CORE

by

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The Sundering by
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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

All of those who have been a part of the dream we call Shards of the Stone.

For those unnamed, we thank you.

For those that have gone on to other things, we honor you.

For those that are still with us, we hope to be worthy of you.

For the loyal Shards of the Stone fans, we salute you!

DEDICATED TO:

Nina Nielsen – for her patience, her money, her support through thick and thin, and ten wonderful years together.

The Members of the Shards Mailing List – may this game be all that you've made it become.

Shane Hensley – for your insight, your selfless advice, and for your gentle nature.

Gary Gygax – for creating my inspiration to do this book and for that wonderful Green Tomato Chutney Steak Sauce… my bottle is empty again…

Chris Clark – well, actually I dedicate this to your Lincoln… may it someday get an alcohol carburetor.

Ed Greenwood – for sharing your vision of your Realms in our humble world.

Steve Long – for helping me during the hard times and enlightening me in the good times.

Nicole – my little actress and wonderful daughter.

Bruce Harlick – for your fairness and kind nature.

Jason Dour – for carrying the torch, may it burn brightly for you

Texwaaagh – Matt, Bob, Glen, Mike and the rest… let's game!

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Foreword

The phone rings again, an editor scurries past my office, and deadlines loom like ominous clouds over my mind. In a morning filled with financial decision, budgeting alarum, payroll processing and the omnipresent staff meeting, I lock my door, sit quietly for a moment and look across my desk to a row of tattered volumes and neatly lined sheaves of hex paper.

Now over twenty years old, my first campaign I ever created beckons to me as I leaf through the old, yellowed pages and I laugh quietly as I remember as clear as the faces of my own children the emotions, the adventure, the thrills of game mastering my first roleplaying game. Once again, I'm wandering the halls of a dank dungeon. I can hear the dripping water behind me, the steely eyes peering from the gloom, and the ominous ooze creeping under the axe-mangled door ahead.

My eye wanders to one of the oldest books I possess, "Space Wars Worlds & Weapons" by Steven Eisler. Instantly I'm transported to odd landscapes, to a Mars planet that conveniently has breathable air, and I still remember the odd sensation of no gravity as my imagination tumbles into space in sleek spacecraft armed with blasters and a devil-may-care penchant for glory and adventure.

I step through time once again as the book "Merlin" by Goodrich envelops me into the noble yet arcane arts woven by the quintessential mage as I pace through his study, with boiling vats hissing, and odd antique relics humming with magical energies. He studies a tome as intently as I would pore over my mystical piles of graph paper, day after day, month after month, immersing myself in a world of my own creation, of my own design.

There is a liberation in sharing your creations with the inhabitants of your own realms. As you lead a team of brave adventurers from place to place, painting a vision of tangled jungles with monolithic spires and impossibly fantastic palaces on your player's minds, you remember that sense of anticipation as you hope they can solve the puzzle, discern the rhyme and conquer the foe long enough to get to the vast mounds of glittering treasures and ancient artifacts.

This is my world. This is my adventure. To lead you through my imagination's theatre and to be led into yours. The real world now expands far beyond the ancient tools of pen, pencil and graph paper. Now we step into a new age wielding the database, the Internet, and the 3D modeling tools, but the goal is the same. I invite you to tell your story. I invite you to add to our world or to create your own. I invite you to join me in an epic world of fantasy of heroism… and of victory.

Let the tale begin.

Yours sincerely,
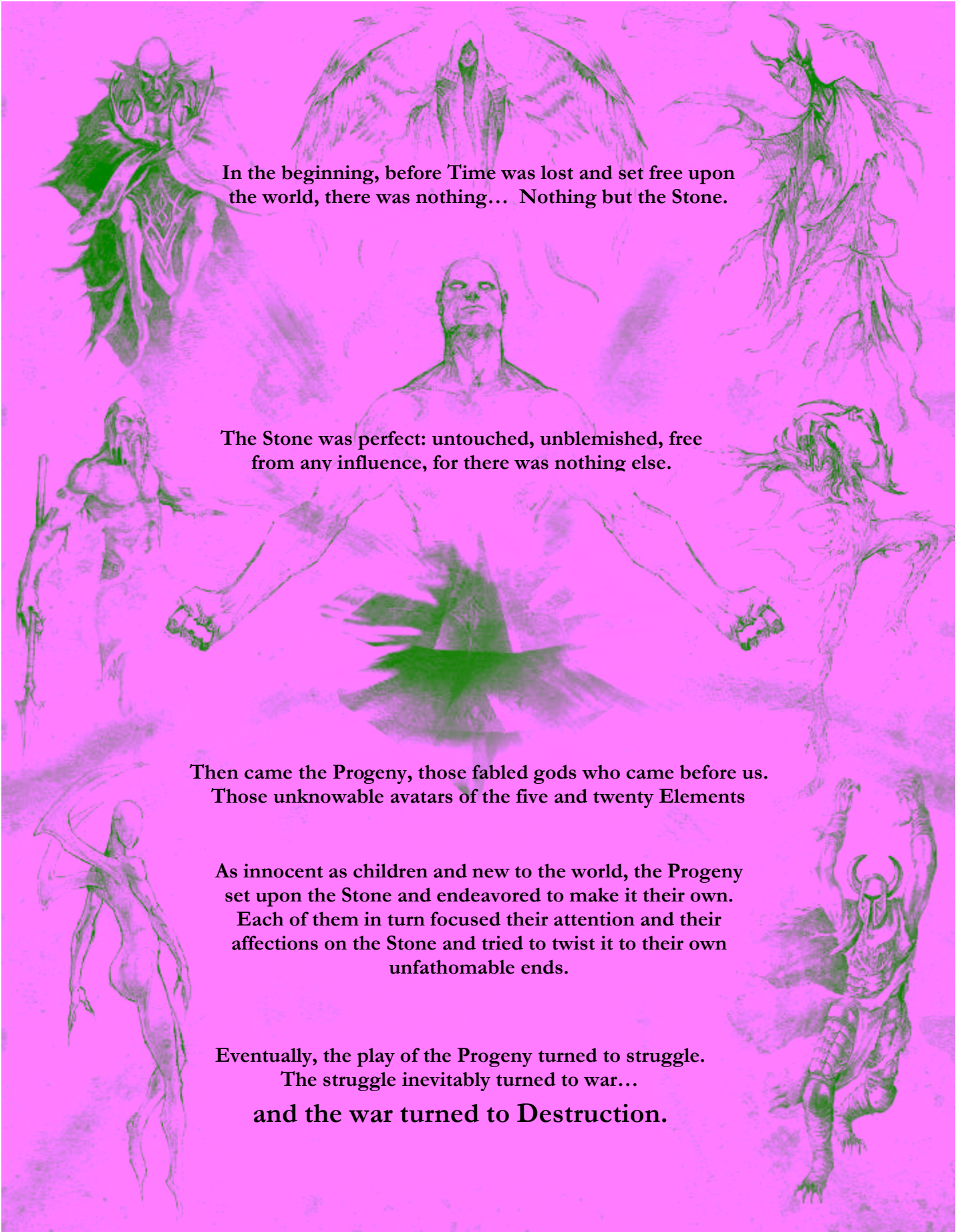
Jared Nielsen
July 12th, 2000

THE
SUNDERING

By
Matt Forbeck
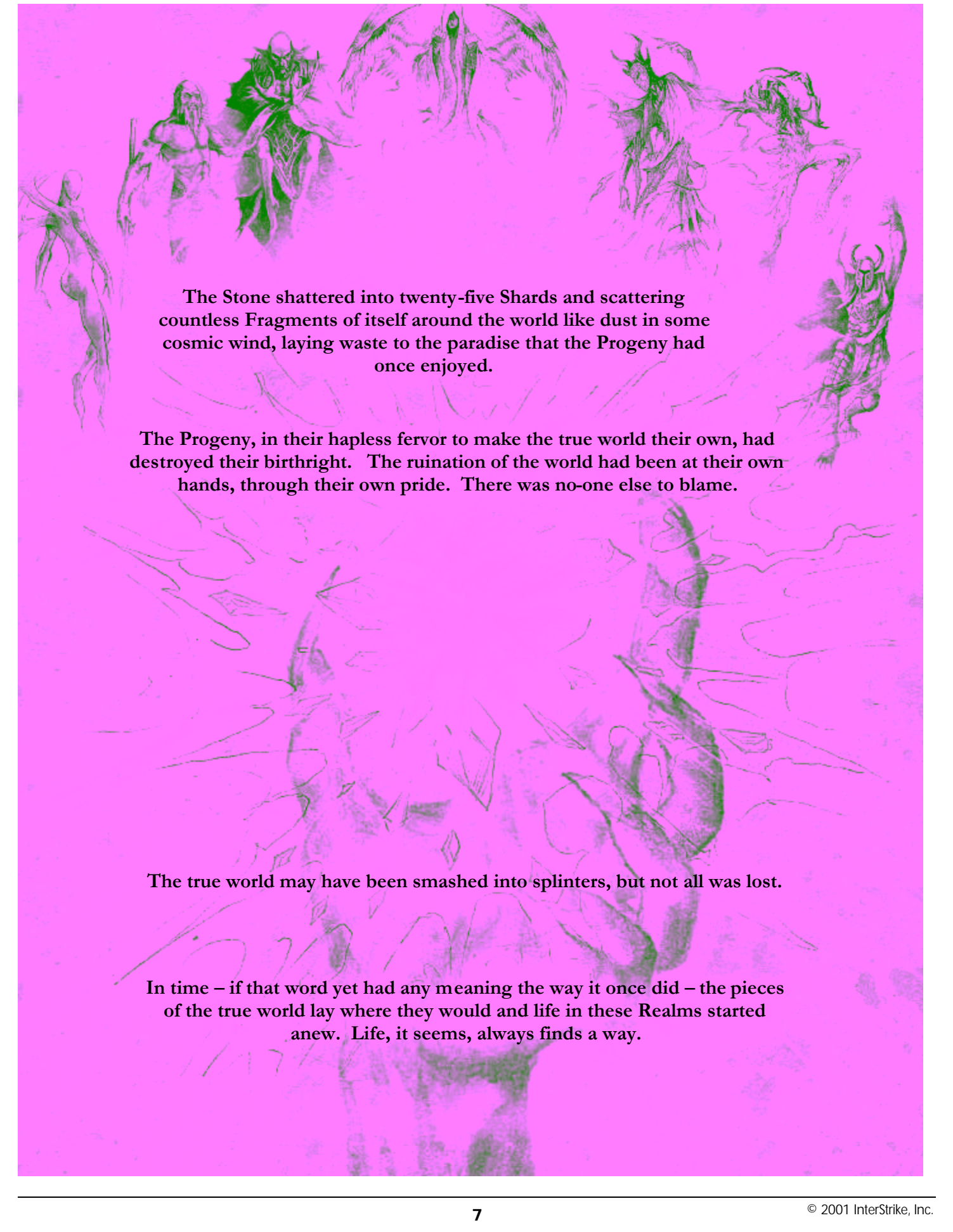
In the beginning, before Time was lost and set free upon the world, there was nothing… Nothing but the Stone.

The Stone was perfect: untouched, unblemished, free from any influence, for there was nothing else.

Then came the Progeny, those fabled gods who came before us. Those unknowable avatars of the five and twenty Elements

As innocent as children and new to the world, the Progeny set upon the Stone and endeavored to make it their own. Each of them in turn focused their attention and their affections on the Stone and tried to twist it to their own unfathomable ends.

Eventually, the play of the Progeny turned to struggle. The struggle inevitably turned to war…

and the war turned to Destruction.

The Stone shattered into twenty-five Shards and scattering countless Fragments of itself around the world like dust in some cosmic wind, laying waste to the paradise that the Progeny had once enjoyed.

The Progeny, in their hapless fervor to make the true world their own, had destroyed their birthright.   The ruination of the world had been at their own hands, through their own pride. There was no-one else to blame.
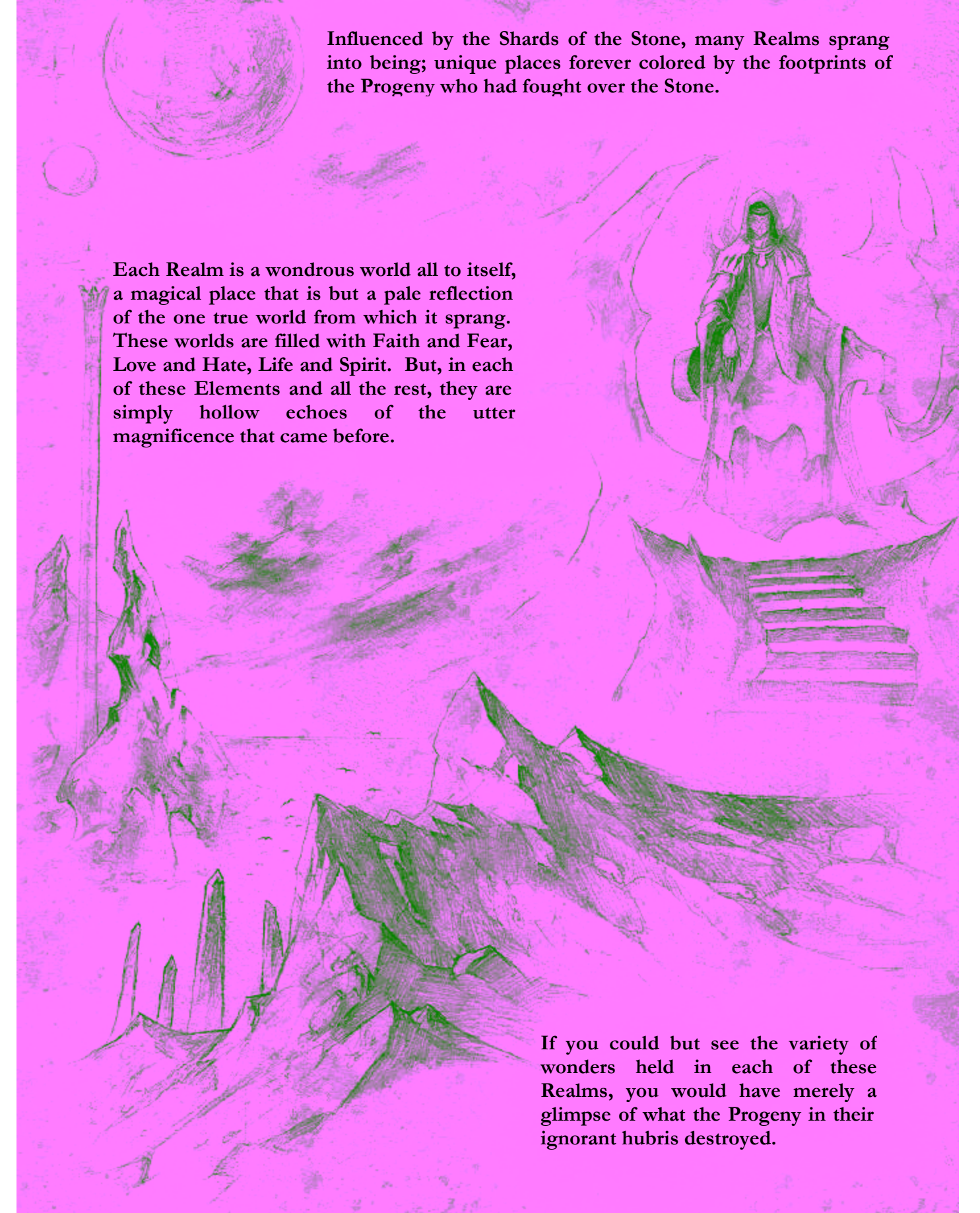
The true world may have been smashed into splinters, but not all was lost.

In time – if that word yet had any meaning the way it once did – the pieces of the true world lay where they would and life in these Realms started anew. Life, it seems, always finds a way.

Within each Realm, survivors crawled from the wreckage of the true world. Some cursed those who had destroyed their paradise, and these poor souls fell victim to their own unholy despair.

Others determined to never surrender, for to do so would be to succumb to certain death, struggled to rebuild as best they could. Theirs was a noble labor, one that seemed doomed from the start, but they knew no other way, so on they forged.
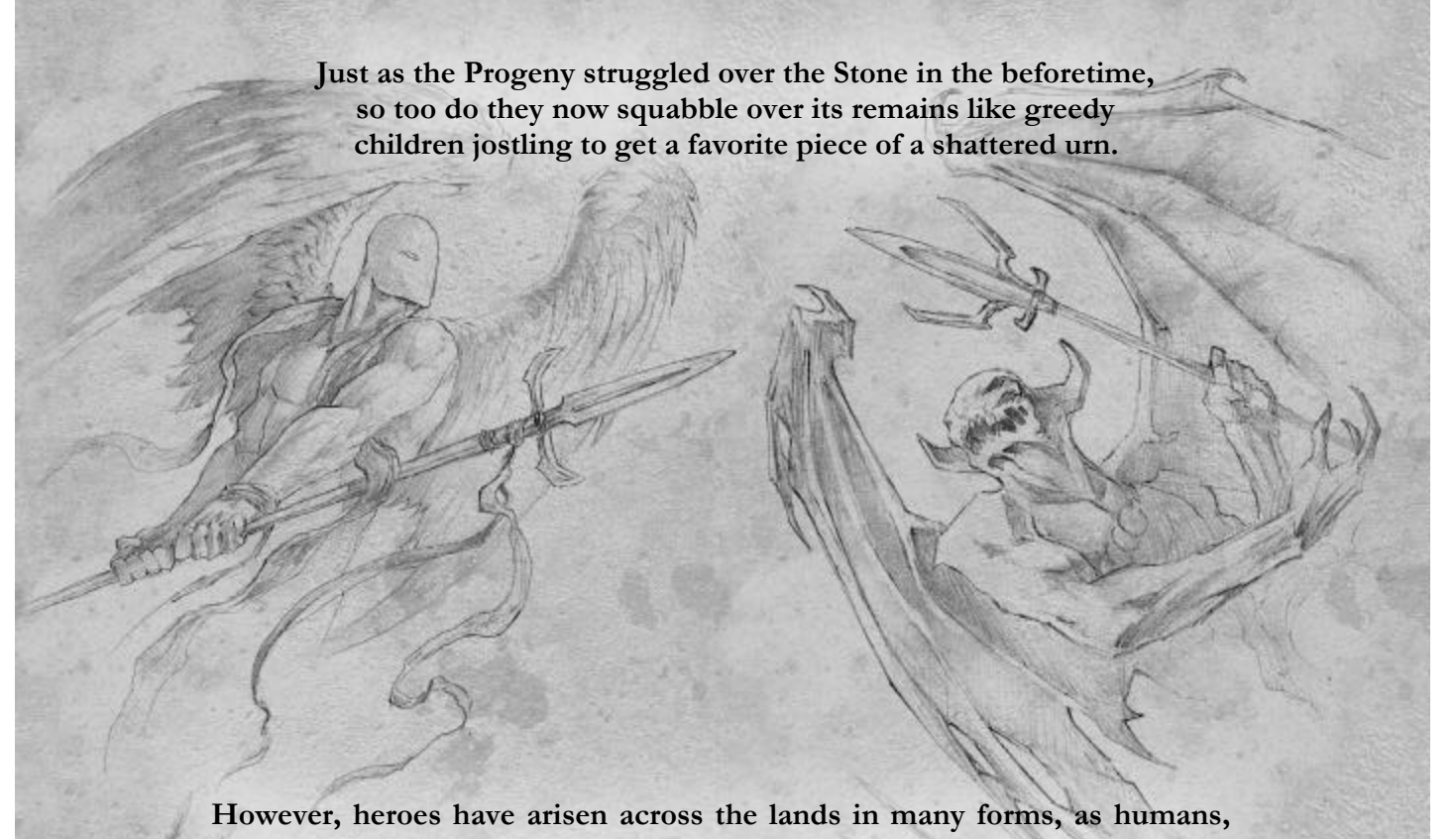
Even the Progeny themselves reeled from the destruction they had unwittingly wrought. In their short-sighted selfishness, they had brought an untimely end to the paradise they had been given. Now they were forced to live on the bitter fruit of the wicked seed they had sown.
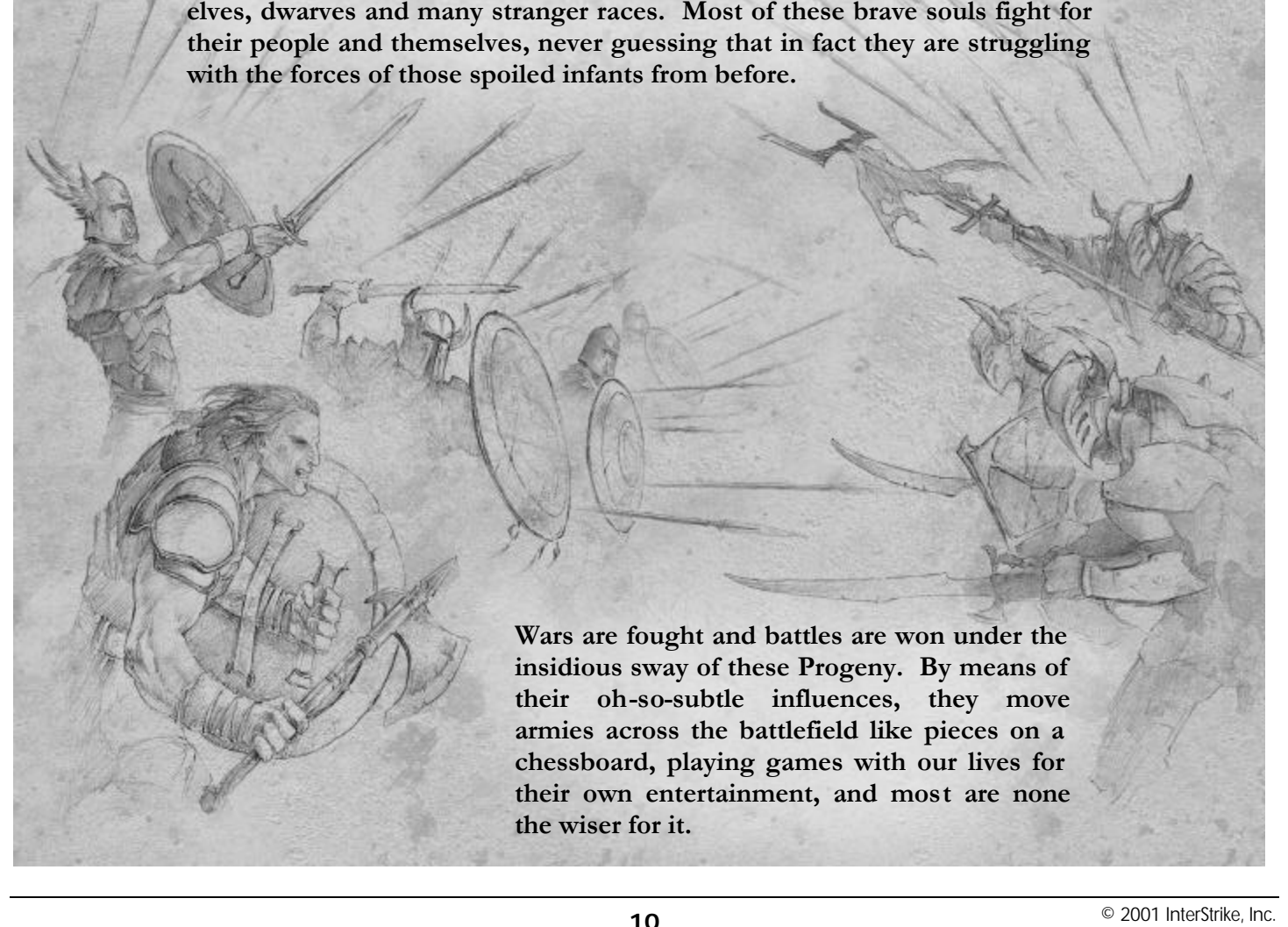
Influenced by the Shards of the Stone, many Realms sprang into being; unique places forever colored by the footprints of the Progeny who had fought over the Stone.

Each Realm is a wondrous world all to itself, a magical place that is but a pale reflection of the one true world from which it sprang. These worlds are filled with Faith and Fear, Love and Hate, Life and Spirit. But, in each of these Elements and all the rest, they are simply hollow echoes of the utter magnificence that came before.

If you could but see the variety of wonders held in each of these Realms, you would have merely a glimpse of what the Progeny in their ignorant hubris destroyed.

Just as the Progeny struggled over the Stone in the beforetime, so too do they now squabble over its remains like greedy children jostling to get a favorite piece of a shattered urn.

However, heroes have arisen across the lands in many forms, as humans, elves, dwarves and many stranger races. Most of these brave souls fight for their people and themselves, never guessing that in fact they are struggling with the forces of those spoiled infants from before.
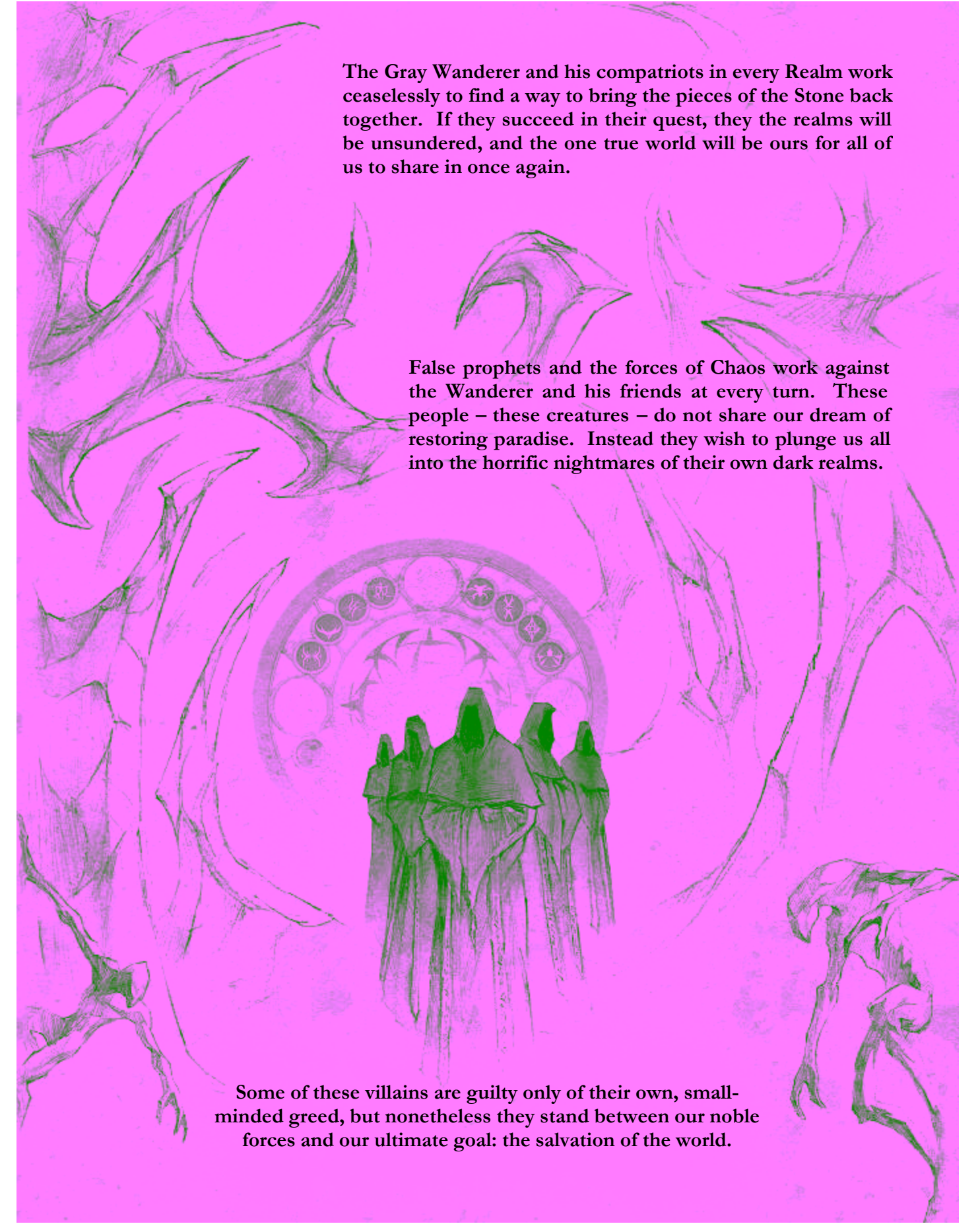
Wars are fought and battles are won under the insidious sway of these Progeny. By means of their oh-so-subtle influences, they move armies across the battlefield like pieces on a chessboard, playing games with our lives for their own entertainment, and most are none the wiser for it.

Among these Heroes proud and strong there is one who wanders between the Realms, spreading the word about the Progeny and their plans, bringing the bright light of truth into the dardest corners of every land.

This man, this Gray Wanderer, slaves tirelessly to unite the people against the Progeny, for only together can the people of the Shards ever hope to stand before beings of such incredible power.

While the Progeny are few, they are the living embodiments of the five and twenty Elements that comprise our Realms. Any one of them could snuff out the life of even the most powerful creature of the Shards like a sputtering candle in a windstorm.
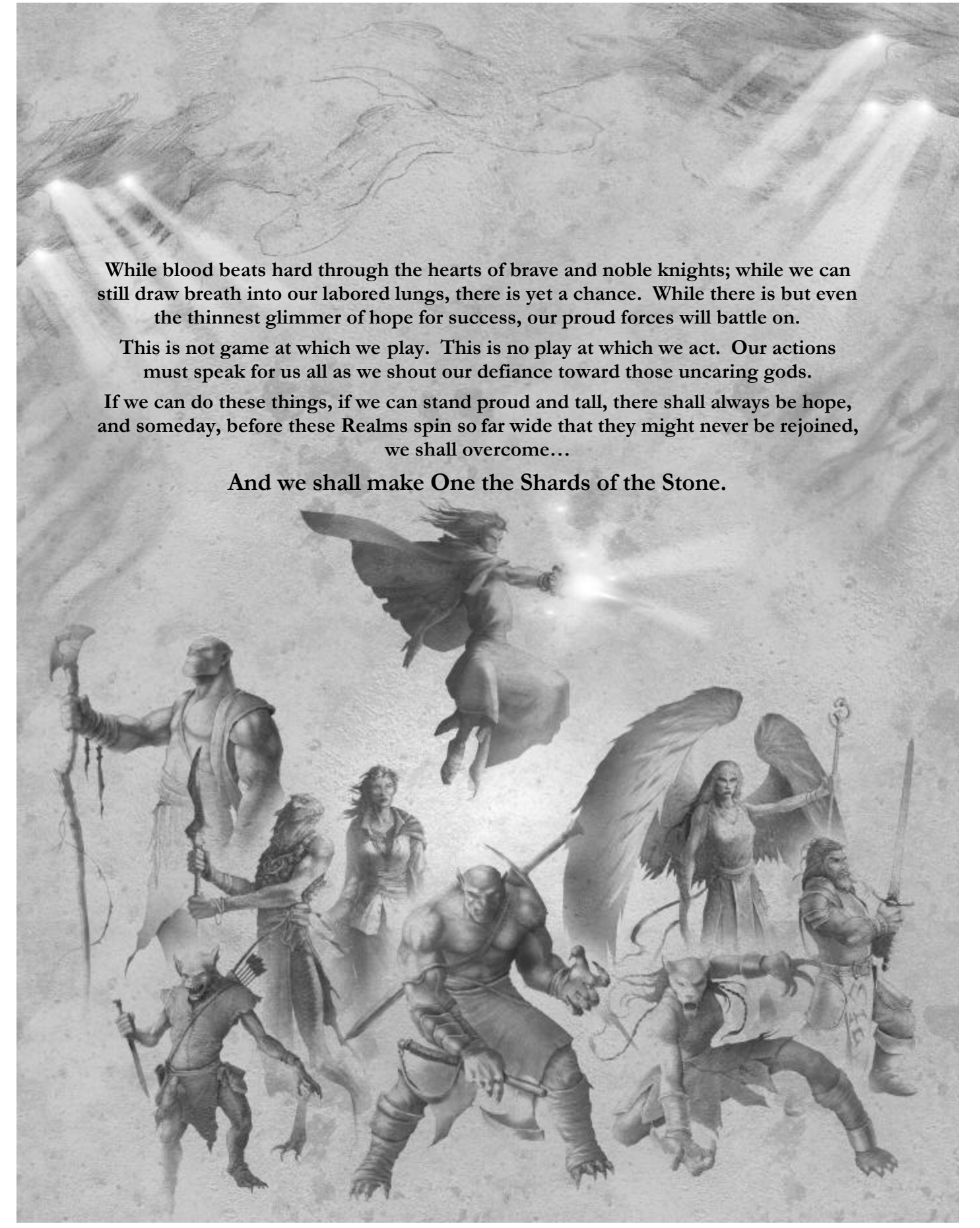
Any direct assault on the Progeny, these gods that rule over our realms, would be doomed to failure, but thankfully there are other, more subtle ways.

The Gray Wanderer and his compatriots in every Realm work ceaselessly to find a way to bring the pieces of the Stone back together. If they succeed in their quest, they the realms will be unsundered, and the one true world will be ours for all of us to share in once again.

False prophets and the forces of Chaos work against the Wanderer and his friends at every turn. These people – these creatures – do not share our dream of restoring paradise. Instead they wish to plunge us all into the horrific nightmares of their own dark realms.

Some of these villains are guilty only of their own, small-minded greed, but nonetheless they stand between our noble forces and our ultimate goal: the salvation of the world.

While blood beats hard through the hearts of brave and noble knights; while we can still draw breath into our labored lungs, there is yet a chance. While there is but even the thinnest glimmer of hope for success, our proud forces will battle on.

This is not game at which we play. This is no play at which we act. Our actions must speak for us all as we shout our defiance toward those uncaring gods.

If we can do these things, if we can stand proud and tall, there shall always be hope, and someday, before these Realms spin so far wide that they might never be rejoined, we shall overcome…

And we shall make One the Shards of the Stone.

THE
STUDENT
OF THE
STONE
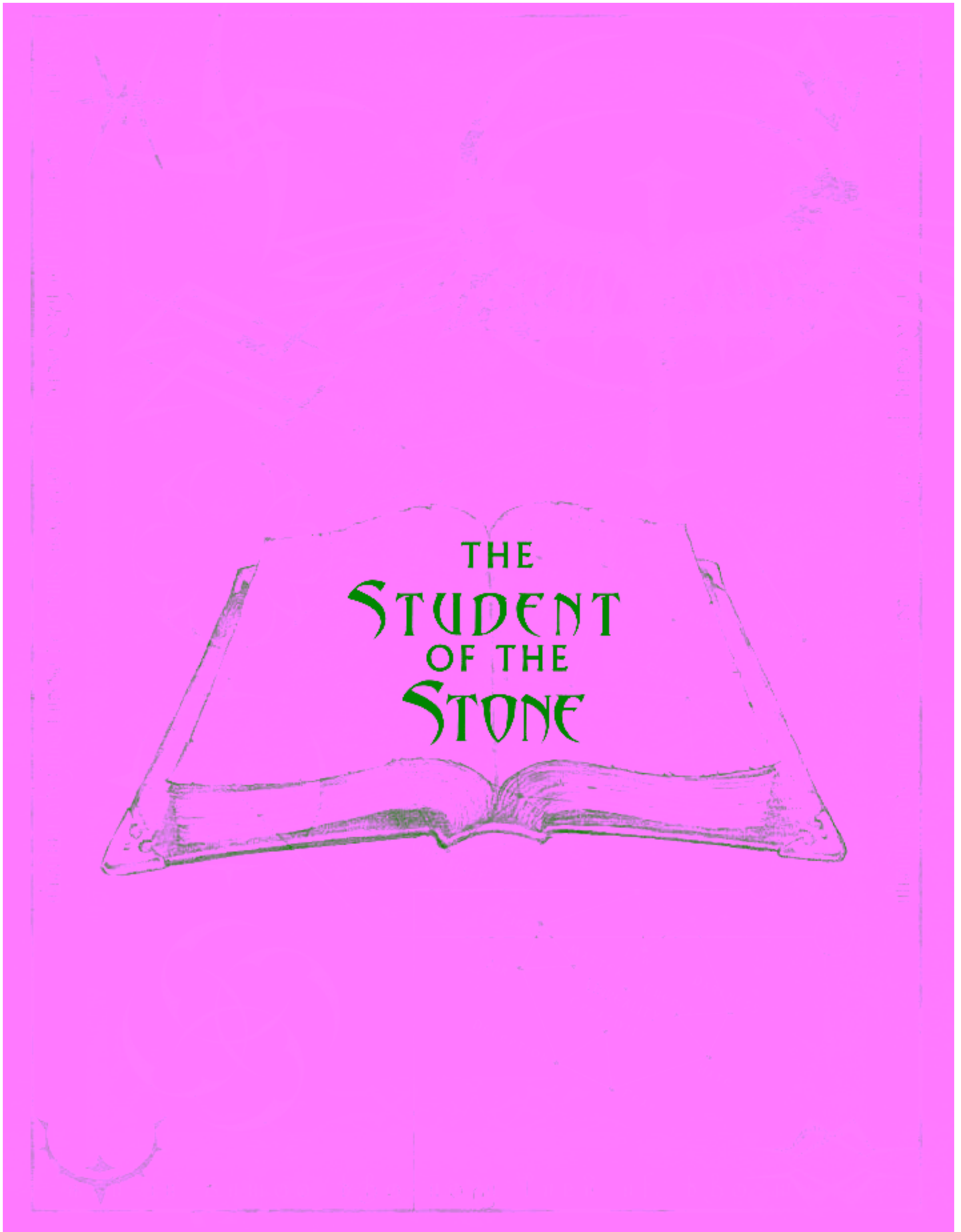
CHILDREN AT PLAY

In what can only be termed "The Beginning," for there is no way to conceive the moments before then, the Progeny were given the Stone. They were set free to play with the Stone, to shape it, mold it, form it to their whims and desires. They imprinted the Stone with their hopes, their dreams… and their fears and despair, as well. All the Progeny could comprehend, they placed within the Stone, and that which they could not understand they struggled with, and that struggle, too, became part of the Stone.

