other people to greater achievements. You are always encouraging others and helping them to find that little bit of potential within themselves that they've always overlooked.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to add one Kept die to any other Hero's Action. He can still spend Drama Dice in addition, if he so wishes.

Intuitive

[High Priestess] Somehow, you seem to know things that you shouldn't. Random bits of information mesh inside your mind, leading you to conclusions others would never have guessed. This gut feeling doesn't always give you the answer you're looking for, but it seems consistently to lead you in the right direction.

Effect: This Virtue costs nothing to activate, but may only be activated by your GM. Whenever he does so, he will give you a hint or piece of information that leads the party back on track. At the end of the gaming session, you will receive 2 extra Experience Points, minus one for each time your GM had to activate your Virtue for you. Any time your GM wants to activate your Virtue, you may veto him in order to save the XP. If your Virtue is activated more than twice over the course of an evening, you can lose XP from the total amount you receive for the adventure.

Passionate

[Lovers] You are at your best when swinging down to rescue a loved one from a grisly death on the rocks below. At those moments everything comes into focus for you and you surpass your normal limitations, pulling off amazing feats of skill and heroism.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to double the number of Kept dice you get for any one Action with which you are directly saving the life of a loved one or friend.

Perceptive

[Moon] Your eyes are drawn to details. You notice the slight guttering of torches next to secret passages, and the hostile stares that ladies direct at the man you're talking with. These observations are second nature to you, and you rarely overlook important clues.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to succeed automatically at any Perception check.

Perspicacious

[Legion] In order to fight evil, you have to understand it, and you do. You may not like it, but you can put yourself in the Villain's shoes and understand him.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to predict what a Villain or Henchman's very next Action is going to be. Once the GM has told you what the Action is, he cannot change his mind based on your actions.

Propitious

[Fool] Things come together for you just as the right moment. You get thrown into prison on the eve of the big breakout, aging timbers in the floor decide to give out right before the villain can finish you off, and every deathtrap you get thrown into has a convenient method of escape built into it.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to call for a lucky escape from the current Scene. This will extract you and your entire party from your current predicament. Every time you use this Virtue, you gain one fewer Drama Die at the beginning of every future Story, so use it only as a last resort.

Self-controlled

[Temperance] The verbal slings and arrows hurled by others roll off your back. You see through seduction attempts and laugh them away. And of course, nobody ever intimidates you.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue to cause any use of the Repartee system against you automatically to fail.

Uncanny

[Tower] Some people think that you have a little bit of sorcery in your blood, while others just think that you have sharp eyes and keen ears. The truth is, you've always had feelings that you don't quite understand. You just know that they mean trouble is coming, and coming quick.

Effect: At any time, you can spend a Drama Die to activate your Virtue. The next time your GM is about to spring an awful surprise on you, he has to give you some warning just before he does so. Once you've received one warning, you have to spend another die if you want to reactivate this Virtue.

Victorious

[Chariot] You are the darling of the gods of War. Somehow, when it seems like you are doomed to fall in battle, you can summon up incredible reserves of strength to strike your opponent down, if only you can get through his defenses.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue after you hit your opponent, but before you roll for Damage. Do not roll for Damage; you automatically score a Dramatic Wound.

Willful

[Magician] Simply put, there is nothing in this world that can keep you from your goals. Nothing.

Effect: You may activate your Virtue in order to prevent NPCs from using Drama Dice when they are facing you in direct combat until the end of the Scene.

Worldly

[Terra] You've been around, you've seen things, and you've got more than your share of know-how.

Effect: Spend a Drama Die to activate your Virtue. When you do, until the end of the Scene, you have one Rank in any Knack in which you do not currently have a Rank.

Hubris

Apart from Flaws, these are the only "negative" characteristics your Hero can gain. However, Flaws can often be overcome, through experience, time or money; your Hubris can never be overcome. It is with you for life. Roleplaying them gives you Drama Dice—however a GM can "activate" your Hubris at any time of his choosing by spending a Drama Die of his own, thereby forcing you to act in character. You can counter his Drama Die with a Drama Die of your own, but be warned—the

GM normally has more Drama Dice than you, and you'll likely need those dice for the next encounter!

Ambitious

[Magician] You crave power. Money is nice, but being in charge of other people is your favorite thing. You are likely to be brought down by attempting a risky grab for power and failing.

Effect: The GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to chase after power, even if the deal you're getting is risky.

Arrogant

[Tower] You firmly believe that you are better than anyone else. Your ideas are the best, your clothes are the most stylish, and you have to let everyone else know how much better you are.

Effect: The GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to show contempt or disdain for someone else.

Cowardly

[Strength] You have a strong sense of self-preservation. You often hesitate to put yourself at risk, even if there's a good reason to do so.

Effect: Whenever you're about to do something dangerous, such as swing across a spiked pit on a fraying rope, your GM can activate your Hubris in order to talk you out of putting yourself in danger.

Envious

[Temperance] Everyone else seems to have it better than you. They have more money, better toys, and prettier wives. You tend to get envious over the smallest things.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to covet something belonging to someone else. You should attempt to get it for yourself.

Greedy

[Terra] Money makes your eyes light up with joy. The more, the merrier, as long as it spends.

Effect: Whenever you're divvying up shares of the loot, being offered a hefty bribe, or catching wind of some fabulous treasure, your GM can activate your Hubris to convince you to grub for as much money as possible.

Hedonistic

[High Priestess] You love a good time. You party too much, drink too much, and eat too much. You have trouble resisting an invitation to join someone in a drink and sometimes shirk your duty if offered a more enjoyable time elsewhere.

Effect: The GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to relax your guard and have a good time.

Hot-headed

[Imperator] You have a chip on your shoulder. A big one. Your fuse is short, and you're ready to get in a scuffle at the slightest hint of an insult.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris to get you to fly off the handle and lose your temper.

Inattentive

[Moon] Your mind has a habit of drifting off at inopportune moments. It flits from one thought to the next so fast that you have trouble getting it to concentrate on the here and now.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris to cause you to fail a Perception check automatically, or to give you a -2 unkept dice penalty to any Surprise check.

Indecisive

[Hanged Man] You have been known to hesitate when faced with difficult choices or split-second decisions. If forced to choose between letting a Villain escape and rescuing a loved one from being lowered into a snake pit, you're likely to agonize over the situation until something—perhaps a cry for help from your sweetheart—forces your hand.

Effect: Your GM may activate your Hubris during time-sensitive moments in the game to force you to discard one Action die from your Initiative Pool.

Judgmental

[Justice] You form opinions quickly and change them very slowly. You also have a tendency to judge people on their appearance. A man dressed as a pirate, no matter how gentlemanly, is a scoundrel and a dog as far as you're concerned. A man covered in mud is a peasant, and a woman wearing revealing clothing is a prostitute.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to jump to conclusions and form an unsubstantiated opinion of someone you've just met.

Lecherous

[Empress] You have a lusty nature and a tendency to pursue the pleasures of the flesh. A pretty woman or a handsome man (however your tastes run) is an almost irresistible temptation to you.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to convince you to give in to temptation.

Loyal

[Legion] You find it very, very difficult to abandon a friend, even if it's only to run and get help for them. As for leaving a fallen comrade behind to die—forget it.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to go back for (or stay with) a fallen comrade, or to prevent you from betraying an employer.

Misfortunate

[Fortune] Lucky breaks are something that happen to other people. Your luck isn't terrible; you wouldn't have survived as long as you have if it were. It just isn't very good. Look at it this way: if you need some blind luck to get you out of a sticky situation, expect to be sticking around for a while.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris to cause you to reroll a successful test whose TN was 25 or higher. Your GM can only do this once to any given test.

Overconfident

[Chariot] Nothing is beyond your capabilities. If you wanted, you could defeat the best swordsmen in all of Théah; you just haven't had any reason to do so yet. And surely that chasm isn't too wide for you to leap across.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to squash any doubts you may have had about your own capabilities.

Overzealous

[Hermit] You are incapable of having a weak opinion. Everything you believe, you believe as if your life depended on it. Everything you don't believe in, you hate with a passion.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to strongly defend one of your opinions, no matter how inappropriate the time and place.

Proud

[Sun] You don't like accepting help from others. If a gift or offer of aid smacks of charity or pity even the slightest bit, you grow indignant and refuse it.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to refuse an offer of aid.

Rash

[Fool] You have the urge to go and look when you hear a strange noise downstairs in the middle of the night. It's not that you're stupid, it's just that sometimes that little voice that says, "What would happen if I..." gets too loud to ignore.

Effect: Your GM may activate your Hubris to force you to investigate something unusual, even if it looks like it might be dangerous.

Reckless

[Death] You lack the emotion of fear. Unfortunately, it is often an important cue that keeps men from doing foolhardy things. Sure, you don't flinch at the sight of even the most hideous monster, but neither do you feel the need to run away when outclassed.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to ignore any nagging feelings of worry or hesitation you may have when confronted with a potentially dangerous environment.

Righteous

[Judgment] The end justifies the means. You are willing to perform morally repugnant actions in order to achieve noble goals. Unfortunately, this can alienate those people who might support your cause if you didn't use such heavy-handed methods.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to dispel any doubts you might have about the moral justifiability of your actions.

Star-crossed

[Lovers] You keep falling in love with the wrong people. You're the common soldier who falls in love with the king's daughter at first sight, or the Hero who falls for the Villain's daughter without knowing who she is.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to shoot you with Cupid's arrow yet again.

Stubborn

[Star] You don't change your mind very often, if at all. Once you've decided on a course of action, you follow through no matter what. Attempts to convince you that you're wrong roll off your back with no effect.

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to prevent you from changing your mind.

Trusting

[Hierophant] You don't like to believe that other people are capable of misleading and lying to you. After all, people are basically good, right?

Effect: Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to quell any doubts you may have about another person.

SWORDSMAN SCHOOLS

Benefits

Every Hero who pays for a Swordsman School gets the following benefits:

- 1 free Rank in the Basic Knacks for the Skills listed under the School's Basic Curriculum
- 1 free Rank in all four Swordsman Knacks
- Unless stated otherwise, the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage for free

Format

Every School is listed with the same format, as follows:

School Name: This is the name of the School.

Country of Origin: The nation the School originates from. If it is not your Hero's Country of Origin, then you must pay 35 HP instead of the normal 25 HP in order to attend the School. If you attend a Swordsman School outside of your home nation, you automatically gain the appropriate Language Advantage for the School's Country of Origin for free as part of the 35 HP expenditure. Some Schools are restricted in other ways, such as those requiring Membership in a Secret Society. Some Schools may have a different HP cost again, in which case it will be noted here.

Restrictions: Any special prerequisites are noted here.

Description: A brief description, telling you a little bit about the history and character of the School, as well as the School's style, strengths and a description of the weaknesses in the School's style (see Exploit Weakness below).

Membership: Does the School give you the Membership: Swordsman's Guild Advantage for free? If not, then any alternative bonus is listed here.

Basic Curriculum: These are the Skills the Swordsman has access to as part of his training. Apart from the 1 free Rank in the Basic Knacks for these Skills, other Ranks must be purchased using HP. Basic Knacks cost 1 HP per Rank to increase, while Advanced Knacks cost 3 HP per Rank. Heroes cannot start with a Rank higher than 3 in any Knack.

Swordsman Knacks: Attending a Swordsman School is the only way to learn Swordsman Knacks. Swordsmen are very proud of their Schools and do not just give away their most valuable secrets. Swordsman Knacks are considered Martial Advanced Knacks, and you must purchase them just as you would purchase any other Advanced Knacks at 3 HP per Rank.

Apprentice, Journeyman, Master Techniques: Each School has three Techniques. Your Swordsman starts with the Apprentice Technique. You gain the Journeyman Technique when all of your Swordsman Knacks reach Rank 4. You gain the Master Technique when all of your Swordsman Knacks reach Rank 5.

Mastery Level: When Mastery Level is referred to, the following conversion to a number of dice should be used: Apprentice = 1 die, Journeyman = 2 dice, Master = 3 dice.

Exploit Weakness

All of the Schools have one Advanced Knack in common: the Exploit Weakness Knack. Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends

more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain +1 Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of +1 Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of +1 Rank per Swordsman defeated. These Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Avalon

Donovan

Country of Origin: Avalon

The most popular fighting style taught in Avalon is Donovan. This style is somewhat old-fashioned, using a buckler and smallsword instead of the more modern rapier and main gauche. The smallsword has a thicker blade and possesses a sharp edge, unlike most rapiers.

This style teaches a wide variety of slashes and thrusts, which tends to confuse those trained to fight against thrusts almost exclusively. Donovan also teaches his best students how to use their blade's edge to its best advantage, and how to perform a lightning-fast thrust.

The primary weakness in the Donovan style is that the more elaborate slashes require a moment of tensing and leave a brief hole in the defenses that another student of Donovan can predict and exploit.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Buckler, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Bind (Buckler): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Disarm (Fencing): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person

who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Donovan): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Donovan style negates the off-hand penalty when using a buckler, and grants one Free Raise when using the buckler.

Journeyman Technique: Donovan teaches its students to take the offensive even when defending themselves. There is a particular move known as Donovan's Twist that allows a journeyman to rake the edge of his smallsword's blade across his opponent's hand while performing a parry. In game terms, when you successfully use Parry (Fencing) as an Active Defense, you deal 1k1 damage to your opponent, +1 additional unkept die for every full 5 points you exceed your opponent's attack roll by. Your Brawn does not add to this damage.

Example: If your Active Defense roll was 17 higher than your opponent's attack roll, you would inflict 4k1 damage on your opponent.

Master Technique: Edwards' Thrust was taught to Donovan by his master, the late Jacob Edwards. The technique is performed by first acclimating an opponent to parrying slashes over and over again, and then suddenly rushing in with a deceptively quick thrust. When using this technique, you may use an Interrupt Action to attack once per Round.

Finnegan

Country of Origin: Avalon (Inismore)

Roary Finnegan is the undisputed bareknuckle champion of Inismore. Just ask him. Or anyone he's beaten down. That's a lot of askin'. In recent years he's begun teaching his unique style of pugilism to anyone who's interested, and who can afford his high tuition fees.

Finnegan developed a style of fighting that was radically different from conventional fisticuff styles. Instead of putting all

his weight on his heels, Finnegan shifted his weight to the balls of his feet. Instead of using a linear movement, Finnegan moved in circles. Instead of relying on quick jabs, Finnegan used side-steps, uppercuts, roundhouses, and body blows.

The primary weakness of the Finnegan style is a tendency to hang back and observe the opponent. An aggressive enemy can press the attack and keep the student on the run and off balance.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Finnegan students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Pugilism, Wrestling

Swordsman Knacks

Bob 'n' Weave: This Knack teaches you how to move in circles, always ducking to the opponent's weak side (left for right-handers, right for left-handers). When an opponent misses you (because of Active or Passive Defense), you may lower your next Action die by one for every Rank you have in this Knack, but not to less than the current Phase number.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Disarm (Bare-handed): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Exploit Weakness (Finnegan): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Finnegan style of fighting learn how to punch hard. Real hard. Your barehanded attacks inflict 0k2 rather than 0k1.

Journeyman Technique: Those who study under Finnegan must be prepared to suffer endless bruises and broken bones, which toughens them up considerably, enhancing their ability to shrug off a wound. Whenever you fail a Wound Check, divide the amount you failed by in half (rounding down) before suffering any additional Dramatic Wounds.

Master Technique: Plain and simple: you fight better with a few pints in your belly. Masters of the Finnegan style of fighting reverse the penalties imposed by the Inebriation rules (see below) for purposes of Attack and Damage rolls, as well as Wound Checks and Active Defense attempts. Masters *never* pass

out from drink. And even Able Drinkers may still use these bonuses!

Inebriation Rules

Make a Brawn test against a TN of 10 x the number of drinks you've had this Scene. For every failure, consult the table below (failures are cumulative). Characters with the Able Drinker Advantage ignore these rules.

Effects of Inebriation Table

# Failures	Effect
1	Slight speech impediment.
2	-1 unkept die to rolls until end of Scene.
3	-2 unkept dice to all rolls. Drops to -1 next Scene.
4+	Pass out for remainder of Scene. If you wake up, you're at -3 unkept dice to all rolls (the number goes down by -1 every Scene until it reaches zero).

Goodfellow

Country of Origin: Avalon

Robin Goodfellow first taught his band of robbers how to use the longbow. For years the secret was confined to a few dozen men, but eventually Robin started teaching all comers. Students learned to build special bows and fire arrows at an amazing rate. Eventually, these students became some of the most nimble archers in the world, arcing their fire over long distances, and even knocking weapons out of the hands of others.

Goodfellow represents the very height of Skill with the longbow. Masters of the style pull off feats that would be impossible for lesser archers.

The main weakness of the Goodfellow style is the pause just before the loosing of each shot. An enemy can take advantage of the pause to snap a shot of his own, or to attempt to get out of the way of the archer's shot.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Goodfellow students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Archer, Hunter

Swordsman Knacks

Arc (Bow): Students of this Knack spend months learning the fine art of arcing a shot from a missile weapon to hit distant targets. For each Rank in this Knack, increase the Range of the missile weapon by five yards.

Disarm (Bow): This Knack uses the bow to entangle your opponents melee weapon and Disarm him. You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Tagging (Bow): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Goodfellow): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: One of the first lessons learned by students of the Goodfellow School is how to build their bow. The bow a student builds allows him to add his Brawn to all Damage rolls made with the bow, as though it were a melee weapon.

Journeyman Technique: Once they've mastered aiming and firing the bow, students pick up their loading speed. At the journeyman Rank, Goodfellow students can spend one Action to make two Attacks. Both attacks have a -2 unkept dice penalty to their Attack roll.

Master Technique: When they reach this Rank, the archers gain a +1 bonus to their Finesse for free. This also raises the maximum Rank their finesse can be raised to by +1. Thus, a Master of Goodfellow can raise his Finesse to 6 (or even 7, with the Legendary Trait Advantage).

Inish Fancy (O'cutty)

Country of Origin: Avalon

Restrictions: Inismore only

Inish Fancy is a Swordsman School based on the Donovan fencing school. It is a no-holds-barred, anything-to-win kind of school. It was developed by an Inish pirate captain named O'cutty and uses a pistol in the off hand and the sharp edge of a slashing weapon, often found in Donovan. The pistol, once discharged, can be re-holstered or dropped and a new gun quickly drawn. Practitioners often carry braces of firearms, pistols with bladed ends, sword-pistols or other such toys.

Swordsmen of Inish Fancy tend to not only be brutal, but the rest of the Swordsman Schools frown heavily on the use of a pistol. Not only does the use of a pistol go against the martial style of using a gentlemanly fencing blade, but also the O'cutty swordsmen often get in close and lock up or bind their opponent's sword, then the pistol is fired at point blank range, thus ending a fine duel in an unseemly manner. Whilst not gentlemanly, the school is very effective.

The major weakness of the Inish Fancy style is the fact that most of the swordsmen move in close before discharging their firearm. One could move back or knock the firearm aside just before the shot goes off, ruining it. Guns fire only once and when the fencer is out, he will usually draw another weapon to parry, or use the gun itself. He also relies heavy on basic slashing moves after this.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Inish Fancy students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Firearms

Swordsman Knacks

Bind (Fencing): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Inish Fancy): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Inish Fancy style allows the Swordsman to draw and fire a pistol with one Action. In addition he may negate the penalty for using a pistol in his off-hand.

Journeyman Technique: Training in the integration of firearms and blades is finalized at the Journeyman level. Maneuvers that the opponent will expect to come from a blade will instead come from a gun. O'cutty teaches his students to meld the firearm and blade into singular fluid attacks and parries. First, the Swordsman is allowed to make the Attack from a successful use of his Riposte Knack using his pistol. Substitute Attack (Firearms) for Attack (Fencing) in this case. Secondly, the penalty from Called Shots at Short Range becomes equal to $5 \times$ Mastery Level—so either 10 or 15.

Master Technique: The Swordsman knows how to follow up a good strike with a shot to the head in the brief moment that the opponent is off-guard. If he declares Raises on an Attack (Fencing) roll and hits, the next attack must be made with a pistol. If this Attack hits the intended target, he rolls and Keeps an additional 1k1 Damage for every two Raises made on his initial Attack (Fencing) roll, to a maximum of an extra 3k3 (equivalent to six Raises).

MacDonald

Country of Origin: Avalon (Highland Marches)

The MacDonalds are some of the fiercest warriors in the highland Marches. Their enormous claymores strike fear into their opponents. A single blow from a skilled MacDonald can cut a man in half.

The MacDonald style is wild and unpredictable. The clansmen have a reputation for ignoring their own defense, preferring to use such a devastating offense that their enemies have no time to even consider an offense of their own.

The main weakness of the MacDonald style is its lack of finesse. Its students prefer to brute-force their way through a fight, and an agile, clever opponent can slowly wear them down—as long as he presents the Highlander with no openings. A single blow can kill, however, and all a MacDonald Swordsman needs is one opening.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Heavy Weapon

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Heavy Weapon): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Lunge (Heavy Weapon): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike: Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict a 0k2 attack, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (MacDonald): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a

School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the MacDonald style may ignore the claymore's -1 unkept die penalty to their Attack roll.

Journeyman Technique: The ferocious sword swings of the Highlanders are as wild as they are deadly. Before you roll to hit, you may set aside any number of your Attack roll dice instead of rolling them. If your strike is successful, you may add those dice to your Damage roll as unkept dice.

Master Technique: Masters of the MacDonald style have learned to put their whole body into their swings. Thus, you roll and Keep +1 extra die when making Damage rolls with a claymore (making it 5k3 without Brawn modifiers).

Castille

Aldana

Country of Origin: Castille

Aldana is the fighting style of choice of Castillians. It is one of the few fighting styles on Théah that forgoes the use of the off-hand. Instead, the off-hand is tucked behind the duelist's back and he presents his side to his opponent, narrowing the choice of targets that can be struck at. The Aldana style is designed for use with fencing weapons.

Aldana combines word fighting with dancing to produce an elusive, unpredictable series of movements. The duelist silently counts time in his head, mentally playing the song that he is "dancing" to. This allows him to make unpredictable moves along with the rhythm of the song, which is unknown to his opponent. These movements make him harder to hit and disorient his opponent, causing deadly hesitations. Most impressive of all, Masters of Aldana can work themselves into a trance in which their entire being is focused entirely on the fight at hand. In this way, they surpass the Skills of most fencers.

The one problem with the Aldana style of fighting is the song's chorus. A duelist familiar with Aldana knows how to watch for the chorus, and strikes while the student of Aldana is briefly predictable.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Courtier, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active

Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Tagging (Fencing): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Aldana): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: The Aldana Apprentice is renowned for his lightning-fast reflexes and aggressive fighting style. You may roll +1 unkept die for Initiative for each Mastery Level you have in Aldana.

Journeyman Technique: The Journeyman's weaving, disorienting style of movement makes him difficult to hit. Add +5 to your TN to be Hit.

Master Technique: Masters of Aldana enter a trance where they are focused entirely on the duel at hand. At the start of such Rounds, you receive a number of "Focus Dice" equal to your Wits Trait. These are unkept dice that may be added to any Attack rolls or Active Defense actions during the Round, but their use must be declared before the roll is made and they are gone once used, until the next Round.

Carlucci

Country of Origin: Castille

Founded by Enzo Carlucci, a Swordsman of unorthodox outlook and unquestionable honor, the Carlucci School of

Swordsmanship is famed for its rigorous and disciplined physical regimen, as well as the fact that its students fight with a rapier in each hand. It is also a very physical school, stressing constant motion, and vigorous action, students using the terrain to their best advantage.

The Carlucci School demands honorable conduct, and is also one of the few schools that specifically teaches its advanced students how to fight multiple opponents, drawing upon Enzo's military experience in the War of the Cross. While some Carlucci students bear two rapiers at their hips at all times, this is considered somewhat gauche, and lacking in subtlety. Truly skilled Carlucci Swordsmen carry but one rapier, and quickly disarm an opponent to equip themselves with a second weapon. Defeating an opponent with their own sword is the epitome of Carlucci prowess.

If any flaws can be directed at the Carlucci School, it is their strict adherence to honor in a nation where honor often bows out to practicality, and the fact that they become overly reliant on the greater reach their paired rapiers provide, so an opponent moving in extremely close can often undermine their abilities.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Fencing

Swordsmen Knacks

Disarm (Cloak): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Double Parry (Fencing/Fencing): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually two rapiers). You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Multiple Opponents (Fencing): When facing two or more opponents, you may make two Attacks, two Parries, or a Parry and an Attack, per Action die spent, providing no more than one of the actions is directed at a single opponent. Each Attack or Parry uses half your Attack or Parry ability as appropriate (rounded down). You get a number of dice equal to your Multiple Opponents Rank to divide between the two actions as you see fit.

Exploit Weakness (Carlucci): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Carlucci style of swordsmanship negates the off-hand penalty when using a fencing sword. Additionally, Carlucci Swordsmen do not need to make two Raises when performing a Disarm attack in order to wind up holding the opponent's weapon.

Journeyman Technique: Carlucci Journeymen learn the Carlucci Twist, catching their opponent's weapon between their twin blades, and twisting them in such a way as to snap the opponent's weapon. To do so you must perform a successful Double Parry, and spend a Drama Die to make the breaking attempt. You may then make a Finesse check against a TN based on the type of weapon you are attempting to break.

- Fencing Weapon: TN 30
- Heavy Weapon: TN 35
- Other Weapons: Per GM decision, but at least TN 40

The following modifiers can adjust these Target Numbers:

- Quality Weapon: TN +5
- Inferior Weapon: TN -5
- Dracheneisen Weapon: TN +10

Even if the breaking attempt is unsuccessful, the opponent is disarmed.

Master Technique: Masters of Carlucci have learned to use multiple opponents as an asset. Whenever the Master successfully uses any Active Defense, he may redirect the attack to a nearby target (except for the attacker). He uses his Active Defense roll as the Attack, but damage is rolled using one less unkept Damage die.

Gallegos

Country of Origin: Castille

Also known as the "Three Circle" style, Gallegos teaches its students that leaping around is unnecessary in a fight. They train in progressively smaller circles, and in each instance, while they are forced to remain in the circle, their opponent can move around at will. Overall, the student learns to fight in three circles before he can become a Master.

The primary strength of the Gallegos style is the seemingly superhuman ability to slide neatly out of the way of an oncoming thrust by twisting a bit to the side, or sweeping out with a lightning fast parry. The students learn to hold their ground and wait for the enemy to come to them, then turn attacks back at their originator with as little effort as possible.

However, students of Gallegos become so used to fighting in this fashion that they have a tendency to forget that they can move at all. Thus, a hulking Leegstra student or a well-aimed bullet can often spell doom for them.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Fencing

Swordsmen Knacks

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt

or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Tagging (Fencing): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Gallegos): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Gallegos School have mastered the First Circle. They learn to play the waiting game and watch for attacks from their opponents. You receive one Free Raise when Parrying with a Fencing weapon. In addition, when you Hold an Action, increase the Phase showing on that Action die by +1 at the end of the Phase.

Example: Thus, if you roll a 5 for Initiative and Hold that Action in Phase 5, the die is increased to a 6 at the end of Phase 5.

This makes you more likely to go first in later Phases, allowing you to take charge when your opponent is low on Actions.

Journeyman Technique: Once he has mastered the Second Circle, the Journeyman can fight comfortably while only occasionally shifting a step to the left or right. He waits for an attack, then turns it around against the attacker with a flick of his wrist. You are extraordinarily skilled at riposting and receive a Free Rank in the Riposte Knack upon becoming a Journeyman. This may increase your maximum Rank to a 6. If it does not do so immediately, you can later increase your Riposte Knack Rank by using XP.

Master Technique: After learning the Third Circle, the Master no longer needs to move his feet during a fight. His flashing blade and graceful movements make him incredibly difficult to hit. Add +10 to your TN to be Hit.

Montena

Country of Origin: Castille

Carlos Montena is close to retirement. He has been a performer for nearly 40 years, and teaching for at least 20. Rumors abound regarding Carlos and his school. Some say he is a Syrna who decided to settle down in San Cristobal, about the time Good King Sandoval was born, and his recent move to Vaticine City is purely innocent. Some say that he acts as a bodyguard for the good king. Some say he is a member of the El Vago League. Others actually think the old man is El Vago himself. What they all agree on is that his Skill with throwing is unrivalled by any in Castille.

Carlos Montena teaches his students to juggle knives, and to throw them blindfolded. He teaches his pupils to entertain, and to protect. Carlos, himself, entertained King Aldana for years after saving the man's life from an assassin's blade. Students of Montena spend most of their time learning to balance (then juggle) knives. Most get their start as Carlos's assistant (i.e. Target), and only after learning respect for the knife do they learn more.

The main weakness to Montena is the release. A knife thrower will draw back his hand to throw as he decides his target. Anyone familiar with the style knows that a fast attack during the draw back will land before the knife can be brought back to parry.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Torres students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks, or +1 Rank in the Throw (Knife) Knack.

Basic Curriculum: Knife, Pugilism

Swordsman Knacks

Catch: Catch is the art of grabbing a thrown object (knife, spear, or similar) from the air before it hits you. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack whenever someone throws a weapon at you.

Pin (Knife): When you use Pin, you must declare whether you are aiming for the target's arm or leg. Make a Pin roll, with Raises equal to the Target's Finesse. This attack does no damage.

If you successfully target an arm, your opponent loses the ability to use any non-Parry Defense Knack until he spends an Action to dislodge the Pin weapon. Your opponent also suffers a +10 TN penalty when using any Weapon Knacks with the affected arm.

If you use Pin against your opponent's leg, then he must make a Finesse+Balance [Attack Roll] roll to avoid falling. If he fails this roll, then he becomes prone, and can't attempt to get up until he spends an action to free himself from the Pin weapon. If he succeeds at this roll, then he only suffers the loss of any non-Parry Defense Knack.

In both cases, the target must make a Brawn [5] roll to dislodge a Pin weapon. He must make a Raise for each Raise you declared when making the Attack roll and for every Pin weapon after the first.

Tagging (Knife): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never

become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Montena): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Apprentice Level of Montena negates the off-hand penalty when using a knife. You can also learn the Catch-Throw Knack, an Advanced Knack. Apprentice students of Montena gain a Free Raise when using the Catch Knack.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen students have learned to draw and throw one knife per hand as a single Action. You may spend 1 Action die to draw and throw two knives. You sacrifice – 1 Kept die from each roll to hit, but roll damage as normal.

Master Technique: A Master of Montena has learned to throw knives at an alarming rate. Once per round, you may launch into the Aguijón del Enjambre de Avispas (Sting of the Hornet Swarm). To use the Swarm, you spend an Action die and make an Attack roll to throw one knife. Hit or miss, you may then throw a second knife at a penalty of one unkept die. Hit or miss, you may then throw a third knife at a penalty of -2 unkept dice. Then a fourth, and a fifth, and so on. Once your unkept dice pool drops to less than 1, then you can no longer throw any more knives. Note that Pin attacks cannot be used with this technique.

Soldano

Country of Origin: Castille

This style of fighting borrows from both the Montaigne and the Crescents, although the Castillians have clearly infused it with their own personality. The student learns to fight with a rapier in each hand, whirling and leaping among his enemies like a tornado, and leaving ruin behind him.

Soldano students fight with flair and color, dispatching whatever hordes of unskilled fighters they may be faced with, then infuriating their enemy before driving their twin blades home in a deadly thrust.

However, Soldano fighters often become too exuberant. In their excitement, they leave small openings in their defenses that a skilled opponent can take advantage of.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Double Parry (Fencing/Fencing): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually two rapiers). You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any

event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Tagging (Fencing): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Whirl (Fencing/Fencing): Whirl is a spinning attack designed to take out multiple unskilled enemies at once. For each Rank you have in this Knack, you may add 2 to your Attack roll when attacking Brutes.

Example: Thus, a Hero with Whirl 3 would increase an Attack roll of 19 to a 25 when attacking Brutes.

Exploit Weakness (Soldano): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices in the Soldano School are trained to deal with large numbers of poorly trained opponents—and do so with style. Your off-hand penalty is negated when using a Fencing weapon in each hand. In addition, at the start of each Battle, you receive a number of Drama Dice equal to your Mastery Level. These Drama Dice, is unspent at the end of the Battle, go away.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Soldano School have learned to marshal their strength for a single devastating attack. After you have inflicted damage on an opponent, but before they've made their Wound Check, you may spend a Drama Die (including those generated by your Apprentice Technique, Double Parry, or Tagging) to lower by 5 the number required for them to take an extra Dramatic Wound. You may do this multiple times, reducing this "Wound Threshold" as low as 5.

Example: Normally an opponent must fail his Wound Check by 20 to take an extra Dramatic Wound. By using this ability and spending 2 Drama Dice, you can lower that number to 10 (-5 for each Drama Die spent).

Master Technique: Masters of the Soldano School have learned to thoroughly enrage and outwit their most dangerous opponents. Once per Round, at the start of a Round in which you are engaged in combat with a Villain, you may use an Intimidation action against the villain without spending an Action. Add +1 to

the roll for each Brute you've personally killed in this fight, and +5 for each Henchman. If you win, instead of the normal Intimidation effects, you steal 1 Drama Die from the GM, plus an additional +1 Drama Die for every 5 full points you win the roll by.

Torres

Country of Origin: Castille

Originally developed for bullfighting, the Torres style makes use of a rapier in one hand and a cloak in the other. The student uses subtle movements to draw his opponent's attention to the cloak, and then blindsides him with the rapier.

The Torres School is an extremely effective defensive style, as the cloak and sword combine to form a wall of cloth and steel between the student and his opponent's blade. Masters of the School are some of the most quick-witted and agile Swordsmen in the world.

However, the Torres style of fighting has very little power when it comes to taking the offensive. While its students are fast and nimble, they lack the penetrating force of an Eisenfaust or Leegstra student.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Torres students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Cloak, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Double Parry (Cloak/Fencing): A Double Parry is a parry with two weapons (a fencing weapon and a cloak). You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Side-step: Whenever you successfully use Active Defense, you may lower your next Action die by your Knack Rank. You may not reduce the Action die to a number lower than the current Phase.

Tagging (Fencing): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Torres): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman

defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices in the Torres School have learned the art of using their cloak to draw attention away from their true movements. The off-hand penalty is negated when you are using a cloak. In addition, your side-step Knack may affect +1 additional Action die for each of your Mastery Levels each time it's used.

Example: An Apprentice with Rank 3 in the Side-step Knack, and who rolled a 7, 7, 8 for Initiative could affect 2 Action dice with a successful Active Defense, changing his Initiative to 4, 4, 8, for instance.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Torres School are very fast on their feet. When performing an Active Defense, lower your Action dice by a number of Phases equal to twice your Mastery Level.

Master Technique: Masters of Torres are some of the most agile and quick-witted fighters in the world. When you reach this level, you gain a +1 Rank bonus to your Wits Trait for free. This also raises the maximum Rank your wits can be raised to by +1. Thus, a Master of Torres can raise his Wits to 6 (or even 7, with the Legendary Trait Advantage).

Zepeda

Country of Origin: Castille

Students of the Zepeda style learn to fight with a whip in hand. Although seldom as deadly as rapier or a knife, the whip is a great tool for intimidation and defense, even skilled Swordsmen will often flinch away from its cracking sting.

The Zepeda School teaches the student more than simply cracking the whip. He also learns a variety of tricks to perform with the whip, not to mention how to cow opponents with the promise of a rawhide thrashing.

However, an opponent who can withstand the pain of a whip for a strike or two can often get in close where the whip is useless next to the deadly steel of even a small knife.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Zepeda students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Whip

Swordsman Knacks

Bind (Whip): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Disarm (Whip): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to

make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Tagging (Whip): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Zepeda): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Zepeda School learn to use the whip as a tool of intimidation and fear. By spending one Action cracking your whip, you may increase your TN to be Hit by your Mastery Level for the rest of the Round. You may do this as many times as you like: the bonus is cumulative. This bonus is no use, however, against opponents who are immune to Fear, and ends immediately if your whip leaves your hand or becomes entangled (such as during a Bind). In addition, you receive a Free Raise to your Attack roll when using a whip.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Zepeda School have learned to use their whip in more versatile ways. As long as your whip is in hand, you may substitute your Rank in the Attack (Whip) Knack for any of the following Swordsman Knacks: Animal Training, Break Fall, Swinging, Grapple. In addition, you may attempt to knock an opponent prone by yanking him off his feet, but this raises your TN to hit him by +10.

Master Technique: Masters of the Zepeda School are greatly feared for their Skill with the whip. You have learned to use your whip to teach others respect. For each successful hit that causes damage against an opponent, you are considered to have +1 to your Fear Rating against that opponent until the end of the Battle.

Example: If you have inflicted 3 hits that have caused at least 1 Flesh Wound to an opponent, then you have a Fear Rating of 3 versus that opponent.

Eisen

Drexel

Country of Origin: Eisen

This School was developed by a mercenary named Kristoff Drexel, the leader of the warband known as the Blood Spirits. He found that, as a mercenary, he was usually forced into unpredictable situations that called for flexibility in thought and fighting style. Thus, he devised several different ways to make use of the versatile Eisen zweihander. The Drexel fighting style is very popular among mercenaries because of its ability to deal with many different situations. Often, these mercenaries are referred to as doppel soldiers, a reference to their fees: they are paid twice as much as a normal soldier.

The Drexel School is well-known for its flexibility in combat. A Swordsman making use of it has more ways of attacking and defending himself than a Swordsman using another School. There are four Stances, or ways of holding the zweihander, that Drexel teaches. Each has certain advantages and disadvantages, and focuses either on offense or defense.

A student can quickly switch between these stances to adapt to a changing situation. However, because the School focuses on flexibility and quick thinking instead of repetitious drilling, there is sometimes a moment of hesitation when the fighting situation changes suddenly, which can be deadly to the student.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Dirty Fighting, Heavy Weapon

Swordsman Knacks

Disarm (Heavy Weapon): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Lunge (Heavy Weapon): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike (Heavy Weapon): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict a 0k2 attack, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Drexel): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and

must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Drexel School have learned some of the basics they will need to know in order to master the zweihander. You know 2 Zweihander Stances, and can use the Apprentice Level abilities listed under each Stance that you know. In addition, you receive +5 to your Initiative Total when wielding a zweihander.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen have expanded their basic knowledge of the zweihander, and they have learned to use their strength and Skill to intimidate their opponents (as well as their own men). You learn +1 additional Zweihander Stance, and you can use the Journeyman Level abilities listed under each Stance that you know. In addition, you receive a Fear Rating of 1. If you already have a Fear Rating, then it goes up by +1. You can use your Fear Rating to aid in Leadership checks, Intimidation attempts, and Panic checks (see the Advanced Mass Combat rules [EI:100]). You receive +1 Free Raise to your roll for every point of Fear. Lastly, when leading men (Henchmen or Brutes) against a creature or person that has a Fear Rating, your Fear Rating cancels out the effects of its Fear Rating on you and your men on a 1-for-1 basis until the end of the Scene (i.e. If the monster's Rating is a 3 and yours is a 2, the monster's Rating is reduced to 1, and yours is reduced to 0).

Master Technique: Masters of the Drexel School have mastered all of the zweihander's secrets, and are feared warriors. You learn the final Zweihander Stance and can use the Master Level abilities listed under each Stance. Your Fear Rating is increased by +1.

Zweihander Stances

A Stance is a particular way of holding and fighting with a weapon. The zweihander is a particularly flexible weapon that has four primary Stances. Each of the Stances affect how the zweihander performs. A student of the Drexel School can enter a Stance at any time by spending one Action as long as he is wielding a ready zweihander not currently waiting to be reset. He may choose to start a battle in a Stance without spending an Action as long as he meets the above conditions. Wielding any other weapon besides a zweihander disallows the use of these Stances.

The Bittner, or Forward Stance

The zweihander is held at head level, almost like a spear. This Stance is mostly defensive, but it makes the zweihander much easier to maneuver. The zweihander deals only 2k2 damage in this Stance.

Apprentice Level: You do not need to take an Action to reset your zweihander and you receive +1 Free Raise to any Parry Active Defense.

Journeyman Level: You now receive +2 Free Raises to any Parry Active Defense. Your Action dice are considered to be -1 lower (minimum 1) when performing an Active Defense.

Master Level: You now receive +3 Free Raises to any Parry Active Defense. Your Action dice are considered to be -2 lower (minimum 1) when performing an Active Defense.

The Gerbeck, or High Stance

This is the Stance that most untrained people assume when handed a zweihander. The blade is held pointing upwards, with the hands near the face, and the weapon is used like an axe, making huge swings. In this Stance, the zweihander deals 3k3 damage.

Apprentice Level: You have learned how to attack an opponent while resetting your zweihander. However, the attack is weak, and the zweihander is only considered a 1k2 weapon for the attack.

Journeyman Level: You have improved your resetting Skills to the point where your zweihander is considered to be a 2k2 weapon during a reset Action.

Master Level: Your zweihander now deals as much damage as an ordinary Heavy Weapon (3k2) while being reset.

The Köhler, or Low Stance

In this stance, the zweihander is held horizontally with an overhand grip near the user's waist, pointing towards the opponent. This is a very quick Stance, allowing rapid movements with the blade. In this Stance the zweihander deals 2k2 damage.

Apprentice Level: You receive +10 to your Initiative Total (in addition to your normal +5), and your Action dice are considered 1 lower (minimum 1) when Attacking, resetting your zweihander, or performing an Active Defense.

Journeyman Level: Your Action dice are now considered -2 lower (minimum 1) when Attacking, resetting your zweihander, or performing an Active Defense.

Master Level: Your Action dice are now considered -3 lower (minimum 1) when Attacking, resetting your zweihander, or performing an Active Defense.

The Metzger, or Back Stance

In this stance, the sword is held like a broom, with the blade pointing at the ground a little bit behind the user. It is an extremely offensive Stance that allows for quick, surprising attacks. In this Stance the zweihander inflicts 4k3 damage, but the user's Passive Defense is reduced by -5, and the TN of any Active Defense the user attempts is increased by +5.

Apprentice Level: Your Action dice are considered -1 lower (minimum 1) when Attacking.

Journeyman Level: Your Action dice are now considered -2 lower (minimum 1) when Attacking.

Master Level: Your zweihander inflicts 4k4 damage when it hits.

Eisenfaust

Country of Origin: Eisen

The Eisenfaust style is taught at several academies in Eisen. It teaches the use of a broadsword in conjunction with an off-hand panzerhand, or iron glove. The student is trained to deflect or grab incoming attacks with his glove and exploit the openings left in the opponent's stance with his broadsword (which is considered a Heavy Weapon). This School of fighting is very defensive, teaching its students to wait for their opponent to make a mistake before attacking: "Whether or not you ever take the offensive is of little consequence if in so doing you leave an opening through which your opponent kills you."

Eisenfaust is very good at exploiting mistakes made by an opponent. Gradually, the opponent grows impatient or angry and makes a mistake. As soon as he slips up, the student of Eisenfaust is on top of him, raining down fearsome broadsword blows.

The flaw in the Eisenfaust style is the rigidity instilled in the training. While there are over 70 individual moves that students learn, there are certain rules they learn to follow when changing from one move to the next. They learn not to use certain moves in succession because of the awkwardness involved. This leaves a small but predictable gap that a knowledgeable opponent can force his way through.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Heavy Weapon, Panzerhand

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Heavy Weapon): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Bind (Heavy Weapon): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Disarm (Heavy Weapon): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Exploit Weakness (Eisenfaust): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Eisenfaust style allows you to use a broadsword (a Heavy Weapon) in one hand and negates the off-hand penalty when using a panzerhand. When your opponent fails to hit your Passive Defense, you gain a Free Raise to your next attack against them for every full 5 points they missed you by. These Raises must be used against that opponent before the end of the Round, or they are lost. In addition, if that same opponent attacks you again before you use the Raises, they are lost as the window of opportunity closes.

Journeyman Technique: Eisenfaust Journeymen have learned how to break their opponents' weapons with their panzerhand. Whenever you make a successful Active Defense using Parry (Panzerhand), you may spend a Drama Die in order to attempt to break your opponent's weapon. You must make a successful

Brawn test against a TN based on the type of weapon you are attempting to break.

- Fencing Weapon: TN 30
- Heavy Weapon: TN 35
- Other Weapons: Per GM decision, but at least TN 40

The following modifiers can adjust these Target Numbers:

- Quality Weapon: TN +5
- Inferior Weapon: TN -5
- Dracheneisen Weapon: TN +10

Master Technique: Eisenfaust Masters have learned the art of patience. You may Hold an Action in order to wait for an opening. Each Phase you Hold the Action grants +1 unkept die of damage if and when that Action is used to attack. You may not gain more unkept dice of damage through use of this Technique than your Resolve Trait. You may only hold one Action die in this manner per Round, and while it is being held you may only Hold or Actively Defend with your other Action dice.

Gelingen

Country of Origin: Eisen

This style of fighting was specially designed for use against non-human opponents. Students learn how to look for weak spots in the anatomy of creatures they are unfamiliar with, so that after fighting a few monsters of that type, they know where to strike in order to do the most damage.

Tricks of the trade include aiming for joints such as knees and elbows, finding substances that are particularly poisonous to certain types of monster, and attacking soft portions of the creature's body, such as the eyes.

However, Gelingen is not particularly useful against intelligent opponents. Students learn to watch for predictable, repetitious movements, and intelligent opponents vary too much from individual to individual to establish any reliable, simple patterns for them.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Gelingen students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Dirty Fighting, Doctor

Swordsman Knacks

Exploit Weakness (Monster): You are trained in the ways of defeating different creatures, noting their weak spots, and learning to take advantage of them. Whenever you fight a monster whose Exploit Weakness Knack you possess, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in the Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. Types of monsters include: aspreys, kobolds, sirens, etc. Intelligent creatures, such as Sidhe and humans, are not considered monsters, since their tactics may vary so much that any standard tricks would be useless.

Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knacks may only be improved (at normal cost) after you have fought and defeated (or helped to defeat) a monster of that type, and then only by one Rank per encounter. Note: This limit does not apply during Hero Creation—the Hero is assumed to have fought the requisite number of monsters sometime in the past.

Exploit Weakness (Gelingen): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A

Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: The student is trained to fight one type of monster (typically a common species, such as kobolds or sirens, but others are possible). You receive one Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knack at Rank 3 for free, and you may purchase up to three more at normal cost (as Advanced Knacks). You must have four Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knacks at Rank 4 to become a Journeyman.

In addition, when fighting a monster whose Exploit Weakness Knack you possess, you always add your Knack Rank to any Damage rolls against the monster.

Journeyman Technique: The student has now learned to fight several different breeds of monster, and begun to identify common attacks and habits among them. When fighting a monster whose Exploit Weakness Knack you possess, you always add twice your Knack Rank to your Passive Defense when attacked by the monster.

In addition, your Apprentice bonus is doubled, allowing you to add twice your Rank in a creature's Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knack to your Damage rolls against it. You must have four Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knacks at Rank 5 to become a Master.

Master Technique: By this point, the student has begun to make broad generalizations in his training that apply to many different types of monster. You are considered to have a free Rank 1 in all possible Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knacks, and you may increase any of them (to Rank 2 or higher) as usual. You may now purchase as many Exploit Weakness (Monster) Knacks as you wish.

Höpken

Country of Origin: Eisen

The invention of the crossbow was both a curse and a godsend to the Eisen. It could penetrate even full suits of Dracheneisen, a feat normal bows could not duplicate. And, although it was an expensive weapon, it allowed them to field their peasants effectively with little or no training. One of these peasants, a man named Adrian Höpken, became so adept at the crossbow that he passed on his techniques to a throng of eager students after the War of the Cross ended.

The Höpken style focuses on accuracy during firing and speed during reloading. In addition, Adrian developed a high-powered heavy crossbow that is even more likely to punch through Dracheneisen. Combined with several gearing tricks and a device similar to a shoehorn, Adrian teaches his students how to reload their crossbows almost instantly.

However, the weakness of this School lies in the very tools it specializes in. The crossbows are only useful when the user is reasonably stationary, and the firing mechanism causes a slight twitch in the crossbow just before a bolt is fired, allowing an alert opponent to get out of the way.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Höpken students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's

Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Crossbow

Swordsman Knacks

Arc (Crossbow): While arcing a shot from a crossbow is very difficult, it is possible. Students of this Knack spend months learning the fine art of arcing a shot from a missile weapon to hit distant targets. For each Rank in this Knack, increase the Range of the missile weapon by five yards.

Reload (Crossbow): You are able to reload a missile weapon quicker. For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for crossbows is reduced by one Action. Someone with a Rank 5 in this Knack has mastered the art of cocking the crossbow in a single Action. *This Knack is considered a Basic Knack for members of the Höpken School.*

Trick Shooting (Crossbow): You are skilled at making difficult shots. For each Rank of Trick Shooting, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (for range, cover, etc.). Trick Shooting cannot lower the shot's TN below the target's base TN to be Hit.

Example: If a target has a TN to be Hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, an Archer with Trick Shooting 5 would negate all 15 points of modifiers, but he would not lower the base TN to be Hit (which remains at the original 15).

Exploit Weakness (Höpken): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Höpken School have learned some tricks when firing a crossbow. You inflict +1 unkept die of damage when you hit (for a total of 3k3), and you may purchase the Reload (Crossbow) Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Höpken School have learned to use the crossbow to its best advantage, firing it further and more accurately than any untrained user. Your crossbow Range is increased by +10 yards, and your crossbow's Short and Long Range modifiers are reduced to 0 and -5, respectively. In addition, you may build a special heavy crossbow that does 4k3 Damage instead of 3k3. This costs 5,000G. Anyone whose Brawn is less than 4 takes +3 extra Actions to reload the crossbow.

Master Technique: Masters of the Höpken School are generally considered the most skilled crossbowmen in all of Théah. Your crossbow's Range is increased by +15 yards, while your Short and Long Range modifiers are reduced to +5 and 0, respectively. Lastly, you may raise your Reload (Crossbow) Knack from Rank 5 to Rank 6 for a cost of 25 XP, reducing your Reload time to 0 and allowing you to fire every Action.

Loring

Country of Origin: Eisen

Restrictions: Freiburg only

Invented by the leader of the Wachhunde, Kelby Loring, and later adopted by the Freiburg Guard, the Loring style of fighting uses two panzerhands. It is a defensive style, much like Eisenfaust, and its practitioners often use it to incapacitate potentially violent criminals without hurting them (too much).

The primary advantage of the Freiburg School is the tendency of Swordsmen to underestimate anyone not holding a long, sharp weapon in their hand. This allows a Loring fighter to step in and quickly snatch an opponent's weapon away from them before they get a chance to react. It also makes most opponents reluctant to draw a pistol or turn the fight deadly in some other manner. Without the Loring School, the mortality rate of the Freiburg Guard would be much higher.

The primary weakness of the Loring School is its poor reach and defensive nature. If backed into a corner or faced with an opponent skilled at bypassing parries, then a practitioner can find himself at the mercy of his opponent.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Panzerhand

Swordsmen Knacks

Bind (Panzerhand): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Disarm (Panzerhand): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Hook: You have learned to use the weight and momentum of the panzerhands you wear to their fullest advantage. You receive a +1 bonus to your panzerhand Damage rolls for each Rank you have in this Rank.

Example: A Hero with Hook 3 would increase a panzerhand Damage roll of 19 to 22.

Exploit Weakness (Loring): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit

Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Loring style learn to fight with a panzerhand on each hand. You suffer no off-hand penalty when using a panzerhand, and gain +1 unkept die to your panzerhand Damage rolls for each Mastery Level you possess in the Loring School.

Journeyman Technique: Loring focuses mainly on restraining violent people and disarming them before they can hurt anyone else. You may use your disarm Knack without waiting for your opponent to miss your Passive Defense, but if you do, your Disarm attempt suffers a -10 penalty to its roll. Failure drops your TN to be Hit to 5 for the rest of the current Phase and the whole of the Phase following. In addition, once you reach this Mastery Level and have Rank 5 in your Disarm (Panzerhand) Knack, you may spend 25 XP to increase it from 5 to 6.

Master Technique: Masters of the Loring School are extremely skilled at protecting themselves from harm. They also become adept at snatching their opponents' weapons right out of their hands. You may now use your Bind (Panzerhand) Knack as a Parry Defense Knack. If you successfully use it for an Active Defense, the weapon your opponent attacked you with has been bound as though you had used the Knack normally. In addition, you immediately receive 1 extra Action which you must use against that opponent right away or lose.

Pösen

Country of Origin: Eisen

This School trains its students in the use of the boar spear, a polearm often used from horseback for hunting boar. It has a crossbar on the blade to prevent the boar from fighting its way up the blade to kill the horse and rider. Some of the more arrogant nobles began using boar spears to hunt enemy soldiers on the battlefield while arrows and swords bounced off their Dracheneisen armor. Eventually, it became a method for nobles to prove their courage—a handicap to make up for the security granted by Dracheneisen. However, methods were developed by the Pösen family that turned the boar spear into a brutal cavalry weapon. Now, it is less a handicap than an effective style of fighting that displays the fighter's noble pedigree for all to see.

The main strength of the Pösen School is its devastating initial burst of action. The student expends a great deal of effort at the start of the battle, then often retires to the reserves to rest and brag about the number of "pigs", or foot soldiers, he's managed to kill.

However, if the student's retreat is cut off, he's in a great deal of trouble. Pösen techniques leave a fighter exhausted after a very short time, and more than one noble has been pulled from his horse, stripped of his armor, and hacked to pieces by the "pigs".

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Polearm, Rider

Swordsmen Knacks

Beat (Polearm): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your

Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Charge (Polearm): This Knack allows you to try to hit early and often, then withdraw to a place of safety. You may lower one of your Action dice by your Knack Rank (to a minimum of one) just before Phase one of the first Round of each combat.

Lance (Polearm): This replaces the Attack (Polearm) Knack when using a Polearm from horseback. *This is considered a Basic Knack for students of the Pösen School.*

Exploit Weakness (Pösen): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of this style learn to use their spear to keep their enemies at bay and to fight from horseback. You receive +15 to your Initiative Total during the first Round of each combat. Also, when you use your Lance (Polearm) Knack during the first Round of a combat, as long as you have a decent amount of space to maneuver (at least a 20 foot x 20 foot area, at the GM's discretion) you roll and Keep +1 extra die of damage when you hit. In addition, Pösen is most often taught to nobles, so you receive a -5 HP discount if you purchase the Dracheneisen Advantage (which is a truer indication of Eisen nobility than the Noble Advantage, since so many nobles have lost their lands).

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen have learned how to focus their strength early in a battle, doing as much damage as early as possible before retreating to safer grounds. During the first Round of each combat, you may choose to add +1 Rank to your Brawn, Finesse, and Resolve. If you do so, you must subtract -1 Rank from those Traits for the rest of the Scene. If this penalty brings any of your Traits to 0 (or you have suffered twice your new Resolve in Dramatic Wounds) you are immediately Knocked Out.

Master Technique: The true Masters of the Pösen School know to attack early and often, and they appear as whirlwinds of steel as they sweep across the battlefield. At the start of a Round, you may choose to borrow against next Round's Actions. Thus, if your Panache is 3, you may perform up to 6 Actions this Round, but if you choose to roll all 6 Action dice, then you receive no Actions next Round. You may use this ability only once every other Round.

Schaller

Country of Origin: Eisen

The Schaller Swordsman School is not taught as part of a disciplined curriculum as with many of the Schools that have formed in the Academies of Eisen. Instead it has been taught by the woodsmen, farm-hands and huntsman of the wild towns in

Eisen. Most small communities have a handful of hardy workers trained in this style to defend the populace if beasts or raiders should seek to attack the farmsteads.

In essence the style is taught for those who simply want to be able to protect themselves from either bandit raids or attacks by wild monsters. The Swordsman uses a heavy axe, usually held in one hand, and the off-hand fends off attacks and also punches out to catch an opponent blind-sided.

The axe is a vicious and brutal weapon, and those trained in Schaller seek to use it to down an opponent quickly, relying on it's sheer weight to knock them down and out. At the same time the wielder can use it to block attacks and strike with the butt, which makes it very versatile.

Most users wear thick leather gauntlets to protect their hands whilst working, these double up though as they can be used to slap lighter weapons aside, or even to grasp swords whilst the axe is swung round to crush and maul. The fist is an intricate part of this style and many have become unstuck when the axe is shifted into one hand and a heavy left hook thunders into a bandit's jaw.

The weakness of this School is fairly obvious: it's adherents have many options open to them, and the choice of maneuver can often cause hesitation and indecision. These moments are simple to take advantage of as the student of a more rigid style is more certain of their next move, and thus often quicker. A fighter taught in the Schaller style, can find himself caught with a sudden blow while switching to the next move.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Schaller students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Heavy Weapon, Pugilism

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Heavy Weapon): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Bind (Pugilism): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Exploit Weakness (Schaller): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently

using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: The first thing learnt is the ability to change the grip on a weighty axe and wield it with one hand. The Apprentice may wield an axe (heavy weapon) one handed without penalty. Additionally, after an Attack misses your Passive Defense you may make an immediate Pugilism Attack, Jab, or Uppercut, but you TN drops to 5 until the end of the next Phase in which you act.

Journeyman Technique: The Journeyman is able to weigh his options and chose where to focus his efforts at each stage of the fight. The student gains a pool of Kept dice equal to his Mastery Level (1, 2 or 3) which may be spent on any Pugilism or Heavy Weapon roll during a Round, or any Advanced Swordsman School Knack whilst wielding an axe.

Master Technique: At this level of Skill the style really comes into it's own as the user is able to wield the blade with freedom and versatility. After you make an Attack, you may give up his next Action die to Attack again immediately, but it must be from the Heavy Weapon or Pugilism Skills and of a Knack not already used this Phase. The Attack roll TN is raised by 5 for every Phase between this Action and the next Action die. The Master also gains a +5 to his Passive Defense.

Example: Frederic acts in Phases 1, 3, 6, 9. In 1he Attacks with his Heavy Weapon, then decides to give up the next Action die (3), and make a Pugilism Attack roll with a +10 to the TN, he then chooses to go again in 1 by giving up the next Action die and makes a Pugilism Uppercut Attack with a +(25) to the TN. He chooses to wait until Phase 9 for his last Action.

Steil

Country of Origin: Eisen

This School teaches a philosophy of leadership radically different from the Unabwendbar School. Instead of trying to be more efficient and logical leaders, students learn how to inspire loyalty in their troops. It doesn't matter how good a tactician the General is if his men refuse to follow his orders.

This style of leadership is particularly suited for small units such as warbands or pirate ships, where good personal relationships between the commander and his men are essential.

However, by befriending his men, a commander puts his own emotional well-being in jeopardy, and risks making a rash decision that saves the lives of a few men only to throw the battle away—possibly killing many more in the process.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Steil students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive the Academy Advantage for free.

Basic Curriculum: Commander, Courtier

Swordsman Knacks

Orders (Advance, Charge, Envelop, Flank, Hold Ground, Regroup, Scout, Set vs. Charge, Trim Line, Withdraw): Each of the Swordsman Knacks (generally for the Steil and Unabwendbar Schools) correspond to entries on the Army Tactics chart [EI:101]. When a General chooses a tactic for which he has a Knack, he adds a number of points equal to his Mastery Level times his Orders Knack Rank to his Strategy roll for that Round of battle.

Example: A General who is a Master and has Orders (Charge) 5 would add +15 to his roll each Round he chose the Charge tactic.

Exploit Weakness (Steil): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Steil School learn to understand the emotions and reactions of their fellow man. This helps them in their day-to-day lives as well as making them better commanders. You receive +1 Free Raise whenever using or resisting Repartee. All NPCs loyal to you receive +2 Free Raises to resist other people's use of Repartee while in your presence. In addition, you receive a -1 HP discount on all Advantages that provide you with an NPC character who follows your orders (Servant, Bodyguard, etc.), and you may use the Experienced Henchmen and Brutes rule (see below). Of course, it should be noted that it is difficult to move large groups (more than 5 or 6) of armed men through peaceful towns without causing a stir. You must learn four Swordsman Knacks at Rank 4 to become a Journeyman.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Steil School are taught to be more effective commanders. They are able to keep track of many men at once. You may team up (see the rules for Brute Squads in the Game Masters' Guide) with a number of Brutes under your command equal to your Wits + Leadership Knack. Any time a Brute under your command is Knocked Out, you may spend a Drama Die to prevent it. In addition, when using the Mass Combat rules, you may add your Mastery Level to your Personal Results roll in order to represent your men watching out for you. You must learn five Swordsman Knacks at Rank 5 to become a Master.

Master Technique: Masters of this School are extraordinarily charismatic men whose troops would follow them into the Abyss. When using the Mass Combat rules, and when you are the General of an army, your ability to inspire the men is greatly increased. During the Set-up Phase of a battle, when you make your Wits + Incitation roll, you receive +1 Free Raise for every full 5 points you roll instead of every 10. In addition, you may spend one Action, once per Scene, to lower the Fear Rating of an opponent by your Leadership Knack Rank.

Experienced Henchmen and Brutes

A Steil student may spend his XP to improve the abilities of any NPCs loyal to him. For a Henchman under your command, every XP you spend to improve him is worth 2 XP (any leftover points are lost). As for Brutes, you may increase the Threat Rating of a Brute Squad under your command by paying the following costs:

New Threat Rating	XP Cost
2	10
3	20
4	40

In addition, you may purchase Knacks for a Brute Squad (up to a maximum of +3) by paying XP equal to the new Rank of the Knack (i.e. Increasing a Footwork +1 to Footwork +2 would cost 2 XP).

Losses to Brute Squads: Heroes should either roleplay out the hiring of replacement Brutes, or the GM can allow one Brute to be replenished at the end of every Act (the Heroes pick him up on the road). Losses do not affect any improvements that a Hero may have purchased for a Brute Squad—the replacements have the same Skills as their predecessors.

Optional Rule: GMs may wish to make the Experienced Henchmen and Brutes rule available to all Heroes, doubling the costs for all non-Steil Heroes.

Unabwendbar

Country of Origin: Eisen

The academy of Unabwendbar in Stärke is the only place to learn this philosophy of war; it teaches not to struggle against the inevitable. A good commander can see when a flank is going to collapse, or a unit is going to be cut off and killed, but many will throw away additional resources on a hopeless situation out of a misguided sense of loyalty. By allowing the inevitable to happen and planning to take advantage of it instead of struggling to stop it, the commander can often turn potentially devastating situations into victory.

Some of the greatest military minds in the world have been tutored in this philosophy. When sending forces against an opponent skilled in Unabwendbar, a commander must be careful to hold any celebration until the battle is over, since what looks like victory is often a trap laid by their opponent.

However, Unabwendbar does not instill the extraordinary loyalty that other philosophies of command do. Soldiers are notoriously unsympathetic to a commander who abandons them in a battle to place their army in a better position.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Unabwendbar students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive the Academy Advantage for free.

Basic Curriculum: Commander, Scholar

Swordsman Knacks

Orders (Advance, Charge, Envelop, Flank, Hold Ground, Regroup, Scout, Set vs. Charge, Trim Line, Withdraw): Each of the Swordsman Knacks (generally for the Steil and Unabwendbar Schools) correspond to entries on the Army Tactics chart [EI:101]. When a General chooses a tactic for which he has a Knack, he adds a number of points equal to his Mastery Level times his Orders Knack Rank to his Strategy roll for that Round of battle.

Example: A General who is a Master and has Orders (Charge) 5 would add +15 to his roll each Round he chose the Charge tactic.

Exploit Weakness (Unabwendbar): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a

School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Unabwendbar philosophy learn extraordinary discipline and concentration. For every Phase you Hold an Action before performing it (or every ten minutes out of combat), you may add points equal to your Mastery Level to your Action roll, up to a maximum of five times your Mastery Level. If you suffer a Dramatic Wound while Holding the Action, your concentration breaks and you must start over, but you do not lose the Action. In addition, students of Unabwendbar may purchase the Man of Will Advantage for 20 HP. You must learn four Swordsman Knacks at Rank 4 to become a Journeyman.

Journeyman Technique: Having usually risen to leadership positions by the time they attain Journeyman status, students learn how to follow their general's instructions in battle and give orders to others. If you add your Rank in Leadership to your general's Strategy roll, you may ignore the normal penalty of -2 to your Personal Results roll this entails. In addition, whenever more than one person in your party is performing the same action at the same time (such as attacking with identical weapons during the same Phase) you may add three times your Mastery Level to each of the participating Heroes' rolls. You must learn five Swordsman Knacks at Rank 5 to become a Master.

Master Technique: An army whose General is a Master in Unabwendbar has a distinct advantage in the battle, able to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. During the Tide of Battle roll for Mass Combat, you may, once per battle, convert one past loss into a win in order to help accumulate the three wins in a row required for a victory. Thus, a Loss-Win-Win, a Win-Loss-Win, or a Win-Win-Loss can all become a Win-Win-Win, resulting in immediate victory for your army. In addition, after anyone in your party (including yourself) has failed a roll, you may, once per Act, change their roll into the minimum number needed for success. However, this ability cancels the effects of any Raises that were made for the roll (preventing this ability from being used: for special Knacks such as Eye Gouge, which require Raises to succeed).

Example: For instance, if you try to hit a TN 25 guard, and you Raise three times for damage, but only roll a 17 for your Attack, you could use this ability to increase the roll to a 25, but the three Raises you attempted would be discarded . without effect.

Montaigne

Bielung School of Protectorate Defense

Country of Origin: Montaigne and Eisen

Throughout the rich lands of Montaigne exist the wealthy merchants and nobles of possibly the greatest nation of Théah. With all these aristocrats, merchants and their grand possessions a need has arisen to protect and defend them. So it was that 76 years ago, in 1592, Albrecht Bielung split from the Eisenfaust School and began to practice his own technique.

He saw the requirement which nobles and successful guildsmen generated and acted on it, forming the Bielung School of Protectorate Defense to instruct those trusted to defend their charges. He took the quick, poor, but strong laborers and farmhands of Montaigne and turned them into stout and dependable guards, watchmen and escorts.

The technique teaches the use of the polearm as an effective weapon within the confined spaces of mansions and warehouse, added to which the desire to subdue and arrest trespassers and thieves gives the students of this school good unarmed martial skills.

The School is not too easy to get into as Victor Souss, the current Principle, ensures that the students are able to direct their attention to the task at hand and see through their duties. Additionally it is not permissible for those who do not come from an acknowledged martial background to gain the techniques taught here. This is to discourage would-be assassins, spies and thieves from gaining the secrets of the School.

The obvious weakness of this School is that those who train in it are too willing to sacrifice themselves to defend another and often leave themselves open for quick debilitating strikes.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Bielung students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Requirements: Candidates must possess at least the following in order to be allowed to join this School: Resolve Rank 3 or better, Guardsman Skill, either of the Academy, Citation or Commission Advantages

Basic Curriculum: Polearm, Wrestling

Swordsman Knacks

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Disarm (Polearm): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Lunge (Polearm): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Bielung School of Protectorate Defense): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel

someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Initially the student is taught how to protect another from harm and the ways in which two people can work to defend each other cooperatively. The Apprentice may forgo an Action to add a number of unkept dice equal to their Parry (Polearm) Knack Rank to the next Active Defense roll made by a companion. This is limited to a maximum number of dice equal to the target's own defensive Knack Rank.

Example: If the companion is using Footwork 2, then only 2 more unkept dice may be added by the Apprentice, even though he may have Parry (Polearm) 4.

Journeyman Technique: The Journeyman can strike with a polearm multiple times in quick succession. Like a quarterstaff, the haft of the polearm is used to make several rapid blows. Decide how many attacks you wish to make (limited to a maximum equal to the Journeyman's Attack (Polearm) Knack Rank) then reduce each Attack by two unkept dice for each additional Attack. This is applied to both the Attack and Damage rolls.

Example: A Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Attack (Polearm) 4 Swordsman decides to make 3 attacks. Each is Attack now at 4k4, rather than 8k4, and the damage of each is reduced to 2k2, as opposed to 6K2.

Master Technique: Firstly, the Bielung Master gains a Free Raise on any attempts to spot a use of either Conceal, Disguise or Unobtrusive. Additionally a Master may take a successful hit against themselves or make an immediate Attack (Anything) roll which can only be defended with Passive Defense. The Master then deals a Dramatic Wound to his opponent for each Dramatic Wound dealt to him, plus one additional Dramatic Wound. This can only be accomplished once per Scene, and you cannot inflict more Dramatic Wounds in one hit than your Brawn Rank. If the Attack you make would leave you Crippled or Knocked Out, the effect of it is ignored for this one Action only.

Example: While defending a noblewoman's child against two assassins, Juliette-Anne steps into the blow of one of them and receives two Dramatic Wounds, but in doing so immediately makes an Attack (Pugilism) roll, ignoring her Crippled status, and whacks her opponent's windpipe for three Dramatic Wounds, dropping him.

Boucher

Country of Origin: Montaigne

The Boucher style of fighting was forged in the streets of Montaigne, and isn't really considered a "Gentleman's School." However, some duelists are more concerned with results than with the impression they make on their peers; this style is designed with them in mind. Students of Boucher wield a long

knife in each hand, and use the two together in a series of attacks designed to confuse and disorient the opponent.

Boucher is one of the fastest fighting styles taught in Théah today. Once the superior reach of the opponent's weapon has been overcome, the knife fighter starts a flurry of attacks that is almost impossible to stop.

On the other hand, Boucher uses two weapons with short reach. A clever opponent who can hold even a Master of Boucher at arm's reach will have little trouble dispatching the troublesome fighter.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Boucher students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Criminal, Knife

Swordsman Knacks

Double Attack (Knife/Knife): When you use this Knack you make two quick attacks against your opponent, one right after the other. You must declare that you are using a Double Attack before you attack, and then roll the two attacks using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by ten when you are using Double Attack.

Double Parry (Knife/Knife): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually two knives) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Riposte (Knife): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Boucher): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Boucher style of fighting are trained to wield a knife in each hand. This negates the off-hand penalty when using a knife. They are also trained to get inside an enemy's guard and strike quickly; add the current Phase to your Initiative Total when wielding a knife in each hand.

Example: In Phase 6, you may add +6 to your Initiative Total.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen have learned to draw their opponent's attention to the knife that isn't attacking them. When you are wielding a knife in each hand, all opponents must make at least 2 Raises when attempting to use an Active Defense against your knife attacks.

Master Technique: You may unleash a flurry of attacks against a single opponent. You must make at least 1 Raise on the first attack, but receive no benefit from it. If you successfully hit your target's Passive Defense TN (even if the attack is Actively Defended against) you receive another attack against the same target. This time you must make 2 Raises, which again give you no benefit. This cycle continues, increasing the number of Raises required by +1 each time, until an attack fails to hit the target's Passive Defense. Damage rolls and Wound Checks are made for each successive successful attack.

du Ponte

Country of Origin: Montaigne

Restrictions: Porté Sorcerers only

The School opened in secrecy by the master of espionage Marie du Ponte is an eccentric one, to be certain. Specializing in the practical methods of the crossbow, the School only admits worthy Porté Sorcerers to its ranks. Their secretly forged crossbow bolts are engineered for the specific purpose of Bleeding and use with Porté.

The du Ponte archer knows not to stand, point and shoot, as is commonly taught, for then your enemy knows how you will attack. Instead they are taught to visualize aiming before they raise their crossbow, often having a ready target in mind by the time the quarrel is nocked.

The weakness of the du Ponte style is in its indirectness. Often hesitant to shoot at the most obvious target, the du Ponte bowman will lose his chance of attack and be struck down by a more ambitious opponent.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, du Ponte students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Crossbow, Dirty Fighting

Swordsman Knacks

Arc (Crossbow): Students of this Knack spend months learning the fine art of arcing a shot from a missile weapon to hit distant targets. For each Rank in this Knack, increase the Range of the missile weapon by five yards.

Feint (Crossbow): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Pommel Strike: Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (du Ponte): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its

weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: An Apprentice is trained to aim while reloading. Any Action Die spent reloading may also be spent aiming, providing an unkept Damage die to the next Attack against the declared target. This may only be used once per Attack (thus, the bowman can't spend six actions reloading and gain six unkept dice), and only applies to the declared target. Apprentices may have two Blooded crossbow bolts that only count as one object, for purposes of determining the number of links a Porté Sorcerer can have.

Journeyman Technique: As a Journeyman, a du Ponte student is taught to open a Portal directly *into* a target that they have just struck with a Blooded bolt, ripping through both space and flesh. If a Dramatic Wound is inflicted with a Blooded bolt, the Sorcerer may spend a Drama Die as his next Action to make a 2k2 bare-handed attack using his Bring Knack. This also retrieves the bolt. Journeymen may have three Blooded crossbow bolts that only count as one object, for purposes of determining the number of links a Porté Sorcerer can have.

Master Technique: A Master of du Ponte has mastered the ability to Walk to his bolts. When using the Walk Knack, the act of opening the Portal to one of his bolts (usually just fired) is reduced to one Action. Also, the Master may spend an Action Die to reduce the number of Rounds left of Portal Sickness by one. Masters may have four Blooded crossbow bolts that only count as one object, for purposes of determining the number of links a Porté Sorcerer can have.

Rois et Reines

Country of Origin: Montaigne

The Rois et Raines firearm techniques are a relatively new innovation. They were developed especially for the Musketeers, but the training has since spilled over into more common usage.

Arced fire, carefully maintained and cleaned weapons, and exacting precision when measuring powder all contribute to a longer range on the battlefield. That's not to say that a student of Rois et Reines cannot defend himself up close—far from it. They drill extensively using bayonets, giving them a fearsome advantage against any group not prepared to handle polearms.

The main weakness of the Rois et Reines style is the dependency on missile fire. The hand-to-hand techniques are not nearly as advanced as those of many of the other Swordsman Schools on Théah. The heavy muskets are not designed to be polearms, and against a group even casually equipped to deal with spears or pikes, the Rois et Reines School is not terribly effective.

The Exploit Weakness (Rois et Reines) Knack is effective only against an opponent wielding a mounted bayonet, not against an enemy sniper taking aim at the Hero.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Rois et Reines students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Firearms, Polearms

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Polearm): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Lunge (Polearm): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike: Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Rois et Reines): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Rois et Reines style become more adept at using firearms and bayonets. You receive a +10 yard bonus to pistol and musket range, and the off-hand penalty is negated when wielding a pistol. In addition, you receive a Free Raise to all Attack rolls using a mounted bayonet.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Rois et Reines style continue to improve their marksmanship over time. Your bonus to musket and pistol range increases to +25 yards. In addition, you may now draw and fire a pistol using one Action. Lastly, you add 10 to your Initiative Total when wielding a mounted bayonet, thanks to the reach that the makeshift polearm gives you.

Master Technique: Masters of the Rois et Reines style are crack shots under any conditions. The bonus to your musket and pistol range is increased to +50 yards. In addition, you may now spend a Drama Die to negate all normal modifiers to a target's TN for one attack.

Example: A target with a TN 20 still only requires a 20 to hit, regardless of cover, range, or other similar considerations.

TN-modifying special abilities such as the Aldana Journeyman ability or the Pyeryem Armor Boon still apply.

Tout Près

Country of Origin: Montaigne

The Tout Près school is not so much a fighting style as an embodiment of the philosophy, “the best weapon is the one that’s close at hand.” Practitioners of the Tout Près school have been known to pummel their enemies with everything from planks to fireplace pokers to chamber pots. When your enemies have surprised you in an inn and you have nothing more than a bottle of wine and a ham to defend yourself, there are few schools that are more useful, since Tout Près is the only Swordsman school that offers formal training with Improvised Weapons.

This “philosophy” is most effective when backed up with a more traditional fencing weapon, since steel is always a welcome addition to any defense. Lead-weighted wide-brimmed hats are a popular choice of apparel for students of Tout Près. Such a hat is considered an Improvised Weapon (1k1 Damage).

A stool doesn’t command the same respect as a fine rapier, however, and experienced opponents will press through with attacks that they would have held off with had the student been better armed.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Tout Près students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman’s Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Dirty Fighting, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Double Parry (Fencing/Improvised Weapon): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Tagging (Improvised Weapon): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Tout Près): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren’t currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A

Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman’s style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Tout Près school are intimately familiar with many common objects that they might need to defend themselves. The off-hand penalty is negated when you are using an Improvised Weapon. In addition, you receive one Free Raise when using Parry (Improvised Weapon) as an Active Defense.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Tout Près school learn to react quickly to new situations, and receive instruction in many skills that are useful in getting out of the way of an oncoming blow. You may pick up and attack or parry with an Improvised Weapon in a single Action. In addition, you receive a Free Raise to any non-Parry Active Defense you attempt.

Master Technique: Masters of Tout Près use their Improvised Weapons to distract their opponents from the rapier in their other hand. After an attack with an Improvised Weapon (whether successful or not), the Master may spend one Action die (even one from later in the Round) to perform an immediate attack with a fencing weapon. This attack may not be Actively Defended against.

Valroux

Country of Origin: Montaigne

The Valroux style of fighting is one of several that uses a fencing weapon in the primary hand and a main gauche in the off-hand. The fighting style is technically defensive, with the main gauche used only to parry. Students of this style are prone to teasing their opponents. They call attention to openings they could have exploited, generally humiliate their opponents and then finish them off whenever the duel grows wearisome.

One of the main strengths of this style is its speed. Masters of Valroux strike more quickly and more often than anyone else. They keep the duel moving around them in a dizzying circle, striking faster and faster, all the while hurling insults that infuriate their opponent. To win against a student of the Valroux style requires an iron will and long patience.

The main flaw in the Valroux style of fencing is its arrogance. A Swordsman familiar with it knows how to fake an opening that his opponent could exploit. When the student of Valroux mockingly call attention to the opening, there is a slight lowering of his guard, and the Swordsman can strike.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Knife

Swordsman Knacks

Double Parry (Fencing/Knife): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Tagging (Fencing): Tagging is a particularly flashy piece of showing off with your weapons, designed to temporarily dishearten your enemy. This could be anything from cutting off a lock of his hair to carving your initials in his shirt. You must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack for your Attack roll. If you successfully hit, the attack causes no damage, but you can cause one of two things to happen. Either your target loses a Drama Die until the end of the battle (after which it returns), or you can gain a Drama Die yourself until the end of the battle (after which it disappears, if unspent). These Drama Dice never become Experience Points, even if the battle was the last thing to happen in the Story.

Exploit Weakness (Valroux): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Valroux style of fighting negate the off-hand penalty when using a dagger or main gauche, and grants a Free Raise when parrying with one of those weapons in your off-hand.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen have learned how to "raise the stakes" in a fight. Whenever you call for at least one Raise when attacking an opponent and you succeed, that opponent must, on his next Attack against you, Raise at least as many times as you did.

Master Technique: Masters of Valroux are the fastest Swordsmen in the world. When you reach this Rank, you gain a +1 bonus to your Panache Trait for free. This also raises the maximum Rank your Panache can be raised to by +1. Thus, a Master of Valroux can raise his Panache to 6 (or even 7, with the Legendary Trait Advantage).

Pirate Nations

Rogers

Country of Origin: None (Any pirate can learn it for 25 HP)

Restrictions: Pirates only

Rogers is a style of fighting passed down from pirate to pirate over the years. Captain Rogers is rumored to have invented the basic techniques, but it has been added to so much over the years that it no longer resembles the original style. Old tricks get retired and new ones come into their own as time passes.

Rogers relies heavily on the use of tricks to confuse and outmaneuver the enemy, but it also teaches Swordsmen how to

cope with the rolling of a ship during a fight. While the landlubbers slam up against the railing, the pirates move in for the kill.

The main weakness of the Rogers style is the peculiar balancing technique taught to students. While normally effective, a knowledgeable opponent can watch for a particular flexing of the legs, during which the student cannot dodge effectively. This flex is so ingrained in the student that it even occurs on land.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Rogers students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Dirty Fighting, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Bind (Fencing): A Bind is only usable against an opponent's fencing weapon. It locks your sword (or buckler, or panzerhand) and his sword together. To use this attack, you declare that you are attempting to Bind your opponent's weapon, and then roll to attack using this Knack. If successful, you have momentarily bound his sword. While the two of you are in the Bind, neither of you can use your bound item.

To try to break your hold, your opponent spends an Action die, and then makes a Contested roll: opponent's Brawn+Parry (in the weapon you have bound) versus your Brawn+Bind. If he wins, the hold is broken; otherwise it holds fast. You, on the other hand, may spend Action dice to improve your hold. Each Action die you spend gives you a Free Raise from now on when your opponent tries to break your hold. If your opponent wishes, he may simply release his weapon, but that will leave it in your hands.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Disarm (Fencing): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Exploit Weakness (Rogers): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: You can use your Balance Knack in place of any Parry Knack. In addition, you learn one Pirate Trick (see below).

Journeyman Technique: You add +5 to your TN to be Hit while aboard ship, unless surprised. You also learn one additional Pirate Trick.

Master Technique: You gain a +2 bonus to your Fear Rating. If you don't already cause Fear, you gain a Fear Rating of 2. You also learn two additional Pirate Tricks.

Pirate Tricks

Those pirates who learn the Rogers fighting style employ all sorts of gimmicks and misdirection to outfox their opponents, and may choose their tricks from the following list:

Against the Rails: You receive a Free Raise when you use Corp-à-corps while your target is using Balance as his Defense Knack.

Belay That: You roll and one extra Kept die for damage when attacking your opponent with a belaying pin (your attack inflicts 2k2 damage, not including Brawn). You receive no off-hand penalty when wielding a belaying pin.

Dagger Ride: By spending one Action, you can drive a knife into a nearby sail and ride it to the deck below, thus avoiding all falling damage. While doing this, you can attack someone below you using Finesse + Balance. If your attack succeeds, you inflict +1 unkept dice of damage for every full 2 Levels you descended.

Death From Above: If you are at least +1 Level higher than your target, you may spend one Action to swing down and attack him using Panache + Swinging. If your attack succeeds, it inflicts 3k1 damage, and your opponent becomes prone. If your attack fails, you must roll Panache + Swinging against a TN of 15 or become prone yourself.

Hold Your Liquor: You receive the Able Drinker Advantage for free. In addition, receive a Free Raise when attacking with a beer mug (an Improvised Weapon, inflicting 0k1 damage).

Kick Up: You may grab a sword off the ground and attack with it in the same Action, provided you're standing right next to it at the start of your Action.

Over The Side: The Boarding rolls of your side in a Boarding Action are increased by +1. Up to three Rogers Swordsmen may modify the Boarding roll of a single side.

Quick Draw: You may draw and fire a pistol in one Action.

Sea Legs: You may roll an extra Kept die when using your Balance Knack. This does not increase your TN to be Hit when using it as your Defense Knack, but it does improve your Active Defense rolls.

Sidarm: You receive no off-hand penalty when using a pistol.

Ussura

Bogatyrs

Country of Origin: Ussura

While the typical fighting style of the Ussurans in times of war employs hatchets behind a shield wall, this is not so effective in individual combat. The Bogatyr style of fighting makes use of a full-sized woodsman's axe and forgoes the use of the shield. Its practitioners are known for their ferocity and courage, and indeed the word "Bogatyr" refers to the wandering knightly class which constitute some of Ussura's greatest heroes. During times of war, the peasants are gathered and armed, and given minimal training in how to form a shield wall and work as a unit. Most Bogatyrs work independently from the peasants, seeking out and fighting the members of the opposing army who are better than the typical enemy soldier, especially the commanders. The Bogatyrs who do work with a unit usually work behind it, keeping the peasants in line by ensuring that they fear the Bogatyrs more than the army marching towards them.

The Bogatyr school is currently a source of political tension between the Swordsman's Guild and the Gaius. The Guild refuses to grant membership to practitioners of any of Ussura's anachronistic fighting styles. On the other hand, the Guild wishes to operate in Ussura, selling their services there freely. The Gaius has made it clear that the Guild may only operate within Ussura's borders if the Bogatyrs formally join the Guild. After much political wrangling, the situation settled into an unspoken compromise. Bogatyrs are considered members of the Swordsman's Guild while they are in Ussura or on a seagoing vessel flying Ussura's flag, but not in any other situation.

The strength of this school is its overwhelming ferocity and intimidating techniques. Opponents rarely wish to engage a howling Bogatyr in combat. The weakness of this school is its reliance on offense over defense. Cautious, patient opponents may catch the Bogatyr while he is recovering from a swing, or following through on a swing that missed.

Membership: Yes and No. Students of this School are considered members of the Swordsman's Guild while within the borders of Ussura or on a vessel flying that nation's flag. They do not have any of the advantages of the Guild when they are abroad. Consequently, they get five Knacks from the Hunter Skill at Rank 1, instead of three, for having the Skill in their Basic Curriculum.

Basic Curriculum: Hunter, Heavy Weapon

Swordsman Knacks

Lunge (Axe): The axe used is a heavy weapon. A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike (Axe): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your axe (heavy weapon) into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Throw (Axe): You hurl your axe (heavy weapon-sized, not a hand or throwing axe) toward your opponent with deadly force. You may throw a heavy weapon (usually an axe) as an attack. When you do so, use this Knack instead of your Attack (Heavy Weapon) Knack. The Range for such an axe is two times your Brawn in yards.

Exploit Weakness (Bogatyr): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Bogatyr School practice swinging their axes with great accuracy. They get a Free Raise when attacking with an axe.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Bogatyr strike incredibly forceful blows capable of inflicting injury on even the sturdiest of foes. They roll an extra Kept die for Damage with an axe (+1k1, for a total of 4k3 before adding Brawn).