The Stone was to become the ultimate representation of all that the Progeny were, and all that they could be. A perfect blend of all that was, all that is, and all that could be. A perfect Vision of a perfect world.

Alas, as with all things, perfection was not to be. The Progeny each had different ideas as to what "perfection" meant, and each of them strove to align the Stone to their Vision. As one would strive against another, the Progeny began to argue, and then to fight over the Final Version. The inevitable occurred, and the unthinkable came to pass.

The Stone… shattered.

THE PROGENITORS

There are things unfathomable even to gods, and the Progenitors are chief among them. Their origins are lost in the shrouds of the Nothingness that even Time cannot account for. Are they the architects of existence? Did they spawn the universe and all that is? Or did they simply come after the act of Creation (from "someplace else," perhaps) and exert their influence? Is it possible that there is another being or set of beings that came before them, creating *them* as the first act of creation?

Such questions lead inevitably to an endless cycle of speculation, debate, philosophy and (ultimately) religion. They do not, maddeningly enough, lead to actual answers. No one knows, and anyone who purports to know is a madman, a liar or a salesman (usually in clerical clothing).

What can be agreed upon by the very few scholars that have enough of the whole picture to even try to construct an early history is this – the Progenitors created the Progeny, and they set into motion certain laws that, to this day, dictate the boundaries that even those nigh-omnipotent beings must acknowledge. It is also fairly clear that the Progenitors gave the Stone into the hands of the Progeny and encouraged their "children" to mold and shape the Stone in their collective image.

The reasons for this are unclear, but the generally-accepted theory is that they did this simply as a creative expression, one that they wanted their Progeny to participate in. In the care of the Progenitors, it seems, existence is a kind of "Grand Experiment," or perhaps the world of Core is merely the table upon which the real experiment is being conducted – perhaps the Progeny are the subjects, and the world is merely the tool being used to stimulate and evaluate them.

Regardless of the real Truth (something that none of the few scholars who know anything about this would ever claim to understand), it is fairly clear that the Progenitors play no discernable day-to-day role in the existence of the world of Core. Their presence is utterly unknown to all, including the Progeny. Some believe that the Progenitors have long since left this aspect of existence, moving on to something Beyond. If they did leave, was it out of boredom? Did they have something else to accomplish? Or are they coming back one day to see how things have progressed?

If they are not pleased with how things have progressed, will they simply wipe everything clean to start again?

The one thing that scholars can agree on with some certainty is this – beings as unknowable and impossibly powerful as the Progenitors are utterly terrifying to contemplate. It would be perhaps for the best if they have indeed gone on to Elsewhere to create other worlds.

After all, Core has enough to worry about.

THE PROGENY

The Gods of Core form a Pantheon of mighty, mythic beings who stride across Existence, exerting their will. Raw, primal forces that are impossible to understand and even harder to contain.

The Progeny are all of these things, and more… or perhaps they are none of these things, and the scholars who name and quantify them are simply trying to catch air in their hands.

Let us proceed on what the scholars tell us, however, for it is all we have. It is believed that there are twenty-five Progeny, one for each of the twenty-five Elements that form the foundations of our existence. It is not clear whether the Progeny are responsible for the existence of the Elements, or the other way around.

Each Progeny is a sentient embodiment of the Element they are connected with. Chaos is a being of indefinable nature and unfathomable goals, existing in a constant state of change. Fire is a being given to the purest form of consuming energy, all heat and searing and burning. Pride embodies all the instincts of avarice, greed, ambition, and arrogance, while Honor is a bastion of selfless guardianship and high personal standards of behavior.

As can be guessed, the Progeny who are linked with the more primal forces are far more ambiguous and terrible in their aspect than the Progeny who are associated with the more social, "human" concepts. It is a fool's errand to attempt to determine which of them is the most powerful, or even the most influential. Their struggles and their actions are constant and varied, and each one is a master in their own field. Alliances and betrayals among the Progeny are an almost daily occurrence as each one constantly seeks to align forces and efforts to best promote their goals.

This ongoing "game" began on the very day the Progeny were given the Stone. Each was told to imprint upon the Stone their very essence and ideals, and the whole of the Progeny were encouraged to work together to shape the Stone into a construct of utter Perfection.

TO WHAT PURPOSE?

One of the questions that is raised constantly is "Why?" What reason did the Progenitors have for creating the

Stone, and why did they place it in the hands of the Progeny?

Were they truly out to see a thing of Perfection created? Did the Progenitors truly believe that their Progeny would bring about a utopian world?

Did they even know that a world would be created from the foundation of the Stone?

It seems likely that the answer to this last question would have to be "Yes" given these are beings of nigh-infinite scope. Still, when one considers the apparently experimental nature of everything else, it is not inconceivable that they did not, in fact, know for certain what the results of these actions would be.

There is a school of thought that believes the Progenitors knew perfectly well that the "Perfection" that was sought would be impossible to achieve. The Stone was given into the hands of twenty-five contrary, primal beings for the express purpose of creating a world from the furnace of conflict and struggle that the Progeny were bound by their very natures to create.

Those who believe this theory also purport that the continuing struggle by the Progeny to attain their varying, disparate goals is meant to be a crucible, one from which a strong and vital world will ultimately emerge.

There is much evidence to suggest this theory has merit.

THE ELEMENTS

It may seem odd to consider that the entire world can be broken down into twenty-five distinct Elements, but it is no less true. Everything you see, hear, taste, smell and touch can be described as a combination of some or even all of the Elements. Everything beyond your ability to sense is also comprised of these same Elements.

The Elements are more – much more – than the simpler things in the world. Feelings, beliefs and ideas come from the Elements as well.

In short, everything comes from the Elements. They are the metaphysical building blocks of the universe.

More directly, the Elements are those things the Progeny left within the Stone before it was broken apart. They are raw concepts the Progeny used to define their existence, made real and tangible and definitive in everything they touch. What we use language to accomplish, they did with more primal forces. Did these primal forces exist before the Progeny, defining them before they truly existed, or did the Progeny bring the Elements into being? Again, impossible to ever truly know (unless you are somehow able to actually ask the Progeny of Truth, and such a conversation may very well leave you mad).

There are three Orders of Elements, representing both their initial place within the Stone and their overall influence over the whole of Creation. Outside of these three Orders is the rarest and most powerful of all Elements, Time. Time formed the very Core of the Stone, and all of Creation revolves around the passage of Time. When the Stone was Sundered, Time was the most scattered of the Elements, bringing the world of Core to the state it is in today.

The First Order of Elements (also called the Primal Order) consists of Reality, Unreality, Order and Chaos.

Reality represents the basis of physical existence in the eyes of the Progeny (and therefore all sentient beings), while Unreality is actually the Void (the maelstrom of impossible, unfathomable Nothingness that surrounds all that exists) given for all things to come together in structure and form, while Chaos is the equally natural impetus for all things to decay in a state of entropy and anarchy.

The Second Order (also known as the Celestial Cross) consists of: Matter, Energy, Law and Creativity. Two of these Elements – Matter and Energy – define the purest forms of raw existence. One becomes the other in an endless cycle from which everything is born and into which everything expires. As touched by Reality, they are the true foundations of our physical world. As touched by Unreality, they become the touchstones of Magic in all its forms. Order and Chaos push and pull on them constantly in a dance that only a madman or genius could hope to follow.

The other two Elements of the Celestial Cross – Law and Creativity – define the purest essences of sentience. They are the two sides of the coin that is Man (or Dwarf or Elf or Orc…), and everyone who can imagine or determine for themselves has some measure of both at the center of their being. They are more than simply opposites; in truth one cannot be truly expressed without the other. Law without Creativity cannot speak to the living condition, and Creativity without Law leads to formless expression that cannot hope to communicate to anyone. Law and Creativity are the key tools by which sentient beings interact with and understand the Elements of the Primal Order, as well as all other Elements and the world at large.

The Third Order (also called the Vertices of Consequence) consists of: Water, Fire, Earth, Air, Light, Darkness, Life, Spirit, Faith, Fear, Truth, Deception, Love, Hate, Pride and Honor. Each of these Elements are a natural extension from the Primal Order and the Celestial Cross. The first eight are the more "physical" Elements of the Vertices, while the latter eight are the more "emotional" components of existence.

In some cultures, Water, Fire, Earth, and Air are the only known Elements. Much of every-day reality can be seen in them. The physical world is clearly explained in their forms, and they are the most "neutral" of the Vertices Elements in terms of moral issues. They simply exist, and all that is known exists in, around and because of them.

Light and Darkness define, in different combinations, everything that is seen and unseen in Reality. In their more magical forms (where Unreality's hand is at work), Light and Darkness become the positive and negative forces that many beings see as "Good" and "Evil." Although perhaps overly simplistic, this concept has always been part of sentient thought and the combined power of Creativity and Faith are not inconsequential when they impact the other Elements.

Life and Spirit are the most intertwined of any of the Vertices Elemental pairs, and the relationship between these two is the most harmonious of any. Life cannot truly be without Spirit, and Spirit means nothing without Life. Life

tends to be more in keeping with the boundaries of Reality and Matter, while Unreality and Energy are the fields in which Spirit plays (although things are by no means that cut-and-dried… Life is nothing without Energy, for example and there are many Spirits that reside within physical things). There are some scholars who prefer to consider Spirit to be "Death," but this connotation does not truly express the true nature of the Element, nor does it truly communicate the possibilities of what Spirit offers.

Faith and Fear. For many, Faith is the barrier to Fear. For others, Fear obliterates Faith. Sometimes Fear leads to Faith while in other instances, Fear maintains Faith. As with all elements, there is a complicated intertwining that exists, and the results are as varied as the sentient beings that deal with them. Faith defines an entity's belie about the world around them, while Fear goes to the heart of what they do not know and how much they believe the Unknown can harm them. Both Elements lead to great and terrible things that have and will shake the foundations of Core.

There are no more true opposites among all the Elements than Truth and Deception. The Progeny that represent these two are the most hated rivals among any of those greater beings, and with good reason. Truth is an absolute that cannot and will not tolerate Deception, while Deception has no other purpose than to obscure and hinder Truth. Truth is an ideal that lies at the heart of any being with whom Law holds sway, and yet Deception has the stronger hold on the minds of sentient beings across the world. The power and utility of Deception has been proven time and time again in countless ways, and yet it remains a maxim that, in the end, only Truth can a permanent solution.

Love and Hate would seem to be as diametrically opposed as Truth and Deception, and they almost are. However, both of these Elements are derived from the purest form of expression there is – passion. In that, they are intricately tied together in an ever-spinning circle that neither can truly be freed of. Love for something can lead to Hate for something else; Hatred often burns itself out, leaving Love in its place. It is certainly true that Hate has led to world-changing wars of all kinds, but it is also true that Love can, indeed, make the world shatter in conflict. The Will of Sentience is the most powerful force of change in the world, and nothing drives that Will more than these two most powerful urges.

If Love and Hate represent the raw, gut-driven instincts of sentient emotion. Honor and Pride represent the manifestations of higher thought and desire within the mind. "Good" and "Evil" are truly matters of perspective, but it can also be said that the nobler, more benign inclinations of any sentient being will be driven by Honor, while the selfish, more malign directives of a being will spawn from Pride. Honor inspires charity, guardianship and goodwill. Pride inspires greed, ambition and cruelty. For all that, it can be said with some confidence that there have been precious few beings ever born who did not contain some fair measure of both in their soul, and it is the struggle between Honor and Pride that most truly defines the condition of Sentience. In fact, the very word might

well be defined by the presence of these two Elements in the soul of a being.

This brings up an interesting point. The Elements are not simply pieces of things lying about in the ground. They exist conceptually in many ways – in the ground and sky, but in the mind and soul as well. However, there are (mostly) tangible aspects of the Elements scattered throughout the world of Core called Fragments. They are much smaller than the Shards (the original pieces of CoreStone), and they are often used as both magical components for spells and items as well as currency for trade and commerce. Fragments of an Element are identified by a unique name, and each type of Fragment has special properties that mske it stand out from normal metals, gems and the like.

There are also Elemental Affinities. The Affinities are a means of understanding more about the Elements. They are the expressions of the Elements we are most accustomed to experiencing and they help us more fully comprehend the influence of the Elements. Some Affinities are physical – metals, plant life, animals – while others are more along the lines of feelings and ideas. You will note that there are many overlapping and similar Affinities between Elements, which further enforces the idea that the relationships between the Elements are complex and highly integrated.

Through these additional ideas, we can further explore each of the Elements:

ELEMENTAL PAIRS

There are "pairings" among the Elements representing the diametrical yet unified nature of the Progeny and their conflicts, as well as the natural lines of connection within the actual Stone. Sometimes these pairings represent opposing forces, but sometimes they represent a more complex relationship, one that is comprised of both conflict and cohesion. The following chart represents the pairs, although there are near-infinite combinations of Element and elemental relationships.

Reality	Unreality
Order	Chaos
Matter	Energy
Law	Creativity
Earth	Air
Water	Fire
Truth	Deception
Faith	Fear
Light	Darkness
Love	Hate
Life	Spirit
Honor	Pride

The one Element that has no correspondent is Time, for it is truly independent of all else.

ELEMENTAL THEORY

TIME

An Elemental Fragment of Time is called **Chronum**, a white, crystalline, rod-shaped material that (if left alone) "grows" in one direction even as it "shrinks" from the other. In this odd way, Chronum "crawls" through the ground, albeit extremely slowly. A piece five centimeters in length will cover a meter's distance over the span of a year (which, in the world of Core is over 500 days). Chronum is an extremely powerful substance in the hands of a knowledgeable individual. It can be used to speed up or slow down any process – any process at all. Though a solid in its natural state, Chronum has a low enough boiling point that it can be effectively melted (a particularly potent forge furnace will do), and this liquid substance can be imbued into drinkable potions. This means even biological processes can be affected though only an alchemist of the highest order in both skill and knowledge would even have a clue where to begin. There are even more extreme uses of Chronum but suffice it to say that, thankfully, Chronum is the rarest Fragment in all of Core.

The Affinities of Time include Patience, Peace, Cycles, Thoughtfulness, Oneness and Eternity. Within living beings, Time is a Mental Element, and the common color associated with Time is White.

REALITY

An Elemental Fragment of Reality is called **Absolite**, a light-brown, semi-solid substance that is most often found in deep fissures and inside volcanoes. It can also be found oozing and forming hardening puddles, wherever great magical cataclysms and storms have occurred. The prevailing theory for this is that Absolite normally exists outside of what we know as physical space, and it "leaks" through into our space wherever great upheavals in the world occur. There are some places in Core where it seems to form more naturally, but these are rare indeed. Absolite's main property, when enabled by the right processes, is the ability to anchor Reality more firmly. The most common manifestation of this ability is the use of Absolite-imbued items or rituals to cancel magical effects. Absolite is also very useful in the creation of wards and fields that prevent powers of magic and chaos. Combined with other Fragments, Absolite could be used to alter Reality (and, more importantly, enforce that changed Reality), but the processes involved are highly dangerous and (thankfully) virtually unknown.

The Affinities of Reality include Totality, Absoluteness, Factuality, Reason, Predictability and the Mundane. Within living beings, Reality is a Mental Element and the common color associated with Reality is Light Brown/Tan.

UNREALITY

An Elemental Fragment of Unreality is called **Void**, one of the more bizarre Fragments known. There is no physical way to even perceive Void, much less grasp or contain it. Almost like a living thing, it spends most of the time hovering around the fringes of Existence, pulling and peeling at the layers of Reality that contain our world and trying to undo it all, or at least change it in some profound way. In fact, the constant interaction between Reality and Unreality (and the constant forced mingling of Absolite and Void) has created an invisible web of Patterns around the world of Core, and it is through these Patterns that many Practitioners of magic draw their spells and abilities (only through the ability of Mage Sight can the Patterns be seen and manipulated, and Mages are the most skilled in using the Patterns directly). Whenever a sentient mind is forced to confront Void, it perceives the Fragment as a swirling mass of black-and-blue tendrils. Looking into pure Void for more than a few moments is a sure path to insanity, making it a truly dangerous substance to even try to use. Only through truly elaborate and careful rituals can Void be harnessed. Once it is, however, its uses are profoundly frightening. With Void, truly anything can be attempted, for Void is the very essence of changing Reality. Magic is only possible through the existence of Unreality, making Void the basis for some of the most powerful magic in all of Core. Even the Progeny are believed to fear this type of Fragment and forbid its use.

The Affinities of Unreality include Nothingness, Infinity, Dreams, Fantasy, Chance, and Magic. In living beings, Unreality is a Mental Element, and the common color associated with Unreality is Midnight Blue.

ORDER

An Elemental Fragment of Order is called **Geomecron**, a dull gray-blue metallic stone that is always found in perfect geometric shapes - most commonly as a cube. Miners sometimes discover Geomecron deep in older, very structured mountain ranges. If they are not already familiar with it (and very few would ever be), they are always quite puzzled when they find a "vein," for Geomecron is always neatly stacked and layered within the earth, as though someone carefully laid it there to be stored for later use. Geomecron is extremely difficult to work with, because it so resolutely resists changing its form or shape in any way. In fact, only tools created from another Fragment (perhaps forged from Infernite or imbued with Maelstrome) could hope to rend it in any way, and only a truly master stonesmith with equivalent tools could hope to shape Geomecron into any useful form. However, anything constructed from Geomecron is assured to remain strong, solid, and unchanged for many generations. More interestingly, any instruments or machines that are constructed with Geomecron in them will be highly accurate and efficient. It is believed that Geomecron can, in fact, be melted down (through intensely powerful processes) and be used as a kind of "oil" or even digested as part of a potion. Anything coated with a Geomecron-based oil would be altered to become the epitome of what it was meant to

be (a sword would become the ultimate example of Swords), and anyone imbibing such a potion would have their mind expanded a hundredfold, enabling them to think in ways that no normal sentient being could ever understand.

The Affinities of Order include Structure, Math, Science, Logic, Certainty, and Patterns. In living beings, Order is a Mental Element, and the common color associated with Order is Blue-Grey.

CHAOS

The Elemental Fragment of Chaos is **Maelstrome**. Describing it is next to impossible, for Maelstrome exists in a constant state of change. It's much like a multi-colored form of mercury, but it also fluctuates through solid, liquid, and gaseous states. Maelstrome can also be found almost anywhere, as it is constantly changing its place in time and space, but it never remains in one place for very long. As such, harnessing it is a kind of art form, albeit an extremely dangerous one. This is because Maelstrome is one of the most destructive forces in the world. Pure Maelstrome is capable of eating through any substance known, including most other Fragments. Only Absolite and Geomecron are known to have any significant resistance to it. Its uses are fairly obvious, for Maelstrome is quite effective in the creation of destructive rituals, weapons, and even tools. In the latter two cases, however, it is extremely important to use other Fragments (again, Absolite and Geomecron are useful, though Mandorite and Emerond will do in sizable amounts) to rein in the Maelstrome. If it is left unchecked, it will simply destroy whatever it is part of. Even more frightening are the tales of some beings who use Maelstrome as a kind of fuel, often to accelerate processes already underway.

The Affinities of Chaos include Entropy, Passion, Change, Instinct, Emotion, and Madness. In living beings, Chaos is a Mental Element, and there is no one common color associated with it - all colors belong to Chaos.

MATTER

An Elemental Fragment of Matter is called **Grey Diamond**, one of the hardest substances known in all of Core. Only Geomecron and hardened Absolite are considered stronger. It takes the finest and sharpest tools, and the most careful craftsmen, to have a chance of effectively cutting Grey Diamonds, which are found only deep underground. They are normally very small in size, though extremely large ones (the size of a dog's head) have been reported all around Core. They look very much like normal diamonds, except for the distinct gray coloring that makes it impossible to see their facets without the direct application of magical light. Anyone peering into a Grey Diamond will, however, be stunned by the utter perfection they witness. For the extremely few discerning collectors who know of them, Grey Diamonds are the most valuable precious stone in all existence. Grey Diamonds are also very powerful; if used correctly, even a small one can increase the durability and strength of an entire castle, or empower a weapon such that no lesser material object could hope to endure against it. Grey Diamond is also believed to be very useful in rituals and operations where a process is to be slowed down or stopped, and there are rumors of fields being created where no energy at all can be expended because of the use of Grey Diamonds.

The Affinities of Matter include Solidity, Form, Steadiness, Stillness, Stagnation, Physics, and Stabilization. In living beings, Matter is a Physical Element, and the common color associated with Matter is Grey.

ENERGY

An Elemental Fragment of Energy is called **Glowstone**, a bright orange "pebble" of concentrated power that is almost impossible to look at. Glowstones are found floating in the hearts of active volcanoes, bouncing around in natural underground furnaces, and dancing madly in bolts of lightning. They can sometimes be found (and harvested) in the passing of lava or in the aftermath of a lighting storm, but there is no normal way to find Glowstones, much less harvest them. Extraordinary and outrageous means must be employed to gather these tiny balls of pure, raw Energy, but for some the risk is more than worth it. A single Glowstone can be used to power a master smith's furnace constantly for months - or destroy a village in the span of a moment. Combined with Void, Glowstones can be used to make any magical process work at Realm-shaking levels. It is probably for the best that Glowstones are as rare as they are.

The Affinities of Energy are Intensity, Power, Fuel, Excitability, Provocation, Drive, Motion, and Change. In living beings, Energy is an Emotional Element, and the common color associated with Energy is Bright Orange.

LAW

An Elemental Fragment of Law is called **Mandorite**, a richly purple-burgundy-colored metal found in the highest mountains and deep underground. This metal is extremely resilient and resistant to alteration, and it is difficult to work without magical means. However, Mandorite is also very valuable for its strength and resistance to damage and environmental wear-and-tear. One danger with Mandorite is its inherent inflexibility. If it is not tempered correctly, and if other Fragments are not included in the making (such as Absolite, White Silver, Touchstone, or even small amounts of Viscerium), any tool or weapon made from Mandorite has a very good chance of shattering under real duress.

The Affinities of Law are Government, Control, Organization, Royalty, Society, Structure, and Obedience. In living beings, Law is a Social Element, and the common color associated with Law is Light (Royal) Purple.

CREATIVITY

An Elemental Fragment of Creativity is called **Viscerium**, a deep purple, highly viscous liquid most often found in or near hot springs or near recent cracks in the earth (especially ones caused by some magical event). Viscerium can be heated to a higher state of liquidity, but it is very "gooey" in its natural form; quantities of it, when exchanged, tend to be contained in small, measured crystal decanters. Viscerium is most often used in concoctions meant to be ingested, for it has the power to unlock an individual's imagination, enhance their dreams, and enlighten their thinking for a time. As such, Viscerium is highly prized by poets, artists, bards, philosophers, inventors, and master brewers. Viscerium can also be employed in the creation of some items, especially those meant to possess a certain flexibility and adaptability.

The Affinities of Creativity are Art, Song, Freedom, Insight, Intuition, Progress, Individuality, and Cleverness. In living beings, Creativity is a Spiritual Element, and the common color associated with Creativity is Dark (Deep) Purple.

WATER

An Elemental Fragment of Water is called **Crystal Blue**, a turquoise liquid that can be found floating in the depths of almost any body of water. However, it is extremely hard to see, even for those who know what they are looking for, and it is rare enough to be considered very valuable in quantity. One of the most well-known attributes of Crystal Blue is its ability to slake thirst so absolutely that a person would only need a couple of drops a day to survive; the moment a drop hits the tongue, it seems to expand to many mouthfuls as quickly as a person can swallow. There are other alchemical concoctions that Crystal Blue can be found in; in fact, it can enhance almost any potion in which it is used.

The Affinities of Water are Fluidity, Patience, Constancy, and Adaptability. In living beings, Water is a Physical Element, and the common color associated with Water is Light Blue-Green (Turquoise).

FIRE

An Elemental Fragment of Fire is called **Infernite**, a black, almost coal-like stone with dark orange, glowing veins all through it. Infernite is extremely hot at all times and can only be handled with great care. If it is somehow cracked open, a Fragment of Infernite will burst into a massive, bonfire-sized flame that will last for many days, even without any other fuel. Infernite is quite popular in more destructive alchemical concoctions, as well as a source of pure heat and flame.

The Affinities of Fire are Destruction, Alteration, Aggression, and Exertion. In living beings, Fire is a Physical Element, and the common color associated with Fire is Dark Orange.

EARTH

An Elemental Fragment of Earth is called **Emerond**, a dark brown, smooth stone with flecks and lines of emerald green running through it. Veins of Emerond can be found in the oldest hills and mountains of Core, often amidst other precious gems and stones. Emerond is an extremely solid, strong substance that is highly prized for construction and sculpting; only Grey Diamond, Absolite, and Geomecron are considered harder substances in all of Core, and Emerond is slightly easier to work with. Emerond is also valued for the solidity and endurance it brings to any mystical items it is used in.

The Affinities of Earth are Stability, Solidity, Endurance, and Strength. In living beings, Earth is a Physical Element, and the common color associated with Earth is Dark Brown.

AIR

An Elemental Fragment of Air is called **Chrysaris**, and it is one of the most intriguing and difficult-to-acquire substances on Core. This is not because it is necessarily rarer than any of the other Vertices Elemental Fragment types, but because this crystalline, constantly-shifting substance floats in the skies above Core. Those who seek to harvest Chysaris must be able to fly, and they must search for this precious substance within the very clouds themselves, where strands of the light blue crystals sometimes clump together. Chrysaris is prized for it beauty, as well as the effects it can have on the motion and speed of items that it is imbued into. Chrysaris is most famous for the implements of flight that have sometimes been created with it.

The Affinities of Air are Openness, Freedom, Motion, and Speed. In living beings, Air is a Physical Element, and the common color associated with Air is Light (Sky) Blue.

LIGHT

An Elemental Fragment of Light is called **Sungold**, a form of gold that, in enough quantity, glows brightly with its own inner light. Sungold is famous for having absolutely no impurities in it whatsoever. Even if someone were to smelt it down and try to mix something else into it, the foreign substance would be rejected utterly. Sungold simply will not mix with anything else. It is not a hard metal, but it is resilient enough for use as coinage, and it can also be used to gild another item in a way that adds the properties of Light to it.

The Affinities of Light are Positivity, Openness, Brightness, Community, Purity, and Communication. In living beings, Light is an Emotional Element, and the common color associated with Light is Bright Yellow.

DARKNESS

An Elemental Fragment of Darkness is called **Nightstone**, a piece of obsidian stone almost too difficult to look at. The blackness of Nightstone literally absorbs all light that hits it; it can be seen by the absence of light, rather than by actually seeing its form. Nightstone is a highly malleable substance, and it can be worked into just about anything - metals, other stones, even potions if it is melted down enough. Items with Darkstone in them tend to be quiet and exude a kind of shadow around them. Darkstone is also often used in magics where subtlety and corruption are involved.

The Affinities of Darkness are Shadows, Quiet, Subtlety, Isolation, Corruption, and Secretiveness. In living beings, Darkness is an Emotional Element, and the common color associated with Darkness is Black.

LIFE

An Elemental Fragment of Life is called **Oakheart**, a piece of wood so hard that it can crack most metals. Oakheart is found at the center of some ancient oaks, though not all. Though some who seek it are prone to simply chopping away at entire stands of oak trees, it is believed the Druids can actually coax some small amounts of Oahheart from a tree without harming it. Not only is this substance highly prized as the hardest wood known in all of Core, but it has mystical properties that make it very valuable for certain kinds of magic, especially where the qualities of Life are concerned.

The Affinities of Life are Nature, Growth, Cycles, Mortality, Health, and Terrestrial Community. In living beings, Life is a Spiritual Element, and the common color associated with Life is Dark (Deep Forest) Green.

SPIRIT

An Elemental Fragment of Spirit is called **Soulstone**, a pale green stone that has slightly luminous qualities. Soulstones are most often found in graveyards, or in other places where the dead have lain for a while. It is believed by some that these stones are the residual effects of a soul leaving the body, even though they are found outside of the bodies in the earth itself, rather than in the bodies. It is more likely that the Fragments of Spirit simply tend to manifest where souls also tend to gather, and graveyards are one of these places. Soulstone tends to imbue the properties of connection to the Spirit World, as well as other aspects of mysticism and spirituality. Some people carry a hunk of Soulstone as a "lucky talisman," and some believe that Soulstones help them communicate with guardian angels or their ancestors.
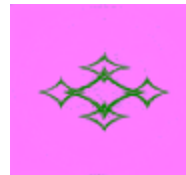
The Affinities of Spirit are Afterlife, Etherealness, Immortality, Mysticism, and Celestial Community. In living beings, Spirit is (naturally) a Spiritual Element, and the common color associated with Spirit is Light (Pale) Green.

FAITH

An Elemental Fragment of Faith is called **Aurite**, a golden-hued metal of impressive strength and endurance. Aurite has the mystical quality of resonating with the strength of conviction of anyone who holds it, giving it even more strength while also increasing their confidence. As such, many churches highly value this metal for weapons to arm their faithful with, or to make holy talismans for their Priests. Aurite is most often found in regions where conflicts or other incidents born of great faith occurred.

The Affinities of Faith are Hope, Confidence, Conviction, Loyalty, Courage, and Servitude. In living beings, Faith is a Spiritual Element, and the common color associated with Faith is Gold.

FEAR

An Elemental Fragment of Fear is called **Dreadstone**, a dark blue-green substance that is most commonly found in deep marshes, dark caves, and anyplace else where sentient beings tend to be afraid to journey. Dreadstone makes even strong individuals feel a sense of apprehension, unless they are fully prepared to deal with its presence. Dreadstone is very prized for certain magical rituals and concoctions where dominance through fear is desired.

The Affinities of Fear are Terror, Ignorance, Instinct, Submission, Despair, and Slavery. In living beings, Fear is a Spiritual Element, and the common color associated with Fear is Dark Blue-Green.

TRUTH

An Elemental Fragment of Truth is called **Touchstone**, a dull blue stone that is highly prized among merchants, accountants, and alchemists. Touchstone can be attuned with other substances to create a kind of measuring device that will reveal fakes or impurities, as well as provide accurate information as to quantity and quality of something. Touchstone is also highly prized by weaponsmiths, for there is no greater substance for the sharpening of blades. Touchstone is also cherished in many circles as a means of focus for enlightenment, wisdom, and clarity.

The Affinities of Truth are Wisdom, Knowledge, Clarity, Fairness, and Precision. In living beings, Truth is a Social Element, and the common color associated with Truth is Royal Blue.

DECEPTION

An Elemental Fragment of Deception is called **Cloakstone**, an innocuous-looking, greenish stone that often goes unnoticed in the beds of streams, the quarries of stonecutters, and just about any kind of mine imaginable. When someone does bother to pick up a few Cloakstones, they might discover the rather special qualities for masking and hiding that it can imbue. Many alchemists consider a combination of Cloakstone and Nightstone to be incredibly powerful in a most subtle and dangerous way.

The Affinities of Deception are Lies, Conspiracies, Masks, Diplomacy, and Artifice. In living beings, Deception is a Social Element, and the common color associated with Deception is Green.

LOVE

An Elemental Fragment of Love is called **Heartstone**, a rose-colored stone that tends to be found in well-tended gardens, unspoiled forests, around peaceful shrines, and similar locations. Heartstone tends to imbue properties of peace and kindness, as well as guardianship. It is not the kind of substance that would be used for a weapon, but it might serve well in armor, or a shield. Heartstone is valued by artists and artisans for the beauty it can bring to their creations and bards consider an amulet with Hearstone at the center to be a lucky talisman indeed. Of course, many alchemists see Heartstone as an excellent starting substance for the ever-popular "love potions" of legend.

The Affinities of Love are Benevolence, Welfare, Peace, Protection, Friendship, and Desire. In living beings, Love is an Emotional Element, and the common color associated with Love is Rose Red.

HATE

An Elemental Fragment of Hate is called **Crimson Vile**, a thick, oozing, dark red substance that can sometimes be found at the heart of any terrible battle or the scene of great atrocity. Gathering this substance can itself be considered a terrible crime to some, but its power is undeniable. It is a concentration of anger and violence that many see as the ultimate alchemical component for a weapon of power. There are other, more heinous uses that are too terrible to even note here.

The Affinities of Hate are Malevolence, Violence, War, Might, Dominance, and Spite. In living beings, Hate is an Emotional Element, and the common color associated with Hate is Crimson Red.

PRIDE

An Elemental Fragment of Pride is called **Bloodgold**, a form of gold with a decidedly red hue that can sometimes be found at the center of veins of regular gold. One interesting property of Bloodgold is that, once some of it is exposed, all of the other gold that is mined from that area suddenly transforms into Bloodgold as well. Bloodgold is highly prized and is cherished by anyone who seeks true wealth; anyone beholding Bloodgold will immediately know that it is more valuable than any other precious metal. This is less because of the truth of such a thing and more because the very nature of Bloodgold subtly influences those in its presence to regard it as such.

The Affinities of Pride are Corruption, Greed, Vanity, Ambition, Desire, Arrogance, and Selfishness. In living beings, Pride is a Social Element, and the common color associated with Pride is Blood Red.

HONOR

An Elemental Fragment of Honor is called **White Silver**, a gleaming platinum metal of surprising strength and flexibility. White Silver is sometimes found in veins of regular silver, although it can also be found on its own deep within the most ancient mountains. Weaponsmiths and armorers are very fond of working White Silver into their creations, not only for its added strength and power, but because knights and nobles prize such items and will easily pay anywhere from three to ten times the regular cost. With the proper rituals and other efforts, a weapon made of White Silver can be very potent indeed against creatures that Honor opposes.
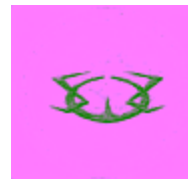
The Affinities of Honor are Duty, Loyalty, Sacrifice, Commitment, Nobility, Justice, and Selflessness. In living beings, Honor is a Social Element, and the common color associated with Honor is Silver.

REALMS OF CORE

THE CORESTONE

It is estimated that the Stone was roughly the size of a medium-sized house, or as some put it, the "head of a Dragon." However, some theories maintain that the Stone was much, much larger - perhaps the size of one of our three moons. There is also one popular postulation that holds the Stone as being little bigger than a decent-sized boulder. This last theory is scoffed at by older scholars, who claim that no object could produce the millions, and possibly billions of Fragments we believe exist in Core. However, those that promote this theory maintain that, with Unreality and Chaos in the mix, matters of actual size have little relevance.