Master Technique: Masters of this School have a reputation for savage ferocity in combat. They often wear skulls, fangs and claws from wild animals they have slain, and they shout fiercely at the beginning of combat, unnerving their enemies. Increase the character's Fear Rating by 2. If he does not already have a Fear Rating, he now has a Fear Rating of 2. The character also gets 2 Free Raises to any attempt to resist the effects of Fear.

Buslayevich

Country of Origin: Ussura

The archers of Ussura are respected throughout Théah, not because they have developed a special School of archery, like the Goodfellow School in Avalon, but because archery is a way of life in Ussura. They see it less as a form of combat than as a means of staying alive, hunting and killing for their food with silent efficiency. Most Ussuran archers have inhuman patience. They draw a bead on their target, aim carefully, and fire only when they know the shaft will fly true.

This technique does not apply to the disciples of Volkh Buslayevich, however. Buslayevich was a bandit who used his bow from horseback. He would thunder out of the woods, firing his bow quickly and accurately, grab what he wanted without slowing his horse, and ride off at top speed. Those few who survived his assaults said that he attacked swiftly and departed even more rapidly than he arrived. He taught his children his methods, and they taught others, and soon his ways became emulated throughout the nation.

During rare times of war, horse-mounted archers constitute an elite cavalry raiding force. The Buslayevich School teaches horsemanship and a reflexive style of archery which allows the student to fire quickly without sacrificing much accuracy. In fact, its students are surprisingly accurate despite the School's philosophy that the archer should merely point a bow at his target rather than carefully aim.

The weakness of this school is its reliance on instinct, speed and maneuverability. As effective as these traits are, they can be turned against the student by someone with a superior understanding of the terrain and the ability to force the archer into positions that limit his options.

Membership: Students of the Buslayevich School do not gain membership in the Swordsman's Guild for free. Instead, they get an extra Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks for free.

Basic Curriculum: Archer, Rider

Swordsman Knacks

Charge (Bow): This Knack allows you to try to hit early and often, then withdraw to a place of safety. You may lower one of your Action dice by your Knack Rank (to a minimum of one) just before Phase one of the first Round of each combat.

Horse Archery: This replaces the Attack (Bow) Knack when firing a bow from horseback. In all other ways, it functions the same way as the Attack (Bow) Knack. *Students of the Buslayevich School may buy this Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.*

Trick Riding: This Knack is what you use for stunt riding, or similarly difficult riding maneuvers. Trick Riding lets you stand

while riding (TN 15), do handstands on horseback (TN 20), hang off one side of the horse for cover (TN 20), and other flashy tricks. A well-trained mount may give the rider a Free Raise.

Exploit Weakness (Buslayevich): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Buslayevich School are the best mounted bowmen in the known world. Apprentices of this School get a Free Raise to all of their Horse Archery rolls, and to any attempt to control their horses without using reins.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Buslayevich School have expanded their expertise with horses to such an extent that they can easily outperform other riders. The student gets a number of Free Raises equal to his Mastery Level for all Trick Riding and Animal Training rolls, and one Free Raise to any Chase rolls he makes while on horseback.

Master Technique: Masters of the Buslayevich School often accomplish feats of horsemanship and archery that seem inhuman. The student gains one free Rank of Horse Archery, raising it to a 6. Furthermore, at the start of each battle, he gets 3 extra Drama Dice that can only be used while he has a bow in his hand or while he is on horseback. These dice never become Experience Points and are lost at the end of the battle if they have not been used. Also, he gets one more Free Raise to any Chase rolls he makes while on horseback (for a total of two).

Dobrynya

Country of Origin: Ussura

Ussurans are famous for being hardy and tough. The warriors who dedicate themselves to the study of the Dobrynya School have chosen to embody these qualities. Their fighting style does not require weapons, nor does it rely on fancy tricks or deceptions. It teaches its students to endure pain, to persist in spite of hardship, and to come out of a fight victorious by virtue of endurance and tenacity, leaving their enemy literally crushed.

These wrestlers practice intensely in the cold outdoors, often with little clothing on. They adapt to the hardships of their environment. They run at least a mile into the woods every morning. They practice their techniques by finding trees of the right diameter, removing their shirt, and embracing the trunk in a bear hug. They apply as much force as they can for an hour or more, straining with all their might against the tree. Then they run back. They do these things regardless of the cold, or the snow, or the rain, or any other concerns of the weather.

The fighting style of the Dobrynya School is simple, but effective. The wrestler grapples with his opponent and places him in a bear hug, then squeezes the life out of him. This may

take a long time, but the student is patient and strong enough to wait and let time and pressure take their course.

The weakness of this school is that its practitioners must get close enough to grab the opponent and maintain a hold on him. Opponents who can avoid the wrestler's grasp have a definite advantage.

Membership: Students of the Dobrynya School do not receive free membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they get an extra Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks for free.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Wrestling

Swordsman Knacks

Bear Hug: You grasp your opponent firmly with both arms and attempt to squeeze him into submission. Whenever your opponent attempts to break a Bear Hug you have placed him in and fails, or a Round ends, roll a number of dice equal to your Knack Rank, and Keep one. Your opponent takes that many Wounds, which he must immediately make a Wound Check against. *Students of the Dobrynya School may buy this Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.*

Disarm (Wrestling): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Fortitude: The character has accustomed his body to severe punishment, increasing his tolerance for pain. For every Rank he has in this Knack, the character gains a +1 bonus to all of his Wound Check rolls.

Exploit Weakness (Dobrynya): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: The student has developed an advanced understanding of the principles of wrestling. He knows the best way to hold his opponent, and how to apply strength and leverage to his maximum benefit. An Apprentice of the Dobrynya style of fighting gets a Free Raise to any roll he makes for the Grappling and Escape Knacks. Also, reduce the damage the character takes from weather by one Kept die (-1k1) per Mastery Level.

Journeyman Technique: At this level, the student has learned to grip his opponent like a vise, and reflexively tightens his grip when he experiences pain. Whenever the character takes Wounds that inflict fewer than two Dramatic Wounds, anyone that they currently are holding takes Wounds as from a Bear Hug. In addition, the character gets a Free Raise to any roll he makes for the Disarm (Wrestling) Knacks.

Master Technique: Masters of the Dobrynya School can withstand punishment. Whenever you fail a Wound Check, divide the amount you failed by in half (rounding down) before suffering any additional Dramatic Wounds. In addition, years of crushing enemies into submission have given you a grip like an iron vise. Gain an extra Rank in the Bear Hug Knack, increasing it to 6.

Kazak

Country of Origin: Ussura

Developed by the mercenary horseman from whom it is named, Kazak embodies the thunder of approaching cavalry, the gleam of wickedly curved steel descending from horseback, and the blood-chilling war cries of a fierce people. The niceties of standard fencing's feint and tag hold no place in the vicious directness of Kazak.

Mounted warriors of Ussura, the Kazaks have alternatively fought for the causes of the Gaius or the Boyars—generally whoever has the heaviest purse. Their favored weapon is the saber, or shashqa, and incorporates aggressive slashing techniques from the back of swift-moving steppe ponies. Fearful accounts of the red-coated riders' fast and brutal methods only lend to credence to this style's vaunted effectiveness.

The obvious weakness of Kazak is its reliance upon being mounted; if the horse can be taken out from under the rider, much of the advantage is lost (sometimes easier said than done).

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Rider

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Lunge (Fencing): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike (Fencing): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Kazak): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and

must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Riding down infantry is a specialty of Kazak. You receive a Free Raise when attacking targets on foot from horseback.

Journeyman Technique: A skilled rider and his mount move almost as one; the Journeyman receives a +5 to his Passive Defense derived from the Riding Knack. In addition, he receives a Free Raise to Active Defense while mounted.

Master Technique: The ground-shaking charge of the Kazak Master is worthy of dread. When mounted and moving at a gallop, a successful Fencing Attack receives a bonus to Damage equal to your Initiative Total. Also, for every Action die the Master holds before the charge (up to a maximum of your Riding Knack) you gain a +1 unkept dice bonus to your Attack. This special Attack may only be used once per Round, and only with sufficient room to build up momentum.

Sarrack

Country of Origin: Ussura

Sarrack, or “Graceful Edge”, is not widely taught due to the need for the student to be rather more graceful and athletic than the average Ussuran. The students are required to have the grace and poise of a ballet dancer, along with the musculature and passion of a Cossack.

The student is taught to fight with two long double-edged knives, known as kynacs. These piercing blades are wielded as a pair, neither being reduced to a parrying blade over the other, as such the student has an advantage over every other fighting style: it's ability to adapt and conquer, much like the Ussurans themselves.

The second aspect is the dance which accompanies this style. It is formed of graceful, darting leaps and bounds. The student whirls in a fast confusing arc about his opponent, slashing forward at the crescendo of the piece in a deadly finale.

The disadvantage is that this style relies heavily on the poise and finesse of the student; if this is broken or ignored and crass, brute strength brought to bear then the student loses all composure and is open to severe, and often blunt, injury.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Knife, Athletics

Swordsman Knacks

Disarm (Knife): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Double Parry (Knife/Knife): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Lunge (Knife): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Sarrack): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning this style allows the student to fight equally well not only with his left and right hand, but also against left- or right-handed opponents. This negates both the off-hand penalty and the bonus opponents may gain from fighting using a left-handed style.

Journeyman Technique: After years of discipline and practice the student is able to leap about their opponent at will and easily flank them for a position. Spend a Drama Dice and roll your Finesse vs. opponent's Wits, then gain a Free Raise on your attack Knack for each rank you have in Dancing.

Master Technique: As the student masters this style, he realizes that it is the overall impact of the fight that matters rather than each individual step. Spend 1 Drama Die. You may forgo each of your Action dice and put them aside. In phase 10 you automatically gain an Attack action (usually taken with the Lunge Knack). Gain one Free Raise for each Action die put aside this Round, if you hit gain +1 Kept die of Damage for each Action die put aside. The Action die put aside can be used either to gain a Free Raise or to add Kept dice for damage, i.e. They form a pool.

Example: You act in 2,4, 7 and 9 and choose to put aside all 4 Action dice. In phase 10 make a Lunge Knack attack and you decide to add 2 Free Raises for two of the Action dice, if you hit then add 2 Kept dice of Damage, plus 2 unkept dice from the Lunge to your Damage roll. Painful, eh?

Sombo

Country of Origin: Ussura

Ussura is a chilly land, and its people find many ways to stay warm; while wrestling your erstwhile opponent into the ground may not seem like a relaxing pastime, it does serve to work up a sweat. Sombo is said to have origins in the wrestling of Ussuran bears, a rumor which seems entirely possible when one sees a student of the art in action!

Consisting almost entirely of grapples, locks, chokes, and joint-breaking techniques, Sombo elevates wrestling from mere sport to lethal combat. Its instructors can be found in the back alleys and dimly lit gymnasiums of Ussuran villages, passing on the knowledge to students who can pass the grueling physical requirements.

The main weakness of Sombo is the need to close with an opponent and grapple before inflicting any real damage. A defensive foe may evade the wrestler long enough to strike a telling blow.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Sombo students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Wrestling

Swordsman Knacks

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Disarm (Wrestling): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Riposte (Wrestling): Similar to the Riposte Knack, but the Riposte (Wrestling) Knack requires the use of Footwork as the Active Defense portion of the maneuver.

A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Sombo): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Sombo holds are difficult to escape. The Apprentice receives a Free Raise for purposes of maintaining a Grapple in a Contested roll of Brawn + Wrestling.

Journeyman Technique: The Journeyman has learned to hold a victim in the most effective, painful manner possible. You may keep up to three dice for the Bear Hug Knack damage instead of

only one die, (you may still only keep a maximum number of dice equal to your Bear Hug Knack).

Master Technique: A Master of Sombo goes from one move right into another, methodically destroying an opponent literally limb by limb. The TN for the Break Knack is +5 rather than +10.

Additionally, a current Grapple hold is not lost after a successful Break maneuver; instead, any net raises gained from maintaining a Grapple are lost (including the Free Raise from Apprentice level) and must be regained normally.

Vendel/Vesten

Anders

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

Using his knowledge as a talented doctor, Erick Anders has been making a healthy profit recently teaching traveling merchants to defend themselves from packs of scoundrels. Two years ago, after Anders killed the sadistic rogue Aldana master Juarez "El Jefe" Santiago-Medicini with but a single thrust to the thigh, the Swordsman's Guild accepted his style as an official Swordsman School.

The power of the Anders style lies within its surgical precision and knowledge of anatomy. It is a practical and direct style, relying on attacks to specific areas of the body to kill or otherwise remove one's opponent as quickly as possible.

The disadvantage is that Anders emphasizes the need to aim, which provides a bit too much caution and hesitation in the style. Any opponent who is swift enough can break an Anders' defenses with a fleeting jab.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Doctor

Swordsman Knacks

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Lunge (Fencing): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Anders): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose

weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice: An Anders student is taught anatomy as part of his basic curriculum. He may substitute his Diagnosis Knack for Brawn when making Damage rolls.

Journeyman: Aiming is essential to the Anders curriculum. Journeymen gain a Free Raise for every two raises called whenever making a called shot.

Master: A master of Anders may opt to make an automatic Dramatic Wound against his opponent instead of rolling for damage by raising twice on an attack (+10 TN).

Halfdansson Harpoon

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

The Vestenmannavnjar use harpoons to hunt at sea. They are useful for dealing with sea serpents and sirens, as well as fighting against people when one ship attempts to board another. The students of the Halfdansson style of fighting use harpoons in a vicious manner. They thrust their weapons deeply into their victims and then grab another harpoon. It is difficult for an enemy to fight effectively while impaled upon a long, barbed object. Halfdansson's students seek to anchor a harpoon within an enemy's body and then slay him at their leisure.

The weakness of this school is that its students focus too much on making the perfect first attack, allowing a clever opponent to take advantage of their preoccupation.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Halfdansson students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Polearm, Whaler

Swordsman Knacks

Disarm (Polearm): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Lunge (Polearm): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Pommel Strike (Polearm): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your

opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Halfdansson Harpoon): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Students of the Halfdansson style of fighting learn that the best way to use a harpoon is to pierce deeply and let the target tire itself out. Apprentices get a Free Raise when using a harpoon against aquatic creatures such as sirens, leviathans, whales, sea serpents and so forth. Also, when making a strike against a target, you may call a Raise to try to impale your target. Should you inflict a Dramatic Wound with an impaling attack, you have impaled your target. Impaled victims have +5 to all their TNs and have their TN to be Hit reduced by 5. Furthermore, any substantial disturbance of the harpoon impaling them causes 2k1 Damage. If a Dramatic Wound is taken in this manner, the harpoon has come loose and is no longer impaled in the victim.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen have learned to strike forcefully and accurately. They roll an extra unkept die for harpoon Damage rolls. This does not affect the damage done by an impaled harpoon. You no longer need to declare a Raise when attempting to impale a target.

Master Technique: Masters of the Halfdansson School instinctively know where to strike for the maximum effect, and they anchor their harpoons deeply in the bodies of their targets. You Keep an extra Damage die with a harpoon. You gain an extra Rank of Throw (Harpoon). This may increase your Rank to a 6. If it does not, you may later increase your Rank from 5 to 6 by spending 25 Experience Points. When you impale your target with a harpoon, it must inflict 2 Dramatic Wounds before it comes out.

Larsen

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

The Larsen School is a common fencing style used by night watchmen in Kirk, as well as a few criminals and muggers in that city. The school teaches its students to use the darkness as their friend, and to confuse their enemies by opening and closing a mask on a bright lantern (they often use a fighting lantern for this purpose). The sudden, dancing beam of light distracts an opponent, allowing the student to penetrate his or her defenses.

The weakness of the Larsen style is that its students tend to strike where the light from their lantern shines, making them somewhat predictable.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Streetwise

Swordsman Knacks

Ambush: You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own. *Students of the Larsen School may buy this Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.*

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Parry (Lantern): Parrying is the act of putting your weapon or shield between yourself and your enemies' strikes. This Knack can be used as your Defense Knack while you are using a lantern.

Exploit Weakness (Larsen): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of the Larsen School practice fighting at night. You have no off-hand penalty when using your Parry (Lantern) Knack. You also gain the Night Trained Advantage for free, which means your penalties due to darkness are reduced by -1 Kept die in dim lighting and -2 Kept dice in total darkness.

Journeyman Technique: Your familiarity with the darkness has grown even further. Reduce the penalties from darkness to -1 unkept die in dim lighting and -1 Kept die in total darkness. Also, you have perfected the trick of dazzling your opponent with the light from your lantern. To dazzle someone, spend an action and make a Contested Wits+Feint roll versus his Wits. If you succeed, increase all of his remaining Action dice by the number of Raises you made on the roll. Any Action dice that are increased beyond 10 are lost.

Master Technique: A lifetime of experience with acting in dim light has allowed the Master of the Larsen School to become one with the night. He suffers no penalty to act in dim lighting, but in total darkness suffers a one Kept die penalty. Furthermore, he uses the shadows like a suit of armor. The Master's TN to be Hit is increased by 10 when he is in dim light and by 15 in total darkness.

Leegstra

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

Leegstra isn't as much a fighting style as a philosophy or an act of willpower. It is designed to be used with a Heavy Weapon, such as a broadsword or an axe, and shows very little regard for the student's own safety.

A warrior using the Leegstra style has been compared to a glacier: slow-moving, uncaring of any assault on itself and,

ultimately, unstoppable. It teaches the student to absorb blows that would kill a lesser man and to focus incredible strength into a single killing blow. There are many tales of warriors using the Leegstra style to cleave off an opponent's head with a flick of their wrist.

The major flaw to the Leegstra style, as any student intimate with its ins and outs can tell you, is its slow deliberation. Most fencers continue to fight against students of Leegstra as they do against anyone else, first testing here and there with experimental lunges. They are usually tragically surprised when the Leegstra Master utterly ignores them, sending a fatal blow crashing down. The key is to be quick and final. The wise opponent stabs for the heart, or the head, and then gets out of the way in a hurry.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Heavy Weapon, Wrestling

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Heavy Weapon): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Lunge (Heavy Weapon): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Leegstra): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: When learning the Leegstra style, you learn how to focus blows from a Heavy Weapon. You may choose to give up Action dice in order to deal extra Kept Damage dice, should the blow cause damage. You may give up as many Action dice as you desire, on a one-for-one basis. This must be declared before the Attack roll is made, and if you miss, the sacrificed Actions are wasted.

Journeyman Technique: Journeyman have learned to ignore wounds that would kill lesser men. You may choose to give up Action dice for Kept Brawn Dice during a Wound Check. You may give up as many Action dice as you desire, one a one-for-

one basis. This must be declared before the Wound Check is rolled, and if you fail the Wound Check anyway, the sacrificed Actions are wasted.

Master Technique: Masters have learned to cause grievous wounds using their Heavy Weapons. When your opponents fail a Wound Check after being struck by your Attack (Heavy Weapon) Knack, they take one Dramatic Wound plus an additional Dramatic Wound for every full 10 points they missed the roll by, as if they'd been hurt by a firearm.

Rasmussen

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

Some Vendel feel that it is not enough to keep up with the current trends; rather, they need to set new ones. They feel that using swords to settle matters of honor has become horribly outdated, and that the newer weapon, the pistol, ought to be the weapon of choice for the new generation. A few, following the principles of the late Erl Rasmussen, have put these ideals into practice. They practice shooting daily, and have become extremely accurate shots and quick at drawing their weapons. The Swordsman's Guild does not approve of their activities, and it has become an unofficial policy for the two groups to harass each other. The recent revelation that Master Val Mokk belongs to the school has sent shockwaves through both sides.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Rasmussen students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a 3-point Obligation Background—to defend the School (and fellow students) from the Swordsman's Guild.

Basic Curriculum: Courtier, Firearms

Swordsman Knacks

Pommel Strike (Pistol): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Reload (Pistol): You are able to reload a missile weapon quicker. You are more effective at reloading pistols. For every Rank you have in this Knack, your reloading time for pistols is reduced by two Actions.

Trick Shooting (Pistol): You are skilled at making difficult shots. For each Rank of Trick Shooting, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (for range, cover, etc.). Trick Shooting cannot lower the shot's TN below the target's base TN to be Hit.

Example: If a target has a TN to be Hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, an Archer with Trick Shooting 5 would negate all 15 points of modifiers, but he would not lower the base TN to be Hit (which remains at the original 15).

Exploit Weakness (Rasmussen): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman

defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices have learned that once a pistol is fired, it will take some time to reload. It is better to have another pistol at hand. They learn to fire a pistol and quickly draw another one. You have no penalty for using a pistol with your off-hand. Also, you may draw and fire a pistol as one action. Reduce your Short Range penalty with a pistol by 5 per Mastery Level.

Journeyman Technique: Journeymen of the Rasmussen School learn how to fire a pistol reflexively in response to a threat. You may use an Interrupt Action to make an attack with a ready pistol (you may spend 3 actions instead of the usual 2 to draw and fire as an Interrupt Action). Also, add ten yards to your effective range with a pistol.

Master Technique: Masters of the Rasmussen School have learned that speed is one, but accuracy is final. They may spend Actions to aid their pistol shot at a particular target. Each consecutive action spent aiming a pistol gives a Free Raise to Damage. You may add up to 3 unkept dice in this fashion. When you are firing two pistols, the usual +1k1 bonus will apply, making the damage 6k4, 7k4 or 8k4 depending on the number of Actions spent aiming. You get a free Rank in Attack (Firearms). This may increase your Rank to a 6. If it does not, then you may later increase your Rank from a 5 to a 6 by spending 25 Experience Points. Add another ten yards to your effective range with a pistol (+20 yards total).

Siggursdottir Axeman

Country of Origin: Vendel/Vesten

The Siggursdottir School is a lightning quick paired axe style. Its students initially learn to throw an axe, then quickly draw a spare. When combat comes in close, the student launches a deadly volley of attacks, screaming battle cries all the while.

The main weakness of the style is its devotion to emotion and speed rather than reason and caution.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Siggursdottir students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Hand Axe

Swordsman Knacks

Double Attack (Hand Axe): When you use this Knack you make two quick attacks against your opponent, one right after the other. You must declare that you are using a Double Attack before you attack, and then roll the two attacks using this Knack. The TN to hit your opponent is increased by ten when you are using Double Attack.

Throw (Hand Axe): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. You may throw a hand axe as an attack. When you do so, use this Knack instead of your Attack (Hand Axe) Knack. The Range for such an attack is 5+Brawn yards. *This Knack is considered a Basic Knack for members of the Siggursdottir School.*

Whirl (Hand Axe): Whirl is a spinning attack designed to take out multiple unskilled enemies at once. For each Rank you have in this Knack, you may add 2 to your Attack roll when attacking Brutes.

Example: Thus, a Hero with Whirl 3 would increase an Attack roll of 19 to a 25 when attacking Brutes.

Exploit Weakness (Siggursdottir Axeman): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: The Apprentice learns to carry at least three axes. The first one will be thrown, and then the third drawn to allow him to wield an axe in each hand. You have no penalty for using a hand axe with your off-hand. You get a Free Raise when throwing an axe.

Journeyman Technique: Journeyman of the Siggursdottir School learn to make a lethal double strike, in which both of their axes strike an opponent simultaneously. To make a double strike, use the Double Attack knack, but both axes strike as one. Roll to hit and do 3k3 damage instead of the normal 2k2. The TN to use an Active Defense against a double strike is increased by 10. You gain a free Rank of Throw (Hand Axe). If your Rank is already 5, it becomes a 6. If it is not, then you may later increase your Rank from 5 to 6 by spending 25 Experience Points.

Master Technique: Masters of the Siggursdottir School are savage warriors who launch brutal flurries of blows with their axes. Whenever you successfully hit your target with a normal Attack (Hand Axe) roll, your next Action die is considered equal to the current phase.

Vodacce

Ambrogia

Country of Origin: Vodacce

The Ambrogia fighting style has caught on like wildfire in recent years. It is remarkable for two chief reasons. The first is that it teaches its students to fight with a sword in their left hand and a main gauche in their right. The second is that its creator, Veronica Ambrogia, also happens to be one of Vodacce's most famous courtesans.

While Ambrogia does focus on the left hand (a factor that many Swordsmen find difficult to deal with), it emphasizes practicality over style. Students learn to use whatever they find in their hands to win the duel. "After all," teaches Madame Ambrogia, "it's the winner that tells the tale."

While other Swordsmen refer to Ambrogia Swordsmen as "Veronica's Boys," there is no denying the style's very practical and deadly effectiveness.

The main weakness of Ambrogia is that it relies a little too heavily on forcing the opponent to react to the student's moves and tricks. If the opponent ignores them, the student is in serious trouble.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Dirty Fighting, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Pommel Strike (Fencing): Pommel Strike is used to smash the hilt or butt of your weapon into your target's face. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of the Attack Knack. If your attack gets through, you inflict 0k2 Damage, and your opponent's TN to be Hit is reduced to 5 until the end of the next Phase.

Riposte (Fencing): A Riposte is a parry followed up immediately with a counterattack. You first attempt an Active Defense against the incoming Attack, and then, if the Active Defense is successful, make an attack of your own on the person who just attacked you. When performing a Riposte, you receive half the dice from your Parry Knack (round down) for your Active Defense, and half the dice from your Attack Knack (round down) for your counterattack. For every Rank in Riposte, you may add one unkept die to either the Active Defense attempt or the counterattack. These dice are added after you've halved the appropriate Knacks.

Example: If Guiseppe has Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3, and Riposte 3, then he would round his Attack Knack down to 2 and his Parry Knack down to 1, and then he would have three unkept dice to add to either of them. Thus, he might add two dice to Parry and one die to Attack for a total Rank of 3 in each Knack.

Exploit Weakness (Ambrogia): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Ambrogia style of fighting negates the off-hand penalty when using a dagger or main gauche, and gives the character the Left-Handed Advantage for free (but only while using this style of fighting). Apprentices among Veronica's Boys are also trained to think quickly and take advantage of every opportunity they get. You may twist your dagger or fencing weapon slightly when you hit, adding +2 to the damage you inflict. In addition, you are not affected by facing other left-handed Swordsmen—you are used to fighting against opponents who use either hand.

Example: A Damage roll of 18 is increased to 20.

Journeyman Technique: When you inflict a Dramatic Wound on your opponent, you may choose to suffer one Dramatic Wound on yourself in order to inflict an additional Dramatic Wound on your opponent.

Master Technique: If your opponent attacks you and fails to hit you because of a successful use of either Passive or Active Defense, the TN to hit him with your next attack is reduced to a TN of 5. If you do not attack with your next action, or before the end of the round, then this bonus is lost.

Bernoulli

Country of Origin: Vodacce

The Bernoulli import more than just artifacts from the Crescent Empire; they bring knowledge as well. The Bernoulli School developed out of the Crescents' use of the scimitar, incorporating a western cavalry saber into its stylistic flourishes. Bernoulli Swordsmen learn to present their side to an opponent (much like the Aldana style of Castille), thus limiting their vulnerable spots. The blade's sweeping movements keep opponents at a distance until they weaken or show an opening, which a Bernoulli Master can take full advantage of.

The school suffers from an overly defensive approach, and the nature of the saber prevents any quick strategic adjustments. On the other hand, it also makes it very difficult to be hit, and Bernoulli swordsmen can keep their foes at bay for a long time without tiring. In Vodacce combat, where quick strikes are the order of the day, the methodical flourishes of the Bernoulli school are a life-saver.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Pugilism

Swordsman Knacks

Beat (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Beat, in an attempt to knock your opponent's weapon aside and put him off-balance. You roll Finesse+Beat, and must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Brawn in order for your Beat to be successful. If you are successful, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Corps-à-corps: Corps-à-corps is the art of close, or body against body, fencing. You declare that you are using this Knack instead of another attack Knack. If your Corps-à-corps roll is successful, you inflict a 0k1 bare-handed attack and your opponent then falls down and becomes prone.

Lunge (Fencing): A Lunge is an aggressive attack that leaves your defense open for a moment. When you declare a Lunge, use this Knack to attack. You roll two extra unkept Damage dice if your attack is successful. However, your TN to be Hit drops to 5 for this Phase, and you may not use any form of Active Defense for the rest of this Phase.

Exploit Weakness (Bernoulli): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Bernoulli students first learn to use their saber as a defensive weapon, deflecting multiple blows with its broad sweeps. Add your Mastery Level to your TN to be Hit.

Journeyman Technique: You have learned a saber maneuver known as a fleche. You point the tip of your blade at your opponent's head and run, leap, or spring towards him. To do this, you perform a Lunge as usual, but then you may give up any number of extra Action dice for the attack. Each extra Action die you give up adds 1 unkept die to the Damage roll and increases the TN to Actively Defend against the attack by 5. In addition, you are extraordinarily skilled at lunging and receive one Free Rank in the Lunge Knack upon becoming a Journeyman. This may increase your Rank to a 6. If it does not, you can later increase your Lunge Knack to a 6 by paying 25 XP for the increase from a 5 to a 6.

Master Technique: Bernoulli masters have reached a stage where they can press an attack from a defensive position—even if they're retreating or pulling back. Once per Round, you may reroll an unsuccessful Attack roll.

Carlucci

Country of Origin: Vodacce

Founded by Enzo Carlucci, a Swordsman of unorthodox outlook and unquestionable honor, the Carlucci school of swordsmanship is famed for its rigorous and disciplined physical regimen, as well as the fact that its students fight with a rapier in each hand. It is also a very physical School, stressing constant motion, and vigorous action, students using the terrain to their best advantage.

The Carlucci School demands honorable conduct, and is also one of the few Schools that specifically teaches its advanced students how to fight multiple opponents, drawing upon Enzo's military experience in the War of the Cross. While some Carlucci students bear two rapiers at their hips at all times, this is considered somewhat gauche, and lacking in subtlety. Truly skilled Carlucci swordsmen carry but one rapier, and quickly disarm an opponent to equip themselves with a second weapon. Defeating an opponent with his own sword is the epitome of Carlucci prowess.

If any flaws can be directed at the Carlucci School, it is their strict adherence to honor (in a nation where honor often bows out to practicality). Also, there is the fact that they become overly reliant on the greater reach their paired rapiers provide, so an opponent moving in extremely close can often undermine their abilities.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Fencing

Swordsman Knacks

Disarm (Fencing): You can only use this Knack after an opponent has just missed your Passive Defense. Spend an Action die to make a Contested roll of your Brawn+Disarm versus his Brawn+Attack (in the weapon he is wielding). If you win, the weapon is knocked out of his hand. If you choose to perform this move with two Raises, you wind up holding his weapon.

Double Parry (Fencing): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Multiple Opponents (Fencing): When facing two or more opponents, you may make two Attacks, two Parries, or a Parry

and an Attack, per Action die spent, providing no more than one of the actions is directed at a single opponent. Each Attack or Parry uses half your Attack or Parry ability as appropriate (rounded down). You get a number of dice equal to your Multiple Opponents Rank to divide between the two actions as you see fit.

Exploit Weakness (Carlucci): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Learning the Carlucci style of swordsmanship negates the off-hand penalty when using a fencing sword. Additionally, Carlucci Swordsmen do not need to make +2 Raises when performing a Disarm in order to wind up holding the opponent's weapon.

Journeyman Technique: Carlucci Journeymen learn the Carlucci Twist, catching their opponent's weapon between their twin blades, and twisting them in such a way as to snap the opponent's weapon. To do so you must perform a successful Double Parry, and spend a Drama Die to make the breaking attempt. You may then make a Finesse test against a TN based on the type of weapon you are attempting to break.

- Fencing Weapon: TN 30
- Heavy Weapon: TN 35
- Other Weapons: Per GM decision, but at least TN 40

The following modifiers can adjust these Target Numbers:

- Quality Weapon: TN +5
- Inferior Weapon: TN -5
- Dracheneisen Weapon: TN +10

Even if the breaking attempt is unsuccessful, the opponent is disarmed.

Master Technique: Masters of Carlucci have learned to use multiple opponents as an asset. Whenever the Master successfully uses any Active Defense, he may redirect the attack to a nearby target (except for the attacker). He uses his Active Defense roll as the attack, and damage is rolled using the attacker's normal damage, -1 unkept die.

Cappuntina

Country of Origin: Vodacce

Though not recognized by Swordsman's Guild—indeed, in many circles it considered a school at all—the women of Vodacce have found Cappuntina an invaluable tool. It is mainly a form of self-defense; the name is derived from the phrase “hat pin,” and the school developed out of a woman's need to protect herself when her husband wasn't around. Today it employs thrown knives, which a woman can easily conceal up her sleeve or pinned into her hair.

The main strength of Cappuntina is its surprising swiftness. Students learn to disable their opponents by pinning their hands or sleeves, cutting tendons to slow pursuit and striking when their defenses are down. Cappuntina practitioners learn to strike swiftly, then flee before their opponents have a chance to recover.

The weakness of Cappuntina is that it lacks the stamina of other Swordsmen schools. If a student can't disable her opponent quickly, she can do very little to stop him. Masters of Cappuntina can hamstring attackers before they know they're under attack, then escape without ever having to face a drawn blade.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Knife, Performer

Swordsmen Knacks

Pin (Knife): When you use Pin, you must declare whether you are aiming for the target's arm or leg. Make a Pin roll, with Raises equal to the Target's Finesse. This attack does no damage.

If you successfully target an arm, your opponent loses the ability to use any non-Parry Defense Knack until he spends an Action to dislodge the Pin weapon. Your opponent also suffers a +10 TN penalty when using any Weapon Knacks with the affected arm.

If you use Pin against your opponent's leg, then he must make a Finesse+Balance [your Attack roll] roll to avoid falling. If he fails this roll, then he becomes prone, and can't attempt to get up until he spends an action to free himself from the Pin weapon. If he succeeds at this roll, then he only suffers the loss of any non-Parry Defense Knack.

In both cases, the target must make a Brawn [5] check to dislodge a pinning weapon. He must make a Raise for each Raise you declared when making the Attack roll and for every Pin weapon after the first.

Throw (Knife): You hurl your weapon toward your opponent with deadly force. When you throw this weapon as an attack, you must use this Knack instead of your Attack Knack. The Range on a Knife is 5, plus two times your Brawn, yards.

Trick Shooting (Knife): You are skilled at making difficult shots. For each Rank of Trick Shooting, you subtract 5 from any penalties to your shot (for range, cover, etc.). Trick Shooting cannot lower the shot's TN below the target's base TN to be Hit.

Example: If a target has a TN to be Hit of 15, plus 15 for modifiers, an Archer with Trick Shooting 5 would negate all 15 points of modifiers, but he would not lower the base TN to be Hit (which remains at the original 15).

Exploit Weakness (Cappuntina): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Apprentices of Cappuntina learn to produce their weapons quickly and hurl them on the fly. They receive no off-hand penalty when throwing knives, and may draw and throw a knife as a single Action. In addition, you may purchase the Throw (Knife) Knack as if it were a Basic Knack.

Journeyman Technique: Cappuntina Journeymen know how to strike with more than weapon at a time. When you spend an Action to attack, you may throw a number of knives equal to your Mastery Level. All knives from a single attack must be aimed at the same target, and you make a single Attack roll for all of them. Should they hit, they deal damage as a group, inflicting 1k1 Wounds for each knife (i.e. Two knives would inflict 2k2 and three would inflict 3k3).

Master Technique: Masters of Cappuntina can disable more than one attacker; some can take down entire brute squads in a single flight of knives. When you become a Master in this school, each of your thrown knives in an attack may be aimed at a separate target, but you must make a separate Attack roll for each target you aim at. In addition, for each knife you choose not to throw (of the three per Action available to you), you gain a Free Raise to the Attack rolls of each remaining knife.

Tarantella

Country of Origin: Vodacce (Crescent)

Tarantella is a style that has only recently become known in Théah. This is a school developed by a Castillian seeking refuge in Vodacce. Names are Castillian with the exception of the style's name, which is Vodacce. Baltasar Dominguez, a well-known Master of Aldana (and ambassador to Vodacce) became enraged upon learning his daughter had fallen for a Syrna. Rapier unsheathed, he went to confront the youth. The lad, Sebastian, grabbed the two scimitars he'd been practicing with, and prepared to defend his honor against this n'ona. As Baltasar began to focus himself on his dance, he watched the youth enter a dance of his own. Back and forth the lad spun—keeping a wall of steel between himself and the Master. Every advance Baltasar attempted was thwarted by the young man's fevered gyrations. He felt as if the boy must have eight arms, or three friends. After several tense moments, Baltasar returned his blade to its sheath, and agreed to allow the young man to court his daughter—provided he teach him this new dance.

Based on what Sebastian told him, Baltasar learned that Tarantella is based on a method of fighting used by some men in the southern Crescent Empire. It was apparently brought north by a Kumbunai several years ago, and has spread among the entertainers and guardians ever since. Baltasar has begun teaching this school to his students in place of Aldana. He has been warned that he risks his standing with the guild, and Aldana, if this activity doesn't cease. So far, he hasn't been overly worried about these threats since he can beat most men who dare challenge his Mastery of Aldana, or his new-founded school.

A Tarantella Warrior begins his battles by entering a constantly spinning dance. He begins by whirling in a tight circle, and slowly expands the dance to enter the Los Tres Circulos (Three Circles). The First Circle is a constant rotation on the balls of the feet, with rapid shifts in direction from left to right. As he moves in the Inner Circle, he expands the dance to include the Middle Circle. With this, he begins a wider orbit while continuing with his tight spins. This leads him to the Great Orbit—a spiraling dance around the entirety of the battle. Once the Warrior has reached El Tercer Circulo, he is able to attack virtually anyone within the Great Orbit.

Tarantella's greatest weakness is that each spin requires precise footwork, and timing. If you know what to look for, you can time

his pacing. This would allow you to place your attack where you know he will be, rather than where he should be.

Membership: Unlike other Swordsman Schools, Tarantella students do not receive a free Membership in the Swordsman's Guild. Instead, they receive a Free Rank in one of their Swordsman Knacks, or +1 free Rank in the Side-step Knack.

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Athlete

Swordsman Knacks

Double Parry (Fencing/Fencing): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Multiple Opponents (Fencing): When facing two or more opponents, you may make two Attacks, two Parries, or a Parry and an Attack, per Action die spent, providing no more than one of the actions is directed at a single opponent. Each Attack or Parry uses half your Attack or Parry ability as appropriate (rounded down). You get a number of dice equal to your Multiple Opponents Rank to divide between the two actions as you see fit.

Exploit Weakness (Tarantella): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: An Apprentice of Tarantella ignores the off-hand penalty when using Fencing weapons. Also, because of your constant spins and leaps, you may move up a number of height levels equal to your Mastery Level, and attack without penalty.

Example: Assuming that you begin on level 1, an Apprentice may move to level 2 and attack without penalty. A Journeyman could move to level 2, or 3 and attack without penalty. A Master could move to level 2, 3, or 4 and attack without penalty.

Journeyman Technique: As you reach the Middle Circle, you learn to incorporate your spins into all your maneuvers. As a Journeyman, you may add your Mastery Level to your Side-step Knack Rank. Also, if your next Action die would become lower than the current Phase, you receive +1 Free Raise for that Action.

Example: A Journeyman with Panache 3 and Side-step 4 rolls 1, 3, and 6 for his Action dice. In phase 1, he uses his Parry

(Fencing) to stop an incoming attack—succeeding in the attempt. This lowers his next Action die by -6 (Side-step 4 plus Mastery Level 2). Since his next Action die would be brought below the current Phase, he gets to use that next Action with +1 Free Raise.

Master Technique: Mastering Tarantella brings the entirety of battle into focus. Whenever you spend a Drama Die to add to any roll using your Fencing Knacks (Basic or Advanced), you gain +1 unkept die in addition to the Kept die.

Example: If you would be rolling 8k3, and spend a Drama Die, you roll 10k4 rather than the normal 9k4. If you spend a Drama Die after rolling, you roll 2k1 rather than the normal 1k1.

Villanova

Country of Origin: Vodacce

The sinister Villanova family has long used political machinations to enforce their will, but they are also deadly swordsmen. The Villanova School developed as a way to quickly return blows, as well as incorporating all number of dirty tricks into its fighting style. Students learn at a secluded academy hidden deep within the swamps of Villanova territory. It is whispered that all graduates must swear fealty to the Villanova family, although enough practitioners can be found elsewhere to discount such rumors.

The greatest strength of the Villanova school is its ability to turn opponents' attacks back on themselves. It uses a move called a stop-thrust, which slides your blade up your foe's to deal devastating damage. It also makes extensive use of feints and other deceptive moves, allowing a Swordsman to conceal his true intent from his foe.

Unfortunately, the Villanova school also encourages overconfidence in its practitioners, who often believe that opponents cannot see their true intentions. More than a few Villanova students have underestimated their foes, dismissing their abilities only to be gutted by an unexpected move. A cautious Villanova swordsman is almost unstoppable, but cautious swordsmen usually find other schools to attend.

Membership: Yes

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Knife

Swordsman Knacks

Double Parry (Fencing/Knife): A Double Parry is a parry with two blades (usually a fencing weapon and a main gauche) crossed before you. You may declare that you are using this Knack instead of an ordinary Parry as an Active Defense. Success grants one free Drama Die, which can be used for a number of Phases equal to your Double Parry Rank. In any event, if you do not use the Drama Die by the end of the Round, you lose it.

Feint (Fencing): When attacking an enemy, you can declare a Feint. Roll Finesse+Feint; you must roll a number of Raises equal to your enemy's Wits. If you manage this, he cannot avoid the attack using any Active Defense.

Stop-Thrust (Fencing): A Stop-thrust is a combination of parry and counterattack that uses the opponent's blade as a guide for the Swordsman's own. When an opponent attacks you, you may spend a Held or Current Action (not an Interrupt Action) to perform a Stop-thrust. To do so, make a Wits+Stop-thrust roll as your Attack roll against your attacking opponent. If you hit, you deal 3k2 Damage to them. If this causes a Dramatic Wound to your opponent, then the attack they were about to make is canceled without effect.

Exploit Weakness (Villanova): Once you have attended a School, you have not only learned its strengths, but its weaknesses as well. Whenever you duel someone who is using a

School whose weakness you are familiar with, even if you aren't currently using that style of fighting yourself, you gain a number of unkept dice equal to your Rank in your Exploit Weakness Knack to all your Attack and Active Defense rolls. A Swordsman who attends more than one School obviously knows more than one weakness...

A character who defeats a Swordsman of another School, even if the defeated Swordsman's style is one that the victor is not familiar with, may gain one Rank in the appropriate Exploit Weakness Knack. He may gain a maximum of one Rank per Act (not Scene) and a maximum of one Rank per Swordsman defeated. These new Ranks must be paid for with Experience Points that the character possesses at the time of the duel and must be spent immediately after the encounter, or the opportunity to gain the Rank is lost.