We do know that, when it was Sundered, the Stone fractured into a few dozen Shards - large chunks of the Stone that contain either four or five of the Elements within. These Shards erupted from the center of Core and wound up on the actual surface (or other planes) of our world, scattered to different Realms. Some Realms have only one such Shard within their boundaries, while others have two, three, or even four.

The exact number of Shards, and even their size, are not known to us. They are hidden away in secret "Shrines" that are maintained and guarded by entities that rival the firstborn of the Progeny themselves, the ShrineMasters. There are some who believe that we should take control of these Shards, but such would clearly violate our Fifth Law. Still, some plot to acquire these Shards through some means.

It is believed that these Shards hold a very direct sway over the Realms they landed in. The Elements present in the Shards seem to have a stronger meaning and presence than any other Elements. Additionally, Fragments that re-manifest (after being "burned" when Magic is used) tend, more often than not, to be drawn to Shards that contain their Element.

The study of the Shards, their impact on their Realms, and their power is something that we are turning more and more attention to. These are the remains of the Sundered Stone, and if the Progeny have any plans for this world, it is certain that the Shards will play a part.

Artifacts have been found by our greatest explorers, artifacts inscribed with Symbols that seem to form a kind of "celestial language"… called the Progenic Tongue that is tied to the truest beginnings of Time. We cannot yet fathom what these ancient, celestial symbols mean, but rest assured that all who study them will not rest until they can determine what these may mean for the future.

THE WORLD OF CORE

The world of Core is vast and varied, and each Realm is a mystery to be explored, an adventure to be experienced, and an opportunity for learning. However, there are some basic facts about the world in general that should be known to all who seek a foundation of under-standing.

Core is a spherical world, one that floats in the vastness of a great emptiness, and it passes in a circular path around what we know to be our sun. There are vast oceans, great continents, and tiny islands scattered across Core's surface, but all is shrouded in the Mists of Time, the Veil that locks away each Realm from another. Even for the ShardMasters, this makes a true and full understanding of Core virtually impossible.

As for calendars and other measurements of Time? To provide a "standard" would be a fool's errand, for each Realm has its own sense of Time to contend with. A day in one place might be a week in another. How many days to a year will depend entirely upon what shore you find yourself. Even the number of moons in the sky may change as per which sky you gaze into; we in Tempus know there to be three moons, but is it so everywhere you go? No, indeed, it is not.

We have documented many places in our travels and a brief snapshot of their various places in time.

Figure 1 - World Map of Core by Realms

7 KINGDOMS

Pristine isles dot the ocean landscape in this small Realm filled with primitive tribes that seem to not have a care in the world. Aside from the occasional invasion by rival Headmen from the northern-most isles, all things are peaceful here… or are they?

THE ABYSS

The Abyss is a realm beyond any ease to describe. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of separate regions within its dimensional space. Some are connected in the normal way; one need merely walk in one direction long enough to end up in a new region. Some are connected via stairs, or slides, or across bodies of water, or via bridges spanning over vast rivers of lava, or any number of other ways. It is not uncommon to walk to the edge of one of these realms, only to stare out into an empty space of swirling colors and shifting forms.

Some scholars hold that the Abyss is, in fact, infinite in scope. They theorize that at the metaphysical center of this realm lies the ultimate manifestation of chaos – Oblivion. Some among these scholars live in perpetual fear that one of the more insane of the Demon Lords will one day succeed in bridging the gap between the Abyss and the other realms, thus drawing all known creation into total Oblivion.

How long the Abyss has existed is beyond anyone's ability to know for certain. Many scholars simply accept that it has Been since the Dawn of Time, and that it will continue to Be long after everything else is destroyed and turned to ash.

One thing that is fairly commonly accepted is that the Demons have not always been in the Abyss, but they have conquered it and made it their own.

AERSHON

High among the towering clouds floats an entire culture, centered around the Air Shrine which permanently moves along its atmospheric plane at the whim of the Progeny.

Winged creatures untold wage aerial combat with other aerial fortresses as they vie for control of the Air Shrine.

BLOODLIGHT

In the time between dusk and night, dawn and day, Meridian has its own type of light -- Bloodlight, so-called because the skies are red and hazy, the color of blood in water. There is no real direct light, even in the morning Bloodlight (called Second Bloodlight), because the haze blocks out the sun.

During the day, the sky and air seem clear but thick, pregnant with moisture and dust particles. It's harder to breathe, causing the people to wear scarves and hoods and masks over their nose and mouth, and everything moves as if caught in a thin web or a dense fog. Projectiles are almost impossible to use during the day -- the density of the air simply slows them to a crawl, so much so that a man could pluck an arrow from the air with ease, and after less than ten feet even the most powerfully-propelled arrow or bolt will drop to the ground, as their weight overcomes them.

At night, the darkness descends rapidly and fully -- the sky is clear, stars twinkling down from above. Sadly, the moon never shines down on the valley and its inhabitants, so the night is cool and dark, with no real light to see by. The air is lighter, though, allowing people to walk about more freely, breathe more deeply, and move more quickly.

But Bloodlight is the time of danger -- and of heroes. At Bloodlight, despite the reddish haze over everything there is still enough light to see by, and the air is as light as it is at night, allowing speed and agility and projectiles. But Bloodlight is also the time of the monsters, the hours when the creatures walk freely, shielded from the glare of the midday sun and the cool emptiness of the night and strengthened by the bloody light. For Bloodlight is when the magics are at their strongest, when mages and wizards work their spells to

most effect and when the barriers between Meridian and other lands are at their weakest, letting creatures enter at will. It is a time when everyday people bar their doors and stay inside, protected and safe. It is when those seeking their fortune roam the streets, in search of adventure.

BRICK CITY

After the Sundering, a Shard of the very Core of the Stone eventually settled to the dust of it's own world. The inhabitants of this world used the powers of the Shard- the Elements of Time, Chaos, Creativity, and Energy- to unify in one civilization. For thousands of years this civilization- the Municipality- prospered, fought, and expanded. The Capital City spread and spread, absorbing villages and ports, and getting taller and more vast as the years rolled on. And one day- with no warning- disaster struck. And the Municipality and it's citizens were reduced to memory.

Now the endless streets and megalithic spires serve as grim testament to what once was as a new Administration starts to re-assert itself over the endless labyrinth of street, brick, and stone. But there's a new resistance. In the Elvish, Orcish, and Dwarven Ghettos, in the opulent Glitter Districts and the most nightmarish tunnels and catacombs of Undertown, the Gangaz emerge. Calling themselves things like the Ruffnex, Hoot'lumz, Thugz, and Bangaz, donning their colors and their Armorgear, wielding their Knifepicks and Smok-Nines, they seek to explore the legacy of the Municipality, to do battle with the Administrati and the dreaded Urban Guard that seeks to subjugate them, and seek out the glory and magic of their world.

CORELISIA

Another source of great mystery to us is the plane of existence known by many names, including the "Astral World," the "Dream Lands," and the "Celestial Realm."

We know that when spirits are separated from their flesh, they traverse this place, which exists as a kind of "reflection" of the world we see. However, it is far more than that, extending seemingly forever in any direction and (by some accounts) containing other places of unbelievable beauty and unimaginable horror.

Heaven? Hell? We believe it is both, and much more.

We also know that this place connects all the Realms, but it that is also disjointed by the shattering of the Stone and the dispersal of Time. Thus, even travelling through the Mists is no sure means of finding your way to another Realm. It is slightly more possible, but only for those who truly know Corelisia well.

DREAMSEA

Deep beneath the warm waters of the DreamSea lie the glorious spired cities sparkling amid the jeweled coral reefs and sparkling underwater scenes. Races of underwater creatures live in a harmonious society while darker denizens are beginning to creep out from the crevasses in the depths.

THE EXUDE

There are many Realms, and they are all separated by the Mists of Time. However, some Realms have tapped into forces arcane and frightening to make occasional connections to other Realms. The Exude is one of those Realms, a place populated by a nearly uncountable variety of grotesque and disturbing beings collectively referred to as "Demons" by most of those who encounter them.

Harnessing Unreality, Chaos, and Spirit, the Demons of the Exude (a Realm believed to be bottomless in depth) are able to send forays into some of the other Realms of Core, wrecking havoc and destruction. There are also those who reside in some Realms who have learned to summon forth these Demons for their bidding.

FAÊRIAN

Wisps of magical essence blink between the strangling trees in this magic-infused Realm of the Fae and the sly creatures that torment their otherwise peaceful island refuge. Ranging from the noble elf to the tiniest sprite, the inhabitants of this Realm strive to understand not only the source of their magic, but to understand more of the true history of the Core World.

GLACIES

Fire and Ice wage war in a Realm encased in the sheets of Glaciers that flow from the north, covering the volcanic depths of the churning heart of Glacies. Carnivorous clans inhabit the forested oases among the ice and stand ready to take advantage of the unwary traveler. Caverns of ice and stone beneath the deserted, snow-bound surface conceal not just more of the original clans but other races including Dwarves and some sinister denizens as well. Ware the depths of Glacies.

GLAMAER

Magical storms howl over the hills of Glamaer, and wizards come to this Summer Land to renew the fires in their wands and staves. Long ago, one mage learned to use the winds as a mind-scouring weapon against foes--and when he was done, the realms of wizards were no more. The most powerful survivors fled or were bound into the very rocks of Glamaer, where they remain today, as the 'Whispering Wizards'.

Today, the mightiest mage in the land, the mysterious and much-feared Ulkar, rules Glamaer from the soaring-spired, bustling port city of Aulachantar. Many of his subjects want nothing to do with magic--and would like to see all wizards locked up or enslaved.

Yet how can a land that holds places such as Brightness Broken, Thallow, and Fallenstar Rise, where magic fairly crackles up from the ground as 'witchfires' that can be seen from afar by night, turn its back on magic? Legends speak of a time when truly mighty mages will come again, and Glamaer will arise into a new and shining age...and if the numbers of strange folk who come from other lands to seek magic here is any indication, those legends are widely believed.

KAZANYSK

Violent winters swirl around the hardy folk of Kazanysk as they trudge from the fields to their homes and back again. Enslavement may be kinder than their present life under totalitarian control where even their minds are instructed what to think and their Priesthoods are hollow and fabricated.

There are inhabitants, however, that have discovered their freedom, but they are hunted daily. Mayhap they will survive, but what then?

KHANRUKH

Slant-eyed throngs of nomadic horsemen sweep across the rich fields of Khanrukh, exulting in their victories and glorying in their martyred brethren slain in their innumerable battles. These brutal tribes protect the tender core of their culture, the female mages, who leverage their own sense of purpose in

hoarding the fragments of the Shards of the Stone, causing untold instabilities in this otherwise paradisiacal Realm.

LYREA

This idyllic isle is lonely and peaceful and has fostered the development of a singularly unique form of spellcaster called the SingMage. These harmonious mages can sing an infirm man to sleep with peaceful dreams, but once they have succumbed to the influence of the SingMage, what sinister purposes could be employed then?

MERROS

Inverted mountains of submerged ice pierce down into the depths of the icy oceans of the southern poles of the Core World, trapping enormous pockets of air and the creatures within. Now entire societies of sea creatures have evolved through the centuries and can now only dream of what may lie beyond their glass ceiling looming over the air above their watery homes.

Rebel clans have set their sights on quests to break from their icy tombs driven by curiosity, a need for liberation, and the rapid decline of the magic energies of the StoneShrine that delivers the life-giving air to their species, and they don't have much time left…

MONTKELIAN

Lofty spires ascend above the tips of the peaks overlooking the vast oceans to the east and the sea of sands to the west.

Lord Kelian reigns here as not only the sovereign of his people, but as their steward and guardian.

Conflicts brew as the Saurans of Vykyan raid the borders and control the trading posts around the deserts, and barbarians continue to encroach from the north. The only solace and strength to the citizens of MontKelian comes from the core of their power as well... the StoneShrine.

Deep within the bowels of the MontKelian underground lies a chamber of inescapable beauty, power, and danger - The Shrine of Order. The path to obtain an audience however lies along treacherous roads and forbidden paths.

NAEVIA

Salty froth sprays over the bulwarks of the mighty ships that sail among this water-bound Realm. Even the citizens that are blessed with land still prefer the tilting water-forts and sprawling deck villages that float on their anchored moorings. Piracy and intrigue abound while trade compels more hopeful men to call the sea their home.

THE NETHER

The Nether is another Realm that is able to occasionally link to other Realms in Core. A place of Darkness and Pride, this is the home of many beings who are called "the Undead" by others in Core - beings such as vampires, liches, and zombies, to name a few.

It is said that, unlike the utter anarchy found in the Exude, the Nether is ruled by a council of terrifying entities. They are called the Necrolords, and we have reason to believe that they have designs on dominating all of Core.

SHAINTAR

Entrenched religions vie for control among powerful fiefdoms in populous cities that baffle every sensibility. All is not in order however as Dregordian hordes mass along the Everwall and the staid Dwarves engage in their own, concealed political maneuverings.

Gateways from many other Realms open into this single Realm which only adds to the conflict and struggle that pervades the seemingly steady politic.

TANGIA

Turbaned dervishes cyclone in plazas packed with people bent on survival and improving their position, where status means survival. Enormous armies combine to wage war over the blasted, desert terrain all in an effort to capture control of the Shard of the Stone.

TARA GORSEDD

This Realm serves as home to the Bard Kings who rule over a mystic society of druids and commoners. The lush landscapes sway to the enchanting melodies of the Gorsedd and deceptively conceal the strife within.

TOARC

Towering beasts rove the primordial forests of this prehistoric Realm, almost ignoring the primeval races of humans that subsist here in fear and superstition. Their verbal tradition speaks of a silvered wind-walker that will come to redeem them and lead their people to a place safe from the mountainous creatures that invade their every thought… day or night.

TEMPUS

This realm is a pinpoint in space and time, located at the true pole of the Core world. Time itself virtually stands still as the events in the rest of the realms spin along their temporal paths. This is the place where the Progeny may appear at will and at critical times may convene to debate the situation on Core from time to time.

VULDAN

Acrid spires of noxious fumes spiral up from the crevasses of the wracked terrain in this tortured Realm. What unknown creatures inhabit the depths of this inhospitable place?

ZULOK

Savage clans wage tribal conflicts in this arid savannah Realm, laid waste centuries ago by the Sundering and only now beginning the long return to its former splendor. These dark-skinned savages conceal an innate nobility and purity of thought that astounds even the most spiritually attuned. Only the influence of the OutWorld can destroy their insular society, but will they let that happen?

TIMELINE

After the "Sundering" the Realms diverged along their own speed of time. There are two Realms that were completely unaffected temporally by the Sundering: Tempus and The Abyss. Both of these Realms ascribe to "Core Time" or the original time scale of the pre-Sundering world. All of the other Realms are represented below with each box representing 1,000 years of time's passage. As you can well realize, travel between Realms not only becomes quite hazardous, but you also stand to miss out on a lot of the events of the other Realms if you enter a Realm whose time scale passes more slowly. To you in the new Realm, one day could be twenty days in another Realm.

Note also that there is no capability of traveling **back** in time. You can only cross over into faster or slower rivers of time… but there is absolutely no travelling upstream.

In our quest to track the Shards of the Stone, we have traversed many of these self-same Realms, seeming to pop in and out of reality to the inhabitants of those Realms, but we have yet to know every path between. We are not even certain that Time is necessarily a constant in some of the Realms. Our limited experience with each Realm has provided only a glimpse into this shattered World and there is yet much to discover.

Some have rumoured that extreme catastrophes can alter the very fabric of some of these barriers of Time, causing them to stretch, break, or even shatter… not like glass would shatter, but like a bubble might merge with its companions… opening up greater areas of synchronized Time and causing the bordering Realms to either accelerate or decelerate to compensate.

Such an experiement is beyond our moral code to tamper with, but would prove to be most intriguing to watch should something of this nature occur.

Other effects on these time barriers are naturally the Mages that roam some of the more developed Realms. These Mages are rarely prepared for the responsibilities that they bear, and some are even blithely unaware of the powers they hold, so bent on discovery and exploration are they that they do not understand the vast consequences that could come from their meddling.

More unknowns come into play with the nebulous concentrations of Time-based Fragments. What would truly happen if Chrona were aggregated and hoarded? What effects would this have on the Realm in which they were gathered? What effects would this have on the other Realms? Such thought can drive the mind to sheer madness, but it is our plight to ponder and prepare to keep the balance that should rule our World once again.

Realm	Eras of Time (1,000 years each division)
7 Kingdoms	
The Abyss	
Aershon	
Akashido	
Bloodlight	
Brick City	
Corelisia	
DreamSea	
The Exude	
Faêrian	
Glacies	
Glamaer	
Havok Nor	
Kazanysk	
Khanrukh	
Kitica	
Lyrea	
Merros	
MontKelian	
Moora	
Naevía	
The Nether	
Oçamyr	
Shaintar	
Tangia	
Tara Gorsedd	
Toaric	
Tempus	
Void	
Vuldan	
Zulók	

Table 1 - Eras Within the Realms

PANTHEON

THE PROGENY AND THEIR "GAMES"

They were given the "Stuff of the Universe" to play with, and they created the world of Core. Then they destroyed everything, leaving us to pick up the pieces and struggle to survive. Now we have built civilizations anew, and made the shattered remains of Core into a new and different world. It is imperfect and harsh and chaotic, but it is our world. And yet, the Progeny are still out there. They still have their goals, their ambitions, their drives... and their secret plans for our world.

There is no easy way to predict what they are doing, how they will do it, and how it will affect us all. Certainly, each Progeny will act according to their nature, and their conflicts will often follow the lines they always have. Hate will oppose Love, Truth will revile Deception, and Order and Chaos will battle for supremacy in their own strange, frightening way. However, these conflicts have never been simply battles between Progeny - to them, the entire world of Core and all things in it are pieces on the board of their "games."

It is clear that many of the Progeny have chosen to act as deities in many of the Realms of Core. Others prefer to act more surreptitiously, manipulating others to advance their goals. Some Progeny act outside of individual Realms, instead focusing their efforts on a larger scale. Then there are those who have simply disappeared, and it is these Progeny we fear most. Their motions and their directives unknown, they are the unpredictable factors we ShardMasters cannot hope to predict at all.

PANTHEON LISTING

Progeny	Power Die	PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
The Grey Wanderer	d100	72/36	68/34	66/33	62/31	74/37
Arden	d100	58/29	62/31	56/28	67/33	50/25
Saxum	d100	64/32	66/33	49/24	62/31	64/32
Glacies	d100	58/29	63/31	55/27	58/29	56/28
Ventus	d100	60/30	54/27	51/25	57/27	48/24
Kaval	d100	52/26	60/30	64/32	57/27	56/28
Mordeth	d100	46/23	58/29	56/28	65/32	59/29

Table 2 - Panthon Chart

Do some of the Progeny seek to rebuild what they have destroyed? It certainly seems so. Are there those who oppose them? That seems likely as well. What would such a thing mean to us?

Paradise regained? Or Armageddon anew?

THE NEW DIVINITIES

Some were raised up by Progeny to look over the Realms they came from. Some have come from places unknown. They are called gods, spirit guides, Ascended. Where the Progeny seem to have abandoned the people of Core, some of these New Divinities seem to have risen to the challenge of shepherding the flocks. Others have clearly seen fit to impose their will and their dark intent over the world. Regardless of origin or intent, however, it is important to realize that the Progeny are not the only Higher Beings who hold sway over Core. The New Divinities will most certainly play an important, perhaps vital role in events as they shape our world.

Figure 2 - Divinity Magic

THE GREY WANDERER

Who is the Grey Wanderer? It is clear that he points to the Progeny and declares them enemies. It is clear that he seeks out those who will help to restore the Stone. It is clear that he wishes to give paradise into the hands of the people who were abandoned by the Progeny… Or is it?

This enigmatic figure poses no small concern to the scholars of the Realms as he is frequently seen striding to and fro about his various errands… unstoppable and ever-enduring in his machinations that only he can reveal.

The Grey Wanderer seems to have not created any minions, armies, or servants to further his causes… instead he infrequently meddles in the affairs of the Realms of his Progenic brethren, to their own dismay and fury.
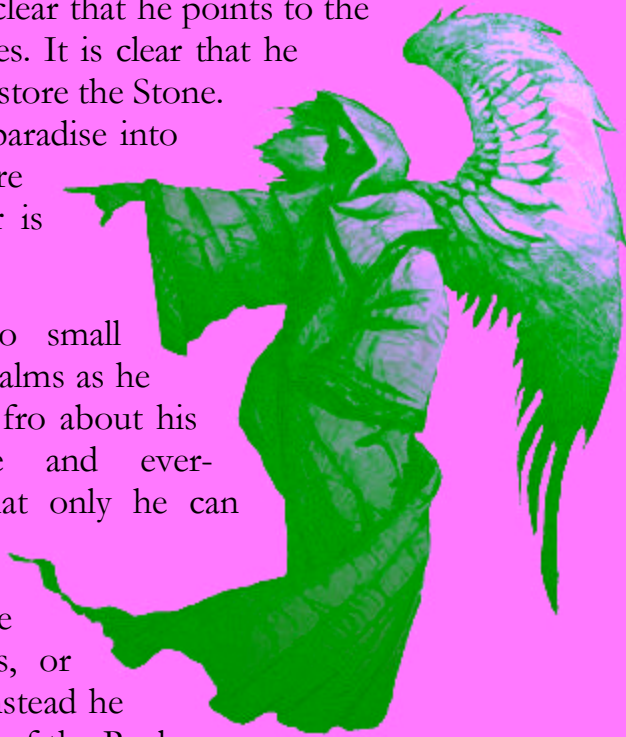
Noone knows where his true purposes lie other than the restoration of Order and the reformation of the CoreStone. Let us hope that is the extent of his ambition.

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 72/36	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 68/34	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 66/33	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 62/31	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 74/37	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	90	S	Intellect	60	A	Faith	80	S	Passion	60	A	Charisma	80	S
Dexterity	50	A	Perception	50	A	Inspiration	60	A	Intuition	80	S	Attraction	50	A
Stamina	80	S	Sanity	90	S	Conviction	90	S	Dedication	70	S	Humility	90	S
Accuracy	60	A	Concentration	80	S	Discernment	50	A	Empathy	50	A	Persuasion	60	A
Adrenaline	80	S	Memory	60	A	Purity	50	A	Ego	50	A	Will	90	S

Arden

Arden was present when the CoreStone first shattered and to this day lives with the knowledge that it was he that discovered its faceted nature; that it was he who erupted out of Passion and jealousy during the Progenic struggle; that it was his own outburst of anger and possessiveness that was the catalyst of the primeval eruption of the CoreStone. To this day, whether he feels a sense of remorse or not, the subject is not spoken of in his presence. Not by his minions, nor by the other Progeny who bear the permanent markers of his wrath and explosive fury.

Now as the Progeny go forth to father the races and to bring about their own purposes, Arden remains in seclusion and hermitage, choosing not to involve himself in the lives of the pitiful races of the Realms and instead electing to simmer in his own furies deep beneath the bowels of the world of Core.

His volcanic channels permeate the crusts of the Realms, even in deep undersea fissures that issue forth clouds of his wrath and anger.

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 58/29	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 62/31	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 56/28	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 67/33	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 50/25	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	35	A	Intellect	50		Faith	60		Passion	95	S	Charisma	55	
Dexterity	80	S	Perception	60		Inspiration	55		Intuition	80	S	Attraction	45	
Stamina	40	A	Sanity	55		Conviction	50		Dedication	40	A	Humility	35	
Accuracy	90	S	Concentration	60		Discernment	55		Empathy	45	A	Persuasion	65	
Adrenaline	45	A	Memory	85	S	Purity	60		Ego	75	S	Will	50	

Saxum

This behemoth of the underworld can be felt throughout the Realms as he rumbles among and through the deep rifts and crevasses of the nether Realms of Core. This monstrous beast is actually one of the more noble of the Progenic family and is actively about the business of restoring Order to the Realms through his mastery of Nature and his understanding of the need for humility among the peoples of Core.

Saxum often is mocked by the other Progeny as a slave of the Grey Wanderer, beholden to his narrow vision of the future of the Realms of Core and incapable of his own independent thinking and pursuit of his own objectives.

Those that are allied with him know far better that Saxum is not only powerful, but he is merciful and kind despite his awesome control of the material sphere. Saxum spreads his influence through a networked society of StoneMages who not only execute his commands but are held to the same high standards of nobility that Saxum himself portrays.

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 64/32	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 66/33	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 49/24	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 62/31	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 64/32	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	95	S	Intellect	65		Faith	55		Passion	65		Charisma	80	S
Dexterity	35		Perception	40	A	Inspiration	60		Intuition	45	A	Attraction	50	
Stamina	60	A	Sanity	60		Conviction	45		Dedication	70		Humility	60	
Accuracy	50		Concentration	80	S	Discernment	50		Empathy	85	S	Persuasion	40	A
Adrenaline	80	S	Memory	85	S	Purity	35	A	Ego	45	A	Will	90	S

GLACIES

Deep under the Glacial rifts lies the palaces and kingdoms of the wise and powerful Glacies. The father of the undersea Realms and progenitor to the Merran races, Glacies interacts daily with his insular societies, dispensing justice and reigning directly among his peoples. He is rarely molested by the other Progeny and has implemented his own sense of a paradisiacal state which he is vainly convinced would be better if implemented for all of the kingdoms of the Realms if they wished to be truly happy.

He cares little for the petty struggles caused by lawless societies spawned yet not directly controlled by his fellow brethren. It is his feeling that their hands-off approach to their creation efforts is cruel and pointless.

Perhaps it is time to extend beyond the watery boundaries of their Realm and bring this better method of custodial rule to the larger masses of the Realms of Core?

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 58/29	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 63/31	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 55/27	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 58/29	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 56/28	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	40	A	Intellect	60		Faith	50		Passion	60		Charisma	60	
Dexterity	30	A	Perception	40	A	Inspiration	55		Intuition	35	A	Attraction	85	S
Stamina	90	S	Sanity	45		Conviction	35	A	Dedication	50		Humility	25	A
Accuracy	80	S	Concentration	75	S	Discernment	80	S	Empathy	85	S	Persuasion	60	
Adrenaline	50		Memory	95	S	Purity	55	A	Ego	60		Will	50	S

VENTUS

Ventus commands the air, the sky and the avians that inhabit the spheres above the Realms. His mastery of the suns, moons and stars coupled with his all-encompassing gaze and knowledge of the activities of the Realms makes him a sought-after ally in any struggles among his Progenic brethren, however he tends to side with the forces of Order so long as his avian brethren remain unmolested, the Avanar. He is the progenitor of their race and defends them with devotion and swift justice.

Although his very essence predisposes enmity with his brother Saxum, for some reason he is frequently known to champion some of his causes, working with the minions of Saxum by providing aerial reconnaissance and intelligence gathering services. Although they avoid contact it is clear that there is a sense of loyalty between them.

Ventus also does not need to rely on his wings for travel as he has mastered the channels of the Unreal that exist throughout Core.

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 60/30	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 54/27	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 51/25	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 57/27	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 48/24	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	40	A	Intellect	80	S	Faith	55		Passion	60		Charisma	50	
Dexterity	55		Perception	50		Inspiration	60		Intuition	75	S	Attraction	45	
Stamina	60		Sanity	30	A	Conviction	45		Dedication	60		Humility	40	
Accuracy	95	S	Concentration	45		Discernment	45		Empathy	35	A	Persuasion	55	
Adrenaline	50		Memory	65		Purity	50		Ego	55		Will	50	

KAVAL

His fury reigns supreme from the Celestial heights to the waste-littered path left behind him as he walks the Realms of Core stirring up the hearts of men to lawlessness and hatred. This member of the Progeny literally captures the souls of the most evil of creatures on Core and together they infiltrate the societies of the Realms, instigating chaos and crime wherever they are involved… which is just about in every Realm known on Core.

Kaval commands a ghastly horde of minions in any Realm of import and calls forth legionnaires to command them, imbued with perverse mutations of their core nature, twisted to the desires and commands of the Progeny Kaval.

Kaval is allied with other Progeny that share his common interest in maintaining the status quo in the Realms… including sabotaging any attempt to reform the CoreStone. There is not much that he would not do to further his cause, including sacrificing any one of his lieutenants in his immoral struggle for the dominance of lawlessness and Chaos.
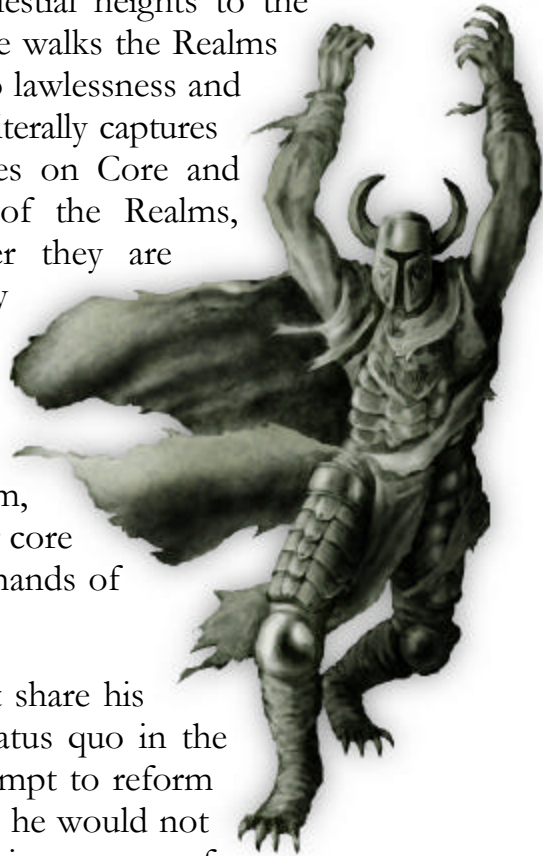
POWER DIE
d100

PHY 52/26	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 60/30	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 64/32	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 57/27	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 56/28	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	55		Intellect	85	S	Faith	35	A	Passion	95	S	Charisma	60	A
Dexterity	45		Perception	75	S	Inspiration	80	S	Intuition	55		Attraction	80	S
Stamina	50		Sanity	25	A	Conviction	55		Dedication	35	A	Humility	20	A
Accuracy	50		Concentration	40	A	Discernment	60		Empathy	40		Persuasion	85	S
Adrenaline	60		Memory	75	S	Purity	90	S	Ego	60		Will	35	A

MORDETH

The tentacled horror we call Mordeth maintains little ambition regarding the quest for the CoreStone. However, this powerful member of the Progeny is pleased with the conflict that ensues each moment among the Realms, providing a ready supply of souls from which he feeds in his Corelisian kingdoms. His tentacles not only serve as a horrific reminder of his ability to reach to any sphere to grasp they souls of the damned and dying but also enable him to transport to any Realm, bringing with him clouds of Death and Dread.
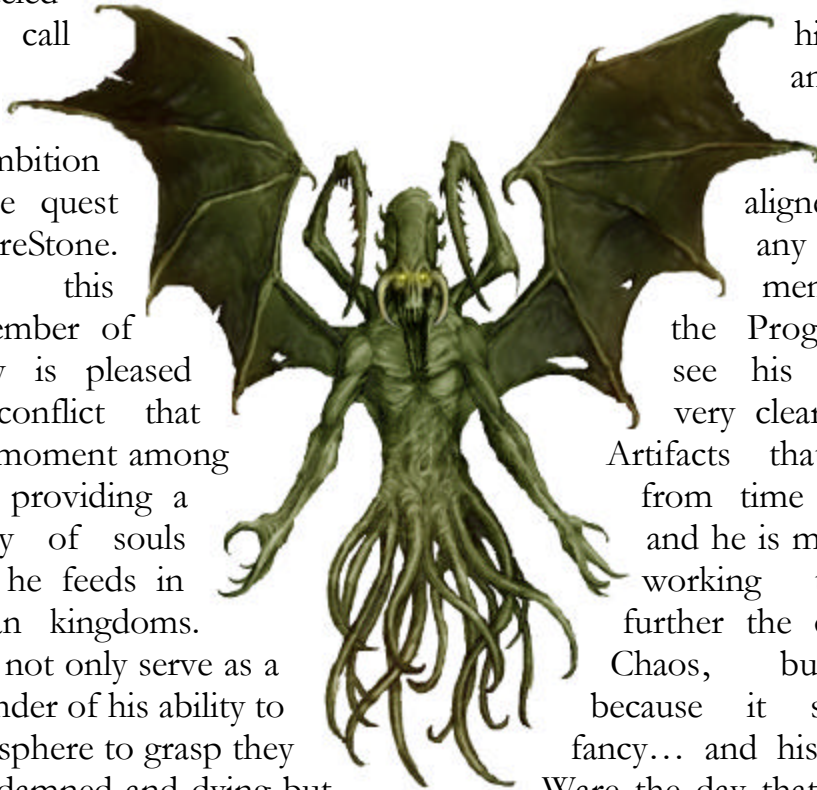
Although his goals and desires are rarely aligned with any one member of the Progeny, you see his workings very clearly in the Artifacts that appear from time to time, and he is most often working to help further the causes of Chaos, but only because it suits his fancy… and his appetite. Ware the day that Mordeth finally chooses a side, for he is a formidable opponent.

POWER DIE
d100

PHY 46/23	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 58/29	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 56/28	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 65/32	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 59/29	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	50		Intellect	80	S	Faith	30	A	Passion	55		Charisma	65	
Dexterity	45		Perception	60		Inspiration	80	S	Intuition	40	A	Attraction	45	
Stamina	55		Sanity	35	A	Conviction	45	A	Dedication	60		Humility	40	
Accuracy	50		Concentration	55		Discernment	95	S	Empathy	70	S	Persuasion	50	
Adrenaline	30	A	Memory	60		Purity	30	A	Ego	95	S	Will	95	S

INTRODUCTION

A Revolution in Gaming

This is where the "rules part" of the Shards of the Stone game begins. Hereafter, you will encounter all of the information you need to begin playing in the fantastic world described in the previous sections.

After all, this amazing world needs Heroes, and you will be among them...

You have in your hands the key to unlocking a gate. This key will allow you to enter and roam the world of Core, where you can fully explore the Shards of the Stone universe. You will be able to become a part of a great adventure, perhaps even ascending to such heights that you will shape the very foundations of this new, exciting world.

This book is more than a key, though - it is a set of tools. These tools will fully empower you to not only become a part of the Shards of the Stone universe, but to create pieces of this world. Perhaps you will even go further and create an entire Realm of your own. There are no limits, save your own imagination.

This is what we mean when we refer to a revolution in the roleplaying game hobby. Through game store events, convention events, and especially via the Internet (www.ShardsoftheStone.com), you will be able to join an ever-growing community of participants who will not only read and play with the universe we are creating, but help us in the act of creation. Your Hero's stories will be told as part of the grand epics being told, your adventures will shape the future of the many Realms, and your Creatures, Items, Spells, and other ideas will become part of the greater whole that we all share... join us!

Roleplaying – A Game with no Board and no Bounds

Roleplaying is simply a theatre of the mind. There is a director (commonly called the ShardMaster), and each player is one of the actors.

We are constantly expanding the world of Shards of the Stone with new settings and stories, engaging characters and fearsome enemies, evocative images, and new plots and story twists that the ShardMaster can use to entertain the Players.

We also provide a wealth of multimedia tools (available for download at www.ShardsoftheStone.com and on CD-ROM at your local retailer) that provide soundtracks, Hero design software, visualization devices, and other theatrical "props" that will further the suspension of disbelief as you play the game.

These rules simply jump-start your experience with a tested, balanced set of guidelines and resources that you can then expand and modify to your own personal style. Make sure you submit your own creations on the website so your unique creativity can become a part of the greater Shards of the Stone universe.

Later in this chapter there is a complete example of a game session, which will be a much clearer explanation of the activity than can be adequately described here.

What is this Book For?

Simply put, this book is a tool for developing stories. Within its chapters are guidelines to help you step into the world of high fantasy and discover the mysteries of Heroic adventure. This book will guide you through the game mechanics and allow you to create epic tales to rival those of even the most distinguished fantasy authors.

Shards of the Stone: CORE is also the most important book in this series that we will publish, because all of the other books will refer to this one for the main rules to play and create by. Think of a set of building toys. You normally need to buy the "main set" before you acquire all of the accessories; if you don't, you won't likely have enough of the key pieces to build what you really want.

It's this same thing here. CORE is that "main set" where all of the key principles and rules are established. Every other book we publish will refer back to this one, so it is important that you keep it handy whenever playing.

This first Chapter will provide you with a clear picture of what it is these rules are meant to help you do - create interactive stories with your friends, featuring Heroes of your collective creation. These stories do not have pre-determined results, which is what the rules, the dice, and your imagination are for. It is possible to succeed or fail at just about anything you have your Hero attempt, which is where the "game" part of the "roleplaying game" comes into play.

"ESCAPE FROM CAMDEN," the example of game play that is at the end of this Chapter, is particularly useful for anyone who has never played a roleplaying game before. If you've never played before, please be sure to read this.

The second Chapter, "HEROES," gets into the nuts and bolts of creating a Hero for your adventures in the world of Core and the Shards of the Stone universe. These rules will also be important for ShardMasters when they wish to create Extras (Villains and Creatures) for the games they are going to run for their friends. This Chapter also covers how to use Skills and how basic Method Resolution is handled in the game.

In the third Chapter, "COMBAT," the rules of combat and conflict resolution are covered. The ShardMaster can keep things simple, or they can add in all of the options available to make your Shards of the Stone game one full of depth and detail. However, we have tried to make the rules of play a simple, intuitive thing. Keeping it simple should be your main goal. Your game is not a court of law for the game rules - it's a fun, entertaining, theatrical experience that the ShardMaster and Players produce together.

The fourth Chapter, "MAGIC," explores the arcane depths of Magic, the Elements, and the Shards. This is where you will find the Spells for your Magic-wielding Hero. It is also where you will discover the tools for modifying existing Spells, creating new Spells, and even formulating entirely new Magic Systems (all intricately tied to the rare Fragments of the Stone that are dispersed across the world of Core). This Chapter is, in many ways, the essence of what makes Shards of the Stone so special and unique in the world of fantasy adventure games.

In the fifth Chapter, "THE SHARDMASTER," the role of the ShardMaster is discussed in greater detail. Particular attention is paid to getting a new GM started on the path of running a Shards of the Stone game, and even experienced GMs will discover specific "tricks and tools" to help them run a better game.

Finally, the sixth Chapter, "DENIZENS," gives you a Bestiary of Creatures, as well as some Villains, for your Heroes to be challenged by. Additionally, complete rules for creating your own Creatures are presented there.

The Appendices at the end cover some odds and ends that will be of great help to your gaming, including Items, using the Web to be more involved in Shards of the Stone and more... For now, onward!

HEROES

A Hero is the assumed role you take on when involved in a roleplaying Session. A typical Session usually has four to six Heroes working together toward a single goal.

To put it a different way, your Hero is the imaginary person that you create to play in the world of Core. Just as the actor takes on the role of a character in a movie or play, you take on the role of the Hero. However, who and what that Hero is comes much more from you and your imagination than any movie or stage character ever would. The actor must follow a script and the guidelines established by the screenwriter or playwright, whereas you are free to describe and guide your Hero solely according to your own ideas and desires.

Heroes in Shards of the Stone are those individuals who do more than run a shop or plow a field or guard a wall. Sure, that may be where they started in life, but something happens to cause them to go far beyond the mundane, day-to-day activities of those around them and to do things worthy of having stories told about them. You will decide what the early life and experiences of your own Hero were before you started playing them, and you will determine what choices your Hero makes throughout their career.

SHARDMASTERS

A ShardMaster must have the Heart of a Bard, the Soul of an Artist, the Intellect of a Scientist, the Insight of a Philosopher, the Foresight of a General, the Memory of a Historian, the Will of an Umpire, the Compassion of a Priest, the Patience of a Diplomat, the Ego of an Auteur, and the Instincts of a Gambler…or not. But it would certainly help.

The ShardMaster acts as the narrator, creator, and director of the roleplaying Session. He also takes on the roles of the Extras the Players come in contact with, breathing life into anyone and everything the Heroes deal with.

It is a demanding Method, to be sure, one that will require time and effort and immense creativity. However, being a ShardMaster is also an incredibly rewarding experience. After all, it is the ShardMaster who presents the world and all things in it to the Players, entertaining them even as they are challenged to survive the Methods and adventures before them. When the Session is over and the Players are regaling each other with the tales of what occurred and how they barely survived the schemes of their enemies, the ShardMaster can take pride in knowing it was they who created, produced, and directed the "movie" that the Players' Heroes "starred in."

GUILDS

Whenever a group of Players get together and create Heroes for a specific Campaign, the gathering of those Heroes is called a Guild. Guilds are more or less a matter of convenient identification when you are just sitting around the game table. However, they have a much deeper meaning when you consider the possibilities of you and your friends joining in the greater whole that is the Shards of the Stone universe.

By creating a Guild and, ultimately, registering your Heroes through www.ShardsoftheStone.com (or through in-store or convention events), your Guild will become one of the recognized groups that travels the many Realms of Core to do the deeds that will be recorded for all others to read and wonder at. Create a strong and worthy Guild, and you may well find your friends at the center of some of the most amazing events that will happen in Shards of the Stone.

Roleplaying is a very social activity, and it is a wonderful way to bring together your friends on a regular basis as well as discovering new friends. We want the concept of the Guild to extend past the gaming table for you - your Guilds should consist of the people you want to call your best friends, the kinds of people you can count on for anything, both in and out of the game.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PLAY?

The single most important thing you must bring to any Session with you is your imagination. Without it, you simply cannot play Shards of the Stone. Your imagination is required for you to be able to see and hear and live out the adventures of your Hero.

Whenever playing a roleplaying game, it is a very good idea to have something to write with and something to write on. Traditionally, paper and pencils have been the way to go. However, more and more gamers find that laptop computers are extremely handy at the gaming table, and even a few of the newer gadgets (such as our Palm Pilot GM tools) are becoming popular with the more "gear-headed" Players. We will be releasing software that enhances your gaming table experience if you wish to use such devices, but a good old notepad and a few pencils (or even pens) will get you by just fine.

You have this book (or at least access to it, thanks to a friend), so you have the main product needed to get into the actual world and rules of Shards of the Stone. However, you and your Guild will likely be adventuring in one of the special Realms of Core. As such, you will need the Realm Book that details that particular part of the world.

We have a number of Realm Books available or planned for you to explore including TANGIA, GLAMAER, TUALA MORN, BRICK CITY, SHAINTAR, BLOODLIGHT, MONTKELIAN, MERROS and more. Each one will take one Shard of the Stone or Realm and take you down a very different storyline and adventure… all leading to the eventual culmination events which will be played out at major conventions throughout the year.

To find out more about these and all of the other Realms for Shards of the Stone, please see our web site (www.ShardsoftheStone.com) and check regularly with your local retailer.

Dice are an important part of the game as well. They are what make it a game, rather than just an exercise in shared storytelling. You will need a decent number of the standard dice that you can find with any board game. These are called polyhedral dice, and they come in a variety of shapes so that you have different numbers that are possible on each one… such as a d4 or "four-sider" that looks like a pyramid, or a d10 or "ten-sider" that goes from 1 through 10 (or 10 through 100), etc. You'll need to have a complete set of polyhedral dice to play your game from any store that carries game supplies. If you need to find a retailer that carries these, make sure you visit our website and click on retailer locator.

Time is another very important requirement. To allow everyone at the table a chance to participate fully in the process of creating a story that has no bounds, you should be prepared to spend at least 3 or 4 hours per Session. It is not at all uncommon for many Guilds to devote 6 or more hours every week or two to their Campaigns. These are times full of interaction, socializing, excitement, and rousing adventure shared in the imaginations of the Players. A roleplaying Session is not something you can sit down and "finish" in 20 minutes. This is a hobby for those who want to have an ongoing experience with their friends over long periods of time.

We are big fans of miniatures. It is much easier to lay out and resolve conflicts with the use of miniatures (more on this in Chapter Five: THE SHARDMASTER). Each Hero should have a specific figure that represents them, and the ShardMaster should have other miniatures to represent Villains, Creatures, and other Extras that may be involved. Specially created miniatures exist for fantasy gaming and can be purchased at any local gaming store, and painting these figures can be its own form of hobby entertainment as well. A special line of Shards of the Stone miniatures will be available to bring a heightened reality and immersion into your games, so check them out at your local retailer.

Of course, once you get into the use of miniatures, there are all kinds of neat toys that can further enhance game play. There are sets of castles, buildings, dungeons, and terrain kits for those who want to go all out with building environments to conduct the battles their Heroes get into. These are by no means necessary, but a lot of hobbyists really enjoy this part. You can get by pretty well, however, with building blocks, pencils and rulers (laid out to mark where walls are), and similar ideas. There are also vinyl mats, marked with hexes or squares (hexes are better) that can be drawn on with water-soluble markers. However, lay a dry-erase board flat and use some thin-tipped markers designed for it and you have an excellent tool for marking off the elements of a "battlefield." For a complete list of any and all gaming and hobby products that can be useful for your Campaigns, log onto www.ShardsOfTheStone.com where you will find a retailer locator that will help you find the nearest store where you can order and buy these items.

If you don't want to buy specific miniatures, anything you have available will do. Toy soldiers, chess pieces, board game pieces, or even coins with tape on them will help you mark off who is where. A bottlecap or similar object can be used to help you mark off how many meters a Character can move when their Action comes up.

Experienced gamers know that you can't really have a good Session without plenty of munchies on hand. A well-lit space with lots of chairs and a big table is the ideal spot to play, though sitting on the floor around a coffee table is just fine. A means for playing music (soundtracks, preferably those that feature dramatic scores without much in the way of distracting lyrics) is a nice addition to the environment. Your imagination can probably take over from here.

TERMINOLOGY CODEX

Action: Whenever a Hero tries to do something within the time unit called a Round, it is called an Action. This is an important distinction whenever actual combat (or other situations where time is important) is at hand. Only one Action can be taken during a Round.

Attack: The most common Method used by Players in Shards of the Stone, an Attack consists of using an Item to cause harm to another Creature. Attack resolution is detailed in the COMBAT chapter.

Campaign: An ongoing series of Sessions where Players, playing the same Heroes each time, gather to continue where they left off in the story from the previous Session of play. Some Campaigns last a few Sessions, whereas some Campaigns may last many years. Think of a Campaign like a television series and you've got it.

Character: Any entity (sometimes also known as a "Persona") that appears in a roleplaying game. Heroes are Characters that are controlled by the Players of the game, while Extras (such as Creatures and Villains) are controlled by the ShardMaster.

Core: The name of the world that the grand stories of Shards of the Stone are set upon. Core is a world of many Realms, all separated by mystical barriers of Time called "The Veils" and "The Mists." Core intentionally has a double meaning, in that this is also the "Core" book of our entire product line, containing the main rules to play Shards of the Stone.

Creature: A term used to refer to a being that has qualities and powers that no normal Character would ever use for their Hero. Fantastic mythical beasts, horrific monsters, and bizarre entities that could not be easily played as a normal Hero or Villain are considered Creatures.

Damage: This is the number subtracted from any one of your Stats due to attacks, accidents, etc. Damage can certainly be absorbed by the Tolerance values of the Creature being attacked or by any items such as shields, parrying blades, armor, etc. Any unabsorbed Damage comes right off the Stat of the Character itself. Characters that absorb too much damage can pass out or even die. There are many distinct types of Damage including Bludgeon Damage, Piercing Damage, Cutting Damage as well as other less common types of Damage such as Impact Damage that may be used by the ShardMaster. Other types of damage can be very specifically linked to the Fragments themselves, such as Fire damage, Ice Damage, etc. Damage is just one of may types of Effects used in Shards of the Stone.

Defense: This consists of the innate mechanics of avoiding Attacks and involves the passive use of Structure/Tolerance as well as more active Methods such as dodging, parrying, etc.

Dice: Shards of the Stone uses standard polyhedral dice including four-siders, six-siders, eight-siders, ten-siders, twelve-siders, twenty-siders, thirty-siders, and "zocchihedrals" (4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20, 30, 100). A ShardMaster may choose the Scale Level for a game where one die would be used more than most of the others. The ShardMaster also has the option of using d8 or 2d4 for example, depending on the types of probability curves they prefer.

Effects: Effects are results of Methods. When a Method is successful (or unsuccessful) then Effects occur. A common Method is an Attack whose resulting Effects could be Bludgeon Damage for example. For purposes of tabletop play, Effects are pretty standard and are listed along with the Methods that cause them, such as Spells, Attacks, or other actions. Effects are primarily used in Item creation, Method creation and other design elements of Shards of the Stone.

Extras: Just like in a film project, Extras are the animated "props" that make a campaign setting rich and vibrant. Any Character portrayed and controlled by the ShardMaster such as Villains and Creatures are two important types of Extras, but anyone else that the Heroes encounter in the Shards of the Stone game, including tavern keepers, shop owners, kings, beggars, ship captains, etc., are also Extras. Each Extra is a unique opportunity for the ShardMaster to roleplay and enhance the story they are creating with the Players.

Fragment: When the Shards of the Stone were Sundered, billions of minute particles were blasted throughout the earth and skies of the Core world. These particles are referred to as Fragments and are imbued with the pure, raw essence of an Element. It was Fragments that were used to create the progenitors of all races and creatures, and these creations retain lasting properties from the Fragments that were used in their creation. Fragments can be common or rare, are used as the general currency in most Realms and can also be used as catalysts for many magical powers. When a Fragment is "burned", it's elemental essence returns to the Stone Shrines (or near them) and coalesces as a new Fragment once again.

Guild: A term referring to a collection of Heroes who work together on adventures, sharing the burdens and challenges and victories and defeats. At the same time, the Guild also refers to the Players of those Heroes, who share in the excitement and fun of playing Shards of the Stone and may well become part of the global community of other Guilds who actually shape and guide the future of the world of Core.

Hero: The Character that a Player portrays and controls in a Shards of the Stone game. Heroes are the reason for the game. They are the protagonists of the story, the adventurers who face unbelievable odds and hope to survive, and (ultimately) the legends that others aspire to be like. Heroes are the folks who will shape and mold the destiny of the world of Core.

Item: An Item is pretty much any "thing" in the fictional environment that a Character can pick up and/or otherwise use. However, in this particular context (meaning "Items with a capital `I'"), Items are special things that have very particular values, powers, and related information. There are rules for actually creating Items in this book.

Method: A Method is any type of "do-able" ability such as a Spell, an Attack, a Defense, etc. Methods have Effects

that are results of success or failure and can be linked to any Item, Creature, or Location.

Player: Anyone who joins in a game of Shards of the Stone to play a Hero and share in the adventures and stories that will be told. Players portray and control Heroes, determining what those Characters do at every turn. They are like actors in a play or TV show, except they have no script and are allowed to decide every action and reaction of their Character. In this way, they participate in a kind of "interactive theatre" with all of the other Players and the ShardMaster.

Properties: These are similar in nature to skills, but they can never be "turned off" for good or for bad. Some tend to be rather limiting and can be referred to as Defects while others are just innate, naturally occurring Abilities. Each Creature has their own set of Properties, making them even more unique and diverse. Although Defects may be a problem for the Creature, they are also an excellent means of defining the personality and nature of your character, and a real opportunity for delving into the story of how the character came to be who and what they are.

Realms: The world of Core is separated into a number of Realms, and these Realms are kept apart by mystic barriers that prevent virtually all travel between them. One of the biggest problems is that each Realm has its own sense of Time - one Realm may have a few thousand years of history, while another may only be a one or two hundred years old. This has a lot to do with the origins of the world of Core. For all intents and purposes, the Realms are separate worlds all their own, and there will be a main book and supplements for each Realm of Core.

Roll: Whenever a Method requires dice to be tossed and numbers added up (and compared to a Target Number), this is called a "roll."

Round: There are times during a Session when measuring time in specific amounts is important. Combat is always like this, and such situations as chases or when something is "counting down" to completion are related situations. Whenever it is important to measure out time, the game is measured out in Rounds. Rounds are 3-second periods, and a Character can take as many Actions per Round as they have Fatigue points for the Stat they want to use.

Scale Level: This enables a ShardMaster to determine the base Power Die used in rolls for a given campaign setting. A relatively low-powered campaign could use a d6 Scale Level so then any rolls for damage, Stat checks, etc. would use six-siders to roll the result. A cosmic, stellar encounter could use d100 and wreak havoc on the Universe itself (not allowed in Shards of course).

Session: This term refers to a period of time when the Players of a Guild of Heroes get together with the ShardMaster and roleplay for a while. Sessions can last as short as an hour (though this is rarely enough time to really get anything done) to an entire weekend (with breaks for the natural things, of course). Typically, a Session will last between 4 and 6 hours, and Sessions tend to be regularly-scheduled events.

Shard: The Shards are the actual artifact pieces of the CoreStone that fractured apart during the Sundering. Each Shard has 4 or 5 vertices which define its shape and also define the 4 or 5 Elements that combined to form that particular Shard. There is an innate, elemental link between a Shard and the matter surrounding where it is housed. Inevitably a Stone Shrine will form around any Shard given time.

ShardMaster: The person who runs the Shards of the Stone game, playing the parts of all Extras who interact with the Players' Heroes; devising all of the challenges and enemies the Players' Heroes will have to face and overcome; breathing life into every aspect of the Realm that the Heroes are traveling, living, and adventuring in; and facilitating and validating every experience that the Players have at the gaming table. The ShardMaster is the reason for everything that happens in a roleplaying game, and they are also the referee who interprets and enforces the rules that everyone is playing by.

Skill: A Method or ability that can be learned or taught, such as playing an instrument or using a weapon. When building a Hero, it is important to consider purchasing multiples of the same Skill to increase competency.

Spell: In Shards of the Stone, the term "Spell" refers to any magical Method that a Character learns and has to use Fatigue or Endurance to cast. Within the "story" context of the world of Core, these powers might be referred to as "Spells" (for Mages), "Gifts" (for Druids), "Invocations" (for Priests), "Disciplines" (for Alchemists), or any number of other designations. For purposes of general game discussion, however, they can all be considered Spells or even more abstractly, Methods. The learning and casting of Spells is often a key defining element to a Hero, in many cases determining their role in society as much as it defines what they are capable of.

Statistic (or Primary Stat): A rating (expressed as a number) that shows your Hero's relative strength or lack of it in a given natural trait. Stats determine how strong, smart or agile the Hero is. The higher the number, the more powerful the Stat. Example: Strength is a Stat; Strength 20 is stronger than Strength 10.

Stone Shrine: This elemental construct that grows around a Shard artifact takes many forms and is highly dependent on the vertices of the Shard that it is formed from. A Stone Shrine is the sanctuary for the Shard and has many other properties, most notably the tendency of Fragments that are burned to re-coalesce in and around the Stone Shrine.

Structure/Tolerance: This is a measure of the "structural capacity" that Items have. Generally, as Damage exceeds the Tolerance, it is deducted from the Structure… until the Item is destroyed. A similar mechanic is used for "live beings" under Fatigue/Exhaustion, also defined in more detail in the HEROES chapter.

SubStat: This term refers to those defining attributes of any Character that are derived directly from the Stats. Any given Stat has five SubStats that provide a more precise way for the ShardMaster to manage the game. As an example, the Physical Stat is split into five SubStats: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Accuracy and Adrenaline. The average of those five values is equal to your Physical Stat value.

"ESCAPE FROM CAMDEN"

AN EXAMPLE OF PLAY

What follows is a "story in progress." We are picking up the trail of a group of heroes in a medieval fantasy setting, one in which there are monsters, magic, elves, dwarves and the like. They are attempting to leave a particular city unnoticed by enemies who are following them. As you read along, pay particular attention to the Sidebar Notes in this section. They will contain important information for understanding what is going on in game terms.

SHADOWS IN THE STREETS

Kerf stepped off the porch of the Screaming Gull Inn, looking up and down the darkened street as he did so. His eyes narrowed, and he listened as carefully as he watched. His dwarven vision adjusted to the darkness more quickly than those of his companions, and his natural paranoia as well as his experience made him the best choice for taking point, leading his friends through the dark streets of Camden.

He stood motionless, allowing the night air and quiet sounds of the town at rest to wash over his senses. He slowly scanned along the buildings, looking up at the roofs and in between alleys and in through windows, searching for any sign of ambush or observation. All the while, his hand gripped the stock of his crossbow, his fingers never straying far from the trigger.

Satisfied that, for the time being at least, they were alone on the streets, Kerf signaled back to his companions. Next to follow was Iolie Rhodes, her hand firmly on the hilt of her saber as the light sea breeze blew her dark hair into her eyes. Moving beside her, Prince Daniel Argorn, also tensed for battle. As they stepped off the porch to follow the dwarven captain, Master Hawk followed, holding out his hand to Chrysalia to help her down the steps as she clutched her toy bear to herself, her frightened eyes darting up and down the street. Finally, Waverly Avanon came out, gently pulling the door of the inn closed behind him.

Kerf looked at Hawk, who nodded silently and pointed northward. Kerf quietly led the small group that way, still on the lookout for pursuit or watching eyes. Iolie and Daniel, as planned, dropped back to the rear of the group, and Waverly and Hawk moved to either side of Chrysalia, looking for all the world like the bodyguards they were. Chrysalia was the youngest of them all, a girl who had been raised by an evil, sinister man who still hunted her for the power she possessed. This was, in fact, why they were leaving Camden in the cover of darkness.

They rounded a corner and Kerf stopped short, surprised by the appearance of a black cat. Its nose was matched to his, and it stared him right in the eyes as it perched on a window sill. He glanced back at Hawk, who nodded and grinned. Grimacing, Kerf whispered to the cat.

"Surprisin' a man like that could get ya killed, Marlain."

The cat leapt down from the window, transforming even before she hit the ground into the willowy form Kerf knew. The brinchie druidess leaned in close to ensure that her words would not carry far. Her feline eyes narrowed slightly;

whether in amusement or malevolence, Kerf had to admit he wasn't certain.

"You wouldn't strike down a poor street cat, would you?" Without waiting for him to respond, she continued. "The Supreme Paladin's men scour the town, although they are attempting to be subtle. In general, this means they are being loud by accident instead of on purpose as usual. And they're not doing a very good job of searching while trying to hide. Still, we must be careful - there's an awful lot of them."

Nodding once to Hawk, Marlain shifted again, this time into a small mongrel dog. After jumping up and licking Kerf in the face, she loped off in the direction they were heading. Chrysalia had to stifle laughter, and the others quietly grinned at Kerf as he angrily wiped Marlain's spittle off of his cheeks.

After waiting a few moments, Hawk nodded again and Kerf began leading them through alleys and back streets. He occasionally paused, holding up a hand for the rest of the group to stop and lay low. While looking and listening intently himself, he turned to Hawk, whose eyes looked distant as he stared at an indistinct point in the air. Then Hawk came out of his unfocused state and looked at Kerf, nodding and pointing in a given direction. They then resumed their quiet, cautious flight from Camden.

The group of friends spent the better part of an hour making their way through Camden, avoiding the search parties and other dangers as they went. At one particularly tricky point, Hawk stopped the group suddenly, reaching to grab Kerf by the collar. Everyone quickly ducked into an

alley and found what hiding places they could (in boxes, doorways, and behind trash heaps) as Marlain, still in her mongrel hound form, came skittering and yapping through the alley chased by four soldiers. The rattle of their chain mail was barely muffled by their cloaks, and Kerf noted the seal of the Supreme Paladin emblazoned on one soldier's breastplate as he passed.

As the soldiers continued their chase through the alleyway, the last of them stopped short, spinning as though something had caught his attention. Instinctively, Chrysalia huddled further into the small space that she had ducked into beneath some broken crates. To everyone's horror, this caused the heap to shift, creating a noise loud enough to further intrigue the soldier, who began staring intently in her direction.

Just at that moment, the yapping of the small mongrel grew loud again as Marlain literally hurled herself at the snooping soldier. Knocking him flat on his back, she bit him square on the nose. His comrades, still chasing her, fell all over him into a pile. As they struggled to extract themselves from each other, Marlain nipped and bit viciously wherever she could, further angering the already-frenzied men. As a whole, they drew their swords and set off after her again, including the "snoop" who forgot what he had seen as he rubbed at his bleeding nose.

Strangely enough, that one near miss helped Kerf to lead the others the rest of the way out of Camden in relative safety. As the four soldiers continued to chase Marlain, the cacophony of barking and curses brought more attention. Soon, without most of them realizing what they were chasing after, dozens of soldiers were running rampant through the streets of the city, shouting back and forth. Lights came on in houses and inns, townsfolk came out to see what all the ruckus was about, and the local guard began to get involved. All the while, the companions made their way silently to the outskirts of Camden and beyond.

A few miles out of town, Kerf called a halt and rounded the group up within a thicket of trees and underbrush, away from the road. He looked everyone over, stopping at Hawk.

"Well, what happened to Marlain? Did they catch her?"

Hawk just smiled as a great winged bird alighted upon his shoulder - his namesake in fact, a beautiful dark-plumed hawk.

"Oh, I'd say she got away all right." The rest of the companions laughed as they let out sighs of relief, some admonishing the Druidess for giving them a scare. They sat down to relax a moment, although Kerf was anxious to get moving again to improve their lead on their pursuers.

"Let's not get too comfortable, now. We've still a ways to go yet, especially if it turns out that any of the Paladin's men have more than half a brain."

"That you can rest assured of, dwarf." This voice came ominously from the shadows beyond where the companions had stopped, and its owner stepped out into the dim light of the stars to reveal himself. Dressed in leathers studded with metal plates, his boots were wrapped in furs to dampen the sound of his passing. He held a crossbow lowered directly at Daniel. "No one get any ideas, or His Highness sees my bolt at extremely close range."

Other movements in the trees revealed eight more men, arranged in a semicircle around the group. Three others also had crossbows, and they were pointed at Waverly, Chrysalia, and Marlain (who was still perched on Hawk's shoulder).

Most of the group threw a quick glance at Hawk, who just stared in amazement at the force that had appeared seemingly from out of thin air.

Daniel just smiled, opening his arms in a non-threatening gesture. "Now, gentlemen, if it's just me you want, then there's no need to involve the rest of these fine folk. Let's just-"

"Not so fast, Your Lordship!" The leader pointed with his crossbow for emphasis. "Each of these people are wanted in the Prelacy for dozens of crimes. Not that I really care, mind you," - this brought laughter from he other men - "but the lot of you will fetch a nice purse from the coffers of the Arch Cardinal's treasury."

Iolie moved to stand at Daniel's side, her hand not quite drifting to her blade as the marauders tensed in unison around them. "You might not find us such easy prey, mercenary." She fairly spat the word out. "Especially since you seem to have no priorities when it comes to targets."

At first, Daniel simply gaped at the slim woman with the glittering eyes as though she had lost her mind, much in the same way as the mercenary leader did. Almost at the same instant, however, the two men came to better understand her as a blue bolt of energy slammed into the enemy leader, throwing him and his crossbow into a thicket of brambles.

"As if I only read minds," sneered Hawk as he reached for his sword.

The sudden attack on their leader startled the other mercenaries, allowing the companions to dive for cover from the crossbows and ready themselves. Daniel and Iolie drew their blades and, almost as one, charged towards the leader and his two closest men. With the clash of blade on blade, the battle was joined.

Kerf, whose battle-axe had replaced his crossbow in his hands some time before, simply stepped over to the two men nearest him and crippled one with a sudden and fierce blow through the legs. The other took a feeble swing in retaliation, which glanced harmlessly off of the dwarf's chain mail.

In an instant, Chrysalia closed her eyes tightly and just...vanished. Even as she did so, a crossbow bolt flew across the clearing at her, narrowly missing the place where she had been.

And even as Hawk's hand reached for his sword hilt, Marlain leaped free of his shoulder and began to shimmer in transformation. In the place of the hawk flew a gryphon, a great winged beast combining the most vicious parts of a lion and an eagle. Two of the mercenaries, armed only with swords, had charged into the clearing towards Hawk. With the sudden appearance of the gryphon, they paused in terror and confusion.

Waverly, attempting to step beside a tree, began a brief chant as his fingers moved in intricate patterns. A hazy sheen of energy appeared around his body as the crossbow bolt intended for his heart slammed into his chest, hurtling

him backwards. Though still alive, two of his ribs were broken and the pain almost blacked him out. His spell, only just cast, faltered and dissipated.

STEP BY STEP

What follows is a "transcript" of the conversation between the players and the GM as they play through the preceding battle scene. This should give you a pretty good idea of how such a thing is played. Just understand that the same set of circumstances will be played out ten different ways for ten different groups of people.

GM: *Daniel just smiles, opening his arms in a non-threatening gesture (the GM demonstrates, taking on the role of Daniel). "Now, gentlemen, if it's just me you want, then there's no need to involve the rest of these fine folk. Let's just -" The leader of the bad guys raises up his crossbow and says, "Not so fast, Your Lordship!" (The GM, pantomimes a crossbow in his hand, points at each of the players.) "Each of these people are wanted in the Prelacy for dozens of crimes. Not that I really care, mind you, but the lot of you will fetch a nice purse from the coffers of the Arch Cardinal's treasury." The rest of the thugs laugh.*

Robert: *Yep, the Arch Cardinal. Shoulda known (this is spoken "out of character").*

Lisa: *I move over to Daniel's side, ready to draw my sword.*

GM: *The leader tenses up, looking ready to fire and command his men to attack.*

Lisa: *I make sure my hand doesn't actually touch my sword ("in character"). "You might not find us such easy prey, mercenary. Especially since you seem to have no priorities when it comes to targets."*

GM: *Both Daniel and the mercenary leader look at you like you are crazy. (At this point, the GM notices that Robert has been showing a piece of paper to all the players that says "Get Ready" on it. Since Hawk has a mind link with everyone in the group except Kerf, upon whom such magic won't work, the GM allows the rather clever bit.) Robert?*

Robert: *I'm firing a telekinetic attack at Leader Man. I'm guessing that he doesn't know I can do this, since no one is aiming a crossbow at me. Maybe I can get him by surprise?*

Shawn: *It would surprise me! (General laughter and words of encouragement for Robert's action. The GM is given to believe the players think this is a great idea.)*

GM: *Sure, he hasn't a clue. Expend two Mental Fatigue for the Discipline, and then roll your attack. You can add one to your roll for surprise.*

Gayle: *Go for it, Robert.*

Robert: *OK, (as he moves two stones from his Mental Fatigue pile to the outside of his mat) my Telekinesis Ability gives me another +1 bonus and is based on Mental (MEN) which has a Stat value of 8.*

Gayle: *Don't forget the bonus for surprise.*

Robert: *Thanks. Yeah, that makes my total modifier a +2 so let's make a real impression on this guy.*

Lisa: *Any day now!*

Robert: *(Giving a wry look at Lisa.) OK, I'm gonna roll now. (Picking up his Power Die - a ten-sider - and rolling, he smiles broadly.) 6! Gives me a total of. 14! I'm betting that's a hit. (The rest*

of the group whoops and cheers; in the system being played, this is a very good roll.)

Ian: *If that doesn't hit, I'm tossing my axe down and surrendering (laughing).*

GM: *(rolls the defense for leader who has a MEN Stat of only 6 and no innate defense to Telekinesis… he's a warrior after all… and only gets a 4 – added to the 6 gives a defense of only 10) As a matter of fact, it slams into him hard. Robert, roll damage. You rolled well enough to re-roll one's and two's (meaning he can reroll any die result that comes up a "one" or a "two" again). The other mercs are so stunned that you can all take an action first. (Robert rolls his Power Die for damage, and the GM applies it against the target character.) In fact, the leader is thrown back into some brambles and is stunned.*

Robert: *"As if I only read minds..." I'm going for my sword.*

GM: *Next Round, Robert. You attacked, so...*

Robert: *Right, but I only used up my MEN fatigue on that one… now it's purely Physical. (He smiles to Lisa who laughs)*

Shawn: *I imagine the bolt from his crossbow might have fallen out in all that.*

GM: Ahem. *Just trying to help, I'm sure. OK, Iolie, what are you doing?*

Lisa: *I draw my sword and charge towards the leader.*

GM: *OK, hold on. We'll need to lay this out. (At this point, miniatures and other accessories are laid out and arranged to indicate where everyone is.) I'm just going to place everyone kind of randomly, since no one was expecting an attack.*

Lisa: *Well, I was next to Daniel.*

Cheryl: *Remember, I'm still a hawk on... Hawk's shoulder. (General laughter.)*

GM: *OK, well, since Kerf was talking to everyone else, he's in front here (indicating as he places the miniatures), and I doubt Chrysalia would be too far away from Hawk at this point. And we'll just put Waverly here.*

Although most RPGs are about more than miniatures battles, I cannot stress enough the usefulness of figures. They are very helpful for arranging and conducting battles, which are very common in most games and inevitable in all but the most esoteric campaigns.

In addition, if you go to the trouble of obtaining miniatures that look like the characters, and then have them painted, it can add a lot to the overall enjoyment of the game. Kind of like being able to play with toy soldiers all over again...

Of course, you can just use bottle caps, Legos, Monopoly pieces, and even real toy soldiers if you like. It's really a matter of personal taste.

Lisa: *(Moving her miniature.) Like I said, I was charging the leader. I guess I'll attack this guy instead (pointing at a miniature of a swordsman standing next to the fallen figure of the leader).*

GM: *Right. Daniel will be right behind you, although he's nowhere near as quick as you are. Roll to hit. (Lisa spends a moment checking her character abilities and then rolls to hit.) That's a miss; your blade clashes against his as he parries just in time. Marlain?*

Cheryl: *Well (checking over her character sheet), how long does it take me to change forms?*

GM: *Well, since it's spell you already have active, it'll only take two Mental Fatigue. You can still half-move and act.*

Cheryl: *Well, considering I want to change into a gryphon, I suspect that Hawk would appreciate it if I wasn't still on his shoulder when I changed. I'll do a half-move and then change into a gryphon.*

Shawn: *Yeah, getting squashed by a gryphon would not be in Hawk's best interests. Of course, I'll bet it gets everyone's attention.*

GM: *Kerf, I can guess what you're doing.*

Ian: *Yep. These two are right in front of me, so I'll use two Physical Fatigue on one attack and two on the other guy…and try and nail them both.*

GM: *Well, you've done this one enough; you know the drill. (Ian rolls the dice, hitting his first target but missing the second one.)*

Ian: *Uh oh...*

GM: *Yep, that means you're out of moves and he's right there. (General groans and pronouncements of doom ensue.) Hawk, you already went, so we're down to...*

Ian: *Well, Chrysalia's next on the Initiative list.*

Gayle: *Well, I'm disappearing. For all I know, Mandris Toman is here himself! (Everyone knows what she means, since Mandris Toman is the name of the Arch Cardinal and the man who has all these people hunting her.) I'll become invisible and then move over behind those men (pointing at the guys who were pointing crossbows at her and Waverly).*

GM: *Roll to get the spell off. (She does so, nodding as it comes up well; her style of Magic is so unpredictable, she has to roll even for Spells that don't require her to target someone else.) All right, spend your Fatigue and move her figure three inches towards the men, going around to the right. Who's left?*

Ian: *Waverly and then the Prince.*

Shawn: *This one's easy...I'm taking cover behind those trees and putting up my Shield spell.*

GM: *Fair enough. Go ahead and move your figure and expend the Fatigue for your spell. Meanwhile, someone move Daniel up to where Iolie is. He's drawing his blade as he does so, which takes his whole action.*

Lisa: *Wait a minute, I was able to move, draw, and attack.*

Ian: *Yes, love, but you have Quick Draw (a Skill in this game).*

GM: Right. *Well, all the bad guys are slower than you, plus they've been surprised by the sudden onslaught and Marlain's transforming into a great winged beast in the middle of the clearing. At best, they can take half Actions.*

Robert: *Cool! Nice going, Cheryl.*

Cheryl: *Thanks. Although I get the feeling that this makes me target Number One.*

GM: *OK, we'll start with the men on Iolie and Daniel (checks some numbers, rolls some dice)...neither even came close. The guy still standing against Kerf swings (the GM rolls) and hits!*

Ian: *Yep. Saw this coming.*

GM: *(Rolling some more dice.) Geez! 7 Hits - that doesn't even get through your armor, does it?*

Ian: *(Grinning) Nope!*

GM: *Clang! He looks down at his sword, his fallen comrade, and then you. He looks a good deal less than pleased.*

Ian: *I just smile at him like a cat about to eat the mouse it's been playing with.*

Robert: *Been hangin' around Marlain too long.*

GM *Right (smiling), anyway, we move on to... (glancing at the board) the crossbowman who was aiming at Chrysalia. He's got a chance in hell of hitting (rolling, eyes going wide). Oooh!*

Gayle: *Oh crud!*

Robert: *C'mon, she's invisible and everything's gone nuts here. I mean, why would he even fire at her, with this gryphon (pointing at the large miniature that has been placed where Marlain is to represent that she has gotten larger) flying here all of a sudden?*

GM: *Ahem. As Chrysalia vanishes and moves away, the bolt passes right through the spot where she was and thunks itself into a tree.*

Cheryl: *"Thunks" itself, huh?*

GM: Right. *It thunks itself there, and now it's thinking of staying (a combination of laughter and groans). Anyway (moving to the board and reaching down to move some figures), these two have run into the clearing towards Hawk. Marlain's sudden transformation seems to have taken the wind out of their sails a bit, though, and they just stand there staring in horror. This guy, however, takes his shot at Waverly.*

Shawn: *Naturally, since I didn't actually do anything.*

Gayle: *Says the man with the glowing energy field surrounding him.*

Robert: *Does kind of paint a "Shoot Me" sign on your forehead, Shawn.*

GM: *Well, you've got some cover...(rolls), but apparently not enough.*

Shawn: *Of course. If anyone's going to get hit, it's got to be me.*

Ian: *Hey, I got nailed.*

Shawn: *You're a tank. You don't count.*

GM: *(Having rolled the damage dice, the GM whistles.) Not pretty, Shawn. 10 Hits!*

Shawn: *I do believe I've been punctured. The Tolerance on my Shield spell is only 8 so two of the hits get through! That didn't taste good.*

GM: *Not so fast, that's piercing damage so only one point goes to the Shield and 9 points make it through.*

GM: *Well, we'll say that the bolt was partially deflected by your spell so you can count it as Bludgeon Damage! but the impact broke some ribs and bruised some internal organs. Were you Stunned?*

Shawn: *Are you kidding?! My personal Physical Tolerance is only 3 and that's three times over that! Yeah, I'm in Shock all right… darn near unconscious!*

Ian: *If he wasn't, I'd have to ask for whatever Waverly was drinking (the group busts up).*

GM: *Well, the bolt slams hard into your chest, where it would have pierced your heart had you not cast your Shield spell. As it is, you are thrown back a few feet and lay stunned at the base of a tree, your spell fizzling away.*

Robert: *Wait a minute... his spell shouldn't drop until the end of the Round.*

GM: *Since that was the last guy to go, the Round is over.*

There you go - a fairly accurate picture of what it's like to actually play a roleplaying Session with a group of friends. The previous example gives you everything to look at, including a sense of the story being told, the Heroes of the story, the action and adventure, and how it is all actually handled by the ShardMaster and the Players.