Techniques

Apprentice Technique: Beginners at the Villanova School learn to use easily concealed secondary weapons against their opponents. You suffer no off-hand penalty when using a knife in your off hand. In addition, you receive a Free Raise when using your Parry (Knife) Knack. Students of this school often make use of Fencing Ring Grips as well.

Journeyman Technique: Villanova Journeyman are skilled enough to conceal their movements behind a series of feints. You receive one Free Rank in the Feint Knack upon becoming a Journeyman. This may increase your Rank to a 6. If it does not, you can later increase your Feint Knack to a 6 by paying 25 XP for the increase from Rank 5 to Rank 6.

Master Technique: At the final Mastery Level, you learn to trap opponents by "inviting" your opponents to attack you. At the start of any Phase, you may voluntarily lower your TN to be Hit in increments of 5, to a minimum of 5. If you are attacked and perform a stop-thrust while your TN is lowered, then you receive a Free Raise to your Stop-thrust attempt for every 5 points by which you lowered your TN to be Hit.

SORCEROUS HERITAGES

Sorcery is very specific to culture. This is not the "high fantasy" form of magic, but is more strategic—almost political—magic. Magic in Théah is costly—it costs you Drama Dice (experience) and typically has a “blood cost” in addition. There can be nasty side effects to Sorcery in Théah. Each nation has its own Sorcery. In game terms, these are literally totally different systems of magic.

There are three levels of Sorcery: Full Blood (40 HP), Diluted Blood (30 HP) and Half Blood (20 HP). If you are Full-blooded, you must choose only one Sorcerous Heritage. You may purchase Half-blooded in two different Heritages (for a total of 40 HP); these Heroes, known as Twice-blooded, are people whose parents were Full Bloods from different nations. Those with Diluted Blood are either possess a weakened Full-blooded heritage, or a strong Half-blooded heritage; either way you only know one Sorcerous Heritage.

If there is an HP Cost listed with the Sorcery's description, this supercedes the cost and requirements given above (usually because that type of Sorcery is markedly different from that imparted through a noble bloodline).

The Heritages

Each Heritage has a number of Knacks. Full-blooded Heroes begin with 7 Sorcery points to spend on purchasing Sorcerous Knacks. Half-blooded Heroes begin with only 3 Sorcery points. Twice-blooded Heroes start with 3 Sorcery points in each Heritage, which may not be transferred back and forth between their sorceries. Diluted Blood Heroes start with 5 Sorcery points to spend on purchasing Sorcerous Knacks., but can never achieve Master Degree in their chosen sorcery. Each Sorcery point purchases one Rank in a Sorcerous Knack. Like other Knacks, Sorcerous Knacks cannot be increased above 3 during Hero Creation.

You cannot purchase additional Sorcery points during Hero Creation, but Sorcerous Knacks can be bought up during game play with XP. While a Full-blooded Hero may reach Rank 5 in his Sorcerous Knacks, Half-blooded and Twice-blooded Heroes may only reach a maximum of Rank 3 in any Sorcerous Knack.

You may not purchase a Sorcerous Heritage from a nation other than your Country of Origin, except in the case of Twice-blooded Heroes, who may have one Heritage from another country (reflecting their dual parentage).

Each path has three Degrees of Mastery. Apprentice, Adept, and Master. When a Hero gains Rank 4 in four Sorcerous Knacks, he moves to the Adept Degree. When he gains Rank 5 in five Sorcerous Knacks, he moves to the Master Degree. Graduating to higher Degrees within a Heritage may require some form of initiation, at the GM's discretion.

Avalon

Glamour

Restrictions: Avalon only

In the land of Avalon, the legends of the people come to life. Avalon sorcerers harness the energy of the people's belief and channel it in order to perform miraculous feats of strength, guile, or Skill. This ability is known as Glamour. It was taught to the Avalons by the Sidhe, who gave them a magical artifact known as the Graal. If the Graal were to be lost, the sorcerers would lose their power until it was returned.

Path Mastery: The Blessing of Renown (Apprentice), The Blessing of Good Fortune (Adept), The Blessing of Power (Master)

Sorcerous Knacks: Anne o' the Wind, Blackcloak, Iron Meg, Isaac Snaggs, Jack, Jeremiah Berek, King Elilodd, King Robert the Dark, Mad Jack O'Bannon, Robin Goodfellow, St Rogers, The Green Man, The Horned Hunter, The Stone Knight, Thomas

Apprentice Degree: Blessing of Renown

At this Mastery Level you get two benefits. First, all your Reputation dice are considered Glamour dice. Second, you can use the Apprentice Degree ability of any Legend Knacks you know by spending a Drama Die.

Glamour Dice

Glamour dice are treated as Drama Dice in all but two ways. First, they cannot be spent to activate (or prevent the activation of) Arcana. Secondly, they do not turn into XP at the end of the Story. Glamour dice may be used to power Glamour Knacks, just like ordinary Drama Dice.

Adept Degree: Blessing of Good Fortune

As you start a game session, the GM's number of starting Drama Dice is reduced by your lowest Trait to a minimum equal to the number of players in the game.

Example: If your lowest Trait is a 2 and there are five players, the GM receives -2 fewer Drama Dice, to a minimum of 5 Drama Dice, at the start of each Story.

Also, you can use the Adept Degree ability of any Legend Knacks you know by spending a Drama Die.

Master Degree: Blessing of Power

Your Drama is based on your highest Trait, instead of your lowest. In addition, you can use the Master Degree ability of any Legend Knacks you know by spending a Drama Die.

Glamour Legend Knacks

Sorcerers emulate Legend Knacks with their Glamour. By emulating a given figure, the sorcerer taps into the people's beliefs about that figure and can demonstrate some of the same powers. You will notice that each Legend Knack is based on a specific Trait, noted before in the Knack's description.

Normally, you cannot choose more than one Legend Knack based on each Trait (however see the Glamour-mere Advantage).

Brawn	Finesse	Wits	Resolve	Panache
The Horned Hunter	Anne o' the Wind	Isaac Snaggs	The Green Man	Jeremiah Berek
Iron Meg	Blackcloak	Jack	King Robert the Dark	St. Rogers
Mad Jack O'Bannon	Robin Goodfellow	King Elilodd	The Stone Knight	Thomas

Anne o' the Wind

[Finesse] Anne o' the Wind was a legendary woman who raced the four winds and won. As her prize, she was given a cup that was always full of wine, a pot that was always full of stew, and a bag that was always full of bread. This was just as well, for she had worked up such an appetite during the race that she sat down to a three-month-long meal just to get her strength back.

Apprentice Degree: spend a Drama Die to add +5 times your Knack Rank to your Initiative Total until the end of the Round.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your Rank in the Sprinting Knack until the end of the Round.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die and then immediately spend all your Actions for the Round, ignoring the rules for Interrupt Actions. This may be done at the beginning of the Round, just after everyone has rolled for Initiative. If more than one Glamour mage wished to use this ability, the one with the highest Initiative Total goes first.

Blackcloak

[Finesse] Blackcloak was the greatest sneak thief in the history of Avalon. It was said that he could climb any wall and pick any lock, and that he never left a trace of his passing.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to hide the traces of your passing for the rest of the Scene. The TN of all attempts to track you are increased by 5 times your Knack Rank.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to reduce the TN of a single Climbing check by 10 times your Knack Rank.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to reduce the TN of a single Lockpicking check by 10 times your Knack Rank.

King Elilodd

[Wits] In the legends of King Elilodd, he forged a lasting friendship with the Sidhe that was the source of all Glamour. For many years thereafter, he remained a favorite with the Seelie.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add 5 times your Knack Rank to a single use of Repartee against a Sidhe. Only Charm and similarly positive effects may gain this bonus when used against the Seelie, while only Intimidate and similarly negative effects may gain this bonus when used against the Unseelie.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to call out to the nearest Seelie for aid. Make a Resolve+King Elilodd [30] roll. If successful, a Seelie answers your call and aids you as best it can (for a price, naturally). If the roll is 10 or less, an Unseelie has answered your call, and the price it demands for its assistance (assuming it doesn't kill you out of hand) will be much, much harsher.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to create a 3 yard wide circle centered around you that Unseelie Sidhe cannot enter. They are hurled away from you if they are inside the circle when you activate this power, and they may not use their magic on you while the effect lasts. You may maintain this effect as long as you can stay awake (you must make a Resolve Test every morning or fall asleep. The TN is +10 for every day you've remained awake). If you move from the spot the effect ends, and anyone else who leaves it is instantly vulnerable to the Unseelie.

The Green Man

[Resolve] Legends of The Green Man tell of the day he challenged a knight to strike off his head with an axe, then calmly picked it up and placed it back on his shoulders. The knight, unfortunately, did not survive his answering blow.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die, then roll one non-Exploding die for every Rank you have in this Knack and Keep the highest one. Give that die to another Hero, who gains a bonus to all his rolls equal to the number showing on the die until the end of the Scene.

Example: If you roll a 6, he adds +6 to all his rolls until the end of the Scene. The following restrictions apply to this die:

1. No-one may have more than one of these dice at once.
2. You may not use this ability on yourself.
3. You may not affect more people at once than you have Ranks in this Knack.

4. You may not use this ability on a character who does not wish to be affected.

When the effect wears off at the end of the Scene, the Hero you gave the die to suffers 1 Dramatic Wound for every 5 points, or part thereof, you rolled on the die.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die and choose one character, including yourself. The next Dramatic Wound that character suffers heals itself at the end of the Round in which it was received. This may bring a character back from being Knocked Out, but not from being dead.

Master Degree: When you use your Adept ability on another character, the person being affected may pay the Drama Die to activate the ability instead of you.

The Horned Hunter

[Brawn] The legends surrounding The Horned Hunter describe him as a warrior of enormous strength and stamina. He could leap great distances, hurl huge boulders, and survive terrible blows that could carve a lesser man in two.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your Brawn for one roll. This cannot be used during Contested rolls, Wound Checks, or Damage rolls.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your Brawn for one Wound Check.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your Brawn for one Damage roll or one Contested roll (such as use of the Disarm Knack).

Iron Meg

[Brawn] Iron Meg is believed to be the toughest woman who ever lived. She got her name by eating nails for breakfast and swords for supper. It's said she once caught a cannonball in her hands and took a bite out of it while it was still burning hot to mock the gunners that had fired it.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to instantly heal yourself of $5 \times$ Knack Rank Flesh Wounds.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to cancel the effects of one type of poison that is currently affecting you.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to automatically succeed at a Wound Check whose TN is no more than 100.

Isaac Snaggs

[Wits] Isaac Snaggs is famous for his lightning-fast hands. He was serving in the Avalon army when his unit ran out of arrows for their longbows. Running out in front of the enemy, Isaac caught every arrow that was fired at him and took them back to his own unit to replenish their stores. Thanks to his efforts, they defeated the enemy Montaigne army.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die after you've attempted an Active Defense in order to add +2 times your Knack Rank to the total.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die and 1 Action to catch a missile that was thrown or shot at you, excluding firearms, but including knives, axes, or even arrows. You must have one free hand to perform this maneuver, and you take no damage—it is considered a successful Active Defense.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die and 1 Action to catch a bullet from a pistol or musket that was fired at you. You must have one free hand to perform this maneuver, and you take no damage—it is considered a successful Active Defense.

Jack

[Wits] Jack's legends tell of his trickery and guile. The victims of his trickery (usually giants) seldom realized what he had done

until it was too late. Even more impressive, Jack was nearly invincible in his own home.

Apprentice Degree: You may spend a Drama Die to transform a small object (less than one cubic foot in size) into one of the following items until the next dawn (or until you will the enchantment to end), when it reverts to its former self. If a transformed object is broken into pieces, all of the pieces disappear at dawn except for one (randomly chosen), which reverts to its original unharmed form.

- A knife
- A fist-sized hunk of cheese. *If the cheese is eaten, the original object is destroyed.*
- A bird. *If the bird is killed, the original object is destroyed.*
- A rock. *You may affect up to five small objects at once.*
- A pair of dice
- A normal-sized playing or Sorte card. *You may affect up to five small objects at once.*
- A Guilder. *You may affect up to five times your Knack Rank small objects at once.*
- A 10-yard ball of twine
- A button

Adept Degree: You learn one of the following five forms for every Rank you have in this Knack. You may spend a Drama Die to transform yourself into one of the forms you know until the next dawn. You may spend 2 Drama Dice to transform another willing person (or a horse, willing or not) into one of the forms you know until the next dawn.

The Child: The affected person temporarily becomes younger. If he is middle-aged or elderly, he becomes spry (refer to the rules on Aging in the 7th Sea Game Masters' Guide). If he is younger than that, there is no effect. If the GM is enforcing Aging penalties, then this form negates them; otherwise there is no game effect. An old horse affected by this form would temporarily regain its youth.

The Hag: The affected person appears older and much uglier. This results in a penalty of -1 unkept die to all Social rolls, but the person is physically unrecognizable as himself. None of his other traits or Skills are affected. A horse affected by this form would become a much less attractive animal.

The Noble: The affected person becomes more handsome or beautiful. This results in a bonus of one unkept die to all Social rolls. A horse affected by this form would become a much more attractive animal.

The Ogre: The affected person is transformed in subtle ways to be more intimidating. Whether it's a sharper point to his teeth, or a slight red gleam to his eyes, he has an unnerving effect on those who see him. This results in a penalty of one unkept die to all Social rolls except those involving Intimidation or Interrogation, which receive a bonus of two unkept dice. A horse affected by this form would be more frightening, possibly with fire coming from its nostrils or a red glow to its eyes.

The Peasant: The affected person assumes a much blander, more ordinary appearance. This results in a bonus of two unkept dice to all Disguise, Unobtrusive, and Shadowing checks. A horse affected by this form would lose any distinctive physical characteristics.

Master Degree: You may enchant one building (no bigger than 4,000 square feet in size) with Glamour. It takes one month of preparation, and one tear from a Sidhe in order to do so. Once the enchantment is complete, you may select three of the Laws listed below as part of the enchantment. They work without fail inside the house unless some other Sorcery (such as the Thomas Knack) disrupts them temporarily. You may have only one house enchanted at a time, but you can end the enchantment on one

house and recast it on another (again, needing a tear from a Sidhe).

1. I can't die in my house
2. Nobody's magic but mine works in my house
3. I always know where everything (and everyone) is in my house
4. No-one can enter my house without permission
5. Nobody ages in my house
6. The pantry in my house always has food and drink in it
7. I can instantly rearrange the inside of my house with a thought
8. My house cannot be harmed in any way
9. The inside of my house is twenty times bigger than the outside
10. No-one can find the way to my house unless I let him

Mad Jack O'Bannon

[Brawn] The King of Inismore is always a favorite subject of myth and legend. Tales tell of his bag of tricks—disappearing behind small objects, popping out of unexpected places, and even taking his own life, only to rise in the morning once again.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die while standing behind an object that at least partially covers you in order to disappear. You cannot be seen as long as you don't move, but you can be heard, and if you peek around the object to see what's going on, the upper half of your body will be apparent.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die in order to step behind one object and step out from behind another object that is within 30 yards times your Knack Rank of the first object.

Master Degree: Your Hero may spend 3 Drama Dice when he is killed. At dawn the next morning, he will return to life, all wounds healed and all harmful substances purged from his body. However, his Brawn drops by -2 because of the stress of dying, and if this would drop his Brawn below 0, the power fails and he is dead for good. Of course, even if the power works, he may have been buried or otherwise disposed of in the meantime...

Jeremiah Berek

[Panache] Jeremiah Berek is a living legend. He has become so famous that Glamour mages have begun to call upon his legend (and his incredible luck) for power. He is known to slip out of tight spots on a regular basis, and seemingly hopeless causes are his daily bread.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add 2 × Knack Rank to that roll.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die before making a roll. For every die that explodes during that roll, roll and Keep two additional dice, not one.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die after failing a roll. You may reroll and try again. If you fail the second time, however, you're stuck with the result. You may not use this ability more than once per roll, nor may it be used with any other reroll ability.

King Robert the Dark

[Resolve] Robert united the clans of the Highland Marches with his powerful personality, earning himself a place in their legends from that day on. Great victories and military coups have become associated with his name over time, so that even today, a particularly skillful leader is said to have "Robert's Blessing."

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your general's Strategy roll this Round. Up to three Glamour mages may contribute to the army's success in this manner, or five mages if the general is a MacLeod.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add your Knack Rank to your Personal Results during Mass Combat.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add +2 times your Leadership Knack Rank to the next roll of up to five people you select (you may choose yourself). You may not select the same person more than once. This bonus must be used by the end of the Scene, or it goes away.

Robin Goodfellow

[Resolve] Legends tell of the amazing feats Robin Goodfellow performed with a bow, hitting targets incredibly far away, putting an arrow through a man's eye, and even splitting an arrow in two with an arrow he fired.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to lower the Effective Range of your next attack with a bow by -5 yards for every Rank you have in this Knack.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add +1 extra unkept die of damage to your next attack with a bow for every Rank you have in this Knack.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to lower the TN of the next attack you make with a bow by -5 for every Rank you have in this Knack.

St. Rogers

[Panache] Captain Rogers was the very first pirate. It is said that his ship was a part of him—two close friends sailing the waves together. Neither man nor woman ever came between them, and when Rogers vanished, a storm came quickly to claim his ship as well. Presumably they found each other once again in St. Rose's Coffin, but no-one may ever know for sure.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to add 3 times your Knack Rank to a single check involving a Sailor Skill Knack.

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to instantly heal a ship whose surface you are touching of a Critical Hit.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die to become the ship whose wheel you are holding. The two of you are considered a single entity. When making rolls of any sort for either of you, use the Trait (either yours or the ship's) that is the higher of the two. This ability ends as soon as you release the ship's wheel. Worse, when you suffer a Dramatic Wound, the ship suffers a Critical Hit, and vice versa. In addition to this ability, a St. Roger's Master may (once, and only once in his lifetime) choose one of the following abilities to permanently bestow upon a ship.

- The ability for the ship to acquire Reputation and use Reputation dice as Drama Dice like any normal Glamour mage. The ship gets a number of Reputation dice equal to the sum of all its crew's Reputation dice divided by 10 (round down).
- Add two Ranks to any one of the ship's Traits, ignoring all maximums.
- The ability for the ship to sail itself. Unless the Pilot of the ship purposely steers the ship into an obstacle or aground, the ship will, regardless of normal ship movement limitations, steer its way around such things.

The Stone Knight

[Panache] The Stone Knight was legendary for his bravery. After yelling for reinforcements across a hundred miles, he held a narrow pass against an invading army all by himself for a night and a day until help could arrive. However, as soon as he saw his fellow knights standing beside him, he dropped dead of exhaustion.

Apprentice Degree: Spend a Drama Die to shout for help. You may choose a number of your friends equal to or less than your Knack Rank. They will all hear your cry over any distance and know immediately where you are (or at least where you shouted from).

Adept Degree: Spend a Drama Die to ignore a Fear Rating less than or equal to your Knack Rank until the end of the Scene.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die and choose a patch of ground (or a bridge, etc.) no more than 10' wide and 10' long. Until a sunrise and a sunset have passed, as long as you do not leave your chosen ground, you cannot die or be crippled. You still can suffer Dramatic Wounds, but they do not affect you until the effect ends. Leaving the chosen area ends the effect immediately. When the Glamour expires, if you have taken 3 or more times your Resolve in Dramatic Wounds, you drop dead on the spot.

Thomas

[Panache] In the legend of Thomas, he travels to the Sidhe court and there learns to sense and resist Sorcery. When he returns to Théah, he gains great fame combating evil sorcerers.

Apprentice Degree: Whenever someone (or something) that possesses Sorcery comes within 10 yards of you, your left thumb begins to tingle. It continues to tingle until he (or it) moves out of range. When someone uses Sorcery directly on you, you immediately detect what's being done, and if you spend a Drama Die you may resist that magic. This ability doesn't affect such things as being struck by a shape-changed Ussuran, since the magic involved is affecting the Ussuran, not you. The Rank of the Knack affecting you must be less than or equal to your Knack Rank.

Adept Degree: When someone uses Sorcery within 10 yards of you, you immediately detect what's being done. You may spend a Drama Die to cancel any one Sorcerous Knack that is being used, or is active, within 10 yards of you. This might cancel a Fate Witch's Blessing, turn an Ussuran back to his human form, or prevent a Porté mage from teleporting away. The Rank of the Knack being canceled must be less than or equal to your Knack Rank.

Master Degree: Spend a Drama Die. Magic may not be used within 10 feet of you for a number of Rounds equal to your Knack Rank. Any active magical effects that enter this area are immediately canceled.

Castille

El Fuego Adentro

Restrictions: Castille only

Before they were driven away, the royal family of Castille commanded the power of El Fuego Adentro, one of the most destructive sorceries known. Flames leapt and swelled at their command, they bathed in the fires of the mightiest volcanoes, and the greatest could even create creatures of flame. The sorcerers could be identified when using their magic by tiny flames burning within their eyes whenever they were controlling a fire.

Even though the royal family was chased out of their palace and many were killed, a few survived. Some of them seek to redeem their family's good name, while others sulk in hidden places, waiting for their opportunity to take the throne back from the Church and their "puppet king." Many are afraid to use their magic at all, however, since its use is a death sentence if the Inquisition gets wind of it.

Heroes who take El Fuego Adentro usually hail from Rancho Gallegos; it's the only place in Théah where they can develop their skills safely. In addition, they must be careful about when and where they use it, for public displays will bring the Inquisition down on them like a sledgehammer (as well as other parties, such as the Rilasciare and Rose and Cross).

Hero Creation: The Sorcerer automatically comes from the Gallegos region of Castille, and will always possess the Gallegos Castillian Accent. In addition, the Sorcerer acquires a 3-point Hunted Background, to reflect the Inquisition's fervid hatred of those who practice El Fuego Adentro.

Path Mastery: Heart of Flame, Hand of Flame
Sorcerous Knacks: Concentrate, Extinguish, Feed, Range, Stunt

Apprentice Degree: Heart of Flame

As an Apprentice Sorcerer, you have taken the fire and made it a part of you. Fire and heat-based damage cannot harm you, and any equipment kept in close contact with you (such as worn clothing) is protected from harm as well. You could, for instance, swim in the molten fire of a volcano and it would feel like a soothing hot bath.

In addition, you can direct the movement of one fire within 10 feet. This fire will ignore winds, and move across water if you will it to (although it will be extinguished if you don't use the Feed Knack). More fires can be controlled over greater distances with the Concentrate and Range Knacks.

Adept Degree: Hand of Flame

Adepts of El Fuego Adentro can grasp fire in their hands as though it were a solid object. They have been known to climb roaring flames like a ladder or scoop up handfuls of fire to hurl at their enemies. They are even rumored to have the ability to cause flames to dance along their sword blade (see the Stunt Knacks for details).

Master Degree: Spirit of Flame

Masters of El Fuego Adentro have gained the ability to give flame the semblance of life. Flickering birds of flame can be sent to land on thatch roofs during sieges, and serpents of flame can crawl down the backs of prisoners, more painful than any lash (see the Stunt Knacks for details).

Limitations of El Fuego Adentro

Fire Movement

Although fire under the control of a Sorcerer can defy wind and water, it cannot move very quickly. A fire being directed by a Sorcerer can only move 5 feet, +5 feet more for each Mastery Level the Sorcerer has attained, each Round. Sometimes it can be faster simply to let the wind direct the fire for you.

The Spark

El Fuego Adentro Sorcerers cannot actually create fire, nor can they cause a fire to grow except by feeding it with tinder and combustible materials, just like anyone else. They must work with what already exists, and they must be careful to keep it burning. Any time the fire leaves contact with a fuel source, the Feed Knack must be used to prevent it from going out.

El Fuego Adentro Knacks

Concentrate

This Knack allows the Sorcerer to control more than one flame at a time. For every Rank in this Knack, the Sorcerer can control one additional fire beyond the first.

Extinguish

This Knack allows the Sorcerer to put out fires with a thought. The sorcerer may, by spending one Action, reduce the damage of one fire by a number of dice equal to his Knack Rank. If this brings the fire's Damage Rating down to zero dice, it is

completely extinguished. This can affect 100 square feet of fire per Knack Rank. The Feed Knack can be used by another Sorcerer to counter the effect of this Knack.

Feed

By using this Knack (no Action is required, simply an intent to do so stated), the Sorcerer can keep a fire burning without any fuel to feed it. Without this Knack, the moment he directs a fire away from its fuel source, it dies out. However, this Knack requires that the Sorcerer use his own life force to feed the fire. The Feed Knack prevents a fire from diminishing in size until the next Phase, but for each Damage die the fire would have lost (its full damage if it would have been put out, such as by being immersed in water), the Sorcerer takes 2 Flesh Wounds. The total damage taken is reduced by 1 point for each Knack Rank. The Sorcerer must make a Damage Check against this damage at the end of each Phase in which he suffers at least one additional Flesh Wound.

Example: A Sorcerer with Feed 3 uses it on a six-dice fire to keep it burning. This inflicts 6 Flesh Wounds on him per Phase, but since the Sorcerer has 3 Ranks in the Feed Knack, he only takes 3 Flesh Wounds per Phase. However, if something happens that would suddenly extinguish the fire (the fire is doused with water), he would have to take 9 Flesh Wounds (12 Flesh Wounds, less his Feed 3 Knack) to keep it burning.

Range

This Knack allows a Sorcerer to extend the range at which he can use his abilities. Without this Knack, a Sorcerer can only affect fires up to 10 feet away, but with it, he can affect fires up to 40 feet away per Knack Rank.

Example: A Sorcerer with Range 5 would be able to affect fires up to 200 feet away.

Stunts

Each Stunt Knack the Sorcerer learns allows him to perform a specific trick, such as keeping a sword aflame during a fight. Each Stunt Knack must be learned and improved in Rank separately, and a Sorcerer cannot learn a Stunt Knack unless his Mastery Level is at least as high as its required Mastery Level (shown in the Restrictions for each Stunt).

Fire-Starting

Restrictions: Apprentice Degree or better

This Knack allows the Sorcerer to suffer 1 Flesh Wound in order to light a fire under adverse conditions using normal fire-starting techniques (flint and steel, etc). The severity of the condition is limited by the Sorcerer's Knack Rank, as follows:

Rank 1: Damp timber or strong wind

Rank 2: Wet tinder or light rain

Rank 3: Waterlogged tinder or medium rain

Rank 4: Non-combustible tinder or heavy rain

Rank 5: Any material or weather conditions

Flaming Blade

Restrictions: Apprentice Degree or better

The Sorcerer plunges his blade into a fire, using his magic to protect the metal from the heat, and to keep the flame burning. This allows the Sorcerer to add his Knack Rank × Mastery Level to his sword's Damage Roll.

Example: An Adept with Flaming Blade 4 who rolls a 17 for his sword's Damage Roll would add 8 to the result, increasing the damage inflicted to 25.

This Knack inflicts 6 Flesh Wounds to the Sorcerer at the start of each Round (the Feed Knack can be used to absorb some of

this damage). It may be cancelled at any time without using an Action.

Hurl Fire

Restrictions: Adept Degree or better

The Sorcerer spends one Action to reach into a roaring fire, picks up a handful of fire, and throws it at an opponent, hoping to set him on fire. The Range of this attack is $5+(2 \times \text{Brawn})$ yards, with no penalties to hit, and the Sorcerer rolls $\text{Finesse} + \text{Hurl Fire}$ for his Attack. Should he successfully hit his target, the attack inflicts 1k1 Damage, plus one Kept die for each Mastery Level, and is immediately extinguished (the hurled fire cannot be kept burning by using the Feed Knack). This Knack inflicts 2 Flesh Wounds to the Sorcerer for each Kept die of Damage inflicted each time it is used (the Feed Knack can be used to absorb this damage).

Fireflies

Restrictions: Adept Degree or better

The Sorcerer spends three Actions and suffers 1 Flesh Wound to create a 100 square foot cloud of living 'fireflies' from a fire at least one-die in size. This reduces the fire's size by one die, effectively extinguishing it if reducing it to zero dice. The Flesh Wound suffered when creating the fireflies will not go away (even if the Sorcerer later takes a Dramatic Wound) until the fireflies are killed by immersion in water, or dispelled by their creator, which can be done at will (without requiring an Action). The Feed Knack cannot be used to reduce the damage taken by the Sorcerer from this Knack.

These creatures can be controlled by their creator and resemble burning embers of flame floating on the wind, but don't need to be maintained by using the Feed Knack. Any creature caught in the cloud suffers 1 Flesh Wound of damage every Phase unless they are wearing heavy clothing or some other similar type of protection. The fireflies can move up to 30 feet (or 1 Level) per Phase. A Sorcerer can have one cloud of fireflies in existence for each Rank he has in this Knack.

Flame Serpent

Restrictions: Master Degree only

The Sorcerer spends five Actions and suffers 3 Flesh Wounds to create a serpent of fire from a two-dice or bigger fire (reducing the fire's size by two dice immediately, and extinguishing it if it is reduced to zero dice). The Flesh Wounds suffered when creating the flame serpent will not go away (even if the Sorcerer later takes a Dramatic Wound) until it is killed by immersion in water, or dispelled by its creator, which can be done at will (without requiring an Action). The Feed Knack cannot be used to reduce the damage taken by the Sorcerer from this Knack.

The creature can be controlled by its creator without a die roll. The serpent's Traits are considered to all be Rank 3, but it cannot be harmed by anything other than immersion in, or prolonged exposure to, water. When it hits, its target suffers one Kept die of damage for each Rank the Sorcerer had in this Knack at the time of the serpent's creation. This diminishes by one Kept die each time the flame serpent successfully strikes its target, until its attack is reduced to zero dice, at which point it is a tiny wisp of flame that crawls away to recuperate (requiring access to a fire source at least two-dice in size). While recuperating, the creature regains one Kept damage die per Round of immersion, up to its original maximum at creation. A Sorcerer can maintain one flame serpent in existence for each Rank he has in this Knack.

Firebird

Restrictions: Master Degree only

The Sorcerer spends ten Actions and suffers 5 Flesh Wounds to create an enormous and strangely beautiful bird made of flames

from a four-dice or bigger fire (reducing the fire's size by four dice immediately, and extinguishing it if it is reduced to zero dice). The Flesh Wounds suffered when creating the firebird will not go away (even if the Sorcerer later takes a Dramatic Wound) until it is killed by immersion in water, or dispelled by its creator, which can be done at will (without requiring an Action). The Feed Knack cannot be used to reduce the damage taken by the Sorcerer from this Knack.

The creature can be controlled by its creator without a die roll. The bird's Traits are considered to all be Rank 3, but it cannot be harmed by anything other than immersion in, or prolonged exposure to, water. The firebird's wingspan is approximately 40 feet. Historically, Castillian Sorcerers used firebirds as steeds to carry them up to 50 miles per day for each Rank they possessed in this Knack at the time of creation. In addition, the firebird can carry one additional passenger for each Knack Rank learned.

The firebird's touch does not burn, but it can explode in a huge ball of fire (a Rank 4 Explosion) if its creator wishes. Doing so causes it to extinguish itself utterly and instantly. A Sorcerer can maintain only one firebird in existence at a time, regardless of his Knack Rank.

Montaigne

Porté

Restrictions: Montaigne only

The most famous sorcery (perhaps because it is so violently spectacular) belongs to the Montaignes. Doorway magic (called Porté by those who practice it) involves the sorcerer ripping holes in the fabric of the universe and stepping through to somewhere else. Not only do the doorways bleed, but some swear they can hear a slight sound when the hole opens as if it were screaming in pain. Not only is the "bleeding" of the doorway itself a part of the sorcery, but bleeding of the sorcerer is also necessary.

The Montaignes call the nether dimension that links the doorways the "walkway", a place as deadly and mysterious as the Seventh Sea itself. No one knows what beings reside there, but most sorcerers know better than to linger in their realm for long.

Apprentice Degree: Items

In the beginning of your training you learn to make small doorways, just large enough for a fist to fit through. Then, you are taught the "bleeding method." You mark an object such as a mirror, knife or snuffbox with your own blood. Then you are taken to another room and told to concentrate on the object. When you are ready, you rip open a small hole and reach through to the blooded object. When you feel the object, you pull it to you back through the doorway.

Adept Degree: Self

At this degree, you have learned to pull yourself to objects you have blooded. This time, you concentrate on the object and rip a hole large enough to step through. When you feel you've reached the object, you grasp it and find yourself holding the object in the location you left it.

Sorcerers learn never to open their eyes while passing through a doorway. It is said that those who do are lost forever in the walkway. Of course, no one can prove this theory, for most sorcerers are too wise to open their eyes as they step through. The ones who do not make it to the other side presumably ignored their master's wise advice.

You can also now pull objects as large as yourself (6 feet, 200 pounds) through the doorway. These items must be blooded and you must be physically able to pull them through the doorway, which means you must be able to lift them in the first place, let alone pull them through a magical doorway.

Master Degree: Others

Finally, you have learned to move objects larger than yourself, most notably other people. Those who pass through portals suffer from portal sickness (see below), and the danger of moving someone through who might open his eyes is always present.

You may only move a number of people equal to your Resolve, and they must hold on to you or someone who is holding on to you. Of course, those who lose their grip in the maelstrom between doorways (Brawn [10] roll when the winds are really bad) are lost forever.

Porté Knacks

Attunement

Attunement allows a Hero to sense, very generally, where the items he has blooded are in relation to himself. For every Rank in this Knack, you can sense items that are further away.

Rank	Distance
1	Up to 10 yards
2	Up to 100 yards
3	Up to 1 mile
4	Up to 5 miles
5	Up to 10 miles

Blooding

When a Hero wishes to blood an object, he makes a Resolve+Blooding [20] roll. Success means that the item is blooded and the Hero can home in on it and open portals to its location. For every Raise made when blooding an object, the TN to open a portal to it is reduced by 5. Apprentices may have up to three objects blooded at once, Adepts may have six, and Masters may have nine.

They may drop the link they have created to a blooded object at any time, but it cannot be reestablished without the object being re-blooded. The ritual to blood an object takes ten Actions to perform, but the blood can be washed off by a person observant enough to spot it in the first place.

Bring

When a Hero wants to Bring a blooded item to himself, he makes a Resolve+Bring [20] roll. The base TN is reduced by 5 for every Raise made when the object was first blooded (signifying a stronger link). It requires one Action to open a small doorway and one Action to reach through and pull the object out.

Catch

The Porté mage has mastered the art of quickly whipping open small portals to catch bullets and other projectiles in order to stop them from hitting him. This Knack can be used as a Defense Knack for Active Defense against firearms and other such projectiles (arrows, quarrels, thrown weapons, etc.) The mages receives a Free Raise to the attempt. Anything “caught” in this manner winds up inside the portal and is lost, probably forever. This Knack may not be used as a Passive Defense, nor is it effective against melee weapons.

Pocket

The Hero can claim a small “pocket” of the Walkway as his own and store things there. These objects do not need to be blooded, but there are a few restrictions:

1. Living creatures cannot be stored in the pocket; they simply can't enter it.
2. The sorcerer can only store ten pounds worth of items in the pocket per Rank in this Knack. Exceeding this limit causes the pocket to dump all the items in it onto the Walkway, where they are lost.
3. There is a small chance that items may disappear when placed into the pocket; it isn't a great idea to leave valuable or one-of-a-kind items in it. The sorcerers aren't sure what causes this, but there's a theory that the objects are being stolen.
4. Lastly, any object placed inside the pocket must hold its shape on its own. Thus, liquids could not be stored in the pocket unless they were in a container. Attempts to pour a liquid into the pocket result in the liquid falling back out of the portal.

It takes one Action to reach in and pull a specified object out of the pocket.

Rank	Capacity
1	10 lb
2	20 lb
3	30 lb
4	40 lb
5	50 lb

Walk

When a Hero wants to Walk to a blooded item from wherever he may be, he makes a Resolve+Walk roll. The base TN is 20, but this is reduced by 5 for every Raise made when the object was first blooded, signifying a stronger link. If a Hero wants to bring along another Hero for the ride, this Raises the Target Number twice (adding +10 to the TN). Every additional passenger requires another two Raises. It requires two Actions to open a doorway large enough for a man to fit through and five Actions to move through to the next doorway. Every two Raises decreases the walking time by one Action. Every extra passenger adds one Action onto the opening time and two Actions to the walking time.

Mechanics

Look and See!

Many players may feel tempted to open their eyes while moving between doorways. We encourage this activity. It weeds out the foolish.

However, some have said there is a force that tugs at their will while they step between doorways, whispering promises if they open their eyes. If a Hero encounters such an occurrence, he may be forced to make a Resolve [10] roll in order to keep his eyes shut. If such an encounter were to occur, that is...

Limits of Porté Portal Sickness

Portal sickness is a condition suffered by any human moving through a doorway, even the caster himself. Its symptoms are akin to sea sickness, but much more violent. Nausea and dizziness are common, and the effect can linger for hours afterward.

Whenever moving through a doorway, the caster rolls a die and subtracts his Resolve. The result is the number of rounds he suffers from portal sickness. Until he recovers, he is at two less unkept dice for all actions. Those who do not possess doorway magic and move through the bloody portals also roll a die, but do

not subtract their Resolve. They suffer for a number of Rounds equal to their die roll.

Pulling Through

Heroes with *Porté* can pull objects through the doorways toward them and pull themselves toward blooded objects. There is no other physical connection between the two doorways. In other words, if a Hero drops a blooded pin into the ocean and opens a doorway to that pin, water will not rush out through the doorway. The pin will be wet when the Hero pulls it through, however.

Likewise, if a Hero tries to pull himself through a doorway toward an object and the object is in a place that the Hero cannot enter, he will find his passage blocked and he'll be forced to go to another blooded object in order to get out of the portal... not a very pleasant option.

Example: If a Hero leaves a blooded pin in a lady's chamber and the lady places the pin in her jewelry box, the Hero will not be able to move through the portal into the jewelry box. However, he will be able to pull the pin toward him without compromising the integrity of the box.

If a Hero has stepped through the doorway, walks to his item, finds that he cannot connect with it and has no other blooded objects to home in on, then he's trapped on the other side forever, or at least until something finds him.

The Anchor

When Walking or Bringing, there must be a blooded item or "anchor" at the opposite end of the portal, whether you are Bringing it to yourself or Walking to it. Without this anchor, the magic cannot work.

Handing Off an Object

One *Porté* mage can hand one of his Blooded objects to another *Porté* mage by making a Resolve+Bring roll. The mage begins to send the object, and the other feels a tingle warning him that an object is being sent to him. It takes one Action for each mage to open the portal, and another Action from each to complete the exchange. The closer relations the two mages are, the lower the TN.

Relationship Between Mages	TN
Twins	5
Father, Son, Mother, Daughter	10
Brother, Sister	15
Uncle, Aunt, Nephew, Niece	20
First Cousin	25
Other (including Non-Related)	30

Breaking a Fall

A *Porté* mage of Journeyman or higher Rank may attempt to save himself from a fall by entering a portal in midair. He must make a Resolve+Walk roll against a TN based on the distance he is falling. Note that he is then inside the portal, and must Walk to a Blooded object as usual.

Levels Fallen	TN
1	5
2	10
3	15
4	20
5	25
6+	30

Creating a Permanent *Porté* Gateway

At least five Master *Porté* mages of different (non-related) bloodlines are required to create a permanent gateway. Stone archways costing no less than 1,000G each are constructed at the

two sites that the gateway is expected to connect. Then, the mages must travel to both sites and Blood them in a ritual that requires three months at each site to complete. Finally, the mages must each permanently sacrifice one Rank of Resolve. This lowers the maximum that their Resolve can be raised to, and if any of the mages drop below zero Resolve, they die in the attempt (although the gateway's creation will still succeed if at least one mage survives). Due to the high cost of creating gateways (and the rarity of Master *Porté* mages), they are still fairly rare in Théah, typically only connecting capital cities and other important locations.

Using *Porté* Gateways

Anyone can use a *Porté* gateway. The user simply steps through with his eyes shut and walks forward until he feels a wrenching sensation, which signifies his arrival at the other end. Once he has stepped out of the gateway, he suffers a Dramatic Wound as the gate siphons off some of his life energy to maintain its operation.

Gateways that have been left unused for several centuries or more fade from their usual yellow glow to a bloody red. The first being to step through such a gate is consumed utterly to replenish the gateway's energy. After that, the gate operates normally once again, returning to its yellow coloration.

Ussura

Pyeryem

Restrictions: Ussura only

Pyeryem is the most unusual of the mystic arts, in that it is not exactly a form of sorcery. The ability to take animal form is more of a holy act than a sorcerous one, a benefit from the Ussurans' spiritual relationship with Matushka. She also gives them the ability to speak the tongue of the animals.

Those with these abilities look upon them with the reverence of prayer. They are not to be used frivolously, or as spectacle. They are gifts which can be taken away from those who choose to abuse them.

The art of Pyeryem passes on to a child from his mother. An animal then comes to the child and presents it with the gift of its "spirit skin." This later enables the child to shapeshift into that particular animal's form by "draping" the skin over all or part of his body. The child is neither able to change shape nor speak with animals until first

learning to speak with other humans.

In order to acquire a new shape, the gifted Ussuran finds an animal of the desired type and bargains with it for permission to assume its form. The animal then gives its spirit skin to him, and he is thereafter able to assume its form. In return, the animal lives as long as the Ussuran. If the animal ever dies, the ability to assume its form remains, but the Ussuran has to provide for that the animal's young if they are too small to take care of themselves.

Apprentice Degree: Shape of the Beast

You have only just begun to learn the potential of your power, but you can at least affect a Basic Transformation. You must transform your entire body into the animal's form, and you thereby gain all of the "Boons" associated with that form for the duration of the transformation (which can be as long as desired.) You can speak with other animals (and gifted Ussurans) while transformed, but you cannot speak with humans who do not know the art of Pyeryem.

In order to transform, you must spend one Action and a Drama Die, and test against the form's TN using Resolve+your Knack in that form. The Drama Die allows you to attempt the transformation, but doesn't give you any additional benefit. If the roll fails, the action and the Drama Die are wasted. If the roll is less than half the TN (rounding up), you are trapped in your current form until the next dawn. The Man Knack is used to return to your normal form (TN 15) in a similar manner, but it does not cost a Drama Die to use.

You can speak to any animal found within Ussura's boundaries. Outside of Ussura, your GM will determine the TN you need to roll against using your Resolve+Speak Knack in order to speak to a particular animal. The difficulty goes up the further you are from Ussura and the more domesticated the animal is.

Adept Degree: Heart of the Beast

Now you've become familiar with the process of changing and can control the effects better, performing a Partial Transformation. You select one Boon (even a non-beneficial one), make your check to transform (remember to spend the Drama Die) as usual, and if successful only the body part involved with the Boon transforms. This is a physical transformation, and it is obvious to anyone nearby. Thus, if you use a Partial Transformation to activate the Night Vision Boon given to you by your owl form, you would gain a downy cover of feathers around your eyes and a faint hook to your nose.