HEROES

THE HERO DEFINED

Before you can begin your journey into the Realms of Core, you must first create a Hero that will be your "alter ego" in this world of adventure and mystery. This is a very crucial part of the game - you want to put a great deal of thought and effort into this, for this is where you begin the story of a Character that may live on for many years in tales that the bards will spread throughout Core.

To put it another way, the Hero is who you will be in the world of Core, so make sure your Hero is who you want to be.

It is both wise and expedient to record all of the relevant game-related information about a Hero in one place, in a format that makes it easy to look up this information quickly. We have taken the liberty of creating just such a format, in the form of a character record sheet. A blank copy of this record sheet is in the back of this book, and you are welcome to make copies of it for use in your games.

Before you go about the business of assigning values to all of those slots on the Hero Record, you had best spend some time thinking about just who and what you want your Hero to be. It's pretty difficult to build something if you don't actually know what you are going to build, right?

The first thing you should do is read and answer the following Ten Questions:

1) What kind of Campaign are we playing in?

This is one you will need to consult with the ShardMaster about. This is a decision they will have to make (although they will likely have input from each Player in the Guild before coming to a final decision).

The rest of the Ten Questions cannot really be effectively answered until you know the answer to this one, however. The kind of Hero you can create in an "Off-the-Farm" (d6) Campaign is going to be considerably different than what is possible in a "Heroic" (d10) Campaign. If you are considering a Mage, the history of such a Hero's training and experience will be very different between an "Early Career" version and an "Epic" one.

Once you and the rest of the Guild have come to terms with the ShardMaster on the answer to this Question, the rest of them may then be easily addressed.

2) What is the Name of my Hero?

Believe it or not, this is perhaps the single hardest thing for most experienced Players to do. Why? Because a good name can set the entire tone of the story for a Hero, and even the whole Campaign.

Think about it - would The Lord of the Rings be as powerful if Gandalf had been named Doombash the Dynamo? Would Han Solo have been such a great character in "Star Wars" if he had been instead named Rex Rhubarb, or perhaps PsychoRipper?

Just consider how truly awful those stories would have been had those characters been named the way many people choose to name their "Quake" deathmatch IDs?

Many Players end up waiting until much later in the Hero creation process before deciding upon a name, and it is likely that you may as well. However, we recommend that you try to come up with a good, solid name early on. A good name can powerfully affect the way you think about your Hero and helpyou make better, story-driven decisions about what your Hero is like, what they can do, and what they will end up as by the time you are done.

So, instead of waiting until you are done with everything else and then, as an afterthought, tacking on "Bill the Bully" as your Hero's name, take some time very early on to consider the way the world will speak of your Hero when they tell the tales of that Hero's deeds.

You will be doing yourself - and the rest of your Guild - a huge favor. Trust us on this.

3) What Race will my Hero be?

We are the last people to suggest that Race should be the primary determinant of who and what someone will become. However, racial identity is a strong part of who each person is in life, and to deny it is to ignore the many rich cultural heritages that make us the distinctive people that we are.

In a fantasy game like Shards of the Stone, the Race of a Hero is even more important, because of the very real impact racial identity has on the natural abilities and inclinations of an individual. This is exemplified by changes to Stats, inherent Abilities, reductions to some Stat Maximums, special Abilities, and Defects that affect every member of a specific Race.

These game-related elements will give a very clear picture as to what the Hero will and won't be naturally suited for. Also, knowing what kinds of bonuses the Hero will begin life with (and what kinds of Defects they will have to endure) will give the Player a clearer idea of where they will want to spend their Points later in the Hero creation process.

Racial identity has a very strong importance on the life and history of a Hero. The Races all have some sense of community, which leads to social customs and belief systems that an individual either embraces or rejects. In either case, such choices are very defining for that Hero; the selection of a Race is one that should happen very early in the Hero creation process.

4) What role in the story do I want to see my Hero fulfill?

This is as simple or as complicated a question as you wish to make it. In some games, this question is easily answered by selecting a "class" or "profession." However, in Shards of the Stone, the rules of this game allow you to make your Hero pretty much exactly as you desire; your Hero's profession is a matter of personal taste and story, rather than one that pre-determines what skills and training they have.

Another way to look at it is this - you will select your Hero's strengths and weaknesses, their Skills and Abilities, and everything else that defines who and what they are. At the end of that process, you will be free to name whatever profession (or lack thereof) you want your Hero to pursue.

However, it is very important to consider early on just what it is your Hero should be able to do. Instead of looking at this strictly in terms of profession or class, a more useful consideration is the "role" that your Hero will take in the grand story that you and the rest of your Guild will tell. This broader view will, in fact, then determine what profession (or multiple professions, or an utter lack of training, or something in between) your Hero should have in their history.

Let's explore this by way of example. What role did Little John play in the stories of Robin Hood? He was a famously strong and extremely tough warrior, a loyal friend, and the man who saw to it that things got done and everyone survived. He was an outlaw who saw a chance to improve his world and he took it.

Now then, thinking in those terms, we can approach "creating" Little John appropriately. We would want to be sure to give him a very high PHYSICAL Stat, training in combat, survival, leadership, woodsmanship, and even some skullduggery. His Defects would reflect his sense of honor and loyalty. From there, it becomes much easier to flesh the Hero that Little John is out.

Let's look at another example - Ahmed Ibn Fahdlan (AKA "Little Brother," played by Antonio Banderas) from the movie "The Thirteenth Warrior." He was the scholar, poet, and ambassador sent into a "barbaric" foreign land to make contact and to learn their ways. His role in that story was also to serve as an outside observer to the goings-on of this new culture, as well as provide an outside viewpoint for others to consider. He observed, listened, and remembered things that ultimately proved very useful to his party. At the same time, he was very weak as a warrior to begin with, and he had to learn quickly in order to survive.

In game terms, we would want Ahmed to have a very good MENTAL Stat. He would have lots of Skills that reflect his scholarship, his facility with languages, his experiences in court, his poetic abilities, and other such areas. Of course, there is one scene that makes it pretty dear that he is also a highly trained horseman as well.

You should have a better idea of what we mean by "role in the story," now. Will your Hero be the wily trader who is always looking for the next big "score?" How about the massive but gentle giant who would rather talk things out than fight? Perhaps your Hero is the natural-born leader who finds herself at the center of "big things" no matter how hard she tries not to be.

Having this clearly worked out in your head will make the rest of the Hero creation process proceed much more smoothly. If you ignore this part, you may find yourself going through the Skill lists, Ability lists, and other areas like a hungry man with a grocery cart and no shopping list.

5) Will my Hero wield Magic of some sort?

In Shards of the Stone, the presence and importance of Magic to the setting is paramount. It is one of the key reasons that Core is a completely different world from our own Earth. This is true of most fantasy settings, and especially so here. The powers of Magic will ultimately make or break the world of Core.

The ability to wield Magic is a particularly defining aspect of a Hero. Magic is powerful and dynamic enough that attaining those abilities will be a costly and time-consuming process, involving a lot of research and cost of Experience Points to be even remotely capable. As such, you should decide at this stage if you wish your Hero to be able to wield Magic to even a small degree.

You also need to consider what Style of Magic your Hero is trained in. It is possible to be proficient in more than one Style, but such a thing is extremely difficult and very, very rare. Your ShardMaster may not even allow you to do it, so be sure to ask first if you are even considering it. Your Style of Magic will determine many of the Skills that your Hero should acquire. It is also important to remember that each race is innately attuned to the use of certain Fragments in different ways. As an example, it would be highly unlikely and rare for a Sauran to develop skills in Ice-based spells due to their innate affinity with Fire. Humans are the only race that have an equal distribution of all Elements in their nature.

You will also want to determine at a very early stage just how powerful in Magic you wish your Hero to be. Everyone in your Guild will begin with a certain allocation of Experience Points that are based on the sum of their SubStat values. As each race is distinctly different, these numbers can vary. Magical power requires sacrifice (this is a very important theme in Shards of the Stone), and you will be sacrificing many Skills and Abilities for that power.

6)   What other kind of training and education has my Hero undergone?

The Skills list for Shards of the Stone: Core is fairly extensive and detailed, and you could spend quite a bit of time just going down it and picking whatever strikes your fancy. It is also possible to create your own Skills, making the list literally endless in possibilities.

However, it will be a much easier and more effective process if you first consider what overall training and education your Hero has undergone up to the point where their part in the new story begins. By doing this, you can make more effective and intelligent choices about how many times to purchase those Skills that fit your concept for your Hero, rather than just picking them at random.

Of course, it may very well be helpful to look over the Skills list to give you the suggestions you need to consider what your Hero's training has been. That's perfectly fine, however, just keep in mind the overall concept of your Hero as you do so. This will help you keep a better focus on just what is and isn't important for your Hero when push comes to shove and you are almost out of Experience Points.

By the way, this question ties pretty closely into question 4; answering that question strongly (and keeping the examples of Little John and Ahmed in mind) should help you considerably here, as well as in dealing with the next question...

7)   What kind of combat training (if any) does my Hero have?

Although directly related to the previous question, it is probably a good idea to look at these ideas very specifically as you consider the creation of your Hero. After all, heroic adventure pretty much always leads to at least a few donnybrooks here and there, as well as the occasional Epic Desperate Battle Against Impossible Odds to Save Everything. The life of a Hero is, after all, rarely boring (not if you're doing it right, anyway).

Related questions include "What kinds of weapons does my Hero wield?" "What kind of armor does he wear?" Many Heroes (and especially those who pretty much avoid the use of Magic) will have rather extensive training in the use of weapons and combat techniques. This, of course, means spending quite a few Points on the related areas. If the ShardMaster allows Martial Arts, most warrior-oriented Heroes will likely have at least one set of those rather effective Maneuvers.

Considering what weapons and armor you want your Hero to have early on will also make it easier to decide what your Hero's Strength should be. It's a fairly direct correlation, really - weaker Heroes won't want to drag around massive battle axes and collapse under the weight of plate & chain mail, while stronger Heroes will hardly be satisfied with a short sword and leather mail if they are expecting to be in a mass melee this afternoon.

Believe it or not, the choice of armor and weapons is also one of appearance and style for many Players. How the Hero looks and "feels" to the Player is very important to their enjoyment over the long haul. As such, Players will often consider the look and style of their armor and weapons as part of the creation process for their Hero.

8)   What is the history of my Hero before they began the life they are about to lead?

This is probably the hardest question for many Players (especially new ones) to deal with. It is also the most important if you want to play a Hero that is a truly "living and breathing" entity, rather than some cardboard cutout of a character that no one would actually find very compelling in a story.

If you spend some time and thought on this question, most of the other questions (all but the first one, in fact) will be much, much easier to answer. If you don't, you'll just be flinging Points around and coming up with a Hero who even you won't really understand well enough to care about.

While you're at it, some related questions include "What kind of family does my Hero come from?" "What brought them to set out on the path they now follow?"

Of course, it's not actually required that you write out an entire novel that describes everything about your Hero (though there have been a few Players known to do just that, and sometimes those novels even get published!). Often you can get by with just a few lines or notes here and there that sketch out the basics. "Lived here, trained there, have three brothers and a sister, Mom died when I was young, Dad was stern but fair, it turned out that I have magical talents, was tapped to train at a local mage academy, academy was blown up by evil Demon Lord, barely survived..."

You get the idea.

The more you put into this process, the more real and vivid your Hero will be not only to yourself, but to everyone in your Guild. Your ShardMaster will also have an easier time telling stories that truly involve your Hero if they have more information to work with.

At the same time, some very experienced Players will leave "holes" in their Hero's back story. In this way, they allow for evolving plot ideas to be tied directly into their Hero's history. This is a fairly advanced technique, but one that can be very satisfying in the cooperative storytelling environment that is a roleplaying campaign.

9) What kinds of problems does my Hero have to deal with?

The answers to this question (and the related questions "What limitations or Defects does my Hero face in their life?" "What drives my Hero?" "What hinders them?" "What compels them to act in certain ways?") should very naturally flow right out of the previous question. You need to consider these issues in a very particular manner, because they will be the keys to two very important aspects of the game.

Defects are an especially effective means for the ShardMaster to weave stories that specifically address and involve your Hero. By tapping into one or more Defects, the ShardMaster has a way of directly pulling your Hero into the current plot, or even creating a whole new plot that revolves specifically around your Hero.

Of course, many Defects are simply powerful tools to enhance your roleplaying and storytelling efforts. By choosing certain Psychological Limitations or Personality Traits, for example, you can define much of how your Hero will react to and respond to the world around them. Be careful, however - it can be tempting to use Defects too stridently, making your Hero little more than a clichè, if that's all that defines them.

A final note - not every limitation or defining personality trait needs to be represented as a Defect. It is perfectly acceptable (and, in fact, preferable) to flesh out such things even beyond whatever Defects you actually get points for.

10) Does my Hero have any special quirks, talents, items of clothing, habits, or anything else that serves as a kind of "tag" or trademark?

This is the "final touches" portion of the Ten Question process. After figuring out everything else, can you think of one or more elements about your Hero that stand out in some fashion that would, for example, make for a "cool bit" in a movie?

Interestingly enough, many experienced Players will actually start the Hero creation process with one or more of these ideas already in mind. That's perfectly fine, though they will no doubt look for the reasons for such tags as they go through the other questions.

At any rate, this is that part of the process that you can play around with while you get started actually spending Points on creating your Hero. With ideas floating in your head (we hope), it's time to get down to brass tacks and build that Hero.

QUICKSTART

Before we delve into the details of creating Heroes, here is a list of things that we will be doing in order:

1. Select your Power Die
2. Choose your Race
3. Purchase Stats and set Tolerances
4. Buy Properties
5. Buy Skills and Spells
6. Buy Fighting Styles
7. Buy Gear

The Heroic Quest

It's important to keep in mind that a good hero is defined by the Villain that he competes with. Make sure as you are playing the game that you keep this in mind. Traversing the path of the villain yourself not only complicates the job of the ShardMaster (that's his job anyway), but it makes it so much harder to maintain the believability of the story as you go forward.

Another thing to consider as you paint this tale from your imagination is that when bad things happen, it's a prime opportunity to really show your roleplaying skills. If your character is going to die, don't complain to the ShardMaster… instead make it a key, dramatic moment in the storyline of the tale. Some of the most poignant parts of the stories that you collectively tell are going to be the misfortunes of your team… and you can always make up a new character, so go out in **style**!

THE POINT(S) OF IT ALL

Now the fun really begins. Each Creature on the world of Core was formed by the Progeny from certain Shards of the Stone. Each Shard has its own distinct assortment of Elements that make up its nature.

Each Creature also was formed on a certain "Scale Level" indicating the relative power of that being to others. The Progeny, for example, are d100 Creatures which means that they can pull from a larger pool of resources in their construction. (It should be noted that in any campaign, it is not wise to introduce the Godlike Progeny as Characters.)

Humans on the other hand are generally d6 Creatures or even d4 for some of the lesser races. A ShardMaster may choose to allow up to d10 Characters, or if they want a truly super-heroic game, all the way up to d20, but d10 is the best balance for an epic fantasy setting.

We'll do an example based on the d10 Scale Level so the ShardMaster sets the Power Die to a d10.

The ShardMaster now has a few choices:

1. Match the SubStat Values to their Racial makeup used to define the Race. Then add up their SubStat values to form their Experience Point pool.

2. Let the players take their Power Die and roll it for each SubStat, averaging each five SubStats to round down to the Stat values for Physical, Mental, Spiritual, Emotional and Social. Players then can add up their SubStats to set their initial Experience Point pool.

3. Assign each Player a pool of initial Experience Points multiplied times 2 and let the Players assign those points to each SubStat, averaging them to discover the primary Stat values. They can have the option of buying higher Stats or more Skills and Abilities.

Once you have determined your Stats and Experience Point pool, you can use those Points to build your Hero. Each and every single choice will be yours to make, although it is often a very good idea to work with your ShardMaster throughout this process. In this way, you can make sure that your Hero is not only someone that you will enjoy playing throughout the Campaign, but also that your Hero is someone that your ShardMaster will feel fits in well with the story they wish to tell.

Be sure to read through all of this and the following sections before you dive headlong into a spending spree. It is very important to keep in mind all of these things as you decide what to spend your Points on. It can be very frustrating to go back after thinking you have finished to discover that you've missed an entire portion of the process.

Making a Hero is actually very easy, but there are so many things you can do that it can overwhelm you if you don't familiarize yourself with all of the options and opportunities that are available to you.

Of course, you can just skip all of this and use one of the Archetypes that we have created for your perusal at the end of this chapter. Even if you don't use them, they can serve as strong examples of well-made Heroes for you to look at as you create your own.

Your Experience Point pool will be used to purchase Skills, Abilities, Combat Styles, and other aspects of your Character. A number of additional Experience Points can be attained through the taking on of Defects. As you are spending your Points, keep the following things in mind:

1) In spending your Points, make sure you have already made the decision about being a Magic wielder. This is where a large number of your Points will end up going. As a general guideline, a Magic-wielding Hero should expect to spend between 1/4 and 1/3 of their Points on their magical abilities to be reasonably effective.

2) Don't assume that even one of your Stats should start at the maximum value possible. Shards of the Stone is a game where it is very possible to improve your Stat values after your Hero has been adventuring for a while (though it will be quite expensive). It is also important to note that the way the rules work, any value you have in a Stat has direct and valid importance. There are no "thresholds" of power in which a lower Stat has no real meaning, while a higher value is required to get a "bonus." The game simply doesn't work that way.

3) If you do try to start the Campaign with one or more Stats at or near maximum values, bear in mind that you will be sacrificing something, somewhere. The beginning Point values are established to allow for "above average" values across the board, but pumping a lot of Points into one area will mean less Points for another.

4) It is common practice for many Players to de-value the Spiritual, Emotional and Social Stats (for non-magical Heroes, anyway). This can be a dangerous practice, however, or at least a painfully limiting one. Keep in mind that being powerful in Mental will make you susceptible in Physical and Spiritual.

5) Make certain that you take the base Racial Stats of your Character. If you do not buy enough Stat points to meet or exceed your Racial makeup, you will have serious weaknesses as an "incomplete" being.

6) Because of the nature of general economics it is important to remember that the higher that your Stats are, the lower your starting Skill Levels will be able to be (if the GM let you buy Stats that is). This is not necessarily a bad thing (Skills are easier, by far, to improve with Experience), but it will have an impact on your Hero creation overall. For Magic users, this also means that Spells will only be able to be so strong, based on how high the related Stats are.

7) In choosing a Racial Template, bear in mind that the more expensive Templates are that expensive for a reason. They tend to give you some pretty distinct advantages. However, the less expensive Templates have their value as well (and they don't eat up nearly as many of your Experience Points). Humans are perfectly viable and acceptable Heroes; in fact, they tend to be the most balanced since they have an even distribution of Fragments in their makeup and are thus, less limited in their ongoing progression. Also, keep an eye on all the things that a Racial Template gives you, including Abilities that you won't then need to buy again.

8) Your selection of Skills should be based completely on the concept you have for your Hero (which should be

thoroughly worked out if you have answered the Ten Questions talked about at the beginning of this chapter). Remember that it is wise to purchase (at least once) any Skill that you want to say your Hero has any education or training in at all. There is a distinct difference between attempting a feat when you have not purchased a matching Skill as opposed to attempting something that your Character is skilled with. Don't mistake the Properties of the Language Skills as languages are used quite frequently, especially from Realm to Realm.

10) It is easy to make one of two mistakes with Abilities or Properties - either you can forget all about them (which, in the case of some Hero ideas, can be a terrible mistake), or you can get too ambitious with them (which can be either an unwise waste of points or a burden on your ShardMaster, who must deal with the consequences of a too-well-connected and overly-wealthy Hero). In pretty much every single case, it is a good idea to just meet with your ShardMaster and discuss which Properties make the most sense for your Hero idea and the Campaign as a whole. Be wary of the allure of Abilities as compared to Skills. Abilities such as "See in the Dark" are quite different from the "See in the Dark" skills as Abilities cannot simply be "turned off"… so imagine the curse of walking in daylight with your night eyes going…. Rest assured that your ShardMaster won't overlook them.

CAMPAIGN SCALE LEVELS AND THE POWER DIE

We have created a method that allows for your Characters and Campaigns to be "scaled" up or down to match your environment. This involves choosing a Power Die to set the Scale Level of your campaign as follows:

Power Die	Type
d3	neolithic
d4	low level
d6	mundane
d8	advanced
d10	heroic
d12	epic
d20	super heroic
d30	paranormal
d60	godlike (in a Greek sense)
d100	cosmic

Table 3 - Power Die Scales

Some Power dice seem odd, such as d3 which you can do with a six-sider where 1-2 = 1, 3-4 = 2, and 5-6 = 3, and d60 which is really 2d30 or two thirty-siders. We only use Mundane through Epic (d6 through d12) in Shards of the Stone. Each is described below, along with the actual numbers of Points assigned to Players for their Hero creation.

"OFF-THE-FARM" CAMPAIGN (D6)

The name refers to the young farmer's son or daughter who has taken up Dad's old, rusted sword from his bygone days as a warrior (or, instead, a simple hoe or staff) and set out on the road to find adventure somewhere. Alternately, the would-be Hero might have just left their aged teacher (perhaps a bit too soon) and wish to test their mettle as a Mage (though they are no more than an apprentice). These

are not powerful or skilled people, not by a long shot. They might have some few natural Abilities or gifts, but they are largely unproven and have a lot of room for improvement.

The kinds of challenges such Heroes face tend to be of the very local variety - small-time bandits and thieves, single (not too powerful) Creatures, and finding lost children are the typical adventures "Off-the-Farm" Heroes should look to face at the beginning.

Building a Hero for an "Off-the-Farm" Campaign is a lesson in humility. You simply cannot afford to make such a Character into a "superstar" in any given area, and to try will leave your Hero woefully deficient somewhere else in their makeup. Spell users will be particularly frustrated unless they realize that a single Spell is really all that they should expect to start with.

Plan on a long Campaign, where your Hero will undergo rather significant changes early on in their career. Create a concept that makes sense for a beginning like this; don't expect that your Hero is a "known crusader" or "famous rogue." More than likely, if they are known at all, it is for being a dreamer, a bungler, and too young to know any better.

To build a Hero in an "Off-the-Farm" Campaign, each Player will receive 150 Experience Points, or alternatively will have 75 Points of Stats and 75 Points to purchase Skills, Properties and Abilities and the Power Die is set to d6.

"EARLY CAREER" CAMPAIGN

That young farmer's son or daughter and that fresh-faced Mage's apprentice have had a few adventures and managed to survive. Perhaps they've even held down a semi-regular job or two. In any normal village, they are probably among the more competent (and maybe even respected) folk around, though in a larger town or city, they would still be considered fairly "green" by hardier, more experienced adventurers.

Challenges for such Heroes include missions to investigate where the bandit raids are coming from, or carrying important messages into dangerous territory. Caravans may hire someone of this experience level as a guard when travelling to harsher lands. "Early Career" Heroes often get in a little over the heads (or perhaps way in over their heads, if they brag too much), mainly because the regular folk tend to expect more out of them than they are ready for.

Building an "Early Career" Hero can be a particularly interesting test in creativity. On the one hand, you have more to work with than an "Off-the-Farm" Hero, but you will also have a lot more to consider attaining. You are trying to create someone who has had some experience, but you must remember that they haven't had that much experience; your Hero may well still be very deficient in some areas, mainly because they simply haven't had time or reason to develop those Skills. "Early Career" Heroes still tend to be fairly specialized and focused.

Though more capable than a just-beginning bumpkin, a Hero of this Campaign Level still has plenty of room for growth and development. The epic, world-shaking battles are still some time in the future, so plan on figuring out what new things your Hero needs to learn as they go. As for reputation - the folks back home may know you to some

degree, as will the people whose village you may have helped save. Those folks in the city, however, will see you as just another would-be legend out to get themselves killed.

To build a Hero in an "Early Career" Campaign, each Player will receive 200 Experience Points, or alternatively will have 100 Points of Stats and 100 Points to purchase Skills, Properties and Abilities and the Power Die is set to d8.

"HEROIC" CAMPAIGN

Having survived their "Early Career," you no longer see the son and daughter of a farmer; instead, you find a seasoned warrior with the skills and the scars to prove it. Instead of the still-struggling apprentice, you're now faced with a competent mage with a sizable array of Spells. These are people who towns call on for help, barons and dukes seek out, and even kings may send word to them.

Such Heroes as these should expect to face challenges that no simple person would ever be crazy enough to take on. Nobility will seek to send them on missions of grave import, towns and cities will ask them to take down particularly powerful bandit princes and vile necromantic warlords, and any large monster terrorizing an area will bring these Heroes running.

Building a "Heroic" Hero should be a fairly exciting experience, especially for Players who are used to starting their Characters as much less powerful entities. Your options become rather more open at this level. "Heroic" Heroes tend to be very good at what they do, but they also tend to have some education and training in areas beyond their initial pursuits. Even the most thick-headed warrior will know some basic scholarly things (especially about the types of creatures they have faced), and the most nebbishy Mage will have some capacity to defend their person from mere thugs without always resorting to a Spell.

"Heroic" level Heroes are no longer struggling to master the aspects of their profession that they started with, but there is still plenty of room to broaden their experiences. Such Heroes tend to start picking up new areas of training and learning - new weapons, new fighting styles, new Styles of Magic, new Skills, etc.. There are people who are well known throughout the regions they travel, and even people outside of their usual haunts may have heard a tale or two of their doings.

To build a Hero in an "Heroic" Campaign, each Player will receive 250 Experience Points, or alternatively will have 125 Points of Stats and 125 Points to purchase Skills, Properties and Abilities and the Power Die is set to d10.

"EPIC" CAMPAIGN

The term "mere mortal" ceases to apply to any Hero of this magnitude. They are the stuff of legends, the movers and shakers of the world, and the inspiration for any "Off-the-Farm" would-be Hero to take up a rusty sword or a simple Spell and try to make a difference.

Quests into the heart of darkness and the fires of Hell are the challenges "Epic" Heroes must expect to face. Kings call upon them to save kingdoms, great wizards call upon them to retrieve ancient, powerful artifacts, and even the gods call upon them to save the universe from time to time.

Building an "Epic" Hero can be an almost giddy experience, because the possibilities are staggering. Your Hero will probably have very high Stats, and any Magic wielder will find they can put together an impressive list of known Spells. It's almost more important than usual to maintain a focus of what kind of Hero you want at this level, because it is so easy to stray all over the place when spending so many points.

"Epic" Heroes are considered masters of the things they do best; others seek them out for training and advice. Such Heroes will always have some knowledge about legends, history, and the world around them - they've been out there too long to not have picked something up. If they aren't the actual rulers of the lands they live in, those rulers regularly consult with them and seek their aid and counsel whenever something comes up. Tales of such Heroes have likely spread throughout the lands (perhaps exaggerated to such proportions as to embarrass the Heroes, or get them into serious trouble).

To build a Hero in an "Epic" Campaign, each Player will receive 300 Experience Points, or alternatively will have 150 Points of Stats and 150 Points to purchase Skills, Properties and Abilities and the Power Die is set to d12.

STATS

Statistics or "Stats" define the very nature of a Creature in the Shards of the Stone world. Each Creature was formed before the world was from the sheer essences of the CoreStone and each Race has an affinity to one or more Shards of the Stone in the post-Sundering Realms.

There are five Primary Stats:

1. **Physical** – Athletic prowess or strength
2. **Mental** – Intelligence and memory
3. **Spiritual** – Spiritual connection to Divine influences
4. **Emotional** – Essence of the heart and psyche
5. **Social** – Ego and charismatic will.

Each one of these Stats has five SubStats however the ShardMaster may choose to play the game only using these Stats without complicating the game further with SubStats. Do not feel obligated to play the Advanced Rules right at the beginning…. Get used to the game using the Primary Stats first.

However, it is useful to define the SubStats. Each SubStat is formed from the influence of the following Aspects:

1. Power
2. Speed
3. Endurance
4. Focus
5. Resource

When you are playing using the Advanced Stat rules (we just call it FiveStat) then you refer to a SubStat such as Dexterity using the following name: PHY:Dexterity or PHY:Dex.

When you are playing using Simple Stat rules (we just call it SimpleStat) then you can assume that any reference to PHY:Dexterity or PHY:Stamina or PHY:Accuracy are all just PHY or Physical… you can ignore the SubStats indicated through this book when using SimpleStat and just use the Primary Stat.

Let's try an example. Let's say that G'Zuldjian is preparing to attempt a check against a skill. He knows that the skill calls for him to roll against his MEN:Perception but he is playing SimpleStat rules. In this case he simply looks up his MEN Primary Stat and uses that to check against the skill. His character sheet doesn't even need to record any SubStat values.

Once you have selected values for each Stat, you must determine the Tolerance values for each Stat. Tolerance indicates how many actions can be taken using this Stat per round. Although this is explained in more detail later, it can be simply done by adding up any Racial Sympathies less any Racial Antipathies in each Stat.

For example, an Elf has three Sympathies in the Spiritual Stat. Every Stat begins with 1 Tolerance plus the 3 Spiritual makes an Elf have a SPI Tolerance of 4 as a starting point.

You may select certain Properties that can also have an effect on the Tolerance of a Stat. For more information on this read the section on Races and the Properties section in this book.

STAT LISTINGS

The influence of these five Aspects on each Stat creates the resulting SubStats:

Physical (PHY)	SubStat	Element	Fragment
Power	Strength	Earth	Emerond
Speed	Dexterity	Fire	Infernite
Endurance	Stamina	Water	Crystal Blue
Focus	Accuracy	Air	Chrysaris
Resource	Adrenaline	Matter	Grey Diamond

Mental (MEN)	SubStat	Element	Fragment
Power	Intellect	Unreality	Void
Speed	Perception	Chaos	Maelstrome
Endurance	Sanity	Reality	Absolite
Focus	Concentration	Order	Geomecron
Resource	Memory	Time	Chronum

Spiritual (SPI)	SubStat	Element	Fragment
Power	Faith	Faith	Aurite
Speed	Inspiration	Fear	Dreadstone
Endurance	Conviction	Life	Oakheart
Focus	Discernment	Spirit	Soulstone
Resource	Purity	Creativity	Viscerium

Emotional (EMO)	SubStat	Element	Fragment
Power	Passion	Hate	Crimson Vile
Speed	Intuition	Light	Sungold
Endurance	Dedication	Love	Heartstone
Focus	Empathy	Darkness	Nightstone
Resource	Ego	Energy	Glowstone

Social (SOC)	SubStat	Element	Fragment
Power	Charisma	Honor	White Silver
Speed	Attraction	Deception	Cloakstone
Endurance	Humility	Truth	Touchstone
Focus	Persuasion	Pride	BloodGold
Resource	Will	Law	Mandorite

Table 4 - Stat Listings Chart

PRIMARY STAT DESCRIPTIONS

Stats define the natural attributes and tendencies of a Hero. They are often combined with a Skill to accomplish a Method. It is important to concentrate on the Stats that most define a Character, but it is equally important to not ignore certain Stats simply for maximum combat effectiveness; you never know when a complete lack in some area could get you killed.

Each Player will start with Experience Points (EPs) based on the type of Campaign being put together. Each Stat costs 5 EP for a +1 Rating in that Stat (depending on Racial costs) or 1 EP for a +1 Rating in a SubStat during the character creation phase.

Once the player has begun playing with this character, it is up to the ShardMaster to determine what to charge (or even to allow) for upgrading stats. Since this reflects the core essence of the Creature itself (sortof the DNA makeup of the character), it should rarely be allowed, but if in rare circumstances it is allowed, a good base cost would be:

SubStat Aspect	Cost
Power	150 EP
Speed	250 EP
Endurance	50 EP
Focus	75 EP
Resource	100 EP

Table 5 - SubStat Improvement Costs

As you may have guessed, Primary Stats are the average of their SubStats, so a Creature with a PHY of 10 could have SubStat values of 10, 8, 6, 12, and 14 which added together equals 50 and divided by 5 equals 10 points.

You can also play using SimpleStat rules which do not incorporate SubStats at all… this way, you only have to deal with the five Primary Stats; PHY, MEN, SPI, EMO, SOC and whenever a Skill or Spell requires a Stat check (say PHY:Dexterity), you can just use the value for PHY instead. SimpleStat is also very useful when you are playing in a "diceless" mode which means that instead of rolling dice, you just act the storyline out using your Stats as general guidelines, but this is definitely up to your ShardMaster.

As you are selecting Primary Stats, it's also important to try to resist the temptation of "min/maxing." This means that you only spend your EP purchasing PHY points because they are the most commonly used in combat. You'll find in Shards of the Stone, that there are denizens and traps that are designed specifically for the lumbering warrior types and you're advised now to make sure your avatar can use their heads, minds and souls as well as their sheer Physical prowess.

PHYSICAL (PHY)

This Stat encompasses all things physical, including structural capacity and endurance of the Creature and the ability to move quickly and accurately.

This Stat is favored for its obvious benefits to combat and travel, but it should be noted that a large brute can be quickly overcome by other, more persuasive means.

Physical death generally means that the body of the Creature has been structurally damaged so badly that the body simply cannot function any more.

MENTAL (MEN)

This Stat deals with the mind and logic, including the raw intellectual capacity of the Creature as well as the speed and accuracy with which he can learn new things, adapt to new situations, and store that information for use at a later date. Educated Creatures normally have a higher Mental Stat and can use it very effectively.

Mental death is a gruesome inability of the mind to further function… this can certainly be caused by Physical injury, but can also be caused by Mental attacks so severe that the Creature is left mindless and brain-dead.