You cannot use two Boons at once that obviously interfere with one another. This includes Boons with contradictory effects as well as Boons that both affect the same area of the body (GM's decision). Lastly, you cannot activate more than one Boon at a time from the same animal type. You could use the Night Boon from your owl form and the Flight Boon from your goshawk form, but you couldn't use both Boons from your owl form.

Each Boon requires one Action to activate, since this effect requires much more control than a Basic Transformation. The Man Knack must still be used to transform the body part back to normal (TN 15), with a roll of less than half the TN (rounding up) trapping you in your current form until the next dawn.

Master Degree: Soul of the Beast

At last you understand the greatest truth of Old Grandmother's gift: form is unimportant; the spirit will always shine through.

Now you may use the Boons granted by your animal forms without actually physically transforming yourself. You do this through a process called Spirit Conjunction. You may activate as few or as many Boons from a single form as you desire, all with one Action and a single Drama Die. However, you may not conjure up Boons from more than one form at a time using this ability. There is no need to use the Man Knack to transform back, as no physical transformation has taken place. The effects of the Conjunction always wear off at the next dawn, unless canceled beforehand.

Pyeryem Knacks: Animal Forms

These are a few animal forms that an Ussuran can possess. Explanations of the Boons are in the Mechanics section.

Man

TN: 15

Notes: This Knack returns an Ussuran to his normal form. It is difficult to return to your original form, overcoming the magic of the spirit skin. Using this Knack does not require the expenditure of a Drama Die.

Asprey

TN: 20

Boons: Armor +10, Attack (0k2 Bite), Brawn -1, Flight, No Grasping Limbs, Speed

Notes: Armor and Brawn -1 are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations. Flight and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Boar

TN: 15

Boons: Attack (0k3 Gore), Brawn +1, No Grasping Limbs, Speed

Notes: Speed and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Boca

TN: 10

Boons: Armor +10, Brawn -1, Leaping, No Fine Manipulation

Notes: Armor and Brawn -1 are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations. Leaping and No Fine Manipulation are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Cat

TN: 15

Boons: Climb, Falling, Finesse +1, Keen Hearing, Night Vision, Silence, Brawn -2, No Grasping Limbs

Notes: Finesse +1 and Brawn -2 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Silence and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.

Duck

TN: 15

Boons: Flight, Hold Breath, No Grasping Limbs, Swim

Notes: Flight and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Fish

TN: 10

Boons: Breathe Water, No Grasping Limbs, Swim

Notes: Swim and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Frog

TN: 15

Boons: Hold Breath, Leaping, Swim, No Fine Manipulation

Notes: Swim and No Fine Manipulation are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Goat

TN: 10

Boons: Attack (0k2 Gore), Brawn +2, No Grasping Limbs

Notes: No Grasping Limbs and Brawn +2 are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.

Goshawk

TN: 15

Boons: Attack (0k2 Claws), Flight, Keen Sight, Speed, Brawn -2, No Fine Manipulation

Notes: Speed and Brawn -2 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Flight and No Fine Manipulation are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.

Hinde

TN: 35

Boons: Armor +10, Attack (0k2 Gore), Finesse +3, Leaping, No Grasping Limbs, Speed**Notes:** No Grasping Limbs and Finesse +3 are considered to be one Boon for Partial Transformations.**Horse**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +5, Brawn ±2, No Grasping Limbs, Speed**Notes:** Brawn +2 and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.**Kodiak Bear**

TN: 35

Boons: Attack (0k2 Bite), Attack (0k3 Claws), Brawn +3, Keen Smell, Swimming, Warmth, Finesse -2, No Fine Manipulation**Notes:** Brawn +3 and Finesse —2 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Attack (Claws) and No Fine Manipulation are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Monkey**

TN: 20

Boons: Finesse +1, Climb, Falling**Mouse**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +10, Keen Hearing, Keen Smell, Night Vision, No Fine Manipulation**Notes:** Armor and Brawn -3 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Otter**

TN: 15

Boons: Hold Breath, Keen Smell, Swimming, Brawn -1**Notes:** Swimming and Brawn -1 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Owl**

TN: 10

Boons: Flight, Night Vision, Silence, Brawn —1, Finesse —1, No Fine Manipulation**Notes:** Flight and No Fine Manipulation are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Rabbit**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +5, Burrow, Keen Hearing, Keen Sight, Leaping, Speed, Brawn —2, No Grasping Limbs**Notes:** Armor and Brawn —2 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Speed and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Raven**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +5, Flight, No Fine Manipulation**Notes:** Flight and No Fine Manipulation are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.**Red Fox**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +5, Howl, Keen Smell, Leaping, Silence, Brawn -1, No Grasping Limbs**Notes:** Armor and Brawn -1 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Silence and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Reindeer**

TN: 10

Boons: Attack (0k2 Gore), Finesse +1, No Grasping Limbs, Warmth**Notes:** Finesse +1 and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.**Snake**

TN: 20

Boons: Attack (0k2 Bite), Burrow, Climb, Finesse +1, No Grasping Limbs, Silence, Speed, Poor Hearing**Notes:** Attack and Poor Hearing are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations. Speed and No Grasping Limbs are considered one Boon for Partial Transformations.**Snow Leopard**

TN: 35

Boons: Attack (Bite 0k2), Attack (Claws 0k2), Brawn +2, Climb, Keen Smell, Leaping, Speed, Warmth, No Grasping Limbs, Poor Sight**Notes:** Attack (Claws) and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Songbird**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +10, Brawn -3, Finesse +2, Flight, No Fine Manipulation**Notes:** Armor and Brawn -3 are considered a single Boon for Partial Transformations. Flight and No Fine Manipulation are considered a single Boon for Partial Transformations.**Turtle**

TN: 15

Boons: Armor +10, Finesse -1, Hold Breath, No Grasping Limbs, Swim**Notes:** Armor and Finesse -1 are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations. Swim and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Wolf**

TN: 25

Boons: Attack (0k2 Bite), Brawn +1, Howl, Keen Smell, Keen Hearing, Silence, No Grasping Limbs**Notes:** Brawn +1 and No Grasping Limbs are considered a single Boon for purposes of Partial Transformations.**Mechanics****Boons**

The effects of a Boon only apply when the Boon is active.

Armor: Your TN to be Hit is raised by the indicated amount. Although this Boon is called “Armor”, it can also represent the difficulty to hit you due to speed, size, or any other factor.**Attack (Bite, Claws, or Gore):** You may make one attack using the appropriate body part (teeth, claws, antlers) as a weapon with the indicated Damage Rating, which should be either 0k2 or 0k3. Your Attack Knack is considered to be your Animal Form Knack. If an animal form doesn't have this Boon, it can still

perform the usual 0k1 bare-handed attack, using the Animal Form Knack as the Attack Knack.

When the Bite Boon is active, you cannot talk to other people unless they are gifted Ussurans.

Brawn: Your Brawn increases or decreases by the amount indicated.

Breathe Water: You can breathe water as if it were air. effects of drowning in water, but you out of it.

Burrow: You can dig a tunnel through dirt big enough for your current form to crawl through. You dig at a rate of two times Finesse inches per Round.

Climb: You roll three extra unkept dice for Climbing rolls.

Falling: Your Break Fall Knack is considered to be 1 higher (giving you Rank 1 if you don't have the Knack normally).

Finesse: Your Finesse is increased or decreased by the amount indicated.

Flight: You are able to fly.

Hold Breath: The Hero's Resolve is considered three Ranks higher than its current form's Resolve when using the Drowning Rules.

Keen Hearing: You roll three extra unkept dice for Perception checks involving hearing.

Keen Sight: You roll three extra unkept dice for Perception checks involving sight.

Keen Smell: You roll three extra unkept dice for Tracking rolls and Perception checks involving smell.

Leaping: You roll three extra unkept dice for Leaping rolls.

Night Vision: You can see in near-total darkness. Bright light causes you a one unkept die penalty to all your actions.

No Fine Manipulation: You must drop your highest die when attempting to manipulate anything held in your hands, claws, whatever.

No Grasping Limbs: You cannot hold or manipulate anything, except perhaps (very crudely) by holding it in your mouth.

Poor Hearing: You roll two fewer dice for Perception rolls involving hearing.

Poor Sight: You roll two fewer unkept dice for Perception checks involving sight.

Silence: You roll three extra unkept dice for Stealth rolls.

Speed: You roll one extra unkept Action die for Initiative each Round.

Swim: Your movement is unimpeded when swimming.

Warmth: You are not bothered by extreme cold. Extreme heat (but not fire), on the other hand, affects you twice as much as usual.

Vendel/Vesten

Lærdom

Restrictions: Vendel or Vesten only (Only Vesten can achieve Master Degree)

Lærdom (*lair-dom*) is the study of words believed to be the "true names" of metaphysical concepts important to the Vestenmannavnjar. According to the Skjæren (*skyair-en*, "Rune Carvers"), these twenty-four words were spoken by their tribal ancestors, who became their pantheon of gods. Each represents a physical or emotional characteristic which is embodied by the god who first carved it. Today, Skjæren are able to tap into the primal forces of the world through use of the Lærds (*lair*s, "Runes").

Runes are inscribed, forged or written onto specific items, granting them the power of their god. It is not enough to speak

the word; it must be brought into the world and invoked in a ritual that only a Skjæren can accomplish.

The power invoked by the Lærd depends on the level of mastery the Skjæren has achieved. Apprentices only understand the physical nature of the rune, the power lingering on the surface. Adepts have become familiar with deeper secrets and are able to inscribe them onto items.

Masters have discovered the final secret—the Great Wisdom—and are able to summon the Lærd's power into themselves. But they have another advantage, as well. They are able to perceive the Living Myth—Valhalla—all around them as a shadowy, indistinct place. They can faintly hear the singing of their ancestors chanting the Song of the World as they ride into battle. Master Skjæren may occasionally receive helpful advice from their ancestors or perceive important omens invisible to their friends (at the GM's discretion).

Path Mastery: Invoking, Inscribing, Becoming

Sorcerous Knacks: Kjøtt, Bevegelse, Varsel, Ensomhet, Styrke, Uvitenhet, Stans, Storsæd, Kyndighet, Sterk, Velstand, Fjell, Høst, Grenseløs, Krieg, Nød, Sinne, Tungsinn, Herje, Reise, Fornuft, Lidenskap, Kjølilig, Villskap

Apprentice Degree: Discoverer of Secrets

At this degree of skill, you are able to invoke only a small amount of power from the runes, and that power is temporary. When you tap into the power, it's like touching a live wire—the natural instinct is to pull away. You invoke the words spoken by Creation, after all, and such power could burn you if you aren't careful with it. Most apprentices use paper and ink to invoke the words, although they could also be written in the sand, on wood or glass, or on any other surface.

Adept Degree: Ward of Secrets

At the second degree of initiation, you have learned to hold the power of the herds a little longer—time enough to mark an object with it, carving it into the item's surface. Runes have been found on swords, armor, doors, archways, and even goblets. Runes inscribed on objects are not permanent and must be maintained. Each one you've inscribed must be renewed once per year, or they lose their power. Conventional wisdom within Vendel holds that herds renewed on the specific day they were inscribed gain additional effect, even allowing the Skjæren to temporarily make temporarily with their gods.

Master Degree: The Heart of Secrets

At the final level of mastery, the Skjæren has learned to touch the deepest heart of Lærdom—he becomes the runes he summons. Lærds are branded into the Skjæren's flesh and become a part of him forever.

Lærdom Knacks

In the following rune descriptions, the effect of invoking the rune, inscribing the rune, or becoming the rune do not vary unless indicated. Target Numbers are listed for Invoking/Inscribing/Becoming, respectively.

1. Kjøtt ("Flesh")

[TN 15/25/40] The first rune is that of Self. "Know yourself," it sings. "That is the first lesson; the first truth..." The rune of Flesh demands that the sorcerer be honest with himself. It is said that the god who embodies this rune was the most hermetic Vestenmannavnjar to ever live, never speaking to anyone but Empathy (see rune #2) after he solved the Riddle of Flesh.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice to resist any attempts to fool or beguile through magical or mundane means.

2. Bevegelse (“Empathy”)

[TN 20/30/40] Beyond the inner Self lies the Outer World, in which others mingle and meld together in one cohesive (though chaotic) whole. Empathy is the next natural step from Flesh, being the union of Self with the Outer World: It is said that the goddess Empathy taught Flesh to understand himself which made her the stronger of the two, though Solitude (see rune #4) took objection, saying that “the Second would never survive without the First

Effect: Adds two unkept dice to any social interaction.

3. Varsel (“Omen”)

[TN 15/25/40] The third rune belongs to the messenger of the gods, the Trickster who sends omens and subtle warnings. Though Omen has been blamed for being unfair in his games, making them too difficult for humans to see, he has disagreed, claiming that “only those willing to listen are worthy to hear...” Note: All the effects that are listed apply to all Skjæren who choose this rune.

Invoke/Inscribe Effect: With a successful Lærdom check using this rune, the Skjæren may speak to others in secret (all those present whom the Skjæren wishes to deceive hear only a garbled, foreign language). Those using the Flesh rune (see rune #1) are immune to the effects of this ability.

Become Effect: The Skjæren may use his Invoke/Inscribe ability at will, without rolling.

4. Ensomhet (“Solitude”)

[TN 15/25/40] The fourth rune cuts away the past, which is an anchor that prevents you from moving forward. It allows you to let your past angers, fears, and obsessions go, so you may concentrate on the present. This is the duty of the true hero, the one who understands that the future waits for no-one. Solitude was the first to accept his gift, the first to use it, and the first to fall saving his home.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice to Resolve tests.

5. Styrke (“Strength”)

[TN 15/25/40] The fifth rune is that of Strength, who challenges flesh for supremacy of the human body. He was a warrior, within and without, with the soul of a demon and the power of the wildest ox. The epic story of his courage is well remembered across Vendel; the modern sport of “caber tossing” (lifting the trunk of a large tree by its end) grew from the legend that he uprooted the tallest tree in Théah as a challenge to Legion itself. In so doing, he drew the line between this world and the demons it had embraced, a conviction shared by many Vestenmannavnjar today.

Effect: Adds one unkept die to all Damage rolls.

6. Uvitenhet (“Mystery”)

[TN 20/30/40] The sixth rune hides the truth; it is mystery. What was clear is concealed, and what was known is forgotten. When the Skjæren take on the aspect of Mystery, their deceptions and lies go unnoticed, veiled even from the Gateway rune. Many have said that those same Carvers begin slipping away from themselves thereafter, becoming less and less as everyone knew them. As if in support of this, many who have fused with Mystery (becoming the rune) have permanently cut ties with all they knew, devoting the remainder of their lives to scholarly work and puzzling out the nature of all they encounter.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice when deceiving someone else and counteracts the Gateway rune.

7. Stans (“Calm”)

[TN 10/20/35] Calm is the seventh rune, also known as Sorrow. For the sailor, there is no greater tragedy than for the sea to still. At the Skjæren’s command, winds die, the air is becalmed and quiet, and doom is brought to the sea. The god Calm observed the moment of silent revelation after Legion was thrust back into Abyss at the end of the war for Vendel. He has observed the same silent moment between each Age since.

Hero Creation: During creation of any Hero with this rune, you must decide which one of two focuses you wish to have—weather or emotions. Each has a different mechanic that follows the Hero through his career. Once the choice is made and play begins, it cannot change and every degree of mastery uses that effect.

Weather Effect: Stills the present weather conditions within the effective range according to the rules for Weather runes (above). Gales fall to breezes, and blizzards are reduced to gentle snowstorms. Weather conditions cannot be changed with this rune (e.g. Rain into an earthquake), however.

Emotional Effect: Adds two unkept dice when trying to calm another’s mood or curb aggressive emotions.

8. Storsæd (“Greatness”)

[TN 15/25/40] Like the Fool of the Major Arcana, Greatness represents the fledgling hero, the young and untrained prodigy begging to be honed to a sharp edge. It is also far more than that. Greatness is encouragement for others like itself, reflecting the best in all it meets. The first person to fill this role was a squire to Stykke, the man who would become Strength (see rune #5). Though seemingly weak and always protected by others, Storsæd proved the most valiant of all, never wavering through the Worst Days and proving to be an example of what they were all fighting for.

Note: All the effects that are listed apply to all Skjæren who choose this rune.

Invoke/Inscribe Effect: The Greatness rune activates according to the same rules as any that adds dice. During its duration, and after performing any successful Action, the number of Raises made with that successful Action may be distributed among any who observed the Action (all going to one person, or one each to several). These are considered Free Raises, and must be applied to the very next Action they roll for. Note that the limit for this ability is the Skjæren’s lowest Trait.

Example: If his lowest Trait Rank is a 2, any Raises he succeeds with beyond the first two may not be transferred in this manner).

Become Effect: At the start of every Scene, the Master Skjæren receives a pool of Free Raises equal to his lowest Trait. He may use these himself or divvy them out to others in his presence at any point during the Scene, but any not used by the Scene’s end are lost.

9. Kyndighet (“Skill”)

[TN 15/25/40] According to the Vestenmannavnjar legends, Kyndighet was the stout and clear-headed mentor to the group that saved the world. He knew that victory could not be rushed, that valor could not be hurried. He always taught the value of patience until the proper moment arrived - then he showed them all what triumph meant. His rune has become a symbol of adroitness and instruction.

Effect: Allows a reroll of one die each Combat Round. Note that all parameters for the use of runes that Add Dice also apply here.

10. Sterk (“Wholeness”)

[TN 20/30/40] “Understanding one’s own weaknesses is more important than knowing those of your foes”, is a

Vestenmannavnjar phrase attributed to Sterk, the warlord who never fell. His fighting style was purely defensive, focusing on protecting himself over hurting the enemy. In the end, most of his battles were won by wearing the aggressor out until he could strike one decisive blow. In this way, he was good company for Kyndighet (see rune #9), whose teachings were of utmost interest to him. Skjæren who worship through his rune are blessed with the uncanny ability to shrug off blows and dodge even crossbow bolts at close range.

Effect: Adds 5 to the TN to hit the Skjæren. Note that all parameters for the use of runes that Add Dice also apply here.

11. Velstand (“Wealth”)

[TN 10/20/35] To hear the Vestenmannavnjar tell the story, Velstand the Pauper was the richest man in the world. His altruism was perhaps the purest intent of any who walked as gods among the Vestenmannavnjar over a thousand years ago. Velstand came from a foreign land, with strange features and a voice that flirted with every wave of the ocean, and he was wise beyond his years. His homeland had been destroyed by Legion before the War, and he had come to Vendel to protect what he saw as an “innocent culture, devoid of the rampant greed and lust spreading across the world.”

His rune would become known as Wealth for lack of a more accurate term. Through it comes an endless wellspring of ideas, as if the Carver’s mind filled with the collective knowledge of all who had come before. The early Skjæren were very careful about who learned this rune’s secrets, well aware of its potential for misuse, but most in modern Vendel do not share their concern. Wealth is rapidly becoming the most popular Lærd among them, especially the merchant class.

Hero Creation: During creation of any Hero with this rune, you must decide which one of two focuses you wish to have—money or wisdom. Each has a different mechanic that follows the Hero through his career. Once the choice is made and play begins, it cannot change, and every degree of mastery uses that effect.

Money Effect: With a successful Lærdom check (according to the rules for runes that Add Dice) the Skjæren gains an additional one-hundred percent of all monies acquired through means other than regular income while this rune is active.

Wisdom Effect: With a successful Skill check (according to the rules for runes that grant dice, above) the Skjæren may tap into his hereditary memory, and may ask of the GM one question relevant to his current situation. The answer will be a brief “flashback” into the life of a former Skjæren devoted to the Wealth rune which is pertinent to the Hero’s present state somehow. The relevance of the scene must be determined by the player.

12. Fjell (“Mountain”)

[TN 15/30/45] Just as the twelfth rune is the rune of heroic sacrifice, so too it is the absence of suffering. Crippling wounds are ignored by Skjæren using this rune. It takes away suffering, salves pain, and frees the Skjæren’s mind to live “in the moment.”

Fjell, the man who took on this rune in the name of his people, was a “sympathetic healer.” During the final hours of the Worst Days, when the mighty Krieg (see rune #15) fell before Legion, he took on the Warrior’s wounds, saving Krieg’s life while sacrificing his own. Never satisfied with defeat, however, Krieg defied the Bargainer who had gifted them all, venturing into its home within the Great Tarn Mountain to find a way to bring him back. When he returned, this rune, the name of power, prevented his imminent death.

Note: All listed effects apply to all Skjæren who choose this rune.

Invoke/Inscribe Effect: When used, the Skjæren selects one Dramatic Wound he has already suffered. For the duration of the rune’s effect (determined as per the rules for runes that Add Dice), that Dramatic Wound is ignored, both for the purposes of penalties from it and for determining unconsciousness.

Become Effect: The Skjæren can suffer one extra Dramatic Wound before falling unconscious, and may ignore any penalties from one Dramatic Wound (chosen when the wound is inflicted; the Skjæren may choose another once that Wound is healed).

13. Høst (“Harvest”)

[TN 20/30/40] The thirteenth rune symbolizes the time of plenty, the Harvest. There is no famine during Harvest, and the gnawing hunger of the winter to come is forgotten. It is the season of rejoicing, for the fruits of one’s labors are at hand. But Harvest is also the lesson that has been taught along the way - nothing can be gained without work and dedication, and perseverance reaps the most precious of rewards.

The man known as Høst was the only Skjæren left behind during the Worst Days. He tended the fields and farms of the Vestenmannavnjar during Legion’s onslaught, and rallied the common folk to follow suit lest their homes and lives be forfeit. His long struggle is remembered over the first meal culled from each year’s harvest, even among those who consider Lærdom a corrupt stain on their nation.

Note: All the effects listed apply to all Skjæren who choose this rune.

Invoke/Inscribe Effect: Prior to the start of any Story, the Skjæren may reduce one of his Knacks voluntarily by one Rank. With a successful use of this rune, the Rank is “stored away” throughout the adventure, not granting the die it normally would. At the end of the adventure the Skjæren receives the Rank back, along with 2 XP he may spend only on that Knack.

Become Effect: The Skjæren may use his Invoke/Inscribe ability once per adventure without rolling.

14. Grenseløs (“Unbound”)

[TN 15/25/40] The way is opened by the fourteenth rune. Those things that would try to constrain the Skjæren are defeated. While locked doors may still bar his path, shackles, ropes, and bindings slip from him and cannot find a hold. Grenseløs, the first to exhibit this ability, was the only person ever to escape the Great Keep of Krigsfang, where even Legion was said to have been bound.

Note: All the effects listed apply to all who choose this rune.

Invoke/Inscribe Effect: Bindings and shackles fall off the sorcerer when this rune is invoked.

Become Effect: Bindings and shackles slip off the sorcerer when he wishes.

15. Krieg (“Warrior”)

[TN 15/25/40] The fifteenth rune, the Warrior, is victory in battle. The arrow finds its mark more easily, and the axe’s thirst for blood quickens. The Sons of the North greatly prize this rune, though many look back to the days following the Great War, when Krieg the Inhuman ravaged the coasts with an army of branded followers as proof of its ultimate corruption of the flesh.

Effect: Adds one unkept die to all Attack rolls.

16. Nød (“Intensity”)

[TN 15/25/40] Sixteenth among the runes is Intensity, who diametrically opposes Calm (see rune #6). Legend states that the two married prior to the Worst Days, and that they were driven apart by their differences once they received their runes. Intensity is all that is violent, aggressive, and forthright. She (and her rune) are a terror on the open sea, almost as bad as her

former mate. She howls with a savage wind, seethes beneath the roiling waves, and stings the eyes of all who look upon her angry shape.

Hero Creation: During creation of any Hero with this rune, you must decide which one of two focuses you wish to have—weather or emotional. Each has a different mechanic that follows the Hero through his career. Once the choice is made and play begins, it cannot change and every degree of mastery uses that effect.

Weather Effect: Worsens the present weather conditions within the legal range for Weather runes (above). This can turn a drizzle into a downpour, a snowstorm into a blizzard. Weather conditions cannot be changed with this rune (e.g., rain into an earthquake), however.

Emotional Effect: Adds two unkept dice when trying to incite another's wrath or promote aggressive emotions.

17. Sinne (“Anger”)

[TN 15/25/40] The seventeenth rune is that of the bitter gale winds. Anger wells up within the sky until it bursts forth in fitful gusts of air like a godlike infant run amok; it is uncontrollable to most, and unquestionable to the rest. Sinne was

living embodiment of this fury, a ravishing beauty no one could possess, control, or even hold the attention of for very long. She remains one of the most emulated of the Vestenmannavnjar pantheon.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice to all Knack checks based on Brawn.

18. Tungsinn (“Gloom”)

[TN 15/25/40] The eighteenth rune brings sullen morning showers. Gloom drains the life from all around it, casting everything in a lifeless shade of gray before it covers the world with an endless stream of lonely tears, and leeching the courage from the bones of Heroes. It reminds most of their losses and washes over the rest without care. Tungsinn was the living embodiment of this malaise, a nihilistic critic who was sure the Vestenmannavnjar would lose the War until several long moments after its end. He has been mostly forgotten, as people have better things to do than sulk and cower.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice when trying to cause depression or fear in another person.

19. Herje (“Ruin”)

[TN 20/30/40] The nineteenth rune is that of disruption and the destructive forces of nature. Ruin comes unexpectedly, brutally awakening everyone it touches and thrusting them into a desperate struggle to survive. Herje was the living embodiment of this devastation, a man plagued with the worst luck of any who ever survived childbirth. Like many of the original gods, Herje fled his homeland after the Worst Days, and nearly all images of him (save those carried by the Skjæren who “worship” him through this rune for its power) have been burned in the hopes that he will never return.

Effect: Add your Rank in this rune to the TN of your target's next Action. This rune's effect ends immediately thereafter.

20. Reise (“Journey”)

[TN 15/25/40] The twentieth rune is the swift Journey. Though a battle may be miles away, the Sons of the North who hear Journey's call rush to answer, their blood burning in their veins. It is the path that matters to them, not the goal, for they have come to understand the importance of every experience along the way. If anything, they are loath to see a journey end (especially life itself), though their dedication to travel and years of careful consideration have prepared even the most fearful to pass on the

mantle of their god to the next generation when the time comes. The god of this rune may have been the first to take this title, but he will not be the last—the name Reise has become very common in Vestenmannavnjar over the centuries.

Effect: Adds two unkept dice to any Perception checks.

21. Fornuft (“Gateway”)

[TN 20/30/40] The twenty-first rune is the Gateway. Visions appear in the waters stirred by the Skjæren's finger. With this rune, the Sons of the North can spy on their enemies and learn their plans. The rune of Mystery (see rune #6) forms the only certain defense against Gateway. Carvers who have learned the secrets of Knowledge are a valuable commodity in Vendel (particularly among the various Guilds, who hire their services out for a profit).

The original bearer of this rune, Fornuft, was an aging artist who had gone blind while trying to paint the sun. He later received an epiphany, what he referred to as “divine inspiration”, and began creating works of art based upon the exploits of the other Vestenmannavnjar gods. During the Worst Days, he learned that his “visions” were actually happening as he observed them, across the nation and beneath the bitter, darkened sky of battle. From then on, his statements and works of art weighed more heavily, and he eventually joined in the pantheon he had once aided.

General Effect: The Skjæren may call up visions of other places, but the rune of Mystery blocks the visions for a radius of 50 feet, showing only a cloudy gray haze. While calling up a vision, the sorcerer must close his eyes and cannot speak.

Invoke Effect: The Skjæren may view events in a place he is familiar with for one Round, plus one Round per Raise.

Inscribe Effect: When this item is used, it shows events in a location the user has seen before for one Round, plus one Round per Raise. The object must have a reflective surface of some kind.

Become Effect: The Skjæren may call up visions of anywhere in the world he's been to and maintain them for one Round, plus one Round per Raise. While calling up a vision, he must close his eyes and cannot speak. This ability may be used only once per day.

22. Lidenskap (“Passion”)

[TN 15/25/40] The twenty-second rune is Passion, or day. The clouds part; the rain ends, and the sky clears up. Fog, too, is dispelled by the auspices of this rune. With the use of the runes of Passion and Hatred, nearly every journey can be made a pleasant one. Lidenskap was a fiery man whose temper appeared as often as the sleek edge of his blade.

Effect: Can increase the temperature within the range accorded by the rules for weather runes (above). This may include such things as blistering heat waves, droughts, and other heat-based effects.

23. Kjølilig (“Hatred”)

[TN 15/25/40] The twenty-third rune is Hatred, or night. The clouds come together, the moon smiles upon the cool ground, and the air becomes more crisp, more sharp. Kjølilig was a brooding angel, whose billowing black form skirts the moonlit clouds on clear nights to this day. The bodies of those who felt her acid kisses linger still upon Tarn Mountain in the north.

Effect: Can decrease the temperature within the range accorded by the rules for weather runes (above). This may include such things as freezing nights, snow, and other cold-based effects.

24. Villskap (“Fury”)

[TN 15/25/40] The twenty-fourth rune is Fury, or lightning. The rumbling of the sky foreshadows the doom of the enemies of the Vestenmannavnjar. Villskap fought alongside Styrke and Krieg during the Worst Days, hurling lightning bolts down upon the Tarn Mountains. When Krieg went mad after the battle, Villskap was the one who slew him, but only after Krieg strangled Styrke in his madness.

Effect: Allows you to fire a lightning bolt from your hands, which is targeted like a normal missile attack, with a range of 25 times your Mastery Degree. The value for both the Attack roll and Damage value is: your Mastery Degree+Villskap Knack, keeping your Mastery Degree.

Mechanics

Most of the runes either add dice to specific Actions, or control the weather. These effects are explained below. In the descriptions, each rune is listed with three Target Numbers, used when invoking, inscribing, or becoming that rune (respectively).

Adding Dice

Invoking

When invoking a rune that Adds Dice, you use one Action and roll your Resolve+Rune Knack versus that rune's Invoke TN. If successful, you receive the benefit from the rune for one Round, plus one Round for each Raise made.

Inscribing

When you inscribe a rune that Adds Dice, you use five Actions (this shouldn't be possible in combat under most circumstances). Then you roll your Resolve+Rune Knack versus that rune's Inscribe TN, and give the object that is being inscribed a name (which the item will thereafter always be called). Keep track of the number of Raises made at this point. If successful, the rune is inscribed for one year, to the day. On that day (or before if you desire), you may perform the ritual of inscription again, renewing the rune upon the item.

Once an item is given a name, it may never take another. Anyone (even someone without Lærdom) who holds the inscribed object and speaks its name is affected by the rune inscribed on it for one Round, plus one Round for each Raise made at the time of inscription. No roll is made when using an inscribed rune, only when actually inscribing it.

Becoming

When you become a rune that Adds Dice, you brand or carve it permanently on your own body. This takes 10 Actions (and is never possible during combat) and requires a red-hot iron brand. You roll your Resolve+Rune Knack versus that rune's Become TN. If successful, the rune permanently becomes a part of your body, giving you its benefits as long as you live. You take 2k2 Damage from the branding.

The rune cannot be destroyed short of killing you, and it does not count towards the normal limit of runes affecting you at once (see Limitations below), nor does it have to be maintained like an inscribed rune. If the Becoming ceremony fails, you take damage as normal, but it may be attempted again after a week, as the failed rune fades from your skin by then.

Weather

Weather runes have powerful effects. Typhoons, droughts, and blizzards can all be summoned using these runes in conjunction. The area affected is one square mile for Apprentices, three square miles for Adepts, and ten square miles for Masters. The duration is one hour for Apprentices, one day for Adepts, and

one week for Masters (assuming another sorcerer doesn't also tamper with the weather). You may choose to cancel any weather effects you've caused at any time.

The GM has full control over the practical effects of weather. It is possible for people to be killed in monsoons or earthquakes, but the Skjæren who caused them through the use of runes cannot control this effect. With a successful Knack use, and no called Raises, they can only turn the basic weather effect (as seen in the rune descriptions) on and off.

Raises can be called to increase or decrease the effects with some modicum of control. The Skjæren asks for a specific change to the basic effect as written, and the GM assigns a number of required Raises, as with all other game Actions.

Invoking

When invoking a Weather rune, you use one Action and roll your Resolve+Rune Knack versus that rune's Invoke TN. If successful, the weather adjusts according to the specifics of the rune (as shown in the descriptions, below). You can only invoke Weather runes outdoors.

Inscribing

When inscribing a Weather rune, you use five Actions and roll your Resolve+Rune Knack versus that rune's Inscribe TN, naming the object and making note of any Raises for when the item is used. If successful, the rune is inscribed and good for one use. Anyone (even someone without Lærdom) who holds the inscribed object and speaks the name activates the rune, as if the original sorcerer had just invoked it.

The person who activates the rune immediately takes 1k1 Damage to power the rune. No roll is made when using an inscribed rune, only when actually inscribing it. Inscribed weather runes do not count towards a sorcerer's limit of maintained runes, and they can only be used outdoors.

Becoming

You become one of the Weather runes, just like you become one of the runes that Add Dice. This allows you to use its power at will.

Limitations

General Rune Restrictions

Runes are dangerous to work with. If you overstep your abilities, you'll get burned by their power. Whenever you try to invoke, inscribe, or become a rune and fail the roll, you take 1k1 Damage for every five points, or part thereof, by which you missed the Target Number.

Example: If you roll 7 lower than the rune's TN, you take 2k2 Damage.

Skjæren can only control a number of runes equal to their Brawn.

Example: A Skjæren with Brawn 3 may not use more than three runes at once.

The number of controlled runes can be increased through Raises (one Raise per additional rune attempted, applied to every Action performed with that rune). If a Lærdom check is ever failed while using more runes than your Brawn, the sheer power coursing through your body becomes too much for you to handle, and you suffer 1k1 Damage for every rune being used at that time. In addition, all the runes immediately fail, thus ending their effects.

Most importantly, no-one can be directly affected by more than one of the same rune at any time.

Restrictions on Invoking Runes

You may only attempt to invoke a number of runes per day equal to your Wits. Failed attempts and multiple invocations of the same rune count towards this total.

Restrictions on Inscribing Runes

First, runes cannot be inscribed onto anything alive, other than a Skjæren. Second, any individual object can only have one—and only one—rune inscribed on it—ever.

Example: A sword inscribed with the Kjøl rune could not be re-inscribed with the Sterk rune after the duration of the Kjøl rune wore off.

Third, the sorcerer cannot maintain more inscribed runes at once than his Brawn.

Example: A Skjæren may only inscribe a number of runes upon items equal to his Brawn.

If he exceeds this limit, then all runes he is maintaining immediately fail, ruining all the objects involved. They may never have another rune inscribed on them.

Lastly, an inscribed rune may only be activated a number of times per day equal to the inscriber's Wits.

Restrictions on Becoming Runes

You may only become one rune—ever.

Vodacce

Sorte

Restrictions: Vodacce Fate Witches only

Fate magic is one of the rarest sorceries in Théah. It is only found in Vodacce, and runs only in the blood of its women. Those attuned to Sorte can see the great web of fate and how its tendrils connect to all things. With enough skill, the Sorte strega ("Fate Witch") can recognize the types of strands as well. Finally, the grand witches (called "nonna" by lesser witches) can create or destroy strands, a very dangerous undertaking.

Path Mastery: Touching the Strands, Tugging and Stretching the Strands, Cutting the Strands

Sorcerous Knacks: Arcana, Coins, Cups, Staves, Swords, Black Strand

Apprentice Degree: Touching the Strands

Sorte apprentices (called "clotho" by their sisters) first learn to sense the strands of fate. As the apprentice's skill grows, she can see the connections between people. Soon enough, she can also determine the nature of those connections. A clotho, for instance, could see the Cups strand between two secret lovers, and the Swords strand beginning to form between her lover and her unaware husband.

Adept Degree: Tugging and Stretching the Strands

Adepts of Sorte (called "lachesis" by their sisters) have the ability to "tug" on the strands they've learned to perceive. They can make some strands tug harder on a Hero than others. For instance, if a Hero feels slight loyalty to his father and a stronger loyalty to his mother, the lachesis can tug on the slighter Staves strand, making it stronger than the mother's Staves strand for a short period of time.

Instead of tugging on a strand, the lachesis can stretch it. Stretching the strands increases or decreases the target's chances of success or failure.

Fate Witches do not use this power carelessly. Although they know they will get the desired effect when using their magic, they are never certain just how the magic is going to accomplish its goal, and Sorte can be perverse in its interpretations of a Fate Witch's wishes.

Master Degree: Cutting the Strands

Master Fate Witches (called "nonna atropos" by their sisters) have learned the most potent ability of all: to create and destroy fate strands. Again, the Witch will get what she asked for, but the means of accomplishing the desired effect can only be guessed at.

Creating and destroying fate strands is extremely dangerous. It tampers with the very fabric of reality, a fabric that is very elastic and has been known to snap back at those who tamper with it.

Sorte Knacks

The Strands

When the Fate Witch is young, she learns how to observe the strands using a Sorte deck. The deck is comprised of 78 cards, divided into two categories: Lesser and Greater. The Lesser Cards are further divided into four suits: Coins, Cups, Staves and Swords. Each suit has cards numbered from one to ten along with four Court Cards: the Squire, Knight, Queen and King. The Greater Cards are different; they have no suit, and the cards are numbered from zero to twenty-one. These Greater Cards are sometimes referred to as "Arcana."

The Fate Witch learns to read fate strands by learning the relationships between the Lesser Cards. She reads the complicated patterns the fate strands make while shuffling, dealing and reading card configurations. Each suit corresponds to a specific strand type, and once she can identify the symbolic meaning of the different suits, she can also identify the meanings of strands.

As for the Greater Cards, they reveal the strengths and weaknesses that lurk in the hearts of other people. The Fate Witch can't affect the Arcana in any way, but she can use this knowledge to manipulate those whose weaknesses she knows.

Meanings of the Lesser Cards

Coins: Coins are yellow strands that represent Commerce. A Coin strand from one person to another indicates some sort of business relationship, or a relationship based on fiscal advantage.

Cups: Cups are blue strands that represent Passion. A Cup strand indicates an emotional link between the two subjects.

Swords: Swords are red strands that represent Conflict. A Sword strand indicates that some degree of conflict (emotional or physical) exists between two subjects.

Staves: Staves are green strands that represent Authority. A Staff strand between two individuals represents a relationship based on status or respect (forced or otherwise) rather than emotion or commerce.

Meanings of the Greater Cards

There are twenty-two Greater Cards in the Sorte deck; when viewed together, in numerical order, they make what the Sorte strega call "The Great Tale."

Arcana appear as ghostly images looming over the person they accompany. These images can appear right-side-up, in their "proper aspect", or upside-down, referred to as their "inverted aspect." The proper form of an Arcana normally indicates a strength of some sort, while the inverted form of an Arcana indicates a weakness. The sole exception to this rule is the Legion card, whose strength is inverted, instead of its weakness.

Black Strand

Restrictions: Sorte Adepts and Masters only

The black strand represents impending death in Fate Witch lore. However, it doesn't always appear before every person dies, so there is probably another condition attached to its formation as well. Black strands cannot be tugged, stretched, created or cut. However, Fate Witches who learn this Knack can see black strands when they form, and sometimes seem to remain young longer than they have any right to (see the Black Spread below).

Mechanics

Sensing Strands

A Fate Witch can do one of two things when sensing fate strands. She can either sense the most important strands in a person's life, or attempt to look at a specific strand between two people.

A Fate Witch can automatically look at a person's most important strands. An apprentice can see the single most important strand, an adept can see the two most important strands, and a master can see the three most important strands. A Fate Witch does not need the appropriate Knacks to see strands, only to manipulate them.

A Fate Witch can also attempt to see a specific fate strand between two people. The TN is 15 and she must roll Wits+the Knack corresponding to the suit of the strand. If she succeeds, she receives the information detailed under Composition of a Strand (see below). If she fails, she is unable to find that particular strand.

Blessings and Curses

Vodacce men are famous for their outrageous fortune, good and bad. Vodacce women are even more famous for their blessings and curses. The Vodacce are so in tune with the elements of fate that they can actually force its hand. The cost is high, but many times it is worth it. On their deathbeds, many Vodacce mothers call to their children for one final blessing before they pass into the next world. Likewise, new Vodacce mothers often bless their children moments after they are born.

Enemies of the Vodacce take care never to meet the eyes of a Vodacce woman, just in case. The wrath of an angry Fate Witch should not be underestimated. In fact, most of Théah's greatest historical and literary tragedies begin with a Vodacce curse.

Vodacce women who wish to pass on a blessing or a curse do so at the risk of great harm to their own fate. The ritual is very simple. The witch looks into the eyes of the recipient and speaks his name three times. Then she kisses him. If the ritual is interrupted, the curse or blessing fails.

When the ritual is complete, the witch rolls her Resolve + the appropriate Knack. For every 15 points rolled, the recipient gains a Blessing die or a Curse die. However, the Witch gains one Curse die for every 10 points rolled.

Blessing and Curse Dice

A Hero who receives a Blessing die rolls one extra Kept die with every roll linked to the appropriate strand. However, this die cannot explode. For example, a Swords Blessing would give the Hero an extra die to roll with every roll involving a conflict. The die remains until it rolls a 1, then it is discarded.

Example: Antonio has a Cups Blessing. Whenever he makes rolls involving passion, romance or emotion, he rolls his Blessing die and adds the result to the roll. Under normal circumstances, Antonio can only keep a number of dice equal to his Trait, but the Blessing die doesn't count toward that total.

When Antonio's Blessing die rolls a 1, he adds one to his total roll, then discards the die.

Curse Dice work identically to Blessing Dice, but instead of adding to each roll's total, a Curse die subtracts from it. The Die remains until it rolls a 10, then it is discarded.

Example: In addition to his Blessing die, Antonio also has a Swords Curse die. Whenever he makes rolls involving conflict, Antonio must roll his Curse die and subtract its score from his total roll. When Antonio's Curse die rolls a ten, he subtracts ten from his roll, then throws away his Curse die.

The Composition of a Strand

Type: The Fate Witch always perceives the strand's suit. When manipulating strands, the Knack used is always the suit of the strand.

Example: A Fate Witch who is trying to alter a Cups strand uses her Cups Knack.

Ends: The Fate Witch can see who the other end of a strand is attached to, as long as the other person is also within sight. If not, she can still see the general direction that the strand's other end extends toward.

Strength: Strands have a strength of 1 to 10, with 10 being the strongest. The higher the strength, the more important the connection.