SPIRITUAL (SPI)

This Stat encompasses the aspects of the Soul and the Creature's innate ability to channel power and intuition from the realms of Deity. Physical and Mental obstacles can sometimes intrude on Spiritual abilities but the intangible and unpredictable nature of Spirituality is hard to control or manage.

Spiritual death consists of the utter, catastrophic destruction of the soul of the Creature, not like a Physical death where the soul is freed to the realms of spirits, but the absolute destruction of the essence of the being itself… with no hope for restoration.

EMOTIONAL (EMO)

This Stat deals with the psychological aspects of the Creature including moods, fear, empathy, and unique motivations that are buried deep in our hearts.

Emotional death takes the form of complete, raving insanity… so acute that the Creature appears out of its mind, but its mind is quite literally trapped in a prison of total isolation, and madness.

SOCIAL (SOC)

This Stat covers the realm of sheer willpower and persuasion. Leadership and Beauty rest in the realm of Social as does Honor and Deception.

A Social death is the most esoteric of fates as the Creature simply loses the will to go on, trapped in a damning maze of utter lack of self-image or self-confidence… forever a hermit.

SUBSTAT DESCRIPTIONS

PHYSICAL

STRENGTH (PHY: STRENGTH)
Strength is the definition of sheer, brute force, including the ability of the Creature to heave, lift, or carry large weights, break down doors, etc.

DEXTERITY (PHY: DEXTERITY)
Dexterity represents physical agility and speed, including dodging missiles, reaction times, etc.

STAMINA (PHY: STAMINA)
Stamina is the persistent ability to keep on going, despite any physical abuse, weariness or weakness.

ACCURACY (PHY: ACCURACY)
Accuracy is the precision with which physical acts are carried out including aiming, deftness, and acrobatics.

ADRENALINE (PHY: ADRENALINE)
Adrenaline identifies the pool of strength that is available to the deep inside all of us, however untapped, and is most readily apparent in times of great duress or danger.

MENTAL

INTELLECT (MEN: INTELLECT)
Intellect is the raw mental force that a Creature possesses including, to some degree, raw intelligence, but also just an inherent capacity to learn and use that knowledge

PERCEPTION (MEN: PERCEPTION)
Perception involves a Creature's awareness of his surroundings, his own mind, and his senses. This SubStat is very useful for things like surprise and reactions.

SANITY (MEN: SANITY)
Sanity is the capacity to endure mental stress, resist mental assaults, and otherwise keep the mind together and coherent.

CONCENTRATION (MEN: CONCENTRATION)
Concentration deals with the mental ability to stay focused on a mental objective.

MEMORY (MEN: MEMORY)
Memory identifies the pool of intellect that is available in the mind of the Creature, defining the maximum limit of intellectual growth in a Creature as well as defining their capacity to remember all of the information they learn.

SPIRITUAL

FAITH (SPI: FAITH)
Faith is the raw essence of the being's Spiritual force that can be tapped by spiritual activities.

INSPIRATION (SPI: INSPIRATION)
Inspiration identifies the speed at which a Creature can respond, recognize, and react to guidance from its divinities. This can sometimes be interpreted as luck.

CONVICTION (SPI: CONVICTION)
Conviction details the dedication to cause and creed including the persistence of Faith when challenged on a Spiritual level.

DISCERNMENT (SPI: DISCERNMENT)
Discernment is the precision with which a Creature can sift through the consequences of actions or the intentions of others using Spiritual insight.

PURITY (SPI: PURITY)
Purity defines the quality of Spirituality and how unfettered the Creature's conscience can be in pursuit of its spiritual objectives.

EMOTIONAL

PASSION (EMO: PASSION)
Passion highlights the raw, unbridled emotive force of a Creature.

INTUITION (EMO: INTUITION)
Intuition is the innate insight of the Psyche… influencing the Creature's ability to anticipate emotional reactions or outcomes.

DEDICATION (EMO: DEDICATION)
Dedication indicates the durability of the emotions of the Creature, forming a root of sorts for Love and Loyalty.

EMPATHY (EMO: EMPATHY)
Empathy indicates the relative ability of the Creature to stabilize its passions and emotions into a consistent and precise objective – even those emotions of others.

EGO (EMO: EGO)
Ego is an indicator of Emotional capacity… how much can a Creature be emotionally focused or for how long.

SOCIAL

CHARISMA (SOC: CHARISMA)
Charisma is the brute strength of will to lead other Creatures, generally increasing their loyalty to the inspiring leader.

ATTRACTION (SOC: ATTRACTION)
Attraction is the inner beauty of the Creature as well as a representation of that hard-to-define characteristic of beauty.

HUMILITY (SOC: HUMILITY)
Humility identifies the enduring satisfaction with self or internal stability of a Creature.

PERSUASION (SOC: PERSUASION)
Persuasion measures the ability of the Creature to quickly react to or engage in convincing or conniving other Creatures.

WILL (SOC: WILL)
Will is the raw resource of confidence and stability that social acts can draw from.

RACES

One of the most entertaining things to do when creating a Hero for a game is to decide what Race that Hero will be born of. Each Race has its own advantages and disadvantages, so your decision will be based on what you want and what you are willing to deal with.

However, the most important reason to select a particular Racial Template should be based on what kind of story you want to tell about your Hero.

The following are the Racial Templates for the Races that are most prevalent throughout the world of Core. These are Races that are appropriate for a Player to choose for their Hero (though there are plenty of other beings in Core that may be either too powerful or too despicable to be appropriate for choosing to create a Hero). Note that everything is described from a Human-centered perspective. Humans are the most prevalent species on the world of Core, and (right or wrong) the world tends to be seen and described from their point of view.

Of course, each Realm Book will have its own set of Racial Templates - Races that are particular to that Realm. In some cases, these may be variations (minor or major) on the Templates and descriptions found here. In others, entirely new and different Races will be presented.

Each Race was formed from the essences of the CoreStone so to qualify for that race you must buy the listed Stat minimums and obviously you can only select this Race if their Power Die is the same or lower than the Power Die limit for your ShardMaster's Campaign, although your GM may allow you to "Scale Down". SubStats that are part of the Creature's essence cost only ½ Point where SubStats that are the antithesis of the Creature's essence cost 2 Points. All other SubStats cost only 1 Point. Once you have met the minimum Racial requirements, you can then embellish your Character further. None of the Abilities of that Race cost anything more past the cost of the Template, nor do any of the Defects associated with the Race count towards the Defect allotment for the Campaign.

RACE LISTING

Race	Power Die	Minimum Cost
Avanar	d10	37 EP
Dwarf	d8	29 EP
Elf	d8	37 EP
Goblin	d6	31 EP
Human	d6	25 EP
Ogre	d8	27 EP
Orc	d6	23 EP
Raun	d8	40 EP
Sauran	d10	42 EP

Table 6 - Race Listings Chart

AVANAR

An offshoot of the Fae bloodlines, the Avanar are the most rarely seen and the most sought after of the races. Theirs is the gift of natural flight, and they are carried aloft on great, beautiful wings to soar among the clouds and the winds. They have most of the same features as their Elven cousins. Avanar have extremely keen eyesight, though not quite the same capacity for seeing at night as their cousins. In addition to having a vulnerability to the mystical metal known as Black Iron, the lightweight bones of the Avanar are very susceptible to damage from blunt weapons.

Avanar were never very common on the world of Core to begin with, and years of being hunted down by their enemies (especially the Demons of the Exude, who have always seen them as the mortal-bound counterparts to the more angelic Fae who served many of the Progeny in the days before the Sundering) depleted their numbers to dangerously low levels. Unable (and generally unwilling) to breed outside their Race, the Avanar have long kept to themselves in order to survive. However, more and more of them are starting to venture out again into the Realms, where their natural gifts make them highly prized scouts and messengers.

Avanar share almost all of the physical appearance qualities of their cousins, the Elves. In addition, they possess huge spans of feathered wings, and the colors of these wings can be almost anything. One Fae aspect that the Avanar do not share with the Elves is an extended life span; Avanar tend to live between 90 and 120 years.

Power Die

d10

Abilities:
Enhanced Senses - Vision, Night Vision, Light Sleeper, Beautiful (+1 to the SOC:Attraction Stat)

Skills:
Flight, Air Combat

Defects:
Distinctive Features - Wings

Vulnerable to Black Iron — take double damage from any Attack using Black Iron

Vulnerable to Blunt Weapons — take 50% (1½x) **more** Bludgeon Damage

Sympathies:
Air, Light, Creativity, Life

Antipathies:
Earth, Matter, Darkness, Hate

Stats

Physical (PHY)	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Strength	0	2	A	*Earth*
Dexterity	1	1		Fire
Stamina	1	1		Water
Accuracy	4	½	S	**Air**
Adrenaline	0	2	A	*Matter*

Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	1	1		Chaos
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time

Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	6	½	S	**Life**
Discernment	1	1		Spirit
Purity	4	½	S	**Creativity**

Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	0	2	A	*Hate*
Intuition	6	½	S	**Light**
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	0	2	A	*Darkness*
Ego	1	1		Energy

Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	1	1		Law

Total Minimum Cost: 37 EP

Short, yes, but broad as they are high — Dwarves are the epitome of compact power. Dwarves are *not* just "small Humans"; their bodies are thicker and more solid. They can often appear pudgy, or even downright fat, but Dwarves are usually far more stout and muscular than appearances would indicate. Although not the most graceful people, Dwarves do have excellent hand-eye coordination. Though slow of foot, they are gifted with an infallible sense of direction, the ability to see heat patterns, and an inherent resistance to being altered by Magic.

Though they can be found in any setting, Dwarves do have a history and culture that relates to their eternal connection to the mountains and to Earth. They tend to be masters of construction, mining, stonecraft, weapons building, and anything to do with stone and metal (in fact, there are many rumors as to the mechanical wonders hidden deep within Dwarvish mountain strongholds). They are also master brewers; Dwarves brought the joys of beer and ale to the people of Core everywhere. Though purveyors of liquid refreshment, no sane Dwarf will stand close to any water more than ankle deep; not only can they not swim, they actually sink like a stone. However, for all of their more esoteric pursuits, Dwarves as a race are warriors-born, stalwart and loyal, courageous to a fault.

Dwarves tend to stand at heights between 3'8" and 4'5", although there have been some shorter, and a few Dwarves of note have stood as tall as 5'. They are quite thick and dense, weighing much more than they appear. Though their range of eye colors are about the same as Humans, Dwarven eyes tend more towards darker colors. Their skin tones are also along the same range as Humans (though, not surprisingly, most Dwarves who live in their ancestral homes tend to be fairly pale). Full heads of red and black hair are the norm; blond Dwarves are a rarity. Traditional male Dwarves prefer long, thick beards, but facial hair choices are wide for them. Contrary to some erroneous myths, Dwarven females do **not** have beards. Dwarves can expect to live at least 280-320 years, and some have lived as long as 400.

Power Die

d8

Abilities:

Magic Resistance, Long Life, Thermal Vision, Instinctive Direction Sense, Strong Immune System

Defects:

Cannot Swim, Short, Distinctive Features – Short

Sympathies:

Matter, Earth, Fire and Creativity

Antipathies:

Chaos, Water, Air and Spirit

Stats

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Physical (PHY)				
Strength	**4**	½	S	**Earth**
Dexterity	**2**	½	S	**Fire**
Stamina	0	2	A	*Water*
Accuracy	0	2	A	*Air*
Adrenaline	**2**	½	S	**Matter**
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	0	2	A	*Chaos*
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		*Fear*
Conviction	1	1		Life
Discernment	0	2	A	*Spirit*
Purity	**4**	½	S	**Creativity**
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	1	1		*Hate*
Intuition	1	1		Light
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	1	1		Darkness
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	1	1		Law

Total Minimum Cost: 29 EP

Graceful and beautiful, Elves bear many of the features of Humanity, but in a finer, more delicate way. Their facial features, in particular, tend towards the angular, and their ears come to a fine, elongated point. They do not possess the physical might of Humans, but they have stronger, more acute minds and a greater sense of balance and poise. They are also possessed of heightened senses. However, they retain some vulnerability to the metal known as "Black Iron," a substance deadly to their Fae cousins in the astral world.

It is not uncommon for Elves to be found among the intellectual and scholarly circles, and some of the great Practitioners and Channelers of Core are Elven. However, there are plenty of them to be found in military circles as well, where their keen senses, grasp of tactics, and natural nimbleness serve them quite effectively. Traditionally, the Elven people have favored settings at harmony with Nature. In many Realms, Elven enclaves will be found within the sheltering embrace of the great forests. However, this is by no means a hard and fast rule, for Elves have also been know to build some of the greatest cities known in Core.

Elves have height and weight ranges not far off from Human norms, though they tend to be slightly shorter and definitely thinner on the average. In fact, it is practically unheard of to see an overweight Elf — it's just not in their makeup. Elves have a startling range to their eye and hair colors, extending far beyond hues normally associated with Humans. Their skin tones range from almost alabaster pale to deep, rich brown. Elves live anywhere between 200 and 600 years; some of the more Humanity-influenced bloodlines live somewhat shorter lives, while others might go as long as 800 years or more (though this is very rare).

Note – The Elves described here are believed to have significant Human blood in their lines (resulting from interbreeding after the Sundering). There are tales of "True Blooded" Elves in some Realms, far more powerful than the ones described here.

Power Die

d8

Abilities:
Enhanced Senses – Vision and Hearing, Long Life, Beautiful

Defects:
Distinctive Features – Ears and slim build

Vulnerable to Black Iron — take 50% (1½x) **more** Damage from any Attack using Black Iron

Sympathies:
Order, Creativity, Light, Life, Love, Pride and Spirit

Antipathies:
Matter, Darkness, Truth, Chaos and Earth

Stats

Physical (PHY)	Minimum	Cost	Sympath	Element
Strength	0	2	A	*Earth*
Dexterity	1	1		Fire
Stamina	1	1		Water
Accuracy	1	1		Air
Adrenaline	0	2	A	*Matter*
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	0	2	A	*Chaos*
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	4	½	S	**Order**
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	4	½	S	**Life**
Discernment	2	½	S	**Spirit**
Purity	4	½	S	**Creativity**
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	1	1		Hate
Intuition	4	½	S	**Light**
Dedication	2	½	S	**Love**
Empathy	0	2	A	*Darkness*
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	0	2	A	*Truth*
Persuasion	4	½	S	**Pride**
Will	1	1		Law

Total Minimum Cost: 37 EP

GOBLINS

Small and fast, possessed of keen senses (especially where their noses are concerned), the Goblins of Core are impressive survivors. Goblins are small and wiry. They aren't so much graceful as just plain quick and agile. Their thin bodies often belie a greater strength than is apparent, and their angular faces and exaggerated ears take in far more than anyone might expect. They also possess the ability to discern heat patterns, even in darkness, and their sense of smell cannot be matched by any other Race on Core.

Goblins can be seen throughout Core and often integrate themselves into whatever society they wind up in. They are excellent craftsmen, scouts, couriers, rangers, and even bodyguards. The less scrupulous of them make exceptional thieves (and worse). Many Goblins will take advantage of expected prejudice and pretend to be far less capable and clever than they are; however, there are no real limits on what path a Goblin of ambition can take.

Goblins often range between heights of 3′5″ and 4′2″, though shorter and taller ones are not unheard of. They tend to be fairly lightweight, thin, and wiry, though the occasionally bulked-out Goblin warrior can be an impressive sight. Goblins have no real body hair at all. Their skin tones range from various shades of green to gray to brown, and Goblin eyes are invariably dark brown to black. Goblins tend to live about 70 years, though a rare few have made it as far as 90.

Power Die

d6

Abilities:
Thermal Vision, Enhanced Senses – Hearing and Smell, Tracking Scent, Fast

Defects:
Distinctive Features – Very Fierce in Appearance, Short

Sympathies:
Law, Fear, Air, Fire and Darkness

Antipathies:
Creativity, Faith, Earth, Water and Light

Stats

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Physical (PHY)				
Strength	0	2	A	*Earth*
Dexterity	3	½	S	**Fire**
Stamina	0	2	A	*Water*
Accuracy	2	½	S	**Air**
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	1	1		Chaos
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	0	2	A	*Faith*
Inspiration	4	½	S	**Fear**
Conviction	1	1		Life
Discernment	1	1		Spirit
Purity	0	2	A	*Creativity*
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	1	1		Hate
Intuition	0	2	A	*Light*
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	3	½	S	**Darkness**
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	4	½	S	**Law**

Total Minimum Cost: 31 EP

Sympathies:
None – Humans have no natural inclinations towards any one element.

Antipathies:
None – Humans have no natural inclination away from any one element

Stats

Physical (PHY)

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Strength	1	1		Earth
Dexterity	1	1		Fire
Stamina	1	1		Water
Accuracy	1	1		Air
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter

Mental (MEN)

Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	1	1		Chaos
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time

Spiritual (SPI)

Purity	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	1	1		Life
Discernment	1	1		Spirit
Faith	1	1		Creativity

Emotional (EMO)

Passion	1	1		Hate
Intuition	1	1		Light
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	1	1		Darkness
Ego	1	1		Energy

Social (SOC)

Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	1	1		Law

Total Minimum Cost: 25 EP

The dominant species of Core (though not of all places *on* Core), Humans are the most adaptable, most balanced, and (in many ways) most varied Race on the planet. They can be quite short or tall; very thin or hugely fat; lithe and graceful or bulky and muscle-bound; brilliant and soulful, or dim and bereft of any real spirit. Often, they are a little of everything.

Though there are Races that are stronger, faster, have greater senses, and are generally more physically and mentally gifted, Humans are favored by the cosmos in ways that defy understanding by even the wisest scholars. Though they do not live as long as some, Humans as a whole tend to make the most of the life they are given. Granted, many of them waste it on petty concerns, but there are plenty of strong and dynamic individuals among the masses to push their brethren to great achievements. Of course, there are just as many such individuals who lead others to achieve dark and terrible dreams, but even they most assuredly leave their mark.

We have little doubt that you know the usual appearances and qualities found in Humans. However, on the world of Core, the possibilities range far wider and more fantastically — even for Humans. There are branches of Humanity that sport skin tones, hair colors, and other physical attributes never seen in our own world. The Humans of Core are also capable of achieving far more "heroic" stature than is normally seen in our own world. Humans in Core tend to live between 80 and 100 years.

OGRES

Physical (PHY)	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Strength	5	½	S	**Earth**
Dexterity	0	2	A	*Fire*
Stamina	0	2	A	*Water*
Accuracy	1	1		Air
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	1	1		Chaos
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	3	½	S	**Life**
Discernment	0	2	A	*Spirit*
Purity	0	2	A	*Creativity*
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	0	2	A	*Hate*
Intuition	0	2	A	*Light*
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	2	½	S	**Darkness**
Ego	0	2	A	*Energy*
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	4	½	S	**Law**

Total Minimum Cost: 27 EP

The most physically powerful of the major Races of Core, few can challenge the might of an Ogre. Massive, thick, and frighteningly strong, it can be said that they are not truly dominant on Core mainly due to their mental faculties (on the average) being a good bit less than some of the other Races. Ogres are possessed of keen senses of smell, and they can also see in the dark (by being able to differentiate heat patterns). Ogres also have extremely thick natural skin; their bodies can blunt even Piercing Damage.

Though as a whole considered a "slow" Race, individual Ogres are more than capable of achieving impressive intellectual and spiritual heights. Often cast in combative and military roles, Ogres have long had to struggle to be recognized as a species capable of other pursuits. Even so, it is on the battlefield where most Ogres of distinction have made their names, and it is not hard to see why. For this reason, many Ogres will "act the fool" even when they are quite clever… all the better to catch an enemy off guard.

Ogres stand between 2 to 3 meters mostly, although there have been more than a few noteworthy Ogres to reach even greater heights. They are invariably extremely broad with heavyset frames. Like Goblins and Orcs, Ogres have no body hair. Skin color goes from greens to grays to browns. Their eyes are almost always dark brown or black. Ogres often only live to be about 55 or so, though some rare few make it as far as 70.

ORCS

Outside of Humans, Orcs may be the most plentiful Race on all of Core. Larger and stronger than Humans, they are nonetheless not as threatening as their "cousins," the Ogres (and, thus, have a slightly easier time getting along in Human-dominated areas). Orcs are gifted with keen senses of smell and can see heat patterns well enough to function in the dark. Though they don't tend to be as sharp or mentally strong as Humans, their physical strengths make up for this lack nicely.

Even though they do not tend to reach the same levels as Humans, Orcs are fully capable of achieving rather impressive mental acumen, and more than one Orc Mage has caught a careless enemy unaware. Orcs tend to form rather militant social groups, and they usually prefer to maintain a society based on strength and knowing one's place (an order they often force on any Goblins and Ogres who choose to live with them). However, individual Orcs are capable of the same range of interests, ideas, and values as any other race.

Orcs are normally somewhat larger and heavier than Humans, though still within much the same ranges. The occasional 1½ meter, 500 pound Orc is, in fact, a little more common than a Human of the same proportions (but not *much* more common). As with Goblins and Ogres, they have no body hair, their eyes run from dark brown to black, and their skin colors cover the ranges of green, gray, and brown. Orcs generally have life spans that reach about 65; some very few make it as far as 85.

Power Die

d6

Abilities:
Thermal Vision, Enhanced Sense of Smell, Running

Defects:
Distinctive Features

Sympathies:
Pride, Hate, Fire and Darkness

Antipathies:
Creativity, Spirit, Water and Light

Stats

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Physical (PHY)				
Strength	1	1		Earth
Dexterity	**4**	**½**	**S**	**Fire**
Stamina	0	2	A	*Water*
Accuracy	1	1		Air
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	1	1		Chaos
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	1	1		Order
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	1	1		Life
Discernment	0	2	A	*Spirit*
Purity	0	2	A	*Creativity*
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	**4**	**½**	**S**	Hate
Intuition	0	2	A	*Light*
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	**2**	**½**	**S**	Darkness
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	**3**	**½**	**S**	**Pride**
Will	1	1		Law

Total Minimum Cost: 23 EP

RAUN

d8

Abilities:
Fast Runner, Exceptional Jumper, Claws, Enhanced Senses – Vision, Hearing and Smell

Defects:
Distinctive Features – Fur

Sympathies:
Chaos, Creativity, Air and Fire

Antipathies:
Order, Law, Earth and Water

Stats

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Physical (PHY)				
Strength	0	2	A	*Earth*
Dexterity	6	½	S	**Fire**
Stamina	0	2	A	*Water*
Accuracy	4	½	S	**Air**
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	4	½	S	**Chaos**
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	0	2	A	*Order*
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	1	1		Fear
Conviction	1	1		Life
Discernment	1	1		Spirit
Purity	4	½	S	**Creativity**
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	6	½	S	**Hate**
Intuition	1	1		Light
Dedication	1	1		Love
Empathy	1	1		Darkness
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	1	1		Deception
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	0	2	A	*Law*

Total Minimum Cost: 40 EP

Lithe, graceful, and incredibly quick, these feline humanoids are considered both beautiful and frightening by many Humans. They've the faces and features of great cats, and their leg structure (and tail) very much suggests a lion or panther that has learned to walk upright and somehow manifested more "human-like" arms in place of their usual front legs. Their torsos overall are more humanoid (this includes female Raun, who have Human female figures rather than feline attributes), while their lower half and heads are more feline. They are, as might be expected, completely covered in fur.

Raun are particularly well-suited to pursuits that take advantage of their physical gifts and incredible senses. They tend towards the combat arts, or else professions where their agility, grace, and balance will serve them well. Raun can often be found as sailors, scouts, hunters, acrobats, dancers, and in some less savory professions (giving the term "cat burglar" a whole new meaning). Among the finest sword masters of the world of Core, there are Raun who are named very highly. However, they are not known for their patience or self-control.

Raun tend to the same range of height as Humans (though more of them tend to be shorter). They also tend to be lighter in weight on the average, less solid overall. Their eye colors tend towards gray, green, brown, and gold. Raun coloring covers the entire spectrum of what you might expect to see in cats overall — everything from the distinctive markings of the great predators to the motley colors of domestic felines. They have shorter life spans than Humans by about 20-25 years; the oldest known Raun rarely make it past 65.

Of all the major Races of Core, the Sauran may be the most "alien" of them all (even considering the Raun). Though intelligent and fully capable of intricate, even advanced societies, the Sauran retain a certain bestial nature at the core of their being that no other major Race truly can identify. They are *very* physically powerful beings (rivaled only by the Ogres), and they are highly adapted to both water and land, living and breathing freely in each environment. In fact, some branches of the Sauran have taken to building undersea homes, while others reside land-side. The cold-blooded Sauran is far more comfortable in warmer climates and settings; extreme cold makes them sluggish and (relatively) weak.

Interestingly enough, many Sauran display an extraordinarily reserved nature. They come off as cold and logical, or else calm and peaceful. Centuries of dealing with their "beast" has instilled a certain self-control that Sauran endeavor to pass on to their young. As such, Sauran are not uncommon in roles as advisors, teachers, researchers, and scholars. However, their extraordinary might often leads many Sauran into more militant pursuits; they often make excellent soldiers or bodyguards.

Sauran have basic humanoid forms, but their heads are very saurian in shape (full of long, sharp teeth). Their eyes are set apart, but not in such a way as to impede what would be consider "Human-normal" vision. Their arms, powerfully built, end in humanoid hands with deadly claws. Their legs are bent in the same way as Humans, but they have sharp points at the knees and are more angular in their normal stance, with clawed feet. Sauran rarely wear much in the way of clothing in their home regions, though many will adopt some form of the local fashion when traveling. Their scaled bodies range in color from dull brown (sometimes even black) to bright, emerald green. Their eyes are normally either golden or green (with some rare and notable exceptions). Sauran range in height between two to two-and-a-half meters; shorter ones are extremely rare, while larger ones are merely uncommon. Sauran will always be much heavier than they look. Sauran are known to live between 120 and 150 years.

Power Die
d10

Abilities:
Swimming, Gills, Prehensile Tail, Claws

Defects:
Distinctive Features - Scales, Thermal Dependence, "Inner Beast" Personality Trait

Sympathies:
Chaos, Law, Life, Earth, Air, Water and Fire

Antipathies:
Order, Creativity, Spirit, Love, Fear and Deception

Stats

	Minimum	Cost	Affinity	Element
Physical (PHY)				
Strength	4	½	S	**Earth**
Dexterity	6	½	S	**Fire**
Stamina	3	½	S	**Water**
Accuracy	3	½	S	**Air**
Adrenaline	1	1		Matter
Mental (MEN)				
Intellect	1	1		Unreality
Perception	6	½	S	**Chaos**
Sanity	1	1		Reality
Concentration	0	2	A	*Order*
Memory	1	1		Time
Spiritual (SPI)				
Faith	1	1		Faith
Inspiration	0	2	A	*Fear*
Conviction	4	½	S	**Life**
Discernment	0	2	A	*Spirit*
Purity	0	2	A	*Creativity*
Emotional (EMO)				
Passion	1	1		Hate
Intuition	1	1		Light
Dedication	0	2	A	*Love*
Empathy	1	1		Darkness
Ego	1	1		Energy
Social (SOC)				
Charisma	1	1		Honor
Attraction	0	2	A	*Deception*
Humility	1	1		Truth
Persuasion	1	1		Pride
Will	4	½	S	**Law**

Total Minimum Cost: 42 EP

PROPERTIES

Some Heroes are born with natural gifts that enhance them in some special way, while others train in techniques that only a rare few can ever hope to master. Some Heroes are born tougher or more resilient, while others tend to have some sort of natural "knack" for a particular pursuit.

These are called Properties, and rare is the Hero that doesn't have at least one or two of them. However, be careful not to go overboard in picking Properties - you still have Skills and other things to consider ahead.

Properties are unique in that they cannot be "turned off" so be careful when making your selections. A property of Night Vision may seem good as an innate ability rather than a skill, but imagine walking around during the day with your Night eyes looking at the brilliant sun.

Some Properties can be purchased more than once – increasing their effectiveness incrementally. You can only upgrade as many times as your Power Die Scale Level indicates… for example if you are playing a d6 Character, then you count the number of Power Die levels including and below d6… 1 for d3, one for d4 and one for d6 – so the maximum number of upgrades is three. For some Properties it just doesn't make sense to upgrade more than once.

Some Properties cost EP and can loosely be called Benefits as they tend to grant additional abilities or powers. Other Properties have a negative cost in EP, which means you get EP back to purchase other Skills or Properties with. These can be referred to as Defects, although every Property has good and bad aspects.

If you have run out of EP for Skills or other needs, you can take additional Defects that will challenge your character in many ways, but will give you more EP to work with. Be sure that you roleplay your Defects to their fullest extent… the most fun can be had when being creative with these.

If Properties are specified in your Racial template, then you must purchase them and no additional EP points are earned unless you purchase additional levels of them.

All Defect choices are subject to the ShardMaster's approval and interpretation. In fact, this process should involve the ShardMaster heavily. They are the best judge as to how often and how much a Defect is likely to affect a Hero in their Campaign.

Figure 3 - Avatar Mask

PROPERTY LISTING

Physical Properties	SubStat Affected	Value	EP
Adrenal Addiction	PHY:Adrenaline	+1	-5
Ambidextrous	PHY:Dexterity	+1	10
Annoying Habit	SOC:Charisma	-1	-5
	SOC:Attraction	-1	
Dependents	*Special		-5
Double Jointed	PHY:Dexterity	+1	10
Dyslexic	PHY:Accuracy	-3	-15
Epilepsy	PHY:Stamina	-1	5
Exceptional Jumper	Jump another height		10
Exceptionally Fast	PHY:Dexterity	+1	10
Glands			10
Hard to Kill	Physical Tolerance	+1	10
Impaired Senses	*Special		-10
Impaired Voice	SOC:Persuasion	-2	-10
Intangible	PHY:Dexterity	-2	30
	PHY:Strength	-3	
Light Sleeper			10
Missing Limb	*Special		-10
Night Vision	PHY:Accuracy	+1	10
Opposable Toes	PHY:Dexterity	+1	10
Prehensile Tail	PHY:Accuracy	+1	10
	PHY:Dexterity	-1	
Solid	Physical Tolerance	+1	10
Strong Immune System	PHY:Stamina	+1	10
Susceptible	*Special		-5
Uncontrollable Change	*Special		-10
Unique Features	*Special		-5
Weakness	PHY:Stamina	-1	-10
	PHY:Strength	-1	
Wings	*Special		25

Mental Properties	SubStat Affected	Value	EP
Amnesia	MEN:Intellect	-2	-5
Craftsman	MEN:Concentration	+1	10
	PHY:Accuracy	+1	
Direction Sense	MEN:Concentration	+1	10
Enhanced Senses	MEN:Perception	+1	10
Head for Numbers	MEN:Intellect	+1	10
Kleptomania	SPI:Purity	-2	-5
Linguist			10
Literacy			10
Maniac	EMO:Passion	+1	-5
	EMO:Empathy	-2	
Mental Clock	PHY:Accuracy	+1	10
Oblivious	SOC:Attraction	+1	-5
	MEN: Perception	-2	
Obsessive	MEN:Concentration	-1	-5
Perfect Pitch	*Special		10
Perfect Recall	MEN:Memory	+1	20
Speed Reader			10
Stubborn	SOC:Humility	-1	-5
Tactitian	*Special		10

Spiritual Properties	SubStat Affected	Value	EP
Bloodlust	SPI:Purity	-2	-5
Bravery/Cowardice	SPI:Conviction	+/- 2	20
	EMO:Dedication	+/- 2	
Devout	SPI:Faith	+1	10
Haunted	SPI:Faith	-2	-5
Honesty/Dishonesty	*Special		5
Lecherous	SPI:Purity	-2	-5
	SOC:Attraction	+1	
Longevity	Maximum Age	+10 yrs	10
Lucky/Unlucky	SPI:Intuition	+/- 1	15
Rapid Healing	Daily Dmg Recover	+1	10
Undead	PHY:Dexterity*	-1	40
	SOC:Attraction	-1	
Zealot	EMO:Dedication	+2	-10
	SPI:Discernment	-1	
	SOC:Persuasion	+1	

Emotional Properties	SubStat Affected	Value	EP
Bad Temper	EMO:Passion	+1	-5
	SOC:Charisma	-1	
Berzerker	EMO:Passion	+2	10
	PHY:Power	+2	
Empath	EMO:Empathy	+1	10
Hibernation	Emotional Endurance	+2	20
High Pain Tolerance	Shock Multiplier	+1	10
Paranoia	SPI:Faith	-1	-5
	EMO:Ego	+1	
Split Personality	MEN:Sanity	-2	-10

Social Properties	SubStat Affected	Value	EP
Battle Hungry	SPI:Purity	-1	5
Beautiful/Handsome	SOC:Attraction	+1	10
Beautiful Voice	SOC:Persuasion	+1	10
Charismatic	SOC:Charisma	+1	10
Disrepute	SOC:Charisma	-2	-5
Hive Mind	SOC:Will	-4	40
	EMO:Passion	-3	
	MEN:Concentration	-2	
Horrific Appearance	SOC:Attraction	-1	-10
	SPI:Inspiration	+1	
Intolerance	SOC:Persuasion	+1	-5
	EMO:Empathy	-2	
Sense of Duty	SOC:Will	-1	-5
	EMO:Dedication	+1	
Strong Willed	SOC:Will	+1	10
Vow/Code of Honor	SPI:Conviction	+1	-5
	SOC:Will	-1	

Table 7 - Property Listings Chart

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

ADRENAL ADDICTION

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Adrenaline	+1	-5

Thrillseekers abound with not just a desire, but a need to push the limits of sanity and safety to get that next "rush". Each successful thrill can only be matched by one more dangerous, more risky, and sooner is better than later.

Due to this condition, the Hero will receive a permanent +1 to his PHY:Adrenaline and a temporary boost of half of their Power Die their PHY:Strength at the moment when they have found another "Thrill".

AMBIDEXTROUS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity	+1	10

Any Hero with this Ability has no such thing as an "off-hand;" they can use either hand equally well. Furthermore, they are comfortable using both hands at the same time. Almost any Hero that favors a two-weapon style is Ambidextrous. See the COMBAT Chapter for more information about the use of two weapons in combat. You may add +1 to your PHY:Dexterity permanently.

ANNOYING HABIT

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Charisma	-1	-5
SOC:Attraction	-1	

The Hero does something that just drives everyone else around them nuts. Those influenced by this Defect suffer a –1 to their SOC:Charisma and a –1 to their SOC:Attraction.

DEPENDENTS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-5

The Hero has one or more people that rely on them for protection and survival. They are around and can be attacked by the Hero's enemies, and they often require monetary help and more. This is a tricky Defect that ShardMasters should be wary of; it can be great for Campaigns where the Heroes are stationed at a castle or in a city, but it is difficult for a Hero on a quest to deal with Dependents (unless they are dragged along).

DOUBLE-JOINTED

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity	+1	10

This is the Ability for those few Heroes who can bend and twist their bodies and limbs in unnatural ways. Unfortunately this also means that the Hero is more easily bent in unnatural ways, such as during impact or major blows in combat so injuries can be more severe. Having this Ability will give your Hero a +1 to any PHY:Dexterity check that could benefit from being Double Jointed.

DYSLEXIC

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Accuracy	-3	-15

Your Hero has an incredibly difficult time with the written word, combat or navigation. Anything written down tends to be jumbled up and hard to comprehend. The penalty for this Defect is PHY:Accuracy –3.

EPILEPSY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Stamina	-1	5

The Epileptic Hero is afflicted by unpredictable seizures. Lesser versions of this may be as simple as the inability to sleep through the night to a Hero that goes into full convulsions at random or inappropriate times. Either way the Hero suffers a progressive penalty of –1 to PHY:Stamina.

EXCEPTIONAL JUMPER

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Jump another height		10

This is the ability to jump a full height higher than another of the same Race.

EXCEPTIONALLY FAST

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity	+1	10

Some Heroes are really fast on their feet, and this Ability represents their natural inclination for sprinting. Add +1 to your PHY:Dexterity permanently.

GLANDS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		10

Some Creatures are born with an innate physiological organ that excretes substances that can be spit, breathed, diffused, or slimed. The type of substance must be identified such as fire, acid, water, oil, musk, etc.

HARD TO KILL

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Physical Tolerance	+1	10

Many Heroes just don't die as easily as their enemies would like; this Ability represents such a person. Add +1 to your Physical Tolerance permanently.

Figure 4 - Escape From The Depths

IMPAIRED SENSES

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-10

Your Hero has some kind of sensory problem. This could be from their ear or ears being damaged, a nerve disorder, or some other physiological problem, whether due to an accident or from simply being born that way. The penalties certainly depend on the nature of the Defect such as a MEN:Perception decreased due to impaired hearing.

IMPAIRED VOICE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Persuasion	-2	-10

Your Hero has some kind of problem with their voice. This could be from their mouth, tongue, or throat being damaged or from simply being born that way. Due to this Defect your SOC:Persuasion is reduced by two for each stage purchased.

INTANGIBLE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity	-2	30
PHY:Strength	-3	

Intangible means that the physical form of the Creature is physically permeable and incorporeal, or ghost-like. The appearance of the Creature may be normal, but when there is any type of light behind the creature, it will become obvious that all is not normal. Obviously this makes carrying physical items quite impossible. Adjustments include: PHY:Dexterity –2, PHY:Strength -3

LIGHT SLEEPER

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Perception while sleeping	+1	10

Heroes with this Ability have the special ability to awaken instantly from any sudden sound or disturbance, clear-headed and ready for action. This is a particularly useful ability for anyone who is being hunted. If lying down, the Hero must still spend an Action to get up. Note that even the slightest noise will awaken a Hero with this Ability, with no roll being required. If someone is using Stealth, the Light Sleeper suffers no penalty when rolling to hear the approaching person or Creature.

MISSING LIMB

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-10

Your Hero has suffered a major injury in the past, or else they were born missing a piece of their body. This will cause all of the expected difficulties. Depending on what your Hero tries to do that would involve the missing body part, the ShardMaster may impose anywhere from a -1 to a -5 penalty. The ShardMaster also can specify stat reductions, such as a missing leg would cause a permanent decrease to PHY:Dexterity or a punctured lung a decrease to PHY:Stamina, etc.

NIGHT VISION

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Accuracy while in darkness	+1	10

A Hero with this Ability sees almost as well at night as they do in the day, although not in true pitch black. Vision penalties for being in the dark are reduced by 1. Night Vision is of no help in any kind of magical or supernatural Darkness. This Ability only works in out-of-doors situations or in buildings where there are plenty of windows.

OPPOSABLE TOES

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity	+1	10

Some Creatures have feet that are more like an additional pair of hands. This tends to force the Creature to walk on all fours at its most comfortable state but enables the Creature to use their feet just as they would their hands, including climbing, swinging, wielding weapons, etc.

PREHENSILE TAIL

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Accuracy	+1	10
PHY:Dexterity	-1	

The Creature with a Prehensile Tail now has an unconcealable, curly tail extruding from their body. While useful in climbing, it also tends to get in the way when the Creature has any adrenal activity such as combat, etc. With proper training, this tail can be become a useful tool but rarely is able to strong enough to wield a weapon. This relegates its use to grasping, climbing, hanging, etc.

SOLID

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Physical Tolerance	+1	10

When you punch some Heroes, it's like slamming your fist into a side of beef. That's what the Solid Property is all about. Add +1 to your Physical Tolerance.

STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Stamina	+1	10

Heroes who seemingly can drink anything and those who never seem to get sick can be considered to have this Ability. Having a Strong Immune System grants the Hero +1 to any relevant PHY:Stamina check made to resist Poisons and Diseases, even supernatural ones. Generally, such a Hero will never get anything like a minor cold, and it will take a lot to ever get one drunk.

SUSCEPTIBLE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-5

Your Hero takes damage from exposure to something that is harmless to everyone else. There is no defense against the Damage that is taken at all, and the Damage is suffered every Round of Action that the Hero is exposed to the substance. "Exposure" is up to the ShardMaster to define; in some cases (such as with water), this may mean actually touching the substance, while in other cases (such as with sunlight), being "out in it" counts. Each "purchase" of the Susceptible Property should be accompanied with a percentage of effectiveness (such as 10% per purchase). As you repurchase Susceptible for the same substance and approach 100%, the effect comes close to immediate fatality upon exposure. Susceptible also only affects a specified SubStat, so your PHY:Dexterity is Susceptible to sunlight for example. It is up to the ShardMaster, but the Susceptibilities chosen should be something that will be encountered from time to time… the more rare the contact, the lower the EP value should be and conversely.

UNCONTROLLABLE CHANGE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-10

This is a touchy Defect that the ShardMaster should be careful about allowing. There are actually two forms - in the first case, the Hero simply suffers some kind of intense seizure that leaves them unable to act. In the second case, the Hero actually undergoes a complete metamorphosis - their entire body changes, and probably their mentality as well. This is the classic "lycanthropy" case, where werewolves come from.

UNIQUE FEATURES

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		-5

In a Human-dominated world, those who look different draw attention. Even in enlightened societies where many Races interact freely, being unique can still cause problems (if for no other reason than that it is easier to keep tabs on you). Also, people can have Racially Unique Features that set them apart even in their Race - scars, strange hair colors and styles, or strange magical auras. These features do not, by default, provide any additional function to the creature. Once you have purchased Unique Features, other Properties such as Wings become available for subsequent purchase.

WEAKNESS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Stamina	-1	-10
PHY:Strength	-1	

This Hero is simply more fragile and weaker than another peer of his own Race. The result of this is a −1 to PHY:Stamina and a −1 to PHY:Strength.

WINGS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		25

The Creature now has a pair of feathered or leathery wings extending from their shoulders and when fully extended reaches three times their own height in wingspan. Although this physiological aspect does not grant the skills necessary to fly, the Creature can engage in basic soaring when dropped from a great height by innate nature. The Creature must select Unique Features to have this Property and is now able to fly 10 meters per round while expending 1 fatigue. Soaring only requires 1 fatigue per hour as long as no sustained flapping occurs.

Figure 5 - Dwarven Warrior

MENTAL PROPERTIES

AMNESIA

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Intellect	-2	-5

Your Hero has lost some or all of their memory. At the lower level, this could mean they've lost a year or two. At the highest level, however, they are a blank slate, leaving them with only the most rudimentary understanding of how to interact with the world. This Defect will often require a lot of back-and-forth between the ShardMaster and the Player to pull off correctly.

CRAFTSMAN

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Concentration	+1	10
PHY:Accuracy	+1	

Heroes with this Ability are very good with their hands and tools. They tend to be very good and building and making things and have an accurate sense of estimating quality of workmanship of other items. Heroes with this Ability also tend to be perfectionists and are rarely even able to do a quick or shoddy job of something… even if others are in a hurry, the Hero will do the job right and take the time to do it. Add +1 to any relevant MEN:Concentration or PHY:Accuracy checks when constructing something.

DIRECTION SENSE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Concentration	+1	10

Heroes with this odd Ability are somehow tapped into the world around them in such a way as to know their place in it, literally. A Hero with Direction Sense always knows when they are moving downward or upward, even on a gradual grade, and they have a strong sense of the cardinal directions and which way they are facing. In a Realm that has the classic four directions (North, South, East, and West), they can point in that direction even while indoors). Such a Hero will gain a +1 on any relevant MEN:Concentration check. where they are trying to find their way from place to place.

ENHANCED SENSES

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Perception	+1	10

The Hero with this Ability has a greatly enhanced sense of sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste (pick one). This Ability also adds +1 to any related MEN:Perception check.

HEAD FOR NUMBERS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Intellect	+1	10

Some scholars (and successful accountants and merchants) have the ability to very quickly calculate sums in their head, without the aid of a tablet and chalk, quill and parchment, or anything else. Often, such a person can also count a large number of items extremely quickly and tend to be quite proud of that fact.. Such people, when discovered, are often not welcome in gambling halls (although, while there, they can add +1 to any relevant MEN:Intellect check where the game involves being able to understand numbers and odds very well).

KLEPTOMANIAC

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Purity	-2	-5

Your Hero just can't keep their hands off of other people's stuff. They may or may not be a very good thief, though they had better become one or face a life on the run. For each stage of this Defect, the Hero not only can, but must attempt more and more perilous acts. The penalty for this Defect however is a reduction in SPI:Purity.

LINGUIST

Substat Affected	Value	EP
		10

Some Heroes have a natural gift when it comes to learning new languages. They are able to comprehend the subtle nuances and learn the vocabulary much more quickly than others. A Hero with this Ability automatically gains a +1 Level to any Language Skill.

LITERACY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
		10

Being able to read and write in a medieval fantasy setting is not a given, not by a long shot. Those who can do it are valued and treasured by many, scorned and feared by others. At any rate, having this Ability means that the Hero can read and write in a Language they know, and when they learn a new one, it is assumed they will learn to read and write in it as well.

MANIC

Substat Affected	Value	EP
EMO:Passion	+1	-5
EMO:Empathy	-2	

This is the classic "manic/depressive" or bi-polar disorder that seems far too common in modern life. A Hero with this condition is prone to rather distinct mood swings; this should be very interesting to roleplay. At the same time, true bipolar-ism can be very dangerous and something the Hero's friends will have to watch out for. This Defect increases the Hero's EMO:Passion by a point but decreases their EMO:Empathy by a point as well. This is due to the fact that the Manic Hero is consistently self-involved and stewing about their own miserable life in a somewhat selfish manner and cannot understand why others don't' see that the world has conspired only against himself.

MENTAL CLOCK

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Accuracy	+1	10

The Hero with this natural Ability has an instinctively accurate sense of the passage of Time. They can tell you how many minutes or hours have passed from a given point, and even indoors they can tell you what time of day it is. Most cultures only measure to within the hour, at best, but those with this Ability can give a more accurate accounting. The only limitation on a Hero with this Ability will be language - if the culture they are from does not measure Time in minutes, they will have no frame of reference to communicate that minutes have passed.

OBLIVIOUS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Attraction	+1	-5
MEN:Perception	-2	

Your Hero just seems dumb to most people, or else really distracted and "out of it." They are not the best choice for guard duty or to give an important part of a complicated plan to remember. As more of these Defects are purchased, the Hero become that much more apt to forget people's names, lose important items, or just generally not be aware of their surroundings. They aren't handicapped, but are just in another place most of the time in their own mind. Although this is an endearing quality (gaining the Hero a +1 in SOC:Attraction), they suffer greatly with their MEN:Perception.

OBSESSIVE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Concentration	-1	-5

There is something or someone that your Hero cannot get out of their mind. They spend their life focused on the object of their obsession, and it drives them to distraction. The penalty of this Defect is –1 MEN:Concentration as any available idle thought turns to the object of their desire rather than the task at hand.

PERFECT PITCH

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		10

There are some beings who come along who are gifted with the ability to distinguish musical notes and other sounds with absolute accuracy.   Add +1 to any relevant MEN:Perception check when discerning music.

PERFECT RECALL

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Memory	+1	20

There are some people who never seem to forget anything they see, hear, or read. Add +1 to the MEN:IQ SubStat permanently.

SPEED READER

Substat Affected	Value	EP
		10

In a world where the ability to read is considered impressive (see the Literacy Ability, which must be purchased to have this Ability), being able to read really fast is a feat of preternatural proportions. Heroes with this Ability can read about ten times faster than anyone else.

STUBBORN

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Humility	-1	-5

Your Hero and the mule! Once they get an idea in their head about something, the Hero is nearly impossible to negotiate with. This Defect is accompanied by a necessary decrease in SOC:Humility.

TACTITIAN

Substat Affected	Value	EP
*Special		10

This very popular Ability gives the Hero a distinct advantage in combat (or any situation where their ability to plan many moves in advance is important). For every Level of this Ability, anyone being led or commanded by this Hero gains a +1 to any Initiative roll after the first round due to his expertise in planning and strategy (this does not help on surprise or other first-round Initiative checks).

Figure 6 - The Voices Inside

SPIRITUAL PROPERTIES

BLOODLUST

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Purity	-2	-5

This Defect indicates a raw, brutal need to commit heinous acts of violence. At its earliest stages, it's justified only during combat, but while in combat the Hero sacrifices moral structure and engages in combat in some foul ways, taking extra time to deliver pain and agony in lieu of a quick or painless victory. At its more advanced stages, the Hero becomes a craven, truly depraved individual. This Defect can be counteracted with SPI:Faith but is a consistent battle in the self-same soul of the Hero to combat his true, foul nature. Those suffering from this Defect lose two points of their SPI:Purity.

BRAVERY/COWARDICE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Conviction	+/- 2	20
EMO:Dedication	+/- 2	

Danger is not this Hero's middle name. Whenever faced with something that represents a real threat to their life, the Hero will have a very difficult time functioning. Not only will they be in constant need of changing clothes, they may well cause their companions even more problems. Those suffering from this Defect lose two points (or gain two points) of SPI:Conviction and two points of EMO:Conviction.

DEVOUT

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Faith	+1	10

Heroes with a very strong sense of spiritual connection to what they believe tend to have this Ability. In many ways, it is a literal representation of the concept of "the Armor of Faith." Heroes with this Ability can also be quite unyielding in their dedication and morals. Add +1 to your SPI: Faith SubStat permanently.

HAUNTED

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Faith	-2	-5

Your Hero "sees things" - dead people, strange animals, a band of clowns, whatever. These things do not need to be real, at least not in any way that means anything to anyone else… or they can truly be identified as a bona fide haunting. Either way, the Hero will certainly be painted as a fool, or even a visionary, but will be debilitated by the omnipresent fear or distraction. This Defect directly challenges the SPI:Faith of the Hero, reducing it by two points.

HONESTY/DISHONESTY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Conviction when asked a question	+/- 1	5

This Hero cannot help but blurt the truth (or a lie) out, often with serious repercussions. As this Defect becomes more serious, there is less and less of a chance that the Hero will know when to keep their mouth shut at the wrong times. When asked a question, the Avatar much check against his SPI:Conviction and if he fails the check, he is forced to tell the truth or lie.

LECHEROUS

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Purity	-2	-5
SOC:Attraction	+1	

Your Hero is obvious and annoying to those they are attracted to. They can be "kind of charming," but this Hero tends to be more comical or ugly about it than they would hope to be. The penalty for this Defect is a large decrease in SPI:Purity but also a small increase in SOC:Attraction.

LONGEVITY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Maximum Age	+10 years	10

A Hero with this Ability will be strong, healthy, and mentally facile for longer than most people of their Race, although they will not live longer than their Racial maximum. The great, elder, silver-haired warriors of legend and the mighty kings who ruled far longer than anyone thought possible had this gift.

LUCKY/UNLUCKY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Intuition	+/- 1	15

Some Heroes are just plain Lucky. Add +1 to your SPI:Intuition SubStat permanently.

The ShardMaster is morally bound to make life difficult for any Hero that chooses Unlucky. The Hero with Unlucky is a walking Plot Device, really. Those with the Unlucky Defect suffer a −1 to their SPI:Intuition.

RAPID HEALING

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Daily Damage Recovery	+1	10

Some Heroes just heal quickly enough to recover an additional Structure point for each night of rest. Rapid Healing only applies to when the Hero is recovering damage naturally; it has no effect when magical Healing is employed.

UNDEAD

Substat Affected	Value	EP
PHY:Dexterity per 1/10 of max age	-1	40
SOC:Attraction per 1/10 of max age	-1	

The Creature is already dead and is still in an animated, conscious state as its soul is still present in its slowly decomposing corpse. This does not instill any immunity to decomposition or convey any regernerative powers… The creature is simply stuck in limbo between worlds. PHY:Dexterity − 1, SOC:Attraction −1 for each tenth of maximum age that passes. Once the Creature passes twice his maximum age while still being Undead, the Creature is banished to the Abyss.

ZEALOT

Substat Affected	Value	EP
EMO:Dedication	+2	-10
SPI:Discernment	-1	
SOC:Persuasion	+1	

The Zealot suffers from a very dangerous Defect… that of an almost insane dedication to not only follow, but to openly be recognized for being the "best" follower of a particular cause. This causes a −1 to SOC:Humility and they always tend to be the rotten apple in the barrel in any cause or group, however they also receive a bonus of +1 EMO:Passion for their troubles.

EMOTIONAL PROPERTIES

BAD TEMPER

Substat Affected	Value	EP
EMO:Passion	+1	-5
SOC:Charisma	-1	

Your Hero tends to be one of those people that people have to really know to have any chance of liking. The average person tends to avoid the Hero, or at least give them a hard time. The world is generally not a fun place for a BAD TEMPERED Hero, and they don't to make it very fun for others. The intemperate Hero gains a point for EMO:Passion but loses a point from SOC:Charisma.

BERZERKER

Substat Affected	Value	EP
EMO:Passion	+2	10
PHY:Power	+2	

Your Hero has this small problem in combat… they tend to lose all sense of rationality and common sense. Once the "dance of blades" begins, they aren't inclined to stop (at least, not until they get something done), and when there's no more conflict it takes them quite a while to wind down. It also isn't a good idea to sneak up behind someone with this Defect as the results may not be what you would expect. This Defect is matched by a corresponding bonus of +2 EMO:Passion and +2 PHY:Power but only during the berzerking moment. The more stages of this Defect are purchased, the less control the Hero will have over his own sanity until he loses complete control (100%) and loses the ability to discern between a friend or foe while he is enraged.

EMPATH

Substat Affected	Value	EP
EMO:Empathy	+1	10

The Hero with this Ability has an almost preternatural understanding of and affinity for another Race (choose one…whether animal, creature or human). This includes the unpredictable ability to influence the emotions of other Creatures… not in a sense of communicating, but in a sense of transplanting suggestive emotions to the Psyche of the target Creature... however you also are constantly affected by the emotions of others as well, whether they are empaths or not, which can be quite maddening. Add a +1 to any related EMO:Empathy check.

HIBERNATION

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Emotional Endurance while asleep	+2	20

The Creature with Hibernation must go into a deep, coma-like sleep whenever subjected to extended periods of cold temperatures or suffer Emotional damage of 1 point per hour. When exposed to temperatures at least half that of their normal body temperature, the Creature will expend one Emotional endurance point per hour of exposure. The Creature can choose to not hibernate, but soon their Emotional endurance will run out and they will be expending damage points. Once the Creature is hibernating, it cannot wake until 24 hours have passed and the cold environment is above half their body heat. The Creature also can sleep for months like this without eating or drinking, although they will awake ravenous and a bit Emotionally disturbed for about two days after awakening.

HIGH PAIN TOLERANCE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
Shock Multiplier	+1	10

Combat often results in a great deal of pain and injury, and even magical healing cannot take away the soreness, stiffness, and shock that a body endures when large amounts of metal (or worse) have been thrust through it. Normally when an injury exceeds the Tolerance by a multiple of 2 (or more), shock or stun occurs, however with this Ability, you can add +1 when calculating your multiplier.

PARANOIA

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Faith	-1	-5
EMO:Ego	+1	

Just because your Hero thinks "They" are up to something doesn't mean They aren't. However, this tends to be seriously annoying (or worse) for everyone else around the paranoid individual. An even worse condition is when the same Hero has Paranoia and is Haunted. Those afflicted with Paranoia gain a +1 to their EMO:Ego but lose a point from their SPI:Faith.

SPLIT PERSONALITY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
MEN:Sanity	-2	-10

This can be very interesting, but very difficult for the ShardMaster to deal with unless they are prepared for it. The separate Personality (or Personalities, if you really want to go all-out) will have a separate, distinct Character Record, but one that only the ShardMaster has access to. Split Personality is not a way for a Player to have more than one Hero; it's a real problem that leaves the Player out of control of the Hero at certain times.

SOCIAL PROPERTIES

BATTLE HUNGRY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Purity	-1	-5

Combat is a way of life for this Hero. They have a hard time being happy unless there is a fight on hand. Naturally, this is a very popular Defect. Generally the Hero sacrifices a bit of moral ethic (SPI:Purity) to their ever-consuming need to engage in warfare… to fight wherever they can, with whomever will try. With some, they only feel the need to participate in a fight if there's one being brought on, however others just have an urge periodically to just start something no matter where they are.

BEAUTIFUL/HANDSOME

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Attraction	+1	10

The greatest-looking and most stunning Heroes have this Ability, which represents their better-than-average looks, poise, and overall appearance. Add +1 to your SOC:Attraction SubStat permanently.

BEAUTIFUL VOICE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Persuasion	+1	10

Heroes with this Ability are known for their wonderful speaking and singing voice. Add +1 to your SOC:Persuasion SubStat permanently.

CHARISMATIC

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Charisma	+1	10

Possessed of natural leadership and inspirational gifts, the Hero with this Ability can get people to follow them more easily and can make their way through society with more grace and charm. Add +1 to your SOC:Charisma SubStat permanently.

HIVE MIND

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Will	-4	40
EMO:Passion	-3	
MEN:Concentration	-2	

Traditionally limited to races that employ a hive instinct such as bees, ants, etc., this ability enables the Hero to insert his own thoughts into that of a hive mentality. This has a complex effect on the Hero's free will as his mind is subjected to thousands of suggestions per minute but it also enables the Hero to know what the hive is thinking. Adjustments include: SOC:Will –4, EMO:Passion –3, MEN:Concentration –2.

HORRIFIC APPEARANCE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Attraction	-1	-10
SPI:Inspiration	+1	

This property means that the Creature has an appearance that is so gruesome, so frightening that no matter what the cultural background, those who look upon him will be absolutely disgusted or horrified. Adjustments include: SOC:Attr – 1, SPI:Inspiration + 1.

INTOLERANCE

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Persuasion	+1	-5
EMO:Empathy	-2	

Your Hero just dislikes "those people" - some race or social group. It could be from years of abuse by individuals like "those people," or from growing up in a society where the Hero is taught that "those people" are bad, untrustworthy, or worse. This is a touchy Defect that should only be allowed in games where the Players can be trusted to roleplay in a manner that doesn't cause actual strife. Although the intolerant boor can be more convincing to the public at large (SOC:Persuasion + 1), they lose some ability to understand the feelings of others in the process (EMO:Empathy –2).

SENSE OF DUTY

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Will	-1	-5
EMO:Dedication	+1	

The Hero is loyal to something or someone and believes they must serve accordingly. This is a fairly common one for Heroes, as almost all Heroes believe in being at least loyal to their friends and allies. This is one of those "No man can serve two masters" Defects where once this is chosen, any further repurchase of this Defect must go to the same target loyalty until 100% means that the primary objective of this Hero's life is to die in their service.

STRONG WILLED

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SOC:Will	+1	10

Having this Ability means your Hero has a strength of will far beyond even most other Heroes. They have a certain amount of extra "psychological armor" to resist attempts at manipulating or attacking them Socially. Add +1 to your SOC:Will SubStat permanently.

VOW/CODE OF HONOR

Substat Affected	Value	EP
SPI:Conviction	+1	-5
SOC:Will	-1	

The Hero has taken an oath or sworn to uphold a set of standards for their behavior. This can be something as classic as a traditional Code of Chivalry to something as intense as "I will never surrender in battle. Death first!" This borders on not truly being a Defect but is treated as such, giving the Hero a bonus of +1 to SPI:Conviction and a –1 on SOC:Will.

SKILL METHODS

This section gets at the heart and soul of the Shards of the Stone game. Skills are how a Hero gets anything done in the world. The main system for rolling dice and getting a result is solely based on the rules for using Skills, so we will go into some depth here.

It's all very, very simple, though, so don't be worried. Once you get the basic idea of how Skills are used, you will understand how to play Shards of the Stone. It's that easy.

Following the basics on how Skills are used (and some of the very interesting things you can do with Skills and the Skill system), there is a rather impressive list of Skills for you to choose for your Hero.

SKILL USE AND RESOLUTION

During the course of playing your Hero, there are going to be times when that Hero will try to do something that they may or may not succeed at. This chance for success or failure is represented by the rolling of dice.

Walking up a normal set of stairs, tossing a rock against the side of a barn, and understanding a basic message written on a sign (if you know how to read) are all examples of simple, automatically successful Methods. There should never be a reason to roll any dice or use any game mechanics to determine if your Hero succeeds at such things.

Climbing over a high wall, throwing a rock at the eye of a dragon, and deciphering ancient magical runes are all examples of difficult Methods that require the use of Skills and dice. The Skill Resolution system of Shards of the Stone comes into play in these situations.

Every Skill in Shards of the Stone is based on a particular SubStat listed on your Character Sheet. You will see which SubStat to check next to each Skill definition.

Skill checks involve a Target Creature or a Target Objective that has their own Power Die value, their own Stats and their own bonuses which are compared to your own Power Die, Stats, and Bonuses. This is simply a game of overcoming the sum total of your Target's score. The ShardMaster must determine the Power Die level of the "Challenge" and can use the following chart to help:

Objective Difficulty	Power Die	Substat Value	Situational Modifier
Simple Task	d4	1-4	+/- 4
Normal Task	d6	1-6	+/- 6
Challenging Task	d8	1-8	+/- 8
Incredible Task	d10	1-10	+/- 10
Herculean Task	d12	1-12	+/- 12
Impossible Task	d20	1-20	+/- 20
Legendary Task	d30	1-30	+/- 30
Godlike Task	d60	1-60	+/- 60
Cosmic Task	d100	1-100	+/- 100

Table 8 - Task Difficulty Chart

You can check a Skill on yourself or you can use a Skill on a Target Creature or Objective. For example, you can attempt to use your Translation skill to pen a scroll in another Language that you know… so it could be you against your own mind. You also could be attempting to translate an ancient Tome written by an advanced mage, so it would be your mind versus the complexity of the Tome and the mind of the man that wrote it. An alternate example would be attempting to use your Tracking Skill to find another Character in the game…. Now you're going up against not only your Skill in Tracking but his Skill in avoiding you.

Each Skill that can be Targeted will also list the Target's SubStat to check against.

To check a Skill we will be using four numbers:

1. Power Die Value
2. Source SubStat Value
3. Target SubStat Value
4. Modifiers

When checking against another Character or Obstacle, take your Source SubStat + Modifiers + the result of your Power Die roll and compare it to the Target's SubStat + Modifiers + the Target's Power Die roll. Whoever is higher wins the check. Let's walk through some examples:

Example One - Shandra Colderan has been given an ancient scroll with Fae runes all over it. It is known that she is something of a scholar in Elven matters, and she does have the Fae Lore Skill which is based on her MEN:Intellect of 6. The Ancient text and even old-style handwriting on the scroll poses a unique challenge of −3. However, Shandra also gets a +2 because she purchased the Fae Lore Skill twice, leaving a net −1 Modifier. After spending some time poring over the scroll (and referencing some of her library tomes), Shandra's Player then rolls her Power Die (d10 for Shandra) and comes up with an 8… she fails miserably and gives up for the day.

Example Two – Lurtik is on the prowl after the elusive G'Zuldjian who is carefully picking his way through the dense forest, careful not to leave a trace. Lurtik decides to employ his Tracking Skill that is based on Lurtik's MEN:Perception SubStat Value of 9, but the Skill also targets G'Zuldjian's deft PHY:Dexterity Value of 6. Lurtik attempts to roll his Power Die of d8 and gets a 6. He quickly adds his roll of 6 to his MEN:Perception value of 9 for a whopping 15! The ShardMaster rules that G'Zuldjian is at home in this forest and knows his way around so he assigns a modifer of −2 to Lurtik's roll leaving a 13. G'Zuldjian tries to evade his Tracking by rolling his power die (a d6 for him) and he too rolls a 6. Adding his roll of 6 to his PHY:Dexterity value of 6 gives him only a 12… which he realizes just as Lurtik turns the corner and spots him… the chase is on!

ShardMasters can play with the numbers a bit, if they choose. For example, they might decide that a Skill is not quite as complicated or they can decide to apply a different SubStat for use in unique cases.

SKILLS DEFINED

The following is a fairly extensive list of Skills that are appropriate to a "classic" heroic fantasy setting. However, this list is not considered to be all there is, not by a long shot. ShardMasters and Players are free to create any Skill they wish. All you need to do is decide on the name, what the Skill does, and what primary Stats it is checked against.

Skills are defined by the following:

Name (Source, Target, EP, Level, Modifiers)

EXAMPLE:

Acting (SOC:Persuasion, MEN:Perception, 5 EP, 2nd Level, N/A)

or more concisely:

Acting (SOC:Prs, MEN:Per, 5, 2, N/A)

DEFINITIONS:

Source: The Creature that is trying the Skill bases its chances for success on the SubStat that matches the Source. In the above example, our Hero would check his acting skill using his Social Persuasion (SOC:Persuasion) SubStat.

Target: This is the SubStat that the Target Creature will use to try to foil your attempt to check your skill. Sometimes the "Target" isn't always a creature… it can be an obstacle, a task or other challenge that is assigned a "Target SubStat" as its defense.

EP: This is the cost required in Experience Points per level to purchase this Skill. You can purchase as many levels of this skill as you wish, which improves your capabilities in this particular Skill. You may only purchase the same Skill a number of times equal to the Power Die Scale Level of your Character. For example, if you are a d8 Creature then just count through the Power Die levels beneath that:… d3, d4, d6 and d8 = 4 Scale Levels. You can only purchase any given Skill four times.

Modifiers: After the skill is purchased, this can show any relevant modifiers…

Result Table: In the Skill listings below, some Skills have a percentile chart that is optional, but allows the ShardMaster to apply random outcomes once a Skill has been successfully checked. In other words, you much check your Skill first… and only then can you roll on the Outcome Result Chart.

When buying Skills, keep in mind the following ranges to evaluate just how good your Hero is believed to be in a given Skill:

0: Untrained, no experience.
1: Low to Average. Students and apprentices have Skills in this range.
2: Competent, notable. This is the range for most people who actually make a living with a Skill.
3: Exceptional. The truly note-worthy and accomplished have Skills in this Range. They are called in as Experts.
4: Incredible. This is the Level at which even supposed Experts will bow to their betters and call them Master.
5: Legendary. At this Level, even the term "Master" is somehow not enough; some are called Grand Master.
6+ Mythic. The most dedicated Masters and Grand Masters will seek out practitioners at this Level and beg to be their students.

SKILL LISTING

Academics	Source	Target	EP
Cramming	MEN:Perception		15
History	SOC:Humility		5
Language	MEN:Intellect		5
Research	MEN:Sanity		5

Combat	Source	Target	EP
Bind Wounds	SPI:Faith	SPI:Faith	5
Quick Draw	PHY:Dexterity	PHY:Dexterity	10
Tactitian	MEN:Intellect	EMO:Intuition	10
Trapwork	PHY:Accuracy	MEN:Concentration	10

Deception	Source	Target	EP
Cryptography	MEN:IQ	MEN:IQ	5
Disguise	SOC:Persuasion	MEN:Perception	10
Forgery	MEN:Concentration	MEN:Peception	5
Gambling	SPI:Faith		5
Hypnotism	SOC:Persuasion	MEN:Sanity	15
Lip Reading	PHY:Accuracy	PHY:Speed	5
Lockpicking	PHY:Accuracy	MEN:Concentration	10
Mimicry	MEN:Perception		5
Sleight of Hand	PHY:Dexterity	MEN:Perception	10
Sleuthing	MEN:Perception	EMO:Intuition	5
Stealth	PHY:Dexterity	MEN:Concentration	10
Streetwise	SOC:Persuasion	SOC:Will	5

Interpersonal	Source	Target	EP
Courtier	SOC:Charisma	EMO:Intuition	5
Interaction	SOC:Charisma		10
Interrogation	SOC:Will	MEN:Concentration	5
Leadership	SOC:Charisma	SOC:Humility	10
Politics	SOC:Charisma		5
Teaching	MEN:Intellect	SOC:Humility	5

Physical	Source	Target	EP
Burrowing	PHY:Strength		10
Climbing	PHY:Stamina		5
Contortionist	PHY:Stamina		5
Feign Death	PHY:Focus	SPI:Discernment	10
Flight	PHY:Dexterity		20
Horsemanship	EMO:Empathy		5
Meditation	MEN:Concentration		5
Polymorph	PHY:Adrenaline		30
Spawning	PHY:Strength		40

Nature	Source	Target	EP
Concealment	EMO:Intuition	MEN:Perception	10
Tracking	MEN:Perception	PHY:Dexterity	10

Trades	Source	Target	EP
Acting	SOC:Persuasion	MEN:Perception	5
Artisan	MEN:Concentration		5
Artist	SPI:Purity	EMO:Passion	5
Farming	EMO:Dedication		5
Fletching	PHY:Accuracy		5
Dance	SOC:Persuasion		5
Driving	MEN:Concentration		5
Inventor	MEN:Concentration		10
Merchant	SOC:Persuasion		5
Navigation	MEN:Concentration		10
Sailing	PHY:Stamina		5
Smithing	EMO:Dedication		10
Ventriloquism	SOC:Persuasion	MEN:Perception	5

Table 9 - Skill Listing Chart

ACTING

	Cost: 5 EP	Range:
	Source: SOC:Persuasion	Area:
	Target: MEN:Perception	Duration:

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	Just really, really bad work
40-49	Passable	Even commoners will note flaws
50-59	Fair	Pleasing to the average folk
60-69	Good	Even a trained eye will find merit
70-79	Excellent	Probably the best most have seen
80-89	Masterful	The Actor will be sought after for more, and word will spread of their talent
90-99	Incredible	The Actor achieves a near perfect result
100	Critical Success	Tales of the creation will long outlive the Actor

This is the Skill of the performer, used to assume a role and maintain the illusion of said role. It can also be useful when a Hero is attempting to "pretend" something is true when it is not (in other words, it can be used to lie effectively).

ALCHEMY

	Cost: 25 EP	Range:
	Source: MEN:Concentration	Area:
	Target:	Duration:

Pct	Result	Effect
< 40	Disaster!	The alchemist is caught in an explosion that does 1d Bludgeon Damage to everyone in the room
40-49	Failure	The reagents are wasted, the money and time is spent, and nothing comes of it
50-59	Passable	The alchemist can create a concoction worth 10 EP
60-69	Fair	The alchemist can create a concoction worth 20 EP
70-79	Good	The alchemist can create a concoction worth 30 EP
80-89	Excellent	The alchemist can create a concoction worth 40 EP
90-99	Masterful	The alchemist can create a concoction worth 50 EP
100	Critical Success	Whether by a stroke of genius or phenomenal luck, the alchemist can create a concoction with 100 EP

This is a study and understanding of formulas, mixtures, and other processes that result in various reactions. A trained alchemist may be able to take odd reagents and combine them in ways that will create any number of effects. In most Realms, the use of this Skill will deal more with magical elixirs and related applications. However, in some Realms, this skill forms the basis for a sort of "scientific" approach to the use of the Fragments.

As an option, some ShardMasters may allow those trained in Alchemy to create small, limited-use potions and items. Such efforts should take a great deal of time and effort, be quite expensive, and require the possession of odd and rare components. The ShardMaster is urged to require the alchemist to be quite creative.

The usual minimum time required to create one dosage or use of a concoction is 1 week; making more uses or taking a shorter amount of time will most certainly require added Stages of Success.

ARTISAN

	Cost: 5 EP	Range:
	Source: MEN:Concentration	Area:
	Target: MEN:Perception	Duration:

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	Just really, really bad work
40-49	Passable	Even commoners will note flaws
50-59	Fair	Pleasing to the average folk
60-79	Good	Even a trained eye will find merit
80-89	Excellent	Probably the best most have seen
90-99	Masterful	The Artisan will be sought after for more, and word will spread of their talent
100	Critical Success	Tales of the creation will long outlive the artist

This collection of sub-skills represents a Hero's training and education in designing and building things (mostly with wood), as well as an overall facility with tools. Realistically, this could be broken down into areas such as Carpentry, Woodworking, and Architecture, but for the purposes of this game, they are conveniently grouped together.

ARTIST

	Cost: 5 EP	Range:
	Source: MEN:Creativity	Area:
	Target: EMO:Passion	Duration:

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	Just really, really bad work
40-49	Passable	Even commoners will note flaws
50-59	Fair	Pleasing to the average folk
60-69	Good	Even a trained eye or ear will find merit
70-79	Excellent	Probably the best most have seen
80-89	Masterful	The Artist will be sought after for more, and word will spread of their talent
90-99	Incredible	The Artist achieves a near perfect result
100	Critical Success	Tales of the creation will long outlive the Artist

The Hero with this Skill is gifted and/or experienced in some artistic endeavor. This could be sculpture, drawing, playing a musical instrument, or any number of other forms. The Player needs to choose which form when they attain this Skill. If they want their Hero to be good at many forms, they will need to purchase Artist multiple times.