Court Cards: There are four primary instances during which Fate Witches cannot alter strands, and these are signified by the four court cards of the Sorte deck. There is a set of court cards for each suit: Squire, Knight, Queen, and King. The Squire is the "Discoverer of the Suit", which means that the strand is too new and unstable to be manipulated. The Knight is the "Defender of the Suit", which means that the strand is simply too powerful to be altered. The Queen is the "Mother of the Suit", which indicates that the strand is splitting, or creating a new strand, and cannot be manipulated until it has finished separating. The King is the "Ruler of the Suit", which signifies that the strand is too old and stable to be changed.

Twisting: If the strand is becoming stronger, the Fate Witch sees it twisting around and around.

Fraying: If the strand is becoming weaker, the Fate Witch sees it fraying.

Remnants: The Fate Witch can see the remnants of a strand that has been severed. Unless she can create a new strand, she cannot alter it.

Tugging Strands

Fate Witches cannot tug on Strands they have not first perceived. Therefore, a Witch must first see a strand before she can begin manipulating it. Tugging on a strand can increase or decrease its strength. Strands that currently have Court Cards cannot be tugged upon.

In order for the witch to increase or decrease the strength of a strand, she must make a Simple Resolve+Knack corresponding to the Suit of the strand roll with a TN equal to 10 for each point she wishes to alter the strand's strength up or down.

Example: If she were trying to change a strength 10 strand to a strength 8 strand, her TN would be 20.

This change lingers for one day per Rank in the Knack used.

The effects are not sudden, nor are they spectacular. Technically, the witch has caused something to interfere with the relationship. If she has weakened a Passion strand, then perhaps the two lovers will quarrel tonight. Perhaps she will notice his eye wandering over to a Castillian beauty. Maybe he will be sent away to war, and their relationship will fade over the distance.

Whatever the reason, the relationship will suffer, at least until the Fate Witch's magic wears off.

Stretching Strands

A Fate Witch cannot stretch a strand that currently has a Court Card.

The simplest way to use Fate magic increases or decreases the dice a Hero gets to use for an action. If a Fate Witch wishes to increase the dice a Hero uses for an action (tugging on the strand of success), she must make a Resolve+Knack roll. The TN is the number of unkept dice she wishes to add, times 15. She must have a Knack that corresponds to the action; the Cups Knack cannot increase a Hero's chance at bargaining.

Example: If a Fate Witch wishes to add two dice to a Hero's total while fencing an enemy, she must roll her Resolve+Swords Knack with a TN of 30.

Subtracting dice from a Hero's pool works in the same manner.

Destroying Strands

While both creating and destroying strands is very difficult, it is easier to destroy something that has already been created than it is to create something from scratch.

Destroying a strand is like ripping apart a spider web: each strand is just as important as another in maintaining the balance of the structure; the stronger the strand, the more vital it is to maintaining that structure. A Fate Witch cannot destroy a strand that currently has a Court Card.

In order to destroy a strand, the Fate Witch must make a Simple Resolve+Knack [40] roll. If the roll is successful, the strand snaps. The effects of this are very dramatic. Life-long friends, lovers, husbands and wives suddenly feel no emotional connection whatsoever. A tragic accident might tear a father and his son apart, and the two might never meet again.

This is the most dangerous kind of magic, for the Fate Witch is inevitably caught up in the wash of its effect. All strands attached to the targets are affected by the act, and by default of her cutting the strand, the witch is attached to both targets, even if only as a casual acquaintance. Thus, few witches are willing—even if able—to destroy strands; the consequences are simply too grave.

Creating Strands

Creating new strands puts an unexpected strain on fate's skein, thus causing pressures that cannot be predicted. In order to create a strand, the Fate Witch must make a Simple Resolve+Knack [50] roll. Like destroying strands, the Fate Witch will feel the repercussions of that added strain.

However, creating new strands tends to be less menacing than destroying them, although the effects are equally chancy. Creating a new political relationship between two important leaders can lead them to a mutual agreement, but it can also lead to a war if the relationship isn't tended properly. Likewise with a romantic relationship: a witch who makes a man love her courts disaster if she isn't careful about the man she picks. If she doesn't watch out, she ends up with a romantic interest who just won't go away, and must resist the temptation to just cut the man—literally—out of her life... and then face the metaphysical consequences.

Vodacce women must be careful with their power. It is one of the most versatile sorceries in the world, but at the same time, if it is abused, it exacts a heavy toll.

The Arcana

When a Fate Witch wishes to see if a person has an Arcana, she must roll against a new TN of 15. If she succeeds, she can tell whether or not that person has an Arcana, and if so which one he

or she possesses. In game terms, the Arcana reveals which Hubris or Virtue the Hero possesses, if any.

Fate Lashes

There are times when witches pull too hard on the strands of fate. "Mad Queen" Marietta was one. She brought her husband's personal guard to a small village, had each of the villagers held down, looked into each of their eyes and cursed them all.

For years, she made certain that the peasants who served under her husband were kept in line with her power. But as the years passed, she developed painful red, oozing scars on her lily-white skin. Every strand of fate she twisted and snapped raked against her, leaving a physical—and spiritual—mark. Eventually, she went completely insane, killing her husband and her children before her own mother put a knife in her throat.

A Witch earns a Fate Lash when one of the dice she rolls for any Sorte-related check explodes two times or more. That is to say, for each single die that generates a total of 20 or higher, the Witch receives a Fate Lash. Note that she can choose not to reroll 10's, so any Fate Lashes she receives are the result of her own ambitions.

Each Fate Lash immediately causes the Fate Witch to lose three Drama Dice. For every Drama Die she is short, she takes a Dramatic Wound. The physical scar remains for three months, but there are no further mechanical disadvantages.

Sorte and Music

Some Fate Witches have learned to weave fate strands into musical compositions, infusing the notes and tempos with their powerful magic. If properly performed, such pieces allow the listener to experience new heights of emotion. Of course, few Witches can claim credit for their compositions, since the most successful composers are male.

If the GM wishes, he may allow Fate Witch Heroes to affect their Composer Knack with Sorte magic. For every Rank in Sorte, they may add one unkept die to any check involving the Composer Knack. This bonus only applies if the Composer Knack is greater than Rank 2; particularly difficult compositions may require the expenditure of a Drama Die to gain the bonus (GM's discretion).

Card Spreads

Fate Witches are capable of performing complicated sorcerous rituals using their Sorte decks as a mental focus. To do so, the Fate Witch must meet the requirement below the spread's name. Next, she must have a Sorte deck, and ten minutes of uninterrupted concentration. Then she simply lays out the cards in the proper configuration, and follows the rules given under the spread itself, noting that Spreads can cause Fate Lashes as usual to the Fate Witch. Using an actual Tarot deck instead of rolling dice can make performing these Spreads more enjoyable.

Coins Spread

Restrictions: Apprentice Degree or better only

The Coins Spread is one of the simplest a Fate Witch can perform. She simply pulls out all of the Coins cards from her Sorte deck, shuffles them together, and chooses three at random, laying the second lengthwise across the first, and the third above those two. By doing so, she hopes to cause fortune in monetary endeavors that will increase the recipient's income temporarily. To perform this Spread, either the Fate Witch must spend a Drama Die or the recipient must spend 2 Drama Dice. The Fate Witch rolls a number of exploding dice equal to her Coins Knack (or draws that many cards, treating Court Cards as 10s), adding the total to the recipient's income for the next month. This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid.

Cups Spread

Restrictions: Apprentice Degree or better only

The Cups Spread is also quite easy to perform. The Fate Witch simply pulls out all of the Cups cards from her Sorte deck, shuffles them together, and chooses three at random, laying the second lengthwise across the first, and the third below those two. By doing so, she hopes to increase the attraction of a particular person to the recipient, in essence casting a temporary love spell. To perform this Spread, either the Fate Witch must spend 2 Drama Dice or the recipient must spend 4 Drama Dice. The Fate Witch rolls a number of exploding dice equal to her Cups Knack (or draws that many cards, treating Court Cards as 10s). For every 15 points she rolls, the recipient rolls an extra unkept die when making Charm repartee attempts against the target for the rest of the month. This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid.

Staves Spread

Restrictions: Adept Degree or better only

The Staves Spread is much more complicated than the Coins and Cups Spreads—not in physical practice, but in the Sorte power required by the Fate Witch. Similar to the first two Spreads, the Fate Witch simply pulls out all of the Staves cards from her Sorte deck, shuffles them together, and chooses three at random, laying the second lengthwise across the first, and the third to the left of those two. By doing so, she hopes to temporarily increase the recipient's fame and influence over others. To perform this Spread, either the Fate Witch must spend 3 Drama Dice or the recipient must spend 6 Drama Dice. The Fate Witch rolls a number of exploding dice equal to her Staves Knack (or draws that many cards, treating Court Cards as 10s), adding the total to the recipient's Reputation for the next month. This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid.

Swords Spread

Restrictions: Adept Degree or better only

The Swords Spread is one of the most valuable that an Adept Fate Witch can perform, allowing her to instill a powerful destiny in a weapon that is usable by others. To perform it, she pulls out all of the Swords cards from her Sorte deck, shuffles them together, and chooses three at random, laying the second lengthwise across the first, and the third to the right of those two. To perform this Spread, either the Fate Witch must spend 4 Drama Dice or the person the sword is intended for must spend 8 Drama Dice. This adds one Destiny die to the weapon, as described under the Twisted Blade Advantage. The weapon to be enchanted must be an ordinary weapon—Puzzle Swords, Dracheneisen blades, etc., are all immune to this effect. This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid, but the total number of Destiny dice the Fate Witch has bestowed cannot exceed her Rank in her Swords Knack. The Fate Witch may cancel at will any Destiny dice that she has bestowed.

Black Spread

Restrictions: Master Degree only

The Black Spread is seemingly very simple, but seldom performed by any but the most powerful Fate Witches, and always only for themselves. To perform it, she uses a special suit of cards called the Skull suit. This suit is rarely seen in Théah and includes the standard 1 to 10 cards as well as the normal Court Cards. In addition, however, the Tower card from the Major Arcana must be included. The Fate Witch shuffles these cards together, blindfolds herself, and chooses two at random, laying one above the other. The purpose of this secretive ritual is to keep the Fate Witch young beyond her years. It doesn't actually extend her lifespan, but she may appear as a young

woman up until the day she dies. However, if the Tower card is chosen, the effects of all previous Black Spreads are instantly undone. To perform this Spread, the Fate Witch must spend 5 Drama Dice. The Fate Witch rolls a number of exploding dice equal to her Black Strand Knack (or draws that many cards, treating Court Cards as 10s). For every 15 points she rolls, the recipient adds one year to her Middle Aged and Old age categories (see Aging in the 7th Sea Game Masters' Guide).

Example: After adding 1 year, a Fate Witch would be Middle Aged at ages 27-41.

This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid, but if any dice ever cause the Fate Witch a Fate Lash, then her age categories reset to the ones listed in the 7th Sea Game Master's Guide.

Arcana Spread

Restrictions: Master Degree only

Finally, the Arcana "Spread" is the most powerful Sorte effect commonly known to Fate Witches. Rather than lay out an actual spread of cards, however, the Fate Witch instead weaves a tapestry and incorporates Fate Strands into it. To do so, the Fate Witch selects a single Major Arcana from her Sorte deck and weaves a tapestry of her intended target, depicting him or her in front of the picture on the card. This effect is so powerful that it can temporarily change the target's personality, making a cowardly man brave, or a holy man greedy. Eventually the original personality reasserts itself, but often not before significant damage is done. To weave the tapestry takes two months of uninterrupted labor and 50G of materials. Once it is woven, the Fate Witch must spend 10 Drama Dice to weave the Fate Strands into it, giving the target the Arcana of her choice (either a Hubris or a Virtue for Heroes, or a Wile or Flaw for Villains) for 10 months, minus 1 month for every Rank of Resolve the target has. This replaces any Arcana the Hero might normally have for the duration of the spell. This Spread may be performed as often as the cost can be paid, but a Fate Witch may only have three tapestries active at the same time.

GAME MECHANICS

Time

The Game Master has the ultimate authority over the movement of time during a story. He tells Heroes how much time has passed from moment to moment. During combat, however, things have to slow down a great deal to make sure that everybody knows exactly what's going on. 7th Sea combat moves like a swashbuckling movie, with Heroes leaping across balconies, catching chandeliers, sliding down banisters and catching their falling friends at the last possible moment, and that can be kind of difficult to keep track of.

7th Sea combat is divided into **Rounds**. A Round lasts as long as the GM needs it to, but it is always divided into ten **Phases**, each of equal length. Heroes will have multiple actions per Round, but they will usually have only a single action per Phase.

Outside of combat, time is a bit more fluid. It is divided into **Scenes, Acts, Stories, and Epics**. A Scene is a single encounter with a specific group of people, or a single combat. Thus, if you encounter a merchant on the road and talk to him, that's a Scene, and if you get into a fight in a burning barn and dive into some water outside to end the fight, that's also a Scene.

An Act is a collection of Scenes that all take place in roughly the same area, such as a single city. If five separate fights take place in Freiburg, those are all Scenes in the same Act. If the Heroes then leave Freiburg and journey to Carleon (where they face two more fights), that's a different Act, and should they encounter a band of pirates on the way, then that's yet another Act. Thus, the first Act is in Freiburg and has five Scenes. The second Act is on the sea and has one Scene (the pirate raid). The third and final Act takes place in Carleon and has two Scenes. Most Acts have from two to five Scenes.

A Story is a collection of Acts that takes a single plotline from beginning to end. Most Stories have between one and six Acts.

Lastly, an Epic is a number of Stories that all lead up to one huge climactic event, such the reconstruction of a powerful artifact, or the death of a recurring Villain.

Money

The Guilder

The exchange rates as determined by the Vendel League upon the creation of the Guilder are as follows:

Avalon: 1 Pound = 20 Shillings. 1 Guilder = 1 Shilling.

Castille: 1 Doubloon = 100 Maravedi. 1 Guilder = 20 Maravedi.

Eisen: 1 Mark = 10 Florins 100 Pfennigs. 1 Guilder = 4 Marks, but you cannot exchange Guilders for Marks, Florins, or Pfennigs because the Merchant Guilds are attempting to take the Eisen coins out of circulation.

Montaigne: 1 Sol = 12 Pistoles. 1 Guilder = 2 Pistoles.

Ussura: Barter. 1 Guilder = 1 chicken or equivalent. In some areas, they use a gold "grivnas" (1 grivnas = 10 Guilders), equivalent to one month's labor. These coins are rarely traded outside Ussura.

Vendel: 1 Guilder = 100 Cents.

Vestenmannavnjar: Barter. The Vestenmannavnjar refuse to use the Guilder for religious reasons.

Vodacce: 1 Senator = 5 Seats. The commercially-minded Vendel have set an exchange rate of 3 Senators to 1 Guilder. The

Vodacce are being forced to deal with the Guilder's ramifications, whether they like it or not.

Rolling Dice

Like many traditional board games, 7th Sea uses dice. The 7th Sea system uses ten-sided dice exclusively, and you'll need a lot of them. When you read the rules, you'll encounter a term you'll need to become familiar with: **Keep**.

Whenever you need to determine the outcome of an action, you roll a number of dice, but only count a few of them. These are the dice that you Keep. Generally, you will want to Keep your highest die rolls.

Example: Nicholas de Brasco is a Vodacce duelist. When he attacks another Hero, he rolls seven dice, but Keeps only three. Nicholas' player rolls seven dice, gaining a 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 9. He can Keep only three of these dice, so he decides to Keep the 8 and two 9s, giving him a total of 26 (8+9+9).

Most of the time, modifiers from advantages, magic, and such are going to be in the form of extra dice you roll, but do not Keep. These dice are referred to as **unkept** dice. When you take a penalty in unkept dice, these are applied first to the dice you don't Keep, and then, if there are penalty dice left over, applied to the dice you Keep.

Example: If you normally roll four dice and Keep three of them, but have a penalty of -2 unkept dice, you are reduced to rolling two dice and Keeping two dice. After all, you can't Keep more dice than you roll!

Exploding Dice

Ten-sided dice generate numbers from one to ten. Generally, the "ten" on a die is indicated with a zero.

Whenever a die rolls 10, you may roll that die again and add the result to the 10. This is called an **exploding die**. If the Hero rolls again and gets an additional 10, he may add that 10 and continue rolling until he doesn't get an additional 10.

Example: A player rolls a 10. He rolls the die again and gets a 5. He adds these two values together to get 15 on a single die. As long as the player keeps rolling tens, he may continue rolling and adding.

Rolling More Than Ten Dice

While most gamers like rolling lots of dice, ten is about the most you can reasonably be expected to hold in your hands at once. Therefore, in 7th Sea, whenever you are rolling more than ten dice at once, drop the excess dice, and change them into extra Kept dice.

Example: If you were rolling 12k6, you would drop the two extra unkept dice and Keep two extra dice, for a roll of 10k8.

Should you reach 10k10 and still have extra dice left over, each additional die (whether it's Kept or unkept) becomes a bonus of 10 to the roll.

Example: Thus, 15k10 becomes 10k10+50, and 11k11 becomes 10k10+20.

Traits

How strong is your Hero? How fast is he? How witty and cunning? How resilient? How much does he stand out in a crowd? These questions are answered with a quick look at your Hero's **Traits**. Just as some people are stronger, faster and more charismatic than others, so are the Heroes you will play. Everyone in Théah is ranked from 0 to 5 (usually) in certain Traits. A Hero with a Brawn of 4 is stronger than a Hero with a Brawn of 3, who is stronger than a Hero with a Brawn of 1, and so on.

Every Hero has a set of five Traits: Brawn, Finesse, Resolve, Wits and Panache. Each describes a different aspect of your Hero. These Traits have values, known as **Ranks**, numbering from 0 to 5. The higher a Trait's Rank, the more potent it is.

In almost every case, Traits tell you how many dice you can Keep during any roll.

Example: Nicholas has a 4 Finesse, so whenever he makes a roll involving agility or reflexes, he rolls and Keeps at least four dice.

Rank Zero Traits

Some Heroes may have a Rank 0 in a Trait. This means that they are very weak in that aspect. A Hero with a Rank 0 Finesse may be crippled, while a Hero with a Rank 0 Brawn may be sickly.

A Hero who must make a roll based on a Trait in which he has a 0 always rolls one die, but if he rolls a zero, it is a zero and not a 10, and the die never explodes. Also, a Hero making a Contested roll against a Hero with a Rank 0 in the appropriate Trait has a 5 for a Target Number.

If the Hero has appropriate Skills to add to the roll, he may do so, but the restrictions still apply.

Example: Jean-Pierre is a Montaigne peasant with Wits 0, which means Jean-Pierre isn't the brightest fellow in the county. When a con man visits Jean-Pierre's farm, he tries to convince the simple farmer to buy some magic seeds. Jean-Pierre must make a Contested Wits roll against the con man. The con man's TN is 5 because of Jean-Pierre's Rank 0 Wits. When Jean-Pierre rolls a 0 on his one die, it does not count as a ten, nor does he get to reroll it—it counts as a zero.

Skills

Just as every Hero has Traits, they also have Skills. However, while every Hero has the same five Traits (even if one or more of them are Rank 0), the number of Skills a Hero can have is much greater.

If Traits define who your Hero is, then Skills define what he's learned. Two Heroes with identical Traits could have (and usually will have) completely different Skills. This is because everybody's background is different. Even Heroes who have the same fencing teacher will develop into different fencers with separate skills and abilities.

Each Skill is further broken down into Knacks. Knacks are the abilities your Hero has gained from the Skill. Generally, Knacks make it easier for you to succeed at actions that they pertain to, such as swimming or parrying with a main gauche.

The Two Rolls

There are two kinds of rolls used in 7th Sea: Simple and Contested.

A **Simple** roll is used when a Hero is acting on his own, when only his own abilities are being tested.

A **Contested** roll is used when a Hero is actively opposing (or being opposed by) another character.

The Simple Roll

A Simple roll is an Action whose outcome is based solely on the ability of the Hero. Does that Hero have the strength to lift and throw that table? Does he possess the deftness to pick that lock? Both are good examples of Simple rolls. Here is how a Simple roll is performed:

Step One: You declare an action and the GM determines which Trait is appropriate for that action. Then he assigns a Target Number for the action.

Step Two: You roll a number of dice equal to your Hero's appropriate Trait and add them together.

Step Three: Compare the total generated by the dice with the TN. If your roll is equal to or greater than the Target Number, the action is successful. If your roll is less than the TN, the action fails.

The GM has a list that shows the relative difficulties for actions and their appropriate Target Numbers. The Target Number Table gives you a good estimate as to what those Target Numbers may be.

Target Number Table

TN	Difficulty
5	Mundane
10	Easy
15	Average (default Target Number)
20	Hard
25	Very Hard
30	Heroic
35	Never Done Before
40	Never To Be Done Again

The Contested Roll

Contested rolls are a little different from Simple rolls. You make a Contested roll when you're trying to use an Action against another character. The GM tells you to roll a number of dice equal to the appropriate Trait, just like a Simple roll, but:

- The TN for a Contested roll is equal to the opposed Trait \times 5.
- Both the Acting and Opposing characters make rolls, and the success of the action is determined by their rolls.

In a Contested roll, one of three results can occur:

- If only one contestant succeeds at his roll, then he succeeds and his opponent fails.
- If both contestants succeed in their rolls, the one who rolled higher wins.
- If neither contestant succeeds in his roll, the Action continues until one or both of them can make a successful roll.

Adding Skills and Knacks to the Roll

When you make a Simple or Contested roll, you usually add your Skills to the equation in the form of unkept dice.

Example: If the Hero picking the lock above possesses the Lockpicking Knack at Rank 2, he adds two unkept dice to his attempt.

Example: Nicholas has a Rank 4 Finesse and a Fencing Skill with an Attack Knack at Rank 3. This gives Nicholas a total of seven dice to roll (Finesse 4 plus Attack 3), but he can only Keep four of them.

Raises

When the GM assigns you a TN, you may find that TN a little too easy to hit. You may voluntarily **Raise** any TN you are assigned in increments of 5. Raising the TN increases just how

impressive the success will be, usually by adding one unkept die to whatever effect the roll had per Raise (for an Attack roll, the effect is damage, for instance). Raising allows you to complete tasks more quickly, more effectively, or with more style. A “called shot” (striking an opponent in the hand, firing an arrow into an opponent’s leg, etc.) is an example of what you can do with Raises. The GM will notify you how many Raises are necessary for a called shot.

You can Raise as many times as you are able, but if you fail to hit your modified TN, you’ve completely failed at the Action you were attempting to perform.

HOUSE RULE: Any successful action will add one unkept die to the result for every full 10 points that the TN is exceeded by, if no Raises are called. Obviously it is still better to call Raises, but this gives the GM some discretion above and beyond that rule mechanic.

Free Raises

Occasionally, you will receive a **Free Raise**. A Free Raise adds 5 to your roll.

Example: Nicholas is making an attack against a monster whose TN to be Hit is 10. He knows that since he’s rolling seven dice and Keeping four, he shouldn’t have any trouble beating that TN. In fact, he knows that he rolls at least a 20 on average, so he tells his GM that he’s Raising two times. This makes his new TN a 20. If he fails to roll at least a 20, his attack misses, but if he hits he’ll get two extra dice to roll for damage (which could make a 5k2 attack into a 7k2 attack, for instance).

Example: If Nicholas received a Free Raise while making the attack in the previous example, and rolled a 17, his Free Raise would boost that to a 22, making it a successful attack. If Nicholas wanted to get the most effect from his Free Raise, then he should have Raised one extra time to take advantage of the fact that he was adding 5 to his roll.

A+B: Roll and Keep Revisited

Here’s a little formula that should keep Rolling and Keeping easy. Whenever we refer to a combination of dice (Trait+Knack, for instance), the first value refers to the number of dice you Keep, while the second value is just additional unkept dice you roll.

In other words, whenever we refer to Trait+Knack, you roll a number of dice equal to your Trait+Knack, but keep a number of dice equal to your Trait.

Drama Dice

You begin each Story with a number of **Drama Dice** equal to your lowest Trait. They act just like regular dice, meaning they explode when you roll any tens. Drama Dice represent your innate ability to second-guess your surroundings and the intentions of your opponents, and perform actions beyond the capacity of the common man (i.e., “heroic actions”). Your GM, on the other hand, starts with a number of Drama Dice equal to the highest Trait in the party, plus one for each Hero in the party. He can use these to make the challenges you face more effective, and generally make your Hero’s life that much worse.

When you spend one of your Drama Dice, one of three effects can be invoked:

1. You may add one Kept die to any one roll. This can be done after the roll is made, but must be done before the GM describes the result of the roll in question. You can spend as many of your Drama Dice as you like on any single roll.

2. You may immediately recover from being **Knocked Out** (see Combat, below). It costs you one Drama Die to do so. However, regardless of the current Phase, you must then spend the remainder of this Round recovering, unable to perform any Actions. Your TN to be Hit during this time is 5.
3. You may activate your Virtue, activate a Villain’s Flaw, or attempt to prevent the GM from activating your Hubris.

Your GM can give you additional Drama Dice when you do something that he feels is particularly cool, when you say something that makes the whole group explode with laughter, when you roleplay your Hero particularly well during a Scene, etc.

Drama Dice are also used to gain experience for your Hero. At the end of a Story, all of your unspent Drama Dice convert directly into **Experience Points**.

Be warned—when you spend a Drama Die to add to a die roll, your GM takes it from you and it goes into his pool of dice at the start of the next Scene. Your Hero’s luck may be looking up now, but if you aren’t careful how you spend your Drama Dice, things could go sour real fast.

Recap

All the rules for resolution of actions in 7th Sea follow three steps. Whenever you aren’t sure what to do, just remember these three steps and you’ll do just fine:

1. The GM assigns a Target Number.
2. Determine which Trait and/or Knack (if any) are most appropriate to the roll.
3. Roll the dice. If you roll equal to or higher than the TN, you succeed. If you don’t, you fail.

Combat

Combat is an important part of 7th Sea. Scenes of swinging from tapestries and yardarms, or fencing on the edge of a perilous cliff are the heart and soul of the swashbuckling genre.

The rules for combat are pretty much the same for everything else in 7th Sea: you roll your dice against a Target Number and compare the result. It’s when we get to results that things start to get complicated.

Initiative

At the start of a combat round, you roll a number of dice equal to your Panache. These are **Action Dice**, and they don’t Explode. The numbers shown on the Action Dice are the Phases in which you will get to act. If you roll the same number on more than one Action Die, you will simply be able to act more than once during that Phase.

Example: Rodriguez Montello, a Castillian swashbuckler, has a Panache of 4. Therefore, he rolls four Action Dice at the start of every combat round. In this instance, he rolls a 1, a 5, a 9 and a 0. Since these are Action Dice, the 0 does not explode. This means that Rodriguez will get to act in Phases 1, 5, 9 and 10.

If Rodriguez had rolled two 5’s, he would be allowed to act twice during Phase 5.

Example: A burly guard has a Panache of 2. Therefore he rolls two Action Dice at the start of every combat round. In this instance, he rolls a 1 and a 9. This means that the guard will get to act in Phases 1 and 9.

Next, your GM will begin to count upwards from Phase 1 until he reaches Phase 10 (usually shown as 0 on a die). When he calls

a Phase in which you get to act, you may do one of two things with each die showing the current Phase:

1. Spend the Action Die in order to perform an Action.
2. Leave the Action Die where it is, making it a Held Action. (Held Actions will be explained in just a moment.)

If more than one Hero or NPC wants to perform an Action in the same Phase, each adds up all his current Action Dice to get a number known as the **Initiative Total**. Note that Action Dice that have already been spent do not count towards the Initiative Total.

The character with the highest Initiative Total goes first. If there is a tie, the character with the highest Panache goes first. If this doesn't break the tie, then determine who goes first at random (flip a coin, play Rock-Paper-Scissors, whatever).

Example: Rodriguez's Initiative Total adds up to 25 (1+9+10+5). The burly guard's Initiative Total adds up to 10. Therefore, Rodriguez has the option of acting first in Phase 1. If the guard's Initiative Total had been 25, then we would have compared Panache scores, and again Rodriguez would go first, since his 4 is higher than the guard's 2. If the guard had also had a 4 Panache, then it would've been settled by a coin flip.

When the GM reaches Phase 10 everyone must use all their remaining Action Dice or lose them. Once all Action Dice on the table are spent or forfeited, a new Round begins, and the process starts all over again.

Example: Rodriguez rolled a 0 earlier on, and now Phase 10 has come. He can't hold that Action Die, because there are no further Phases coming up. He must use it now or lose it.

Held Actions

Sometimes you need to wait until later in the Round to execute your Action. This is a **Held Action**. Once you've held an Action, the Action Die remains on the table. It is considered to match any later Phase called, but the number showing on the die doesn't change. This is important when adding up your Initiative Total.

Example: Rodriguez decides to hold his 1 for later use. It remains on the table, and he can use it in any Phase after Phase 1. However, it still only counts as 1 towards his Initiative Total.

Interrupt Actions

What if you didn't roll any low numbers at all, but you really need to get your Action off before the bad guys? In this case, you can perform an **Interrupt Action**: you exchange any two Action Dice showing later Phases for one Action Die showing the current Phase. You must still compare Initiative Totals if someone else wants to act in this Phase to determine who goes first, but at least you have a chance to act. It's cheaper to use a Held Action instead, but if you simply don't have one, you'll have to use an Interrupt Action. You cannot use an Interrupt Action to make an attack.

Example: It's now Phase 4, and Rodriguez has already used his Held Action from Phase 1 to bar a door that some guards were about to rush in through. Unfortunately, he has just noticed another guard at the window aiming a crossbow at him and would like to dodge. He has a 5, a 9 and a 0 remaining. Rodriguez wants to hang on to his Action in Phase 5, so he exchanges the 9 and 0 Action Dice to get a 4. His Initiative Total at the start of Phase 4 is now 9 (4+5).

Passive Defense

Your **Passive Defense** is used at all times without using up an Action. It is equal to 5+(Defense Knack × 5). This is the TN that your enemies are usually rolling against in order to hit you. Look at the Defense Knack Table to see what Knacks you can use as your Defense Knack, unless your GM declares otherwise.

Defense Knacks Table

Defense Knack	When Used
Footwork	May be used at any time, unless over-ruled by another Knack
Parry	May only be used when holding an appropriate item
Balance	Must be used when fighting on an unstable surface (gravel, ship, moving carriage)
Climbing	Must be used when climbing
Leaping	Must be used when leaping
Riding	Must be used when riding an animal
Rolling	Must be used when rolling or sliding
Sprinting	Must be used when running
Swimming	Must be used when swimming
Swinging	Must be used when swinging

Your Hero cannot use Leaping while swinging or Swinging while Parrying. When leaping, he must use the Leaping Knack.

If you don't use any of these Knacks as your Defense Knack, then your Passive Defense is 5.

Example: Rodriguez has a Parry Knack of 3 in Fencing. Thus, if he has a fencing weapon in hand, he can use Parry as his Defense Knack, giving him a TN to be Hit of 20. As long as he has his weapon in hand, the burly guard will need to roll a TN of 20 in order to strike him.

If Rodriguez were to be disarmed, he could no longer use his Parry Knack as his Defense Knack. Luckily for him, he has the Footwork Knack at 2, giving him a TN to be Hit of 15.

Example: The burly guard has no Defense Knacks other than a Parry of 2. His TN to be Hit is 15 while armed and a paltry 5 when unarmed, because he has no other Knacks to fall back on in an emergency.

Lying Prone and Getting Up

Sometimes you will fall down—whether because you slipped when swinging on a chandelier, or because your opponent used his Corps-a-corps Knack against you. In any event, while you are lying on the ground, your Passive Defense drops to 5, and you must make two Raises in order to use your Active Defense (see **Active Defense**, below)—it's hard to parry while lying on your back.

Example: If your opponent rolls a 24 to hit you, while you're lying prone, you need to roll a 34 in order to avoid the blow.

It takes one Action to stand up, and during the Phase you are standing up, your Passive Defense remains a 5 and you cannot use any Active Defense.

Making an Attack

When you spend an Action Die, you may choose to attack an opponent with that Action. You roll Finesse+Attack (for the weapon or fighting style being used), Keeping Finesse. This is known as your **Attack roll**; remember its total for the next step. If you roll equal to or higher than your opponent's TN to be Hit, you are going to hit him, unless your opponent uses an Active Defense successfully.

Example: Rodriguez has a Finesse of 3 and an Attack Knack of 4 in Fencing. Therefore, to attack the burly guard he rolls seven dice, Keeping three. Assuming the guard is armed, Rodriguez

needs to roll a 15 or higher in order to send an attack winging towards the guard successfully. Shouldn't be too difficult...

Off-hand Penalty

When you are using an object (such as a main gauche) in your left hand (or right hand, if you took the Left-handed Advantage), you have a -1 unkept die penalty when doing anything with that object. Several Swordsman's Schools teach you how to avoid this penalty when using certain items (such as a buckler or main gauche) in your off-hand.

Fighting in Darkness

There are two low-light conditions in 7th Sea that characters might have to deal with: Dim Lighting and Total Darkness. Characters lose 2 Kept dice from all Actions taken in Dim Lighting that involve the senses or movement of some sort (e.g. searching for a secret passage, swinging a sword at an enemy). This penalty increases to 4 Kept dice in Total Darkness. These penalties are halved if the character has the Night Trained Advantage.

Fighting in Shallow Water

When fighting in shallow water, Heroes use Balance as their Defense Knack. When they attempt to use Active Defense, they roll Brawn+Balance instead of Wits, since moving through water is more dependent upon strength than agility.

Active Defense

Once the attacker has rolled equal to or higher than your TN to be Hit, you get one last chance to avoid the damage. This is an **Active Defense** attempt.

First, you must spend an Action Die showing this Phase. You roll Wits+Defense Knack, keeping Wits. You must use the same Defense Knack that you were using as your Passive Defense against the attack. Your TN is the attacker's Attack roll. If your roll equals or exceeds the TN, you have successfully avoided all damage from that attack. The Defense Knack Table below lists the different possible Defense Knacks and the instances when you can use them.

Defense Knack Table

Defense Knack	When Used
Footwork	May be used at any time, unless over-ruled by another Knack
Parry	May only be used when holding an appropriate item
Balance	Must be used when fighting on an unstable surface (gravel, ship, moving carriage)
Climbing	Must be used when climbing
Leaping	Must be used when leaping
Riding	Must be used when riding an animal
Rolling	Must be used when rolling or sliding
Sprinting	Must be used when running
Swimming	Must be used when swimming
Swinging	Must be used when swinging

Some circumstances demand that a particular Knack be used (for instance, if you're riding a horse, you must use the Riding Knack to make any Active Defense); they are noted on the table.

You may use Held Actions or Interrupt Actions to pay for an Active Defense roll. Remember that Interrupt Actions cost you two dice instead of one.

Example: Rodriguez makes an Attack roll of 34. Assuming that the guard can scrounge up an Action in this Phase (perhaps he Held his 1, anticipating an attack), then he must roll a 34 or higher to avoid the damage. Let's say his Wits is a 2, so he rolls

four dice, Keeping two. He gets a 16, which fails to meet or beat the TN, and he gets hit.

Example: The burly guard attacks Rodriguez with an Attack roll of 22. Rodriguez decides to use Active Defense, and spends an Action Die. He has a Wits of 2 and a Parry Knack of 3, so he rolls five dice, Keeping two. He gets a 25, successfully avoiding the attack.

Movement during Combat

7th Sea works well with miniatures and a map of the area in which the combat is occurring. This enables everyone to visualize what's going on more easily, and helps to prevent the arguments that often spring up when there's a miscommunication between the GM and the players concerning the layout of the battle.

The maps that you will find in published 7th Sea products have numbers on them that represent the different heights of the depicted areas.

Example: A tavern map might have a 1 on the floor, a 2 on the table tops, lower stairs, and bar, a 3 on the upper stairs and chandelier, and a 4 on the balcony.

Each different number represents a **Level** on the map, and corresponds to one die (1k1) of falling damage.

Example: In our tavern (see previous example), a Hero falling from the Level 4 balcony to the Level 1 floor would take three dice of falling damage (3k3).

As part of any other Action, you can move anywhere on the map that is either on the same Level or one Level down from your current position.

Example: You can rush across the floor and attack some guards coming in the door all in one Action, or you could swing down from the chandelier, land on the bar, and kick someone in the teeth all in the same Action.

However, if you want to go up one Level, that costs one Action. You don't want the Villain forcing you up the stairs while he's fighting you because that makes you use up a lot of Actions.

You can drop down more than one Level at a time with one Action, but if you don't have the Break Fall Knack, you'll have to take falling damage in order to do so.

Lastly, use some common sense when moving around. A bunch of guards aren't going to let a Hero simply walk around them to get to the Villain they are protecting. Certainly, they'll stand there dumbfounded if the Hero swings over their head on a tapestry and drops down next to the Villain, but that's an entirely different situation. This applies to NPCs as well. If a Hero has blocked a stairway to protect another Hero's retreat out of the fight, the Villain can't just ignore the dramatic stand that Hero is making—that makes for poor cinema, and it cheats players out of feeling like Heroes.

Ranged Attacks

If you look at the missile weapons on the Missile Weapons Table (see the Weapons section in these rules), you'll see a number in the Range column. This is the maximum distance (in yards) that the weapon can be fired with any real chance to hit.

If you're using miniatures and a map, we recommend that you say that one inch on the map is equal to 2 yards of range. This isn't exact, but it's close enough. When you fire at a target that is up to half of this range away from you, apply the Short Range modifier to your Attack roll. When you fire at someone further than half the maximum range away from you, apply the Long Range modifier to your Attack roll. You can fire at someone

further away than the maximum range, but you have no chance to hit.

Example: Milo the archer is firing his bow at a Villain 50 yards away from him. He makes his normal Attack roll, and then, since he is closer than half his maximum range of 150 yards, he uses the Short Range modifier and subtracts 5 from his roll. So, if he rolled a 28, it drops to a 23.

Milo is now firing his bow at a Villain 90 yards away from him, and he rolls 28 again. Since he is over half of his maximum range away from his target, he uses the Long Range modifier (-10) for a total roll of 18.

Firearms

When using a firearm (pistols and muskets), a Hero fires against his target's Passive Defense only. A Hero may not use Parry as his Passive Defense against firearms. Firearms may not be avoided with an Active Defense. In addition, firearms suffer no Short Range Modifiers when fired at targets less than 10 feet away.

Heroes can fire two pistols at the same target with one Action. This Action raises the TN to hit the target by 5 and also increases the damage rolled by one Kept die (raising the damage rating to 5k4). You don't get to roll two separate Attack rolls; the two pistol shots do 5k4 and are considered a single attack.

Normal Damage

All weapons are listed with a Damage Rating (DR) that looks something like this:

Weapon	Damage Rating
Fencing Weapon	2k2

When you deal out damage with a melee weapon (a hand-held weapon such as a sword or an axe), add your Hero's Brawn to the first number in the Damage Rating and roll that many dice. The second number (following the 'k') tells you how many dice to Keep from your roll. Missile weapons (such as bows and pistols) do not add your Hero's Brawn to the Damage Rating.

The damage inflicted is referred to as **Wounds**.

Example: Rodriguez has successfully hit the guard, so now he determines how much damage he inflicts. His Brawn is 2, and he's wielding a sword with a 2k2 Damage Rating. Adding his Brawn increases the Damage Rating to 4k2, so he now rolls four dice, Keeping two. He rolls a 19, which means he inflicts 19 Wounds on the guard. The guard now must make a Wound Check (unless he's a Brute, in which case he's down and out).

Improvised Weapons

When you pick up whatever's at hand (a mug of ale, for instance) and smash your opponent upside the head with it, you're using an improvised weapon. You use the Attack (Improvised Weapon) Knack, found under the Dirty Fighting Skill, for your Attack roll. The damage you do with the weapon is dependent upon its size and shape.

The number of Kept dice is either one or two, depending on whether the object is blunt or sharp, respectively.

The number of dice you roll is equal to your Brawn+Weapon Size Modifier, as shown on the Improvised Weapons Table below:

Improvised Weapons Table

Size	Weapon Size Modifier	To Hit Modifier
Hand-held	+0	N/A
Smaller than Man-sized	+1	N/A

Size	Weapon Size Modifier	To Hit Modifier
Man-sized	+2	-1 unkept die to hit
Larger than Man-sized*	+3	-2 unkept dice to hit

* The Larger than Man-sized category is limited by how big an object your Hero can lift and swing around.

Example: Using a mug (blunt, hand-held), you would consider it a 0k1 weapon, while a table (blunt, larger than man-sized) would be a 3k1 weapon, and a person (blunt, man-sized) would be a 2k1 weapon.

Unfortunately, as you will have seen if you've watched any good swashbuckling movies, improvised weapons have a tendency to break (and spill a lot of good ale). Soft weapons (like people) don't break, they just bend and spring back into shape later. Firm weapons (made of glass, clay, wood, etc.) break any time you roll a 10 on any of their damage dice, whether or not you choose to keep that die. Even hard improvised weapons (metal or stone) aren't built to fight with, and break any time any of the damage dice you roll explode more than once (i.e., you roll a 20 or more on a single die). Of course, you can choose not to reroll your tens in order to avoid this, but it's probably easier just to grab another weapon.

Wound Checks

Once you've been damaged, you have to see if something bad happens to you, or if you shrug off the hit for now. This is referred to as a **Wound Check**.

You roll your Brawn with a TN equal to the number of Flesh Wounds you've taken so far in the combat (including the damage you just got hit with). If you fail the roll, you suffer a **Dramatic Wound**, plus one additional Dramatic Wound for every 20 you failed your Wound Check by. Otherwise, nothing happens, but the damage stays with you.

Firearms (pistols, muskets, etc.) are so dangerous that you take an additional Dramatic Wound for every 10 you failed by, instead of every 20.

At the end of each battle, erase all your Flesh Wounds (but not Dramatic Wounds.)

Example: After that blow from Rodriguez, the burly guard must now roll his Brawn of 4 with a TN of 19. He rolls a total of 22. He's okay for now.

Next round, Rodriguez hits the guard again for 17 damage. The guard must roll Brawn again, this time with a TN of 36! He rolls, getting a 35, so he takes a Dramatic Wound. If he had rolled a 16, he would have failed by 20, so he would immediately take an additional Dramatic Wound beyond the first.

Dramatic Wounds

When you suffer a Dramatic Wound, the first thing to do is erase all the **Flesh Wounds** you've suffered so far. Don't get too excited; you still have to deal with the Dramatic Wound's effects.

First, if this Dramatic Wound brings your total number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Resolve, you're **Crippled**. Until your total number of Dramatic Wounds is reduced below this level, none of your dice (except Drama Dice) explode.

Second, if this Dramatic Wound brings your total number of Dramatic Wounds to twice your Resolve, you're **Knocked Out**, and you'll probably wake up in a dungeon or tied to a chair, assuming no one kills you.

Example: Rodriguez has a Resolve of 2, and he suffers his second Dramatic Wound. Until he gets one of those Dramatic Wounds healed, he is Crippled and his dice stop exploding. Should he suffer another two Dramatic Wounds, he goes down

and becomes Knocked Out until either his friends heal him, or the GM has him wake up.

You'll either have to let your Dramatic Wounds heal with time (all Dramatic Wounds heal between Stories), have a doctor see to them (see the Doctor Skill), or find some magic to cure your hurts.

Knocked Out

When your Hero has suffered a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to twice his Resolve, he becomes Knocked Out. This means that he's taken so many wounds that he's completely out of it. The pain of his injuries has rendered him helpless, and anyone can simply walk up to him and kill him automatically by spending one Action. He can't do anything at all when he is Knocked Out. He doesn't even roll for Initiative.

You may recover from being Knocked Out by spending one Drama Die. However, regardless of the current Phase, you must then spend the remainder of that Round recovering, unable to perform any Actions. Your TN to be Hit during this time is 5. You also recover from being Knocked Out if you are healed of one or more Dramatic Wounds, though again you won't be able to do anything until the next Round, and your TN to be Hit will be 5 until then.

NPC Wounds

In 7th Sea, there are three kinds of NPCs: Brutes, Henchmen and Villains. Each of them is wounded differently.

Brutes

Brutes are riff-raff. They are the nameless thugs that villains employ by the dozens and who die by the dozens when Heroes show up. A group of Brutes is called a "Brute Squad."

When a Hero gets a successful strike against a Brute, the Brute is Knocked Out. That's it. There's no roll for Wounds, no Wound Check, just the Brute going down. The GM determines if the Brute has been killed or just knocked unconscious, but if a Brute takes even a single Wound after he's been knocked down, he dies.

Oftentimes, a Hero can dispatch a menacing Brute Squad with little effort. If a Hero is facing a Brute Squad directly, he may attack an additional Brute per Raise.

Example: If you were facing four Brutes, you would need three Raises (one for each additional Brute beyond the first) to attack them all.

Henchmen

Henchmen are the lieutenants and hangers-on of Villains and Heroes. They're tougher than Brutes, but only a little. Henchmen are actually just on the verge of becoming Heroes and Villains themselves; all they need is a little push and they're on their way.

Henchmen receive Wounds as Heroes do, but if they ever take a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to their Resolve, they become Knocked Out.

Villains

Villains are the counterparts of Heroes. They have the same abilities as Heroes, and the same potential to do evil as a Hero has to do good.

Villains are Wounded in exactly the same manner as Heroes. Whenever they receive Wounds, they make a Wound Check using their Brawn. If they succeed, there's no effect. If they fail, they take a Dramatic Wound. If a Villain ever takes a number of

Dramatic Wounds equal to twice his Resolve, he becomes Knocked Out.

Example: Rodriguez is facing four Brutes. He only wants to spend one Action on dispatching them, so when he attacks, he tells the GM he wants to attack all the Brutes. There are four of them, so the GM tells Rodriguez he needs three Raises to attack them all. The TN to attack these Brutes is 10, so with three Raises, the TN becomes 25. Rodriguez makes his roll and all the Brutes fall down in a flurry of swordplay.

Armor

The intent of **armor** is to deflect sword strikes and musket balls to save its wearer from damage. Unfortunately, most modern Théan weapons go right through armor. Nowadays, armor is more of a liability than an asset. It is not commonly used, except of course by the Eisen, who have their almost magical Dracheneisen armor, capable of deflecting musket balls while remaining light enough to move around freely. However, if you do want armor, here are the rules for doing so in 7th Sea.

When your Hero puts on armor, the idea is that it protects certain parts of the body from injury. One problem with this during game play is that the game system is intended to be quick and dramatic, and therefore does away with hit location tables and variable damage charts.

These armor rules are intended to translate the protection of armor into a general reduction in damage taken by the character, without hurting the efficacy of Dracheneisen armor in the game (thus depriving Eisen characters of their "balance" against sorcery) and still maintaining the pseudo-17th century European feel of Théah.

Different types of armor available for purchase are listed after the Weapons section in this compendium.

Armor Categories

Armor is grouped into three categories, each of which represents a general level of protection, as follows:

Armor Category Table

Category Description

Light	This is the lowest form of protection, apart from daily clothing. It includes materials like light hide (buff coat), quilted material (gambeson) and heavy layered cloth (heavy cloak)
Medium	Heavier armor, such as hard leather (cuirbouilli) or leather and light metal rings (ring mail) are included in this class
Heavy	In this class you find the heaviest armor, such as close-link chain mail, steel plate mail, or even wood and iron chest plates

All of these armors are designed so that they include the necessary under-layers.

Example: Chain and plate mail have either heavy cloth or a quilted jacket underneath. Chain mail has a silk shirt as the lowest layer.

Armour is simply not worn over normal clothes, and layering different types of armor is generally just not practical.

Body Locations

The human body is divided up into six areas, which can be effectively covered with armor. These areas are as follows:

1. Head and Neck
2. Torso and Stomach
3. Upper Arms and Elbows
4. Lower Arms and Hands
5. Upper Legs and Knees
6. Lower Legs and Feet

Each area can be covered with a particular type of armor, offering protection to that area. Each side, such as lower arms and hands, is assumed to include both left and right sides—you normally wouldn't protect one side without the other.

Armor Protection

When your character purchases armor, simply decide which areas it covers and into which armor category it falls. Then look up these areas on the Armor Protection Table below and total up the protection offered by the armor as a whole.

Armor Protection Table

Location	Light	Medium	Heavy
Head and Neck	1	2	3
Torso and Stomach	2	3	4
Upper Arms and Elbows	1	2	3
Lower Arms and Hands	1	2	3
Upper Legs and Knees	1	2	3
Lower Legs and Feet	1	2	3

Example: A chain shirt (Heavy), covering the torso (4) and upper arms (3) only, would be worth 7 points of protection. A fairly long buff coat (Light), covering the torso (2) and upper legs (1) only, would be worth 3 points of protection.

The protection value listed for each armor category, is the number which is removed from all Damage Rolls which actually hit the character, to a minimum value determined by the weapon size inflicting the Wound (Small = 1, Medium =2, Large, Bow =3, Very Large, Longbow, Crossbow =4, Firearms =5*, Explosives = 10 points).

* Firearms at point blank range are generally deadly against most armor types, Dracheneisen armor being the only exception. Treat the fire from all firearms as being doubly effective (10 points) at this range.

Example: Every attack made with a dagger against a character in a buff coat does 3 points less Damage, to a minimum of 1 point (daggers are small weapons). This means that a buff coat is effectively useless against large-sized, or bigger, weapons and firearms.

Effectively, most weapons “ignore” a certain amount of damage, based on the weapon size. This rule protects the power of Dracheneisen armor to fully protect the wearer.

Example: Our character in the previous example may fare better in a chain mail shirt with it's accompanying heavy cloth undershirt.

Most daggers, knives, and small axes are Small weapons. Fencing weapons, such as rapiers, smallswords, and other blunt weapons, such as clubs and maces, are Medium weapons. Heavy weapons, including boar spears and axes, are Large weapons. Zweihanders and most polearms are Very Large weapons, and pistols and muskets are firearms. Explosives include cannons and grenades, and can also include Damage from other “broad” sources, such as falling. Bows and light crossbows are treated as being Large weapons. Longbows and standard crossbows are treated as being Very Large weapons (even though they physically aren't). The GM has the final say as to what constitutes a particular size of weapon.

Armor Penalties

Wearing armor comes with an associated penalty, which, coupled with the expense of good armor, is why not everyone uses it. Armor is often heavy and cumbersome.

Chain mail is very weighty, with a momentum of it's own, but provides great protection versus blades. Likewise, plate mail is lighter, but less flexible, and therefore more difficult to move about in, plus it is extremely pricey. Breastplates of whatever material are stiff and can be tight—restricting shoulder

movement. Also, many metal breastplates only provide protection from attacks from the front.

Put simply, armor can put a crimp in your character's style. The only simple way to represent this in 7th Sea is to apply a Finesse penalty for those wearing armor. This is generally determined by the heaviest type of armor worn by the character, even if it's only on one body location. The penalty for wearing armor is:

Light armor, Dracheneisen armor: No penalty.

Medium armor: Reduce all Finesse-based rolls by one unkept die.

Heavy armor: Reduce all Finesse-based rolls by two unkept dice.

Panzerhands

Panzerhands are medium-sized weapons, but, unless they are made of Dracheneisen, they count as heavy armor on the wearer's lower arm and hand. Because of the flexibility built into this style of gauntlet, Heroes wearing only one panzerhand, and either light or no other armor, are considered to be wearing light armor.

If the Hero wears two panzerhands, one on each hand, then he is considered to be wearing medium armor, regardless of what other armor he is wearing. This armor penalty is waived for students of the Loring Swordsman School as long as they are wearing no other armor (not even Light armor).

Dracheneisen Armor

The rules for armor protection don't apply to Dracheneisen armor. Dracheneisen armor retains all of the benefits listed under the Dracheneisen Advantage. As noted above, it always wears as if it were light armor, including Dracheneisen panzerhands.

Note that locations not covered by Dracheneisen armor are just as vulnerable to called shots as usual.

Dracheneisen armor is rarely combined with other armor types, however (unless the character is simply using a Dracheneisen panzerhand, and wearing a chain shirt, for instance). Where this does happen, the damage reduction capability of the Dracheneisen is reduced by one Kept die to reflect the averaged nature of wearing both standard and Dracheneisen armor.

Armor, Body Locations and Called Shots

The rules for armor are designed to reflect an average level of protection across the body, but this should increase if a called shot is used to target a specific body location.

Example: A chain shirt deducts 7 from Damage rolls when hit. However, if the wearer's hand is targeted by a called shot, then the armor gives no protection.

In this example, no benefit is gained from wearing the chain shirt—it doesn't protect the hands. However, if the character was also wearing a metal gauntlet and greaves (covering the lower arms of the character), this would increase the overall protection value to 10 points (torso 4 plus upper arms 3 plus lower arms 3).

Any armor in a specific body location provides twice the protection it would normally provide against called shots to that locations.

Example: This time, when the hand is hit, deduct two times the protection of the specific area hit, i.e. $2 \times 3 = 6$ points.

The minimum Damage rule for different weapon sizes still counts.

Example: A Villain shoots a Hero in the hand with a pistol. The character's hand is protected with a chain and cloth gauntlet (Heavy armor, 3 points). The damage from the Firearm is rolled for, inflicting 17 Damage points, reduced by 6 points for the gauntlet, so doing only 11 Wounds.

If the villain had been unlucky and rolled only 4 Damage points, then the firearm would do this amount of Damage (4 Wounds), as the pistol effectively ignores the first 5 points of armor.

Surprise

When attempting to sneak up on or ambush someone, you make a Contested roll of your Finesse+Stealth or Finesse+Ambush, as appropriate, versus your target's Wits+Ambush. If you win your target is **surprised** for one Round, or until struck, whichever happens first.

While surprised, your Passive Defense drops to 5. In addition, you cannot use any Actions, including Interrupt Actions. You are allowed to Hold any Actions you would have normally received until you are no longer surprised. Surprise only works in a situation where you can approach the victim unobserved.

Example: Rodriguez has a Stealth Knack of 3. He tries to sneak up on a guard who has a Wits of 2 and no Ambush Knack. Therefore, Rodriguez's TN is 10, and he rolls six dice, Keeping three. The guard's TN is 15, and he rolls two dice, Keeping two. Rodriguez gets a 21, and the guard gets a 12. Since Rodriguez succeeded and the guard failed, Rodriguez wins the Contested roll, and the guard is surprised for 1 Phase. If Rodriguez saved an Action to take advantage of his surprise, the guard will most likely die a quick death.

Experience

As you adventure, your GM will award you **Experience Points**, or XP. Your GM will probably hand out from 1-5 XP per player per game session (plus your leftover Drama Dice, which turn into XP, and any XP your Backgrounds give you), but it is his prerogative to raise or lower this number as he sees fit. You can use XP to improve your Hero's abilities in the following ways:

Buy a New Skill

Buying a new Skill costs 10 XP. This is more expensive than at Hero Creation, and represents finding a new tutor to teach you the unfamiliar skill. When you buy a new Skill, the first Ranks in the Basic Knacks are free just as at Hero Creation, with one important difference: if you already possess a Knack that you are getting a free Rank in, you cannot add the Rank to your existing Knack as you could when making your Hero.

Example: If you have a Footwork of 2, and you buy the Pugilism Skill, your Footwork does not go up.

Buy a New Background

You may buy a new Background for 3, 6, or 9 XP, which gets you a 1-, 2-, or 3-point Background. You may only have a total number of Backgrounds (not points in Backgrounds) equal to your Rank in Panache.

Example: If you already have two Backgrounds, and you have a 3 Panache, you may purchase only one more Background.

Raise a Knack

In order to increase a Knack, you must spend a number of Experience Points equal to twice the Rank you want to increase the Knack to.

Example: If you want to increase a Knack from Rank 2 to Rank 3, you must spend 6 Experience Points.

After Hero Creation, Advanced Knacks cost the same to increase as Basic Knacks, so it is usually more cost-effective to

start with a low Rank in your Advanced Knacks, then work them up through game play.

You can only raise your Knacks to a maximum Rank of 5 in most circumstances, unless you can gain access to Special Training (see below). You may only raise a Knack by one Rank per Story.

Knack Advancement Table

Next Rank	Cost of Advancement
1	2 XP
2	4 XP
3	6 XP
4	8 XP
5	10 XP
6 (Special Training)	25 XP

Special Training

It is possible under special circumstances to reach Rank 6 in certain Knacks. First, the Hero must already have Rank 5 in the Knack to begin with. Then he must find a Master in that Knack—someone sufficiently knowledgeable to instruct him—and convince him or her to pass on what they know.

Instruction costs 25 XP and can take anywhere from one month to one year, depending on the circumstances (the GM has the final word). If these conditions are met, the Hero's Rank is increased to 6. Normally, only NPCs and retired Heroes have a Knack Rank this high, and usually in no more than one or two Knacks.

Raise a Trait

In order to increase a Trait, you must spend a number of Experience Points equal to five times the Rank you want to increase the Trait to.

Example: If you want to increase a Trait from Rank 3 to Rank 4, you must spend 20 Experience Points.

Unless you have a special Advantage or ability, you can only raise your Traits to a maximum Rank of 5.

Trait Advancement Table

Next Rank	Cost of Advancement
1	5 XP
2	10 XP
3	15 XP
4	20 XP
5	25 XP
6 (Special Ability)	30 XP
7 (Special Ability)	35 XP

Join a Swordsman School

With your GM's permission, you may join a new Swordsman School. You must already possess both Skills in its Basic Curriculum, plus be a member in good standing with the Swordsman's Guild (if that is offered by the School), and then you must find a Master of the style who is willing to teach you. You must then pay an additional base 50 XP to learn the style, modified for the following:

Condition	XP Modifier
Country of Origin different to that of School	+30 XP
If you already have an Apprentice Ability with an effect that matches that of the School	-10 XP
You already know a Swordsman Knack taught by that School (each Knack known)	-5 XP

It requires at least one month of training before a character can be said to have learned the basics of a School's style. The GM may also require other conditions, however, such as a financial cost or some form of initiation.

Things You Can't Do With XP

You may never use XP to do any of the following:

Buy Arcana

Virtues are rare, even among Heroes, and if you missed the boat when making your Hero, then you're out of luck. Moreover, if you bought a Hubris, then you're stuck with it for life. We warned you that it was a fatal flaw, didn't we?

Buy an Advantage

Like Arcana, Advantages don't just magically appear when you have the points for them. On the other hand, your GM may want you to marry into a noble family, or something that similarly supplies you with an Advantage that you didn't have at Hero Creation. In this instance, your GM will simply give you the new Advantage for free.

Raise your Drama

Drama is always equal to your lowest Trait. The only way to raise your Drama is to raise your Traits. Drama is what makes you a Hero, after all, so it's not cheap to come by.

Repartee System

An essential element of the swashbuckling genre is banter. Witty remarks can cut as deeply as a blade and drive an enemy into a frustrated frenzy that gives the Hero the upper hand he needs to overcome the odds. Unfortunately, not all of us are as cunning as the heroes we'd like to portray, so here's a system to help you simulate such interactions with very real game effects.

Interpersonal Actions

There are several basic interpersonal Actions that any PC or NPC may attempt—Charm, Intimidate, and Taunt. The base Trait used and effects of the attempt are determined by the Action (see their descriptions below). How they are attempted in the game is left up to the players, who must decide on a reasonable course of Action to justify the attempt before the GM allows it.

The default TN for all interpersonal Action attempts is the target Trait $\times 5$. The target Trait is always the one being used to perform the action (i.e., Resolve vs. Resolve, Wits vs. Wits, Panache vs. Panache).

Witty Repartee Table

Action	Trait Used	Effect
Busking	Varies	Increase money received from your performance
Charm	Wits	When number of successes = target's Resolve, the target is convinced
Intimidate	Resolve	Target has a one unkept die penalty, plus an additional unkept die penalty when acting directly against the Hero for the remainder of the Scene
Taunt	Panache	Target must Raise as many times as the Hero did when acting against him.

The effects of all interpersonal Actions are temporary—after contact (i.e., physical proximity) is broken between the Hero and his target, all effects vanish, and a new process must begin before any new modifiers can be applied.

Affecting Multiple People With Repartee

When a Hero wants to affect more than one target with this system, he must consider the level of the opponent he is facing. The following rules apply:

Villains: Heroes may affect only a single Villain at a time with any Repartee effect.

Henchmen: Heroes may affect more than one Henchman with Repartee. Each additional Henchman is a Raise.

Brutes: One unmodified roll is all that is required to affect a single Brute Squad. Additional Squads require one Raise apiece.

Busking

Trait Used: Performer Knack+applicable Trait

TN: $5 \times$ Target's Resolve

Restrictions: Busking can only be used on Henchmen and Brutes, never Villains.

Busking is an age-old tradition of artists and performers "passing the hat" to make a living. Basically, a performer or troupe spontaneously begins entertaining passers-by or a gathered crowd, with the intention of making a bit of money. The performer often has an instrument case, a pot, or a hat on the ground in front of him, and invites people to toss in a coin or two in appreciation. This can be very lucrative in a tavern or a busy plaza, but the busker must always be on the look-out for potentially disapproving authorities, who may see it as a form of begging.

One Busking attempt takes a full hour. This represents the performer sizing up the audience, trying to feel out the crowd's mood, and changing tunes and/or stunts to set the scene. A character cannot attempt to busk a completely hostile crowd (such as enemy soldiers or prisoners), if a test is successful, subtract the TN (including any raises) from the number rolled. Multiply the result by 1 cent. This is the amount of money the busker earns for the hour. This amount can be increased by 1 cent for each Raise the character calls, including Raises for multiple targets.

Charm

Trait Used: Wits

TN: $5 \times$ Target's Wits

Charm Actions attempt to convince a character of something by reducing his or her Resolve, representing the gradual effect the player Hero's words and actions are having on his target. The Hero makes a series of Contested Wits checks against the target. Once the Hero has made as many successful Charm rolls as the target's Resolve, the target is convinced of the Hero's point. (Raises count as extra successful rolls.) If the Hero ever fails with a Charm roll, then the process ends automatically, any accumulated successes are lost, and no further attempts with that target and point of argument can be attempted.

Charm is used to improve the attitudes of others, as well as convince them of a particular point or course of action.

When calling for a Charm attempt, the player must inform the GM of his intent and/or ideal result. As Charm is a prolonged Action (commonly taking several player Actions to complete), it is important to know what he is ultimately trying to accomplish at the beginning.

Limitations of Charm

It is impossible to convince anyone of anything that he or she is inherently opposed to (morally, ethically, or otherwise). Secondly, all Charm effects are temporary—the long-term attitudes of others cannot be permanently adjusted with this Action.

Intimidate

Trait Used: Resolve

TN: 5×Target's Resolve

Intimidate Actions attempt to cow the target by sheer force of will. The Hero makes a Contested Resolve check against the target. Success indicates the target loses one die—plus one additional die per Raise—from every action when acting directly against the Hero.

Intimidate is far less complicated (and commonly much more direct) than Charm. In essence, your Hero is attempting to cow another by force of personality alone (though displays of wanton violence and unpredictable, hostile behavior help the process along).

Note that this effect can eliminate all the target's dice before he even counts them. This result indicates that the target is automatically unsuccessful with the action.

Taunt

Trait Used: Panache

TN: 5×Target's Panache

Taunt Actions can cause the target to fail where he would otherwise succeed. When using this option, the number of Raises made by the Hero is important; with success, the target must also Raise by the same amount for his next Action directed at the Hero. Of course, if he overcomes this handicap, the Hero will be sorry for his words...

A combination of making fun at the target's expense and general derision, Taunt is the dark side of interpersonal communication. All that is required is a sharp tongue, a sadistic streak, and the knowledge that it's all in good fun.

EQUIPMENT

All prices are listed in Guilders and cents (1/100 of a Guilder).

Clothing

Item	Cost
Apron, cloth	8c
Apron, leather	80c
Boots, fine	5+c
Boots, plain	2G
Boots, riding	3G
Cape	1G
Cloak, fine	3+G
Cloak, plain	1G
Coat, digger's	4G
Coat, gentleman's	5+G
Coat, plain	1G
Dress, fancy	5+G
Dress, plain	2G
Gloves, cotton	10c
Gloves, leather	20c
Gloves, silk	2+G
Gown, exotic	7+G
Hat, wide-brimmed	1G
Hat, tricorn	1G
Jacket, plain	1G
Jacket, fancy	3+G
Mask	30+c
Money belt	40c
Shoes, fancy	2+G
Shoes, plain	50c
Shoes, snow	2G
Spectacles	5+G
Suit, plain	1G
Suit, silk	4+G
Undergarment	1+G
Tabard	80c
Veil	5c
Vest	40c
Wig	1G

Transportation

Item	Cost
Cart (1 horse)	40G
Cart (1 pony)	25G
Coach (2 horses)	200G
Coach (4 horses)	400G
Coach (6 horses)	800G
Overland passage	3G/100 mi.
Ship passage	5G/100 mi.
Sled, dog (7 dogs)	70G
Sleigh	50G
Wagon (2 horses)	60G
Wagon (4 horses)	80G
Donkey	35G
Horse, draft	50G
Horse, pony	45G
Horse, race	1000+G
Horse, riding	60G
Horse, war	750G
Mule	40G
Ox	90G

Tack and Harness

Item	Cost
Bit and bridle	5G
Bird cage	1+G
Falcon hood	1G

Item	Cost
Falconer's glove	1G
Harness	75G
Hobbles	1G
Horse blanket	50c
Saddle bags	5G
Saddle blanket	50c
Saddle, pack	10G
Saddle, riding	15G
Saddle, side	15G
Saddle, war	30G
Yoke	1G

Weapons and Armor

Item	Cost
Bow	8G
Avalon longbow	10G
Buckler	4G
Crossbow	12G
Cutlass	12G
Fencing sword	15G
Smallsword	18G
Flintlock musket	20G
Flintlock pistol	20G
Heavy weapon	8-10G
Broadsword	10G
Knife	6G
Stiletto	8G
Grappling Gun	25G
Grenade	22G
Throwing Knife	6G
Throwing axe	6G
Main-gauche	8G
Garrote	2G
Panzerhand	5G
Whip	2G
Polearm	14G

Weapon Accessories

Item	Cost
Arrows, normal (20)	40c
Arrows, grappling (5)	2G
Bayonet, plug	3G
Belt scabbard	250c
Bolts, normal (2)	40c
Bolts, grappling (5)	2G
Bullet mold	90c
Caltrops (per bag)	50c
Extra flint	10c
Fencing Ring Grip	2G
Gunpowder (10 shots)	1G
Lead (10 shots)	50c
Powder flask (10 shots)	50c
Powder measure	120c
Quiver (20 arrows/bolts)	1G
Sheath, ornamented	4+G
Sheath, plain	1G

Miscellaneous

Item	Cost
10' pole	1c
Backpack	7c
Bandages (3)	1G
Bedroll	125c
Blanket	1G
Chair	3G
Chisel	50c

Item	Cost
Climbing gloves	2G
Climbing pick	2G
Coat, digger's	4G
Compass	1+G
Crowbar	1G
Dice (wooden)	25c
Grappling hook	2G
Hammer	75c
Hatchet	1G
Lamp oil	10c/hour
Lantern	2G
Litter	25c
Lock (TN 10)	5G
Lock, per +5 to lock TN (max 30)	+2G
Lockpicks	10G
Mallet	50c
Mattocks	2G
Map or scroll tube	1G
Mess kit	2G
Pavilion (10-man)	40G
Pick	75c
Pillow	50c
Rope (50')	1G
Salted provisions (1 week)	1G
Shovel	150c
Soap	3G
Splint set	20c
Spike, iron (5)	1G
Spike, wooden (12)	1G
Table	3G
Tent (2-man)	10G
Torches (6)	50c
Whistle	1G

Food and Lodging

Item	Cost
Ale (quart)	3c
Banquet (feeds 4-10 people)	5+G
Beer (1 round)	5c
Beer (small keg)	20c
Brandy (bottle)	2G
Cider (jar)	3c
Dinner (feeds 4)	1G
Fruit (5)	10c
Fruit, citrus (5)	50c
Jerky (1 week)	1G
Liquor (jigger)	10c
Lodging, good (weekly)	1+G
Mead (bottle)	15c
Meal, good (feeds 1)	5c
Pork (1 lb)	15c
Rum (bottle)	10c
Tea (1 lb)	5G
Wine, average (bottle)	10c
Wine, fine (bottle)	1G
Wine, excellent (bottle)	5+G

Tools

Item	Cost
Anvil	20G
Bellows	20c
Block and tackle	8G
Chain	1G/ft
File	15c
Grindstone	30G
Knife blades (5)	6G
Ladder	2G

Item	Cost
Loom	120G
Nails (10 lb)	5G
Needle sewing	30c
Pliers	3G
Pitchfork	2G
Razor	2G
Saw	3G
Scissors	4G
Sextant	5+G
Shovel	150c
String/twine (50 ft)	25c
Telescope	5+G
Thread (10 ft)	10c
Tongs	2G
Whetstone	1G
Wire, iron	3c/ft

Scholarly Items

Item	Cost
Alembic	3G
Balance and weights	14G
Basket, wicker	2G
Beaker (4)	3G
Bellows	150c
Book, blank, 100 pages	1G
Book, scholarly	1-10G
Brazier	25G
Candle, sealing wax (5 seals)	50c
Chalk (12 pieces)	1G
Clock, pendulum	200G
Clock, water	40G
Crucible	5G
Dipper	1G
Flask	40c
Funnel	1G
Hourglass	5G
Ink (5 bottles)	3G
Lens (concave and convex)	13G
Logarithmic table	1G
Measuring tools	3G
Microscope (50x)	75G
Mirror, full length	25+G
Mirror, small	10G
Mortar and pestle	3G
Pen	5-15G
Prism	15G
Retort	5G
Surgical kit	100G
Tongs	1G
Tripod	5G
Tubing, glass (per foot)	20c
Tweezers	25c
Vial	10c

WEAPONS

Melee Weapons Table

Weapon	Damage	Notes	Cost
Bayonet	3k2	Plug Bayonets explode with 2k2 damage if fired when fixed. Takes 1 round to (un)mount.	3G
Blunt Weapon	2k2	Maces, hammers, morning stars and cudgels fall into this category	-
Boar Spear	1k2	If hit, increase lowest Action die by +1 per full 10 Flesh Wounds inflicted	-
Broken Bottle	0k2	Pretty obvious...	-
Buckler	1k1	Standard parrying shield	4G
Chair	2k1	Pretty useful all round household object	3G
Cutlass	3k2	Its weight confers a -1 unkept die Attack penalty	12G
Dietrich Sword	2k2	Allows you to reroll any ones on your Damage dice	-
Disguised Blade	1k2	Looks like a Vaticine Cross. Adds +2 Free Raises to Conceal rolls	-
Dracheneisen Fencing Sword	2k2	Confers +1 unkept die bonus when using Fencing Knacks	-
Dracheneisen Heavy Weapon	3k2	Confers +1 unkept die bonus when using Heavy Weapon Knacks	-
Dracheneisen Knife	1k2	Confers +1 unkept die bonus when using Knife Knacks	-
Dracheneisen Polearm	3k2	Confers +1 unkept die bonus when using Polearm Knacks	-
Dracheneisen Zweihander	3k3	Confers +1 unkept die bonus when using Heavy Weapon Knacks	-
El Esoque Occulto	2/1k2	A rapier with a hidden dagger, released from the pommel	-
Fencing Ring Grip	-	Grants +1 Free Raise to Feints, but if Disarmed the user takes 1k1 damage	-
Fencing Sword	2k2	Standard fencing blade	15G
Hatchet	2k2	One-handed axe useful for chopping wood and kobolds	-
Heavy Weapon	3k2	The standard weapon of surly Théan guards	8-10G
Highland Marches Claymore	4k2	It's unwieldy nature gives a -1 unkept die penalty	-
Knife	1k2	Standard short-bladed dagger	6G
Large Club	1k1	Your basic club	-
Small Club	0k1	A smaller version of the large club	-
Panzerhand	0k2	Dracheneisen gauntlet adding +1 unkept die when using Panzerhand Knacks	5G
Pitchfork	2k2	The weapon of choice for many an irate farmer	2G
Shield	1k1	A large and heavy version of a Buckler; +10 TN to be Hit versus non-firearm ranged attacks	8G
Sidhe Dagger	2k2	Faerie speed gives -1 bonus to one of your Initiative dice. -1 unkept die if away from Avalon	-
Sidhe Sword	4k2	Faerie speed gives -1 bonus to one of your Initiative dice. -1 unkept die if away from Avalon	-
Stiletto	0k2	Long, thin-bladed dagger that gives +1 unkept die to Attack rolls.	8G
Swordcane	2k2	Perception [30] check to notice a Swordcane; The wielder must add +5 to all Parry (Fencing) Active Defense rolls	-
Table	3k1	Good for eating from, not so handy in a fight; -1 unkept die to Attack rolls	3G
Throwing Axe	2k2	One-handed axe balanced for throwing	-
Whip	0k1	Using the Whip grants a +5 Initiative Total bonus and the Action dice of the user are 1 lower when Attacking	2G
Zweihander	3k3	After every Attack you must spend 1 Action to reset the Zweihander before you Attack or Parry with it, or else drop it and switch weapons. 2-handed	-

Missile Weapons Table

Weapon	Damage	Range	Short	Long	Reload	Notes	Cost
Avalon Longbow	2k2	200	-5	-10	1	Fine bow of Avalon	10G
Bow	2k2	150	-5	-10	1	Standard	8G
Crossbow	2k3	100	-5	-10	6	Standard	12G
Dracheneisen Pistol	4k3	50	-10	-15	20	-5 to opponents To Hit TN	-
Dracheneisen Musket	5k3	100	-10	-15	30	-5 to opponents To Hit TN	-
Grappling Gun	1k1	40	-10	-15	25	TN 5+Range Modifier to grapple	25G
Grenade	4k4	5+(2xB)	0	-5	n/a	See Exotic Weapons	22G
Harpoon	3k2	5+(2xB)	0	-5	n/a	Against large creatures is 3k3	-
Hatchet	2k2	5+B	0	-5	n/a	Standard	-
Musket	5k3	80	-10	-15	30	Standard	20G
Pistol	4k3	30	-10	-15	20	Standard	20G
Sidhe Bow & Arrows	2k2	150	-5	-10	1	(Sidhe Weapon) Those hit fall into an enchanted sleep	-
Thrown Knife	1k2	5+(2xB)	0	-5	n/a	Basic dagger	6G
Throwing Axe	2k2	5+(2xB)	0	-5	n/a	One-handed axe balanced for throwing	6G
Vodacce Throwing Knife	1k1	5+(2xB)	0	-5	n/a	Free Raise when thrown; Active Defense TN increased by +5	6G

Exotic Weapons Table

Weapon	Skill Used	Notes	Cost
Caltrops	Simply drop them on the ground	Finesse+Athletics (Footwork) vs. TN to Traverse 5 feet or -2 Chase Markers. If 1 Kept die is a '1' then take 0k1. A bag covers 5 sq feet	50c/bag
Garrotte	Finesse+Dirty Fighting (Throat Strike)	Struggle for Rounds = Resolve, then -1 Resolve per Round. When at -1 Resolve the victim dies. He is considered Grappled until then	2G
Grenade	Finesse+Throwing	1 Round to light, roll 1D10 for phase it goes off; 0 = now! 1 DW for every 5 Wound Check is failed by but may roll Panache + Leaping/Sprinting TN20 to avoid	22G

Weapon Descriptions

Avalon Longbow: Avalon history is peppered with prominent use of the longbow, from the exploits of Robin Goodfellow to David III's stirring victories over the Montaigne. Avalons use a larger and heavier bow than their continental counterparts. This increased pull gives the Avalon longbow a range of 200 yards. Other stats are as for a normal bow.

Bayonet: A typical Théan bayonet is simply a long knife blade with a rounded handle designed to fit inside the barrel of a musket. When it is mounted in place, the musket can be used as a polearm (3k2 Heavy Weapon, but uses the Polearm Skill). It takes one Action to either mount or to unmount a plug bayonet. A musket fired with a mounted plug bayonet will explode, inflicting two dice of damage to its wielder.

Montaigne has recently developed the attached bayonet, which clips to the side of the musket barrel and does not prevent the weapon from firing.

Boar Spear: A boar spear is a polearm approximately five to seven feet long, with a crossbar behind the tip that can force opponents back away from the wielder. Boar spears require one hand to wield and inflict 1k2 damage. However, an opponent successfully hit by a boar spear must increase his lowest Action die by +1 (to a maximum of 10) for every full 10 Flesh Wounds inflicted on him.

Caltrops: Caltrops are small spiked balls which are scattered on paths in order to slow down pursuers. It requires a Finesse+Footwork (20) roll to successfully traverse 2 yards of ground covered by caltrops. Failure means the pursuer must slow to a walk, adding +2 markers to the Chase. If the pursuer rolls at least one '1' on any of his Kept dice, then he has stepped on a caltrop, causing him 0k1 Wounds and forcing him to limp until healed (the Chase is effectively over). GMs may adjust the TN for mitigating factors (low lighting, whether the pursuer is watching the ground, etc.) as appropriate.

Caltrops cost 50 cents per bag. The contents of a bag can suitably cover 2 square yards.

Cloak: A Hero wearing a cloak in combat can remove it in order to use it as a makeshift buckler, but this requires the Cloak Skill to do so effectively. Cloaks never inflict damage in combat, but they can be used to entangle an opponent, unlike a buckler. A cloak costs anywhere from 1-10G, depending on how fancy it is.

Cutlass: Cutlasses are Fencing Weapons (2k2). They are weighted like meat cleavers to cut easily into flesh and bone, but at the expense of accuracy. Therefore, a Hero's Attack roll is at a penalty of one unkept die, while his Damage Roll is at a bonus of one unkept die when using a cutlass (3k2 total).

Fencing Ring Grip: The grip is a ring above the quillions of a blade; the user can put his or her fingers through it, allowing for greater control of the weapon. A fencing ring grip gives a Free Raise to any Feint attempt the wielder makes. However, should the wielder be disarmed of his fencing weapon, he suffers 1k1 Damage, as any fingers he has in the ring grip are battered and possibly broken.

Fighting Lantern: A fighting lantern is a masked, bull's-eye lantern, most often used by the students of the Larsen School. Very little light escapes it when its mask is down, and when the mask is up, light can be directed in one direction only. The handle of the lantern is attached to its back, and a thumb-activated lever allows its user to raise and lower the mask.

Garrotte: A garrotte is a long piece of wire which wraps around a victim's throat in order to strangle him. Garrottes use Finesse+Dirty Fighting (Throat Strike). With a successful attack, the victim cannot make a sound and begins to suffocate. The

victim is considered Grappled and can attempt to break free normally.

Grenades: Here's an astonishingly nasty little device. Grenades are basically a wrought iron shell filled with gunpowder, and a piece of cannon fuse to light them with. When the fuse is lit, it burns down to the gunpowder, which explodes, shattering the iron shell into pieces of shrapnel. This translates into a Rank 4 explosion [GM:174] and the shrapnel causes Heroes caught by the blast to take one Dramatic Wound, plus one more for every full 5 points by which they failed their Wound check.

It takes one Action to light the fuse, and another one to throw the grenade. Unfortunately, quality control on cannon fuse is rather poor. Some fuses take a long time to burn, and some burn almost instantly. When the Hero lights the fuse of a grenade, have him roll a non-exploding die. The number showing is the number of Phases before the grenade goes off, and if it's showing a 0, the grenade goes off this Phase. Grenades always go off in a Phase before anything else happens, and a person holding or lying on a grenade gets no chance to avoid the explosion. Feel free to wreak havoc with these new toys, but be careful!

Harpoon: Whaling is a primitive operation on Théah, thanks to the extreme danger surrounding the endeavor. Typically, whalers attempt to kill any leviathans in the area with cannon volleys and envenomed harpoons, not caring whether or not the animal's body is destroyed. Then they use thrown harpoons to harvest the less dangerous beasts. Harpoons are a 3k2 weapon normally, but against large creatures (such as whales and leviathans) whose flesh they can dig deeply into, they are considered a 3k3 weapon. Like other thrown weapons, their range is 5, plus two times Brawn, yards.

Hatchet: A hatchet is a small, one-handed axe commonly used for chopping wood. When used as a melee weapon, it inflicts 2k2 damage. When thrown, it has a range of 5, plus the thrower's Brawn, yards, with no modifier for Short Range and a -5 penalty for Long Range.

Highland Marches Claymore: Claymores are Heavy Weapons. They are extremely large and heavy in order to put enormous impetus behind their blows. A Hero's Attack roll is at a penalty of -1 unkept die, while his Damage roll is at a bonus of one unkept die, when he uses a claymore.

Powder Magazine: A powder magazine is a pre-measured container of gunpowder designed to make reloading firearms and artillery both faster and easier. When a powder magazine is used during the reloading process, it takes -5 fewer Actions to reload a firearm and -10 fewer Actions to reload an artillery piece. A powder magazine for a firearm costs 1G, while one for a piece of artillery costs 5G.

Shield: A shield is similar to a buckler, but much larger and heavier. The wielder relies on its size for protection, while a buckler is moved to deflect incoming blows. Due to the size of a shield, the TN to be Hit by non-firearm ranged attacks (e.g. bows or crossbows) is increased by 10 when using one. If a character bashes another with a shield, it inflicts 1k1 damage.

Stiletto: A stiletto is an assassin's knife, easily concealable, with a long, thin blade. It is considered to be a knife and requires the Attack (Knife) Knack to use effectively. It causes 0k2 damage and gives you +1 unkept die on your Attack roll when using it.

Swordcane: A swordcane is a light fencing blade hidden in a cane. The sword's grip forms the cane's handle, and the remainder of the cane forms the sheath for the sword. There is usually some sort of locking mechanism to prevent the sword from coming out accidentally. It takes a Wits [30] roll to notice that a swordcane is not an ordinary cane. Treat the swordcane as a fencing weapon when wielded, with one exception: its lack of a

guard gives a penalty to its user of 5 to all TNs for using Parry (Fencing) as an Active Defense.

Throwing Axe: A throwing axe is a small, one-handed axe balanced for throwing. When used as a melee weapon, it inflicts 2k2 damage. When thrown, it has a range of 5, plus twice the thrower's Brawn, in yards, with no modifier for Short Range and a -5 penalty for Long Range.

Throwing Knife: The Vodacce use throwing knives for a variety of purposes, since they are easily concealed and quickly replaced. Students of the Cappuntina school learn to hide them up their sleeves, in their bodices, or even disguised as hat pins. Throwing knives inflict 1k1 Damage, but they give a Free Raise to the Attack roll when thrown, and the TN to Actively Defend against them is increased by 5.

Whip: A whip is a long lash, often made of rawhide. A whip is a one-handed weapon that uses the Whip Skill for attacks, and inflicts 0k1 damage, but its wielder's Action dice results are considered -1 point lower when attacking, and 5 is added to the wielder's Initiative Total. A whip costs 2G.

Zweihander: Zweihanders are enormous swords that often stand taller than their wielder. The sword is designed to allow eight points of attack along its length. A zweihander is a Heavy Weapon that deals 3k3 damage. However, after every attack made with a zweihander, the Hero must either spend one Action to reset it before it can be used to attack or parry with again, or else drop the zweihander and switch to another weapon.

Example: Rodriguez is using a zweihander and rolls 1, 4, 6, and 8 for Initiative. He uses his 1 to attack. Now he can neither attack with the zweihander nor use his Parry (Heavy Weapon) Knack until he spends one Action to reset the zweihander, which he does in Phase 4. Now he is prepared to attack once again in Phase 6, and then reset his blade in Phase 8 so that it'll be ready for next Round. Instead of resetting his sword, Rodriguez could drop it and draw his pistol or another weapon, but he would still have to spend an action picking up the sword again before he could use it once more.

ARMOR

The following standard armor is available for purchase by characters, and can be considered representative of the types of armor worn by Théans, particularly in the military. See the Dracheneisen Advantage for information on Dracheneisen armor—you generally can't otherwise buy it.

Armor Table

Item	Covers	Category	Protection	Cost
Buff Coat	Torso, Upper Legs	Light	3	14G
Leather Jerkin	Torso	Medium	3	10G
Leather Jack	Torso, Upper Arms	Medium	5	20G
Quilt Gambeson	Torso, Upper Arms, Lower Arms, Upper Legs	Light	5	1G
Pot Helm	Head	Light	2	8G
Cavalier's Helm (Morion)	Head	Medium	3	10G
Leather Arm Greaves (Vambraces)	Lower Arms	Medium	2	4G
Steel Leg Greaves	Lower Legs	Heavy	3	20G
Chain Shirt	Torso, Upper Arms	Heavy	7	70G
Chain Hauberk and Coif	Head, Torso, Upper Arms, Upper Legs	Heavy	13	200G
Full Plate Mail	All Locations	Heavy	19	300G
Leather Breastplate with Arm Greaves and Metal Leg Greaves	Torso, Lower Arms, Lower Legs	Heavy	8	80G
Steel Breastplate over Leather Buff Coat*	Torso, Upper Legs	Heavy	5	55G

* This is technically “layering” armor. However, note that no benefit is gained to the Torso for having the Buff Coat under the Breastplate, the bonus being the protection on the thighs.

APPENDIX I: FAMILY NAMES OF THÉAH

While the 7th Sea Players' Guide contains Given Names for the various nations, they did not include any Family names. Not everyone has a Family Name, but if you need one, here are some typical names for your use.

Avalon

Abbott, Ashton, Baldwin, Benning, Blackmore, Blake, Briggs, Chambers, Coghill, Collins, Crawford, Cross, Doncaster, Dorset, Evans, Fairfax, Fenwick, Freemantle, Gage, Garrick, Graham, Hamilton, Hardy, Hawkins, Hix, Hollister, Holmes, Hooper, Jenkins, Kendall, Lane, Longford, Lovejoy, Maitland, Marshall, Montgomery, Northedge, Oakes, Oglethorpe, Owens, Parsons, Pethwick, Rampling, Renwick, Richmond, Ridgewell, Rose, Roth, Sharp, Sheperd, Stonehouse, Thorpe, Trenchard, Underdown, Wakefield, Walker, Wedgewood, Whitelock, Wickham, Wickwire, Windebank, Wyndham

Highland Marches

Atkinson, Baird, Ballantyne, Blacklock, Blackwood, Boswell, Buchanen, Byrne, Calderwood, Campbell, Carmichael, Dalrymple, Douglas, Dunbar, Fergusson, Galbraith, Gallaway, Gordon, Hawksmoor, Kennaway, Kilgour, Kinloch, Kirkwood, Lockhart, MacArthur, MacConagall, MacDonald, MacIntyre, MacKenzie, MacIver, MacLeod, MacManus, MacLochland, McShane, Raeburn, Stewart, Tarbert, Turnbull, Watson

Inismore

Bagwell, Blackwell, Beresford, Brooke, Callahan, Conway, Connolly, Devlin, Donnelly, Doyle, Drennan, Edgeworth, Fitzgerald, Fitzpatrick, Flanagan, Gray, Greene, Griffith, Guinness, Haverty, Hennessy, Kavanagh, Kelly, Lawless, MacBride, MacDonnell, MacKenna, Mahoney, McCracken, Morgan, O'Brian, O'Daley, O'Donovan, O'Faolain, O'Neill, Parnell, Preston, Quinn, Redmond, Russell, Ryan, Shea, Stokes, Sullivan, Waddell, Wolfe

Castille

Acevedo, Acosta, Aguavo, Aguerre, Amador, Arevalo, Avalos, Ballesteros, Baroja, Barillas, Berrugueto, Cabanas, Cabezon, Cabrera, Chamoro, Chavez, Delezon, de Laguila, Dellcastille, Delgadillo, Ellacuria, Espejo, Espinosa, Estanoz, Ferran, Figueres, Fuentes, Galvez, Garralda, Garrido, Guerrero, Hedilla, Huert, Juantorena, Malgosa, Mallarino, Mariano, Montalva, Montilla, Montoya, Murillo, Obaldia, Palma, Pareja, Perez, Quadros, Quevedo, Quintero, Rodriguez, Salegio, Sandova, Santander, Santiago, Santoyo, Serrano, Sosos, Tejed, Torralva, Urizar, Valadez, Vasquez, Ventura, Zarapata, Zapeta, Zarzosa

Eisen

Aueswald, Arndt, Amann, Ackenheil, Angermann, Baumann, Behle, Berendt, Braun, Breitmaier, Brehme, Carlberg, Cramer, Disl, Dotzauer, Dohrmann, Dörner, Eisler, Eminger, Eckhardt, Englemann, Frielinghaus, Fromater, Falke, Fauser, Floetgen, Grutzner, Gehring, Glockauer, Hauser, Heiss, Hilger, Immesberger, Jaeger, Janicke, Jungen, Koepfers, Kvasch, Koch, Kroening, Leucht, Losch, Leonhard, Mueller, Muehlegg, Mautner, Ortlieb, Oldenburg, Osterwald, Pfeiffer, Pechstein, Pahl, Reinecke, Reggenhard, Reinisch, Rossbach, Reinshagen, Reinfrank, Schelling, Schneider, Stoeckl, Stadloben, Schlager, Sontheimer, Streppelhoff, Theissen, Thayer, Troger, Tanneberger,

Ulrich, Urselmann, Uecker, Vogt, Velsing, Viefers, Warnicke, Welhing, Winterhagen, Wehmeyer, Zieleecke, Zweig

Montaigne

Allamand, Berruyer, Bourgoin, Campan, Chameroi, Chatillon, Cuizot, d'Aiguillon, d'Araujo, d'Esternau, Delaunay, Dupaul, Duveyrier, Fargeon, Foncier, Fourcroy, Gabelle, Garat, Hubert, Hauranne, Jodard, Jalabert, LaBelle, LaChapelle, Lavanchy, LeBrun, Legout, Lamolle, LaFramboise, Marbot, Moniotte, Montchanu, Marquette, Maillaret, Monvel, Navarre, Pecheur, Pelletan, Poudrier, Pichot, Quelen, Raucourt, Rollier, Rolland, Savary, Surveilliers, Sarnin, Tailleur, Tallien, Toutain, Verlaine, Vernet, Villele, Yverneau

Ussura

Afanasyev, Aksinin, Baladin, Belyayev, Chernetsky, Chenchik, Dmitriev, Donskoi, Emirzyan, Egorova, Fyoderov, Filatov, Granovsky, Gela, Gusakov, Ignatiev, Ivanov, Ilya, Krylova, Konov, Konov, Kojevnikova, Loginova, Lomonosov, Muratova, Mait, Mororov, Neuzora, Nevsky, Notkin, Ogurisoa, Orenkhova, Otar, Pakhomova, Prokasheva, Pantelei, Potashov, Rudenko, Ryzhkov, Ruslana, Seregina, Simonov, Shelyukin, Solovi, Stasys, Torshin, Tkachenko, Terekhov, Tyurin, Ulanov, Uzunova, Urmanov, Vasilijus, Vascha, Vadim, Yakunin, Yuris, Zorin, Zulfiya, Zonoviev

Vendel/Vesten

Alsagaard, Andreassen, Barhaugen, Brusveen, Colbjornsen, Dybendahl, Engen, Farstad, Gjelten, Gravdal, Hattestad, Hovgaard, Hvammen, Jorgenson, Kjerulf, Knusten, Konningen, Lundberg, Maartmann, Njos, Nordskog, Odegard, Olrik, Peerson, Rolvaag, Rynning, Sivertsen, Skeldal, Solberg, Stensrud, Stokken, Thomassen, Thorsen, Ulvang, Undset, Vik, Vinjarengen, Waerhaug

Vodacce

Agnelli, Alferi, Aretino, Badoglio, Bellotto, Boccioni, Cavazza, Cero, Casillo, Dellisanti, d'Arezzo, Dulano, Errichiello, Fellini, Fantoni, Fattori, Giordano, Giovanelli, Giotti, Larini, Lufrano, Lucibello, Mengoni, Mennea, Montorsi, Nizzola, Nencini, Paruzzi, Pirelli, Pollio, Pazzaglia, Rallo, Riccio, Rigamonti, Ramazzotti, Rispoli, Segni, Sibani, Scali, Scoppa, Tognazzi, Tonani, Tomba, Teocoli, Tomba, Ucelli, Velasca, Vettori, Vitelli, Zarrilli, Zoggeler, Zurita

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY

Action: A single act taken by a character during a Phase. A Hero may make a number of Actions per Round equal to his Panache.

Action Dice: Dice that represent a Hero's Actions during a Round. Each die's facing tells the Hero in which Phase he has an Action.

Active Defense: An action that gets a Hero out of the way of a successful attack (therefore, rolled after the attack has been proven successful). A Hero's Active Defense is Wits+Defense Knack; the TN for the Active Defense is his opponent's Attack roll.

Arcana: A term referring to the twenty-two Greater Cards in the Vodacce Sorte deck; also a Hubris or Virtue available to Heroes at the beginning of the game: a kind of "heroic halo" that hangs above the Hero's head that only Fate Witches can see.

Background: Unresolved stories in a Hero's past that come back to haunt him every once in a while.

Brawn: The Trait that determines a character's strength; used for rolling damage and resisting the effects of Wounds.

Character: A list of words and numbers that represents a persona. There are five kinds of characters: Heroes, Villains, Henchmen, Brutes and Non-Player Characters.

Contested roll: An action that a character takes against an opponent who is actively resisting that action.

Defense Knack: Knacks that protect a Hero from getting hit by opponents.

Dramatic Wound: A serious injury that results in a failed Wound Check.

Finesse: A Trait that measures a character's physical coordination; used for striking opponents.

Flesh Wound: An inconsequential injury. Whenever a Hero takes a Flesh Wound, he makes a Wound Check (using Brawn) against his total number of Flesh Wounds.

Free Raise: When a character adds 5 to the result of a roll. This is a normally a bonus.

Game Master (GM): The player who runs the game. He doesn't play a particular character, but instead plays all the characters the other players will encounter in Théah.

Knacks: Knowledge and abilities gained from the study of a Skill.

Non-Player Character (NPC): This is a character whose part is played by the Game Master, not one of the other players.

Panache: A Trait that determines a character's style; at the beginning of a Round, a Hero rolls a number of Action Dice equal to his Panache.

Passive Defense: Based on a Defense Knack, the TN an opponent needs to roll in order to successfully strike a character. The formula for determining Passive Defense is $5+(\text{Defense Knack} \times 5)$.

Perception Check: The GM will call for a Perception Check whenever he wants to see if your Heroes spot something that isn't readily visible, such as a hidden catch, a far-off ship, or a dust-obscured hieroglyph. A Perception Check is a straight Wits roll, only adding dice for Advantages such as Keen Senses which specifically add to Perception Checks.

Phase: One-tenth of a Round.

Raise: When a TN is assigned by the GM, a player may chose to Raise the TN in increments of 5. For every 5 points a player raises the TN, the quality of his success increases.

Rank: A number, usually between one and five, that represents a Trait or Knack. The higher the Rank, the stronger the Trait or Knack.

Reputation: A character's fame (or infamy) measured from -30 to 100. For each 10 Reputation Points (positive or negative), the character has one Reputation Die, usable in Reputation Actions.

Resolve: A Trait that determines a Hero's intestinal fortitude; a Hero may take a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to his Resolve before he is Crippled and twice his Resolve before he is Knocked Out.

Roll: A number of dice rolled to determine the success or failure of an action.

Roll and Keep: When a Hero takes an action, the player rolls a number of dice. Throughout the rule book, the total is always listed with this formula: A+B. A is the number of dice he can roll, and B is the number of dice he can keep (usually the highest).

Rounds: A value of time. Each round is approximately 10 seconds long, but can be longer or shorter as the GM sees fit. A Round is divided into 10 Phases.

Simple roll: An action in which the outcome is based solely on the skill and ability of the Hero.

Skill: A word that describes knowledge the character has learned. All Skills are accompanied by Knacks, which are "sub-skills" or "specialties." Skills do not have Ranks, but Knacks do.

Trait: A word that defines a physical or mental aspect of a character. Each Trait is listed with a Rank; the higher the Rank, the stronger the Trait. The five Traits are: Brawn, Finesse, Resolve, Wits and Panache.

Target Number (TN): A number assigned by the GM when a Hero declares an action. The higher the TN, the more difficult the action.

Wits: A Trait that determines how quickly a Hero can think on his feet; used for Active Defense rolls and rolls involving intelligence and memory.

Wound Check: Whenever a Hero receives new Flesh Wounds, he must make a Wound Check: rolling his Brawn against a TN equal to his total Flesh Wounds.

Published References

The following abbreviations are used within this compendium to refer to published sources. Page numbers appear after the abbreviation in the format Abbr:Pg, where Abbr is the abbreviation and Pg is the page reference to the most recent printing.

7GC	7th Sea Game Masters' Compendium
7PC	7th Sea Players' Compendium (this document)
AH	Arrow of Heaven: Adventure (Erebus Cross III)
AV	Avalon: Sourcebook
CM	7th Sea Compendium
CN#	Crow's Nest: Magazine (Issue #)
CA	Castille: Sourcebook
DK	Die Kreuzritter: Sourcebook
EI	Eisen: Sourcebook
FRC	Freiburg: City Sourcebook (from the Boxed Set)
FRS	Freiburg: Sights Sourcebook (from the Boxed Set)
GM	Game Masters' Guide: Rulebook (First/Second Printing)
IC	The Invisible College: Sourcebook
LF	The Lady's Favor: Adventure (Erebus Cross I)

LV	Los Vagos: Sourcebook
MN	Montaigne: Sourcebook
PG	Players' Guide: Rulebook (First/Second Printing)
PN	The Pirate Nations: Sourcebook
RC	Knights of the Rose & Cross: Sourcebook
RL	Rilasciare: Sourcebook
SD	Sophia's Daughters: Sourcebook
SF	Scoundrel's Folly: Adventure (Erebus Cross II)
US	Ussura: Sourcebook
VE	Vendel: Sourcebook
VK	Villain's Kit
VO	Vodacce: Sourcebook
WB	Waves of Blood: Sourcebook

APPENDIX III: THÉAN PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The following pronunciation guides are not meant to be complete; they are only quick guides to give you an idea how to pronounce personal and place names. More complete pronunciation guides are provided in the Nation Sourcebooks.

Avalon

Before the Montaigne invasion, Cymru (kim-ree) was Avalon's native tongue, and it forms the basis for the modern Avalon tongue. Much of Avalon's geography has names that look confusing, but once you understand the language, they are easy to pronounce.

Vowels

Cymru vowels are always long and stress is always placed in the next-to-last syllable.

w: is a vowel, pronounced "oo" as in "food"

Consonants

c: is always hard, as in "cat"

dd: is an aspirated "th"

f: pronounced "v"

ff: pronounced "l"

ll: is a sound unique to Avalon. Put your tongue between your teeth, blow softly and make the "l" sound.

Castille

A quick note: The word "Castille" (kas-teel) is the foreign pronunciation for "Castillo" (kas-TEE-yo) or "Castle." Castellians don't appreciate their nation's name being mispronounced.

Vowels

a: "ah" as in father

e: "ay" as in café

i: "ee" as in need

o: "oh" as in piano

u: "oo" as in June

Consonants

b/v: the Castillian b and v are almost identical, as if slurring them together

j: "y", as in "yam" and "yonder"

ll: "ya" as in "million"

ñ: a combination of n and y as in "canyon"

rr: the "trilled r" or "rolling r"

x: "ch", as in the Highlands "loch"

Eisen

Vowels

ä or **ae:** Shape your mouth like you're going to say "ee", and say "ay"

ö or **oe:** Shape your mouth like you're going to say "oh", and say "ee"

ü or **ue:** Shape your mouth like you're going to say "oo", and say "ee"

ie: pronounced "ee" ei: pronounced "eye"

au: pronounced "ow"

aü: pronounced "oy"

eu: also pronounced "oy"

Consonants

v: pronounced "f"

w: pronounced "v"

s: pronounced "z"

ss (also written **ß**): pronounced "s"

z: pronounced "ts"

Montaigne

Montaigne is a complicated language; there are more exceptions than rules. What follows is a very rough guide to speaking Montaigne.

Vowels

Montaigne's vowels are similar to Castille's, except:

u: as the Eisen "ü"

ou: as in "bush"

oi: pronounced "oh-ah"

eau: pronounced "oh"

ai: as in "paid"

er or **et:** pronounced "eh"

Consonants

The consonants d, n, p, r, s, t, and x are usually silent at the end of a word.

r: rolled, like a Highland "r"

g: when followed by a, o, or u, as in "garden"; when followed by e or i, as the second "g" in "language"

gn: as the Castille ñ

ch: pronounced "sh"

h: silent at the beginning of a word

Ussura

Ussuran has its own alphabet, unlike the one used by the rest of Théah. The Ussuran names in these books have been transliterated into the familiar alphabet, and so are pronounced more or less as spelled. No foreigner can speak Ussuran like a native, anyway.

Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

Vowels

a: as in "awe"

á: as in "father"

ä: as in "bar"

å: as in "call"

e: as in "gin"

é: as in "day"

i: as in "is"

o: as in "boat"

ö: as in "not"

ø: as in "earl"

u: as in "foot"

ü: as in "boot"

y: as in "fruit"

Consonants

c/k: as in “bank”
g: as in “give”
j: as in “year”
r: as in “trilled”

Vodacce

Vowels

a: as in “far”
e: as in “fate”
i: as in “machine”
o: as in “store”
u: as in “spoon”

Consonants

c: (before a, o, u and consonants, including h) as in “cat”; (before e or i) as in “champ”
g: (before a, o, u and consonants, including h but not including l and n) as in “gap”; (before e or i) as in “gem”
gli: as in “billion”
gn: as in onion
h: always silent
q: (always followed with u) as in quick
r: rolled like the Highlands r
s: as in “rose”, also when followed by b, d, g, l, m, n, r, v; at the beginning of a word or when doubled is unvoiced as in “sap”
sc: before e or i as in “shot”; before a, o and u as in “skate”
z: as in “treads”

Pirate Nations

This is the “Pirate Voice” made famous by Robert Newton in the 1950 movie adaptation of *Treasure Island*. He built this accent using old Welsh dialects.

The Crying Baby “A”

The sound found in “blather” and “ran” is also used in words like “father” and “water.”

Short “E”

“E” is always short, as in “get” and “set.”

The Popeye “I”

The Pirate “I” is like the Australian “I”. When Popeye says “Oi yam what Oi yam”, he’s speaking Pirate.

The Canadian “O”

The “O” sound found in Canada is the sound we’re looking for. It’s a combination of “ow” and “oo,” as in “out and about.”

The Monkey “U”

The Pirate “U” is short and clipped and almost an “oo” sound. Make an “oo” sound while saying “nuptial” or “cup” and you’ll have it.

The Hard Pirate “R”

This is the sound everybody’s familiar with. “Ahr!”

Inversion

Here’s a technique for players who’ve mastered the sounds. Modern English puts its nouns in front of its verbs: “I do,” “he does,” etc. If you really want to master Pirate-ese, put your verbs in front of your nouns. The best way to learn this technique is to listen to Yoda. “Wise you must be,” “Great is Vader,” and “To Obi-Wan do you listen!”

APPENDIX IV: NOTES FROM THE FIELD

One of the major contributors to the 7th Sea Mailing List has posted these notes, which new (or experienced) players may find useful. While they are not comprehensive, in that they don't describe all of the different options available in the game, these notes may prove useful for players of certain Swordsman Schools, or anyone using the different Swordsman Knacks.

Swordsman Schools

Aldana

Simply put, Aldana focuses on perfection of form and technique. It is proof that you can become a great fighter by focusing on mechanics. This much practice gives you a great deal of control over when you go, and the rest of the fight. The song is what drives you, carries you through the fight, but the song can adapt as needed. Good swordsmen not only have multiple songs, they can also learn new ones and change the old. This, combined with a focus on perfection, lead to the "trance" this school is famous for. The advantage mechanical perfection gives you essentially turns into a pool of extra Drama Dice each round. Use these freely.

Excellence on defense, excellence on rhythm, and excellence on attack make for a wonderful combination. Tag your opponent a few times, put in a Feint if you have the opening or your opponent likes to Parry (using those nice extra Drama Dice to help hit), and Riposte if they attack you. Hold at least one action at all times, more if you want, to take advantage of Riposte's power. Save up those Tagging Dice, and hit hard, using any unspent Focus Dice, with your last action. Some schools will Parry better than you do, some will Attack better, but none have the balance you do.

Compatibility

Well learned technique carries over everywhere, and the song can be adapted to meet a variety of influences. You can use what you learned from Aldana any time you use a rapier, and the focus on just about any fight. After all, it's just a matter of closing out the rest of the world. The rest may not translate as well to heavy weapons, though. It's possible to integrate Aldana's style of movement with heavy weapons, polearms, or hand to hand combat, but it may be difficult.

Cappuntina

This "school" has one purpose and one purpose only: to put as many pieces of flying steel between you and your attacker as possible in the shortest amount of time. Hide a number of knives about your person in easily accessible places. Then, by turning the action of drawing into the beginning of the throw, speed is increased to incredible degrees. With enough practice a student of this school even gets to the point that conscious effort is not needed to aim; the eyes identify the target and the hand takes care of directing the knife's flight.

Because of the nature of throwing knives, however, and since most of the students are ladies unprepared for a drawn out fight, the school is rarely lethal. Instead, the goal is to slow your opponent down by Pinning clothing to whatever is convenient. If other people or objects are between you and your target, make the opening. Why bother throwing knives at a target when you can bounce the knife off three walls before hitting your target? Or add some distance to your throw, and surprise the heck out of

your target, by throwing in a high Arc which comes down directly on their head.

Regardless, remember your goal; throw as many knives as you need to incapacitate your opponent as quickly as possible, and then maybe one more while they're immobilized just to teach the fool not to mess with you.

Compatibility

The nice thing about this school is that it focuses specifically on one particular act: throwing knives. Usually this means throwing knives, but (especially with the system's easy-going weapon classification system) a parrying dagger works just as well. Of course, a throwing knife can also be used to parry...

As a result, this school can be used any time you have a knife on your person. The necessity of throwing the knife may affect how you fight afterwards, but that shouldn't be a problem. What student of Cappuntina would carry only one knife?

Finnegan

Not just the world's greatest boxing school, but the world's greatest *drunken* boxing school! Once again the Inish have surpassed us all. This school is, quite simply, designed to make a boxer who hits very hard, takes a lot of punishment, and likes a good drink. A series of little tricks and proper form help the Finnegan student hit very hard, and years of practice getting hit by these people as a learning method helps condition him to take beatings that would wipe out most people without dropping their beer. As for the drinking, there are certain ways people sway and stagger when they've had a few to drink. Most people don't expect such seemingly random movement to turn into a sudden, vicious attack, meaning you can use it to your advantage.

Sadly, most people in this civilized age feel the need to go into a fight fully armed. There exists a simple solution to this: disarm them. Wait for them to attack, duck under, bob forward, and twist the weapon from their grasp. Then knock them to the ground and kick them a few times while they're getting up. Hit them very hard. Sink in an uppercut or a few jabs, grapple them, and quietly pound them into submission while they're trying to deal with your bear hug. If they wiggle free, don't worry. Just duck under their attacks and cut loose.

Compatibility

The nice thing about Finnegan is that its teachings are universally useful. Granted, you may not be throwing many punches while using a sword, but the toughening training still applies no matter what you're using. And the ability to use drunkenness to your advantage can, with just a little practice, be applied to weapons as well. But any time you take a swing at someone, no matter what other teachings you use, your Finnegan training will help you.

MacDonald

Accuracy is for puny fighters who barely use swords bigger than their...pinkies. A good fighter, one properly trained in the highlands, knows that the way to win a fight is to swing as hard as you can as often as you can. After all, it's not at all hard to hit a man-sized object with a 4-foot long sword (at least, at the smaller end of things). So don't worry 'bout that "honorable" stuff those weak "fencers" use. The way to show your opponent honor in a fight is cut him down quickly and drink a pint (or several pints) to his memory. Hit fast, hit hard, and don't worry about "aim" and "delicacy".

This school is a simple one; light on the strategy. All the techniques are based around inflicting extra damage (5k3 by Master), or swapping dice for more damage. The knacks combine nicely to a similar end. While it seems mildly incomprehensible to hold a 4-foot sword in such a way as to hit with the pommel, you can do exactly that. The combo of Pommel Strike/Lunge is a beautiful one; especially with a 5k3 blade. Likewise, Pommel Strike/Beat against people who like to parry or use Riposte. Granted this means you need to be able to hit with the Pommel Strike, but still...

The Journeyman technique raises some interesting questions: on a Pommel Strike/Lunge combination: is it better to call lots of raises for damage, or to sacrifice attack dice for damage dice, and make fewer raises? Well, adding 1k0 to a roll results in slightly less than +5 on average. You're basically making the trade for certainty rather than chance. Besides; assuming you roll 9k4 at this point, you can safely hit 25 with only 4k4. This gives you 4 raises, 2 dice from Lunge, and 5 from the technique for (assuming Master here) 10k9 before adding Brawn. And you can do that as often as you like...

Compatibility

Spiritually, this has a bit of trouble with some of the other heavy weapon schools. It's much faster and more chaotic than Leegstra, and lacks the structured, methodical style of Eisenfaust. But beyond those small philosophical difficulties it could work. Mechanically (referring to both game and real life) this school works almost perfectly with Leegstra, but why you need more damage I don't know. Except for stacking the Master abilities, it's almost not worth it. And Eisenfaust is about waiting for opportunities; once those arise, there's no reason you can't hit such to make a Highlander proud!

Rogers

The widely acknowledged Pirate School, Rogers isn't so much about excellent fighting as it is about tricks. Coordination comes with time and practice, but that's mainly a bonus. This style, though, is mainly useful on ships (and similar surfaces like moving carriages). Unlike most schools, this uses Bind (Fencing), which means the only weapon will be tied up. Fortunately it has Corps-a-corps and various pirate tricks involving off-hand weapons to fill those holes.

The key to this school is to carefully pick pirate tricks that compliment your techniques and abilities; this makes up for otherwise weak techniques. For instance, "use Balance instead of Parry" is, by itself, completely useless. But combined with tricks that give you extra dice on Balance rolls, it becomes more useful. Of course, you also become susceptible to tricks which give your opponents bonuses against people using balance, so beware. Decide how you want to fight, and where, and pick the right tricks. Then bind your opponent, and smash them silly before they get free.

Compatibility

These techniques are mainly designed to be used under specific circumstances (on ship, swinging down, attacking with a beer mug, etc.), but as long as you meet those conditions, you should be able to use the techniques and tricks at any time. And, of course, fear effects are pretty constant. The bigger issue is that most pirates probably won't learn a more formal school, and most "landlocked" swordsmen wouldn't stoop to learning a school that's so undignified. Most swordsmen. Usually.

Soldano

A good example of Soldano can be seen in movie "The Mask of Zorro" when Zorro takes on a barracks full of soldiers. The

Soldano master does not stand still for long, rather he is everywhere at once, cutting, lunging, dodging, and then stepping away and getting ready for the next round. This is not a school which, like Leegstra or Eisenfaust, spends its time sitting around and waiting. And this is where it gets its power.

Quite frequently, a mediocre fighter can overwhelm a superior one through sheer wildness. Of course, it's quite likely s/he'll get a sword through the ribs for the attempt, but it will be one of those cases where both fighters fall. Beyond that, while most fighters know how to deal with one sword or even a sword and short dagger, very few are used to dealing with two full length killing swords. Soldano teaches such a rush of energy, such a flurry and onslaught that even very competent swordsmen frequently don't know how to deal with it. If a group attacks you, go into a Whirl, cutting and thrusting and dodging at all angles, and watch them all fall (in game play, one Soldano Journeyman was taking out entire Brute squads in one action. By Master he was calling extra raises just to make life interesting.) Of course, if someone does rush you like this, they leave little openings because they're not being careful and clean in technique. Beware these little holes.

By Master in this school you'll have a whole pile of Drama Dice. Whatever you normally start with and whatever you earn, you start each fight with 3 extra Drama Dice. Plus, if you're going against a Villain, you'll start stealing his in large amounts. If they attack you, use Double Parry. Use Tagging a couple of times a round. With at least one action a round, attack; call Raises for damage; then hit, spending a couple of these Drama Dice if you need to; then, especially if you rolled lots of damage or he hasn't taken any Dramatic Wounds yet, spend more Drama Dice to reduce the threshold for extra Dramatic Wounds. At worst you'll force your opponent to spend dice on the wound check; at best you'll do enough damage to cripple the bastard in one shot.

Compatibility

Whirl is almost impossible to do with only one sword, as is Double Parry. A kind and generous GM might, (that's a "big" *might*) let you replicate the effects with a knife or improvised weapon. But it would still be difficult. Barring weapon-specific issues, there aren't any Swordsman Knacks that wouldn't integrate nicely into the school. It is easy to picture someone of this school using one sword to Bind and the other to Attack, or Riposting into a Lunge, or Disarming his opponent and *then* making the Intimidation check.

As for other schools, this style would fit with any school that isn't specifically calm and calculating. Any of the one-sword styles could be done with a second sword in hand, allowing you to blend them with this. Basically, the Soldano philosophy is to overwhelm the opponent with sheer aggression, convincing them they are about to die. Very few schools would have a problem with this. The apprentice and journeyman technique would probably only apply when you are able to fight with this kind of wild abandon, but the master technique should really kick in whenever you go through a whole group of people.

Villanova

Quite possibly the sneakiest school yet known to Théah, this school relies more on outsmarting and tricking your opponent than out-fighting them. This style will frequently be used at very close range, probably even with your blade in contact with your opponent's. This allows you to clearly communicate your invitations, and to stop-thrust with a quick extension as soon as you feel movement. Use Repartee Actions, use Feints and Stop-Thrust, use whatever you need. Convince your opponent the time is right to attack, then hit him. If you scare your opponent

enough that he refuses to attack, hit him in such a way that he can't parry.

More so than with most schools, it's a good idea to hold actions when using this style. Double Parry or Riposte can be used off an interrupt action if needed, but Stop-Thrust can only work with held or current actions. While Stop-Thrust is a very powerful knack, it only works at full effectiveness if you inflict a dramatic wound. Therefore, it's usually wise to hold off on using it until you've already landed an attack or two. Until then, use Double Parry. Don't worry about conserving those Drama Dice, though; spend them freely on Feints and Stop-Thrust; spending them on Stop-Thrust means you can call raises, inflicting more damage, and, hopefully, stopping their attack.

At Master level, lower your phase whenever you've got a Held Action (and aren't facing huge numbers of opponents), and lower it all the way. 5 Free Raises make it very likely you'll get those Dramatic Wounds, especially if you've hit them before.

A word on fencing grip rings: the "Vodacce-style rapier" allows greater power and control with the sword, because you can use more finger strength on the blade, rather than just agility. A Disarm *does* twist the fingers painfully, but there are still many reasons to use this style, even beyond Vodacce (although the Montaigne would probably avoid something so unfashionable, and the Castillians actually designed a more comfortable version of the ring).

Compatibility

Villanova is a very opportunistic school. As such, it combines very well with any other rapier school (and, with some effort, you could probably learn similar abilities with polearms or heavy weapons), because you can use the other style as normal and then, when the opportunity arises, strike to make Giovanni proud!

Going the other way, most any other school's philosophy is compatible with this one. One can be a perfectionist and sneaky/dirty at the same time; one can taunt one's opponent; one can be calm and orderly or wild and energetic. Any other attitude, except for "fair and honorable above all" works well with sneaky, dirty fencing like this.

Swordsman Knacks

Keep these in mind when looking at how to use your school appropriately. You can get a lot of power out of a school just by combining the knacks properly. And by combining complimentary sets of knacks from two or more different schools, you almost don't even need techniques. Sometimes the most obvious uses or combinations are the best, but the ones no one was expecting can win you a fight (and make everyone at the table go "Oooo...Cool!").

Arc

No matter how much they look like a straight line, every projectile moves in a curve. Faster ones make a closer approximation of straightness, but even the fastest bullet has a bit of a curve in its path. As you improve your skill in this Knack, you learn to control this. It may seem like you're aiming above your target's head, but when the bullet eventually comes down, it comes down in the right place.

Attack

There are a very limited number of ways to attack; either you extend the point straight out through your opponent, or you cut down with a sharp edge and sever. Within that, though, there are many tricks you can use. As you gain skill in attacking, you learn

how to go around, or through, Parries, how to convince your opponent to guard high when you attack low, and how to control tempo and distance enough to drive your point home. At Rank 1 you can hit your basic target. By Rank 3 you can go around simple Parries with ease, and by Rank 4 you can aim for specific freckles at will. At Rank 5 you're hitting before your opponent is fully aware that you even moved.

Beat

There are two types of Beats; hard and light. The light Beat, ironically enough, is covered under Feint; this Knack deals with heavy Beats. The idea behind a heavy Beat is to hit their sword with enough force to leave their sword in a useless position, at least for the fraction of a second it'll take you to hit them. The trick to doing a Beat properly is to keep the motion in your hand so that it's fast enough and subtle enough to hit and to not leave you very far open in case you miss.

Bind

While a good bind will leave your opponent with a useless weapon for the rest of the fight, its main purpose is to make an opening into which you can attack. When using a Panzerhand or your bare hands, the goal is to get a good grip on the weapon (or its handle or their hand) and hold on tight. When using a buckler, dagger, or sword to bind, it's more a matter of pushing the blade into a position from which it can not be easily withdrawn. Usually, if you calm down and look at this situation, it's easy to escape from a Bind. So don't give your opponent time to think. Putting your opponent in a Bind forces him to spend actions getting free. Let him. Spend an action or two to strengthen if you wish, but concentrate instead on pounding him while he's bound.

Bob-n-Weave/Side-step

These two are essentially the same Knack; the difference comes down to flavor. Bob-n-Weave is more a boxing thing; when they punch, duck under it (Bob) and come up to the side (Weave). Or just step to the side and forward or back as needed (Side-step). Either leaves you in a more advantageous position while your opponent is still recovering from their attack, allowing you to attack sooner. If you're good enough at either of these, or you go to a fun school like Torres, this can give you a large number of actions which are suddenly current. And, since they just spent an action, your opponent probably won't be ready to parry all of them. So Side-step and then unload on the fool. Probably deserves it anyway for missing.

Corps-a-corps

The most traditional form of this attack is a good old fashioned shoulder check. But there's no reason you can't do it with a good punch to the chin or a kick to other portions of the anatomy, for that matter. Regardless, you will leave your opponent in a little bit of pain and laid out nicely on the ground. Might it be suggested that now would be a wonderful time to attack as hard as possible? The main trick behind this knack is getting close enough to hit without being stabbed. But that shouldn't be too hard.

Disarm

There are a number of ways to Disarm your opponent. You can grab the weapon and pull it out of their hand, you can apply enough force to the blade to send it flying (a good Beat will do the trick, in fact), or you can apply leverage in just the right way that the sword pops out of the grip. One of the best ways of doing this is to start a big circle at the tip of your opponent's blade which becomes a much smaller circle as you reach the

handle. Pick whichever way works best for your weapon, and send the blade flying. This typically works best when your opponent has just missed you, as they'll be at full extension and your sword will be in contact with theirs (usually), but it can be done at other times as well, with effort.

Double Attack

For obvious reasons, this is only possible with two weapons. Normally it's one quick slash with each weapon, but it is possible, especially with a knife, to make two attacks with the same knife. The objective here is not truly to cause massive damage, but to get in two small, quick hits. Sadly, the knack as written doesn't reflect this. As is, it's one of the most dangerous knacks in the game because it doubles your offensive Panache. Keep Double Attacking and you can beat almost any opponent. Regardless, remember the secret here is speed.

Double Parry

This can be the traditional "X" Parry, or you can just push to the side with both weapons. Either way, this presents great opportunity. The reason this grants a Drama Die, and the reason it's so temporary, is that one blade (or shield or cloak) can be used to hold the Parry while the other one is used to Attack. An excellent and very powerful technique, spend that Drama Die right away and attack into the opening you've created.

Feint

This Knack, more than any except perhaps Parry, covers a huge number of techniques which are all designed to do one thing: get your opponent to parry when you want, where you want, and how you want. Of course, since you'll be expecting this, you can attack somewhere else and hit while they're busy Parrying the wrong attack. Some Feints are actually attacks upon the blade, like a light beat, which say to your opponent, "Hey, I'm going to attack you now!" Some are just the beginning of an attack in one line followed by a quick shift to a different line. Either way, when done properly your opponent will be hit before even realizing they didn't Parry your attack.

The question has been asked, why bother using Beat or Feint when I can make a normal attack and use those raises for damage instead? The answer is simple; as good as you may be at Attacking someone, there will be someone out there who is even better at Parrying your attack. If you can't hit, you can't inflict damage and so, no matter how many Raises you call for damage, you'll never win. Even if your Feints and Beats are hitting lightly, they'll build up after a while. Besides that, it makes all those points your opponent spent on Riposte suddenly become useless. As a house rule, though, consider saying that a Beat or Feint which misses the necessary number of raises but hits the base TN will hit as a normal attack.

Fortitude

Not so much a skill as a learned level of toughness, Fortitude is the result of years of conditioning and physical abuse. Some of my instructors in unarmed combat tell stories of wrapping pieces of wood or metal in rope and spending hours beating on them in a variety of ways to build toughness. Some schools teach that every morning before breakfast you should slap your entire body roughly—quite roughly in fact. That is how you learn Fortitude.

Hook

A boxing term, but one that applies to any barehanded combat (or gauntlets, like Panzerhands, which work similarly). By twisting your body into the strike, your body weight and back

and leg muscles add to the power of the blow. Such a little ingrained addition, but it makes a big difference.

Lunge

Every fencer Lunges; it has the advantages of covering ground quickly in an attack and allowing for speedy recovery. Some, however, are faster, hit harder, or cover a lot more ground. These are the people who Lunge. The only problem with a good lunge is it leaves you spread out; if you don't hit, you're wide open for any attacks which may come your way. So pick up that front foot, throw it forward at top speed, hit, and then recover to your guard stance as fast as you can.

Parry

There is a difference between a Parry, which redirects an Attack, and a block, which absorbs the force. But it's not such an important difference that most people worry about it. Usually you Parry a thrust and block a cut, although a hard enough cut might need to be redirected if you use a light sword. At Rank 1 you know all the basic parries and how to move from one to the other. By Rank 2 you have more than one Parry you can use from any given position, using a combination of straight, circular, diagonal, semi-circular, seated, and counter parries. By Rank 3 you're probably even doing them correctly. Rank 4 you're not Parrying until the last possible second to prevent a Feint, and you're probably tangling their tip in your shirt from time to time, too. At Rank 5 you make it look effortless, barely even moving to turn the fiercest thrust.

Pin

Few things in the world are more fun than tossing a knife (or shooting an arrow for that matter) with enough accuracy to Pin your opponent's arm to the nearest wall. Well, their shirt, but it's still fun to watch them feel all embarrassed. Normally this is used to slow your opponent long enough that you can run away, but don't underestimate the usefulness of Pinning two or three limbs and sending the next knife into a nicely immobilized target.

Pommel Strike

Most people don't worry about the pommel of the sword; after all, it's not sharp so how much can it hurt? So when it hits them, right in the face, too, they're left nicely surprised. Besides, getting hit in the nose is distracting. Leaves you nicely dazed for a few seconds. Traditionally this is done with the hilt (or pommel; go figure) of a sword, but there's no reason it can't be done with any blunt object.

There's a beautiful moment in the movie "Phantom Menace" that shows this. It's the end of Darth Maul's fight against Qui-Gon; Maul takes his quarterstaff-like lightsaber and smashes the handle in the middle against Qui-Gon's face. He's distracted enough by this that he can't react to the following attack... This is the best illustration I've ever seen of how to use this Knack. In game play, the party has occasionally decided to hold all actions until one member uses Corps-a-corps or Pommel Strike and then unload a huge number of attacks in that one phase. But, of course, that's not sporting so we don't do that, right?

Seriously, though, Pommel Strike and Corps-a-corps both provide excellent opportunities to make attacks on your opponent with many raises. While the temptation is great to use these for damage, don't overlook the other knacks which require many raises to work effectively; Beat, Feint, Throat Strike, Eye Gouge, and Ear Clap are all wonderful follow-up Attacks, as you can execute these about as easily as you could normally hit them

(and don't forget; in this game, hitting frequently is often better than hitting hard).

Riposte

There is a wide range of feelings about what constitutes a "true" Riposte. In its simplest form, a riposte is a parry followed by a quick counter attack. What separates "riposte" from "parry/counter attack" is just a matter of timing; riposte happens more quickly. At the highest levels, it is essentially one motion, and how you execute the parry impacts how well you counterattack. While many purists define riposte such that parry and attack must be done with the same blade, it is this writer's opinion that riposte is more a functional definition; parry followed by attack. This means you can parry with your sword and attack with an off-hand weapon, or vice versa. This even means you can dodge out of the way of the thrust and attack while your opponent is extended. However, primarily how one performs a riposte depends on how they have been taught by their school. Habits are powerful.

Side-step/Bob-n-Weave

These two are essentially the same knack; the difference comes down to flavor. Bob-n-Weave is more a boxing thing; when they punch, duck under it (Bob) and come up to the side (Weave). Or just step to the side and forward or back as needed (Side-step). Either leaves you in a more advantageous position while your opponent is still recovering from their attack, allowing you to attack sooner. If you're good enough at either of these, or you go to a fun school like Torres, this can give you a large number of actions which are suddenly current. And, since they just spent an action, your opponent probably won't be ready to parry all of them. So Side-step and then unload on the fool. Probably deserves it anyway for missing.

Stop-Thrust

If your opponent makes the mistake of telegraphing their attack or using sloppy form, and many people do, you can take advantage of the situation by thrusting into their attack. When done right, your extension will block them from finishing their attack, or at least they'll be in too much pain to finish it. The trick to doing this properly is to shut out, or close, the line your opponent is attempting to use. That way they'll be sitting there looking silly with your point in their flesh and their sword feeling useless. Like Riposte, the difference between Stop-Thrust and a Parry/counterattack usually comes down to a matter of timing.

Tagging

Less, almost, a move and more a frame of mind, Tagging is used to point out to your opponent exactly where you could have hit them, were you not feeling so generous at the moment. Cutting clothing or facial hair are common, but Tagging can just as easily be a thrust which stops a hair's width away from a vital point, while you stand with a grin on your face. Any school which teaches Tagging should use it extensively. Build a large pool of Drama Dice, and feel free to use them when needed. Or tag with all but one action in a round, and with that last one call many raises and spend all your dice. Given a Master who rolls 9k4 on attacks and has a Panache of 5, that's a 10k7 attack. Rolling that much, you can easily afford enough raises to roll over on damage.

Throw

What it sounds like. There are different techniques for throwing weapons, based on what type of knife or axe or whatever and how you normally use it.

Trick Shooting

Sure, you can Throw a knife, or shoot a bow, but can you bounce it off the pot hanging on the wall, make it go through the open window, and hit that guy in the foot? Of course you can! Trick Shooting just makes it a little easier to make those impossible shots that no sane person would attempt.

Wall of Steel

[Note that it is very important to pronounce this in a very impressive basso profundo (deep) voice at all times] Your Parries have become so solid that most people would rather insult a king than try to get around them. Either you Parry so well and so quickly that getting an attack in is useless or you keep moving your sword so unpredictably (but controlled enough that you can still parry) that they have no idea when it's safe to attack. It's quite possible to do this with any blade or parrying device, but if it is done with a buckler or cloak it might be more appropriate to call it "Wall of Hide" or "Wall of Cloth". As a note, the same basic thing done with Footwork is the Gallegos master technique; with just a little twist, the blade passes harmlessly past and it almost looks like you didn't even move.

Whirl

Extend swords out on either side of you and twirl rapidly. Or just go into a flurry of attacks and motion. Depending on the school teaching it, this is either a dancer's graceful pirouette, only more dangerous, or an angry cat's blind rage. These aren't strong attacks, or terribly effective, but against some opponents that's all you need.