BIND WOUNDS

	Cost: 5 EP	Range:
	Source: SPI:Faith	Area:
	Target: SPI:Faith	Duration:

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	More harm done than good, Target loses 2 endurance
40-49	None	No appreciable effect at all
50-59	Fair	The wound will stop bleeding and the Target is stabilized
60-69	Good	Stabilized, and the Target gains +1 Physical Endurance back
70-79	Excellent	Stabilized and the Target gains 1 PD of PHY Endurance
80-89	Masterful	Stabilized in 20 min and the Target gets 1 die of Endurance
90-99	Incredible	Stabilized in 5 min and the Target gets 1 die of Endurance
100	Critical Success	All Physical Endurance and Fatigue is restored immediately.

This is the basic Skill for preventing a Character from bleeding to death or otherwise suffering further from wounds. It involves a combination of life-saving techniques, a knowledge of bandages and splints, and a basic understanding of the use of healing herbs and poultices.

BURROWING

Cost: 15 EP	**Range:** 1m x PHY:Strength per turn
Source: PHY:Strength	**Area:**
Target: PHY:Stamina	**Duration:** Physical Endurance

Through enhanced knowledge of how to dig and most likely additional physical features such as strong nails, powerful forearms, etc., the Creature with this skill knows how to burrow through soft dirt or loam with a surprising speed. This skill enables the Creature to dig 1 meter per point of PHY:Strength per turn while consuming 1 fatigue per turn of concentrated digging. This skill solely provides the technique of Burrowing, and no physiological features are bestowed with this skill.

CLIMBING

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Stamina	**Area:**
Target: PHY:Stamina	**Duration:** Physical Endurance

Through enhanced knowledge of how to climb and most likely additional physical features such as powerful fingers, limber joints, powerful forearms, etc., the Creature with this skill knows how to climb what may seem to be sheer surfaces by being able to identify the cracks, crevasses and other necessary features to make a climb. This does not grant the Creature the ability to climb truly sheer surfaces. Physiological Properties such as Prehensile Tails, Opposable Toes and others will complement this skill.

CONCEALMENT

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: EMO:Intuition	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

The Skill used in hiding things from sight or in searching for things that have been Concealed by others. This includes either placing or searching for traps, hidden doors, peepholes, secret safes, and anything else that is to be hidden or was intentionally hidden by another.

CONTORTIONIST

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Stamina	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

This Skill refers to a Character's training in "hyper-limberness," allowing them to fit in otherwise impossible spaces, bend in ways that aren't normal, and do other feats of body twisting and squeezing. A successful Contortionist roll may allow the escaping of such bonds as ropes or manacles.

COURTIER

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Charisma	**Area:**
Target: EMO:Intuition	**Duration:**

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Thoroughly Embarassed	The serving wench has better manners and grace by far, and your impropriety will be long remembered.
40-49	Passable	Noted for an utter lack of style, but at least you're not a complete, bumbling idiot and barbarian.
50-59	Fair	Far from noteworthy, but at least no negative attention will be drawn.
60-69	Good	It is clear that you fit in well here, and others will be mildly impressed or even may see you as an equal.
70-79	Excellent	You simply must be of Noble stock and will certainly be asked after for future events.
80-89	Masterful	If they haven't already, the ranking nobility will quickly seek to converse with you and learn more.
90-99	Incredible	Those who do not know better will mistake you for the ranking Nobility present.
100	Critical Success	Women fawn and faint, men either pledge loyalty or resent you bitterly and you are the absolute center of attention..

This Skill refers to an overall facility with all things "courtly." A Hero trained in this area is skilled in maneuvering through high society, has intimate knowledge of etiquette, and is quite familiar with the intrigues and political machinations that go on in whatever "court" they have experience with.

CRAMMING

Cost: 15 EP	**Range:**
Source: MEN:Perception	**Area:**
Target:	**Duration:**

Heroes with this Ability are particularly good at quickly learning just enough about something to get them by for a while (much like a student who crams for a test). After a Hero has used this Ability to study a skill, they can add a temporary bonus of +1 on an opposition check or +10% to a result roll for another skill. Your Cramming Ability must be of a high enough level to match the level of the Skill for which you are Cramming or your study will not be worthwhile and no bonuses will be achieved. This bonus fades away after a day or after an extremely stressful event (such as combat).

CRYPTOGRAPHY

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: MEN:Memory	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Memory	**Duration:**

Any Hero Skilled in this area can encrypt and decrypt coded messages with some time, effort, and a successful roll. Furthermore, they can be quite useful in gleaning at least some meaning from ancient runes, hieroglyphics, and the like as long as they have some translated portion of the symbology. The minimum time it should take to decrypt a message of about a page should be 6 Hours, with excellent rolls reducing the time as appropriate.

DANCE

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Persuasion	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	Just a really, really bad performance
40-49	Passable	Even commoners will note flaws
50-59	Fair	Pleasing to the average folk
60-69	Good	Even a trained eye will find merit
70-79	Excellent	Probably the best most have seen
80-89	Masterful	The Dancer will be sought after for more, and word will spread of their talent
90-99	Incredible	The Dancer achieves a near perfect result
100	Critical Success	Tales of the performance will outlive the Dancer

This is the specific Skill in moving one's body rhythmically and with style and grace. A Hero may actually only know one style or form, but they can quickly pick up other styles and, more importantly, they can look really good dancing.

DISGUISE

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Persuasion	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

Pct	Result	Effect
< 30	Atrocious	A child can tell that you are "play acting"
40-49	Passable	Only a simple attempt at looking like "a nobody" will be remotely successful
50-59	Fair	Passing as someone of the same Race, even someone known, is possible
60-69	Good	Only someone looking for a deception will even have reason to look closely, though you can only imitate someone of roughly the same height and broadest features.
70-79	Excellent	Can pass as almost anyone of the same or similar Race (even cross-gender, although that will take some real time and effort)
80-89	Masterful	Anyone, any Race, even someone thoroughly famous. The parents and loved ones of the one being portrayed will not even suspect.
90-99	Incredible	Your own family and loved ones will not be able to tell who you are, even after careful, intense scrutiny.
100	Critical Success	You simply are identical in appearance, manner and demeanour of the person or object being mimicked.

This Skill allows a Hero to alter their appearance in various ways so as to look like someone else. To merely change one's appearance is not very difficult for anyone with training, while looking like a specific person may be quite challenging indeed. This can be especially true when a Hero is attempting to pass as another Race.

DRIVING

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Concentration	Area:
Target: PHY:Dexterity	Duration:

Harder than it looks, there is a whole set of aptitudes involved in driving a wagon or other land-based vehicle effectively. A high Skill rating is imperative when being chased by mounted warriors.

FARMING

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: EMO:Dedication	Area:
Target: EMO:Ego	Duration:

This Skill is very common among agrarian societies and is almost a requirement in most civilizations. This encompasses the skills necessary to plant, irrigate, and harvest crops including the ability to identify edible plants and how to prepare and care for them.

FEIGN DEATH

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Concentration	Area:
Target: SPI:Discernment	Duration:

This very unusual, very rare Skill represents a Hero's training and discipline to lie extremely still, slowing their heartbeat and breathing to such a low level as to appear dead to any casual observer. This is a matter of extreme inner peace and strength, indicating a person who has mastered the concept of Mind over Matter. Any Hero with this Ability may add +1 to any Meditation roll, and they can enter their death-like trance for up to 6 hours at a time. Those that are Spiritually attuned will be able to discern their life force, foiling the illusion, but most people are quite convinced of the effect.

FLETCHING

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: PHY:Accuracy	Area:
Target:	Duration:

A useful Skill for any archer (or someone who likes to make money from them). Fletching allows a Hero to make new arrows or crossbow bolts, given the appropriate time and resources. In an environment conducive to the work, a Hero can make a number of arrows equal to their PHY Stat per hour, with a minimum of 1.

FLIGHT

Cost: 20 EP	Range:
Source: PHY:Dexterity	Area:
Target: PHY:Endurance	Duration: Physical Endurance

While this skill does not bestow the "ability" of flight, it provides the skills necessary to perform flight. A comprehensive knowledge or instinct of lifts, evades, soaring, banking, and aerial combat comes witht his skill, and if the physiological needs are there (wings or contraptions to serve as wings) then this Creature will be truly powerful in this regard.

FORGERY

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Concentration	Area:
Target: MEN:Perception	Duration:

This is the Skill of creating fake documents that will serve in the place of real ones; it also allows someone added Skill in spotting other forgeries.

GAMBLING

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: SPI:Faith	Area:
Target: Special *	Duration:

Heroes with this Skill are good at playing games of chance. Which Stat applies depends entirely upon the game. MEN:Intellect is often best in games where knowing the rules and calculating the odds is most important, such as Blackjack or Chess (and, yes, Chess can easily be a gambling game). SOC:Persuasion is useful in any game of Poker. PHY:Dexterity is highly effective when one

wants to toss the Bones. Gambling can also be used to cheat or to spot cheaters - appropriate Skill vs. Skill rolls will apply.

WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

When your Hero gambles, it's always against something or someone. Either "the House" or fellow gamblers opposing the gambling Hero. Instead of a normal Results Chart, the amount of money a Hero wins or loses while Gambling is based on the difference between what they roll and what "the House" rolls, or else how they compare to the highest roll among a group of fellow gamblers.

In the case of betting "the House," the Hero decides how much money they are willing to lose before they begin. Then they roll their Power Die against the Power Die roll of the "House" as determined by the ShardMaster. Dinky little gambling dens will likely not have any modifiers in favor of the House, while a posh and renowned gambling hall may have as high as +3 or +4 (with "rigged" places adding anywhere from +5 to +6, though the Hero can roll to spot such trickery before they commit to playing).

In the case of gambling against a group of other Characters, the Hero once again decides how much money they are willing to lose. Then everyone rolls their Power Die and determines their Totals. Whoever has the highest total is the "Big Winner," and everyone else's totals are compared to that one to determine how well or badly they did.

The ShardMaster can create even more elaborate games and systems to simulate Gambling, but this process will give you quick and clean results.

HISTORY

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**	
Source: SOC:Humility	**Area:**	
Target:	**Duration:**	

This Skill represents a Hero's knowledge and understanding of history. Someone with the History skill may be able to tell you what the last battle that was fought was about and how it affected the balance of power in the region. The historian call also requires a certain amount of wisdom and an open mind in the approach to sifting through the layers of hyperbole and propaganda to find out what truly happened.

HORSEMANSHIP

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**	
Source: EMO:Empathy	**Area:**	
Target:	**Duration:**	

This Skill represents riding and handling a horse. Someone with any Levels here is at ease in the saddle for at least normal travelling, and a high Skill Level has a good chance of being able to outride pursuers, leap chasms, and perform other stunts. In some instances, other SubStats may be a better fit, such as PHY:Dexterity when technical skill is required more than the ability to "communicate" with the horse in the riding style.

HYPNOTISM

Cost: 15 EP	**Range:**	
Source: SOC:Persuasion	**Area:**	
Target: MEN:Sanity	**Duration:**	

The hypnotist must start with a willing subject who is patient enough to become entranced with some form of mechanical or focus device. Once in a trance, the ShardMaster may choose to decide the outcome any may use the Interaction Result chart or perhaps grant the Hypnotist a bonus on their persuasion stat with the hypnotized individual.

INTERACTION

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**	
Source: SOC:Charisma	**Area:**	
Target: SOC:Will	**Duration:**	

< 50	Atrocious	Open hostility or fear; likely to attack or run away
50-59	Passable	Antipathy, anger, derision, resentment or stron discomfort
60-69	Fair	No noticeable reaction or they ignore you
70-79	Good	Mild comfort and ease, open to listening
80-89	Excellent	Enthusiasm, friendliness or respect, strongly inclined to act as instructed.
90-99	Masterful	Intense desire to perform as asked or ordered, complete trust or total respect
100	Critical Success	Fanatical belief in every word you say

This Skill deals with a Hero's interpersonal abilities. This includes (but is not restricted to) basic conversations, seductions, oratory presentations, and attempts at persuasion. Accomplished actors, skilled con artists, and successful merchants have good scores in this area.

TALKING THE TALK

The Interaction Skill is definitely one where two people can go back and forth for quite a while. We have prepared a chart that provides an optional method of adding some results to successful (or failed) engagements with Interaction.

Use of this Skill does not represent a supernatural power of any kind; those being influenced will not be inclined to perform acts that utterly violate their nature, no matter how influential the speaker.

As a general rule, the ShardMaster is encouraged to let pure roleplaying take care of most such situations. However, a Player who has put a lot of effort and points into making their Hero more influential than others may wish to have their Interaction Skill come into play during an argument or other situation. The ShardMaster may wish to allow this, rolling as normal and requiring the other Players to portray their Heroes as responding under the influence of the Interaction Skill.

INTERROGATION

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**	
Source: SOC:Will	**Area:**	
Target: MEN:Concentration	**Duration:**	

< 50	Atrocious	Unbreakable; Actually laughs at interrogator, making a mockery of the whole situation. Will never, ever respond favorably or respectfully to the interrogator.
50-59	Passable	Shows signs of weakness but will not bow or reveal any information (no additional attempts will work)
60-69	Fair	Some progress but it will take multiple attempts to get anything out of this one.
70-79	Good	Bending; will reveal some information but will hold back any relevant or vital details.
80-89	Excellent	Breaking; will reveql pretty much everything but is still defiant on a primal level
90-99	Masterful	Broken; no shred of defiance, no sense of self worth and will tell all, even if it impacts those close to him.
100	Critical Success	Shattered; will not only tell all but will serve you either out of sheer compunction or shame

This Skill involves gaining information (or, perhaps, some other form of compliance) from a hostile and unwilling source. The Interrogator can also (with a successful Intelligence-based Skill roll) judge how to not leave marks, where someone's breaking point is, when they are close to death, etc.

INVENTOR

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**	
Source: MEN:Concentration	**Area:**	
Target:	**Duration:**	

A highly complementary Skill for Artisan, Alchemy, and Smithing, this represents a Hero's natural Abilities as well as their experience in creating new things from existing components and ideas. Inventor would be used to design a new item or concoction, while the Skills already noted would be used to actually implement the design. Note that a ShardMaster should never permit an invention that would change their game world in a way they don't want to see.

LANGUAGES

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**	
Source: MEN:Intellect	**Area:**	
Target:	**Duration:**	

A Hero gains 20% fluency in a Language from this Skill, but the ShardMaster is expected to interpret how much they can glean from a conversation based on their knowledge. At the same time, the Player is expected to roleplay according to their ability with a given language. Note that all Heroes are considered to be fluent at 60% in their native tongue. Also remember that being able to read and write is not automatic; you must buy the Literacy Skill for your Hero to be able to do that.

LEADERSHIP

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**	
Source: SOC:Charisma	**Area:**	
Target: SOC:Humility	**Duration:**	

This represents a Hero's ability to influence people to follow their commands, especially in a stressful situation or where management is needed over persuasion. It is really only useful in situations where Extras are involved; using it "against" Heroes would be counterproductive to roleplaying. However, if the Heroes were feeling particularly overwhelmed, a good Leadership roll might result in some form of morale boost (especially where supernatural forces are imposing penalties due to fear).

LIP READING

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Accuracy	**Area:**
Target: PHY:Dexterity	**Duration:**

< 50	Atrocious	You get the conversation all wrong, misinterpreting, often in an embarrassing or humorous way.
50-59	Passable	You can tell that a conversation is taking place but can't seem to make out the intent of the discussion
60-69	Fair	You can pick up one or two key phrases
70-79	Good	You get the gist of the conversation but may miss a few key points
80-89	Excellent	You get most of the conversation
90-99	Masterful	You miss nothing and can repeat word for word
100	Critical Success	You not only catch the entire discussion but you also can tell by their body language what may be truth or deception.

A very specialized and useful talent that indicates that a Hero can see people talk so precisely that they can discern their speech even when they cannot be heard. The level of success on a roll should determine how much information is gleaned in any situation.

LOCKPICKING

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Accuracy	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Concentration	**Duration:**

The classic ability to open that which someone wanted your Hero to leave closed. The ShardMaster is encouraged to use both time and difficulty ratings to challenge any would-be thief or intruder. Locks have their own Power die value to be rolled against, and the base time to pick open an average lock is 20 Minutes.

MEDITATION

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: MEN:Concentration	**Area:**
Target:	**Duration:**

< 30	Atrocious	You are distracted and cannot focus. You lose one Mental Endurance point and are more exhausted than when you started
40-49	Passable	You are calm but you don't reach your state of being, hence no appreciable effect
50-59	Fair	You have induced a relaxed state equal to a normal night's sleep (and you must meditate just as long with no extra benefit)
60-69	Good	You achieve a state of meditation and gain one endurance point for each stat per four hours
70-79	Excellent	You have inner peace and regain one endurance points for each stat per two hours
80-89	Masterful	You master the meditative state and regain one endurance point per hour of meditation
90-99	Incredible	Nothing can disturb you and your regain all of your endurance and fatigue in a single hour
100	Critical Success	Total and complete calm pervades your soul, restoring all fatigue, all endurance and you recover two damage points in each Stat

Learning the proper techniques will allow Heroes to gain some or even full rest with little time lost. Other benefits can be gained through proper Meditation, and spellcasters can particularly benefit from Meditation.

MERCHANT

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Persuasion	**Area:**
Target: SOC:Will	**Duration:**

This Skill refers to the general abilities and knowledge involved in being a successful businessman. This includes trading; bargaining; appraisal of goods, metals, and gems; basic economics; and other related knowledge and aptitudes. Where the story is better served by "getting on with it," some simple rolls against this Skill will determine the acquisition of goods at a good price.

MIMICRY

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Persuasion	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

< 30	Atrocious	A child can see you "talking into your hand"
40-49	Passable	Only a simple attempt at distracting someone with a brief word will be remotely successful
50-59	Fair	Within your same dialect, you might have a chance of convincing someone of low intellect.
60-69	Good	Your mimickry is possible but only in your native tongue.
70-79	Excellent	Can pass as almost anyone of the same or similar Race (even cross-gender)
80-89	Masterful	You can even imitate the voice of someone thoroughly famous.
90-99	Incredible	You can portray someone of another race or a remote dialect.
100	Critical Success	Your voice is simply identical and can fool anyone.

The specific talent of being able to imitate other voices. Skill in this area will greatly enhance a good disguise, especially if used in conjunction with acting.

NAVIGATION

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: MEN:Concentration	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Intellect	**Duration:**

Heroes with this Skill are knowledgeable about sea-based chart reading and finding the way from one place to another via ocean travel. They also understand a lot about reading the stars and figuring out which direction they are headed.

POLITICS

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: SOC:Charisma	**Area:**
Target: SOC:Will	**Duration:**

The skill and knowledge of politics and political structure in the land. This Skill can be useful for predicting the responses of various nations, city-states, and other political bodies to any event or major decision. To a degree, it can also be used to predict the responses of a political figure, such as a king, duke, or minister.

QUICK DRAW

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Dexterity	**Area:**
Target: PHY:Dexterity	**Duration:**

A very popular Ability among many rogues and warriors, Quick Draw represents the ability to ready a weapon, nock an arrow, or unsheathe a blade very quickly. It normally takes a full round to pull out a weapon, but Quick Draw reduces this to virtually no time at all (allowing the Hero to Attack on the same Round they draw their weapon, with no penalty). Only one-handed, melee weapons can be Quick Drawn; there will be no whipping around a maul like it was a dagger.

RESEARCH

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: MEN:Sanity	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

A vital Skill for most spellcasters (especially Practitioners) and all scholars, this entails the knowledge and experience necessary to navigate through libraries, search through stacks of books, and find the desired information.

SAILING

Cost: 5 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Stamina	**Area:**
Target: PHY:Stamina	**Duration:**

The wide world of the sea calls many, and this Skill set represents everything they might learn as a sailor. This includes rope use, sail trimming, steering, deck swabbing, tobacco chewing, etc.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:**
Source: PHY:Dexterity	**Area:**
Target: MEN:Perception	**Duration:**

This Skill represents a Hero's overall skill at such Methods as palming objects, picking pockets, and doing "magic tricks."

SLEUTHING

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Perception	Area:
Target: EMO:Intuition	Duration:

This Skill group represents a Hero's ability to search for clues, ask the right questions, and otherwise go through the process of solving a mystery or crime.

SMITHING

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: EMO:Dedication	Area:
Target: PHY:Stamina	Duration:

This Skill represents a Hero's ability to pour heart and soul into the creative process of forging weaponry, in designing and building things (mostly with metal), as well as an overall facility with metalworking tools. Realistically, this could be broken down into areas such as weaponsmithing, armorer, and blacksmithing, but for the purposes of this game, they are conveniently grouped together.

STEALTH

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: PHY:Dexterity	Area:
Target: MEN:Concentration	Duration:

This Skill entails a Hero's ability to hide, as well as move quietly and unseen. Typically, it is a contest against another Hero's ability to carefully watch the subtle changes of the landscape along with simply paying attention and avoiding distractions. Stealth is equally useful in both urban and wilderness settings.

STREETWISE

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: SOC:Persuasion	Area:
Target: SOC:Will	Duration:

Use of this Skill aids a Hero in navigating the "seedier" side of life, which includes dealing with the black market, getting information, and finding places to hide from the authorities. Use the Interaction Result Chart (modified accordingly) for specific uses of this Skill.

TACTICIAN

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Intellect	Area:
Target: EMO:Intuition	Duration:

< 30	Atrocious	All is confusion, commands are bungled, troops are demoralized. −2 Initiative rolls, -1 on attack rolls
40-49	Passable	You appear uncertain but you make the calls. No effect
50-59	Fair	+1 to attack rolls
60-69	Good	+1 to attack rolls and +1 to initative
70-79	Excellent	+1 to attack, +1 to initiative, +1 to defense
80-89	Masterful	+2 to attack, +2 to initiative, +2 to defense
90-99	Incredible	+3 to attack, +3 to initiative, +3 to defense
100	Critical Success	You achieve the critical tactical advantage subject to the interpretation of the ShardMaster

This Skill relates a Hero's knowledge of warfare and combat in terms of units and how they move, as well as what people are likely to do in conflict situations. By communicating this knowledge to those who will listen, the tactician can provide bonuses in combat to all he commands.

In any situation where a Hero can plan before a given conflict, the ShardMaster may allow them to roll a result on the above chart. This Skill provides no assistance in surprise situations… only when the Hero has the time to plan ahead and evaluate the situation.

On any Round where the Hero does nothing but evaluate an existing battle, they may make another Tactics roll. Only the Tactics-using Hero and everyone they can directly influence (through shouted commands, for example) will gain the results on the next Round.

If each side has a tactician, each rolls their Tactics as normal.

TEACHING

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: MEN:Intellect	Area:
Target: SOC:Humility	Duration:

This Skill reflects a Hero's ability to teach what they know to others, a necessary Skill in a society where "word of mouth" is how most anything is learned. A Hero can teach almost anything they are Skilled in; the nature of the Skill and the student's capacity to learn it will figure into the ShardMaster's decision as to how hard it is to teach and how long it will take.

TRACKING

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: EMO:Intuition	Area:
Target: PHY:Dexterity	Duration:

This skill involves an innate familiarity with the outdoors and its inhabitants mixed with a bit of Sleuthing ability. The tracker actually takes on a feral, prowling mentality as his mind becomes that of his prey as he anticipates their moves, choices and examines the evidence of their passage.

TRAPWORK

Cost: 10 EP	Range:
Source: PHY:Accuracy	Area:
Target: MEN:Concentration	Duration:

Heroes with this Skill are have the peculiar training and experience needed to know how to navigate past traps. More often than not, this means actually disarming the trap in question, but there may be occasions where the ShardMaster requires the Skill be used with PHY:Dexterity instead, whereby the Hero is getting past the trap rather than deactivating it. Like locks, traps will often be listed with a Difficulty Rating for disarming them, and it usually takes a minimum of 20 Minutes.

VENTRILOQUISM

Cost: 5 EP	Range:
Source: SOC:Persuasion	Area:
Target: MEN:Perception	Duration:

Using odd techniques of vocal misdirection, a Hero can develop the ability to "throw their voice." This can be used to no end of mischief.

CURRENCY

Although different Realms may have their own unique systems of commerce, the foundation of the economy of Core for most Realms is based on the Fragments of the Stone that are found throughout the world. These Fragments are often forged into coins or other uniform units, although some types of Fragments defy such convenient forms. For example, Crimson Vile and Crystal Blue, when used as currency, will be contained within tiny (usually crystal) vials.

Different Realms have different quantities of the Fragments, which will dramatically affect their relative value. One Realm may prize White Silver as one of the most precious of all metals, while another will use White Silver coins as commonly as we use a dollar bill. It is this ebb-and-flow of the frequency and rarity of Elemental Fragments that drives the internal economies of the various Realms, which is a very important - even crucial - element in the great scheme of things.

STARTING FUNDS

If your ShardMaster has decided to assign specific coinage to each Hero, begin with the base amount given according to the Campaign Level.

Off the Farm	300 Coins
Early Career	1,000 Coins
Heroic	4,000 Coins
Epic	10,000 Coins

Very often, larger "Ten-Coin" pieces will be cut from the Vertices Fragments for easier exchange. The prices for weapons and armor are expressed in single Coin values, while much of the miscellaneous Gear is expressed in either Coins (c) or Ten-Coins (tc).

Remember, though, that each Realm Book will have its own money systems, and you will likely need to convert your Hero's coins accordingly. This is why the "eyeball" method explained first is often the better choice for equipping a Hero.

EXCHANGE RATES

The following chart provides a guideline to the value of the Elemental Fragments, assuming an absolutely equal distribution of each type of Fragment within a Realm. In practice, however, these values depend highly on rarity, economic conditions and many other factors. It is far more likely that only a small number of the Vertices of Consequence Fragments will be used as the "Single Coin" currency in a given Realm, while other Fragments may be nearly priceless or even unheard of. The values are based upon a coin-sized amount of the Fragment indicated:

Vertices of Consequence	Element	Value
Aurite	Faith	1c
Dreadstone	Fear	1c
Crimson Vile	Hate	1c
White Silver	Honor	1c
Sungold	Light	1c
Nightstone	Darkness	1c
Touchstone	Truth	1c
Cloakstone	Deception	1c
Infernite	Fire	1c
Chrysaris	Air	1c
Emerond	Earth	1c
Crystal Blue	Water	1c
Soulstone	Spirit	1c
Bloodgold	Pride	1c
Oakheart	Life	1c
Heartstone	Love	1c
Celestial Cross	**Element**	**Value**
Mandorite	Law	10c
Viscerium	Creativity	10c
Glowstone	Energy	10c
Grey Diamond	Matter	10c
Primal Order	**Element**	**Value**
Geomecron	Order	100c
Maelstrome	Chaos	100c
Absolite	Reality	1,000c
Void	Unreality	1,000c
Core	**Element**	**Value**
Chronum	Time	10,000c

Table 10 - Shard Fragment Chart

ARSENAL

There is a constant struggle for survival in the world so the inhabitants have turned to the forging of weaponry to help them in their battles within their Realms and between them.

ShardMasters may choose to assign the proper types of equipment for each Avatar, or they may be allowed to "shop" from the following lists. Pricing is listed as an example and are highly subject to the Realms own independent economies.

Weapons are defined by the following:

Name (Structure/Tolerance, Damage Type, Range, Modifiers, Notes)

EXAMPLE:

Dagger (6/5, DAM: 1d Piercing, RANGE: 10m, MOD: PHY:Dexterity-1, NOTE: Throw Attack)

or more concisely:

Dagger (6/5, 1dP, 10m, PHY:Dex-1, Throw Attack)

DEFINITIONS:

Structure: This value indicates the Power Die that is the basis for the weapons Structural Capacity… For example, a knife is a fairly simple weapon so it is only a d6… however a Ballista could be as high as a d20.

Tolerance: This is the amount of Damage that can be absorbed before actual Damage is done to the items Structure, so a blade with a Structural of 6 and a Tolerance of 5 would require 11 points of damage to be destroyed.

Damage: This is the base Damage and Damage Type of the weapon that is done by default for this Weapon. Damage is listed by the number of the wielder's Power Dice that should be rolled to compute damage and what type of Damage in the form: 1d Piercing or 1dP: Possible Damage Types include: Piercing(P), Cutting(C) and Bludgeon(B).

Range: This indicates the base Range that this item can be used, thrown, fired, etc.

Modifiers: These indicate which SubStats receive modifiers during the use of this item, due to the item being very heavy, unwieldy, or conversely easier to use, lighter, etc. These modifiers apply to the wielder only and are not cumulative with any special attacks with this weapon.

Notes: These are some special circumstances for some of these items. Some of the most common are:

AP = "Armor Piercing" indicates that it is hardened and designed to puncture armor.
RL = "Reload," indicates that the wielder must spend one Fatigue preparing to use this weapon
2H = 2-Handed Weapon; except in extreme cases, the weapon requires both hands to wield.
TH = This weapon can be Thrown, doing the appropriate damage at the range indicated.

WEAPONS LIST

Swords	S/T	Damage	Range	Mod	Notes
Broadsword	8/6	1d C			
Claymore	10/7	2d C		PHY:Dex –1	2H
Dagger/Dirk	4/4	1d P			
Estoc	8/7	1d P		PHY:Str+3	AP
Foil	4/1	½d P			
Great Sword	12/8	2d C / 1d B		PHY:Dex -2	2H
Hand Axe	4/3	1d C			
Longsword	8/4	1d C			
Rapier	6/1	1d P			
Saber	6/2	1d C			
Short Sword	6/5	1d C			

Axes/Hammers	S/T	Damage	Range	Mod	Notes
Battle Axe	8/7	1d C			
Dwarven Axe	10/9	2d C			2H
Great Axe	10/8	2d C / 1d B		PHY:Dex-2	2H
Great Mace	8/6	1d P / 1d B		PHY:Strength +1	2H
Hammer	8/7	1d B			
Hand Axe	6/4	1dC			
Mace	6/6	1d B			
Maul	10/9	2d B		PHY:Dex –1	2H
Ogre Axe	12/7	2d C / 2d B		PHY:Dex-4	2H
War Club	8/3	2d B		PHY:Dex-1	
War Hammer	10/9	2d B (1d P)		PHY:Dex-2	2H

Missile	S/T	Damage	Range	Mod	Notes
Arbalest	20/15	3d B / 2d P	1000m		
Bow	4/1	1d P	100m		RL:2H
Crossbow	6/2	1d P	100m		RL
Heavy Crossbow	8/3	2d P	200m	PHY:Dex-1	RL:2H
Longbow	6/1	1d P	200m		RL:2H
Sling	3/0	1d B	50m		
Slingshot	3/1	1d B	50m		RL
Staff Sling	4/2	2d B	100m		RL:2H
Throwing Axe	6/5	1d C	20m		
Whip	3/1	*	4m		

Polearm	S/T	Damage	Range	Mod	Notes
Cavalry Lance	8/6	2d P			2h
Flail	8/5	1dB / 1dP			
Great Flail	10/7	2dB / 1dP		PHY:Str +2	2H
Halberd	12/9	2d C / 1d P		PHY:Dex-2	2H
Harpoon	6/3	2d P	10m		2H
Javelin	4/2	1d P	50m		
Morning Star	8/6	1d B / 1d P			
Spear	4/3	1d P	30m		

Brawling	S/T	Damage	Range	Mod	Notes
Chair Leg	3/1	1d B			
Club	6/3	1d B			
Giant Club	12/9	4d B		PHY:Dex-4	2H
Knife	4/4	1d P			
Pitch Fork	3/2	1d P			2H
Sap	3/3	1d B			
Scythe	3/2	1d C			2H
Slaver's Whip	4/1	1d C	2m		
Sledgehammer	6/4	2d B		PHY:Dex-1	2H
Stein/Beer Mug	3/0	1d B			
Wood Axe	3/2	1d C			

Table 11 - Weapon Listings Chart

BROADSWORD

Cost: 550 Coins	**S/T:** 8/6
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

Probably the single-most common forged weapon in all of Core (with the possible exception of the Dagger). An easy length and weight to handle, and perfect for the warrior who wants to carry and use a shield as well.

CLAYMORE

Cost: 750 Coins	**S/T:** 10/7
Damage: 2dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity-1, 2-Handed

This unwieldy weapon delivers a powerful stroke when placed in the right hands. Super extended guards protect the hands and allow for vigorous parrying and blocking..

DAGGER

Cost: 50 Coins	**S/T:** 4/4
Damage: 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

As much a utility tool and eating utensil as a weapon, the Dagger is simply one of those things that almost no self-respecting Hero would be found without. Particularly skilled Heroes know how to use a Dagger to find holes in their opponent's armor, and a balanced Dagger can be Thrown for good effect as well.

ESTOC

Cost: 750 Coins	**S/T:** 8/7
Damage: 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:** PHY:Strength + 3, Armor Piercing
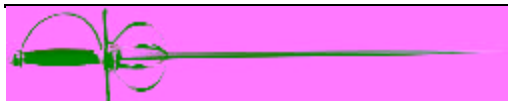
This triangular-bladed weapon is specifically designed to pierce steel armor. With no cutting edges, the Estoc is hardly a dueling weapon as it can only block, parry and bludgeon, but it is fearsome when used for its proper purpose.

FOIL

Cost: 1,500 Coins	**S/T:** 4/1
Damage: ½dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

The elegant, slim blade of the Foil may be flimsy but it can also be deadly. These make for terrible weapons since they lack durability and most warriors that like to stay alive will upgrade to a Rapier, however the noble class still favors a Foil and may even use them in combat. Foils rarely come in a mundane style so they can be very expensive

GREAT SWORD

Cost: 900 Coins	**S/T:** 12/8
Damage: 2dC 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity – 2, 2-Handed

Of all the "great" weapons, this one is the most graceful and efficient of them all. Though it takes a strong warrior to wield a blade that is longer than most men are tall, the value of the Great Sword cannot be denied.

LONGSWORD

Cost: 550 Coins	**S/T:** 8/4
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

This sword is favored by the nobles and military alike. It has an extended length for more defensive capabilities and normally is designed with intricate handles to lend a sense of professional style to the Warrior.

RAPIER

Cost: 650 Coins	**S/T:** 6/1
Damage: 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

A relatively recent development in the world of Core, these slim, lightweight blades are best suited to thrusting and quick-slash attacks. Wielders of such weapons tend to be highly skilled (or dead), and they focus more on piercing or getting past an opponent's armor instead of hacking through it.

SABER

Cost: 450 Coins	**S/T:** 6/2
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

The standard, curved weapon of the lower crust of society, the Saber has become feared by many. Its curved blade focuses on leaving large gashes in the enemy with little attention to the presumably more "dignified" damage caused by the straight blades.

SHORT SWORD

Cost: 400 Coins	**S/T:** 6/5
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

Compact, lightweight, and deathly efficient in the right hands, These are common weapons in the city streets.

AXES AND HAMMERS

BATTLE AXE

Cost: 600 Coins		**S/T:** 8/7
Damage: 2dC		**Range:**
Power Die: d8		**Modifiers:**

This is either the single or double-bladed axe that can be particularly effective at smashing through an opponent's armor. However, Battle Axes tend to be heavy and unwieldy, which makes them less popular than most swords.

DWARVEN AXE

Cost: 2,100 Coins		**S/T:** 10/9
Damage: 2dC		**Range:**
Power Die: d10		**Modifiers:** 2-Handed*
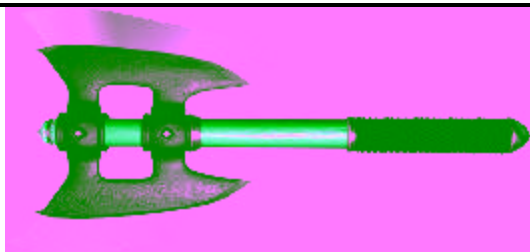
The finely wrought Dwarven Axe is the pinnacle of its craft. From true-honed edges to the strength of its haft to its overall balance, this is a masterful weapon for a true master. When wielded by a Dwarf or an AxeMaster with the proper specialization, this can be used as a one-handed weapon.

GREAT AXE

Cost: 950 Coins		**S/T:** 10/8
Damage: 2dC 1dB		**Range:**
Power Die: 10		**Modifiers:** PHY:Dex −2
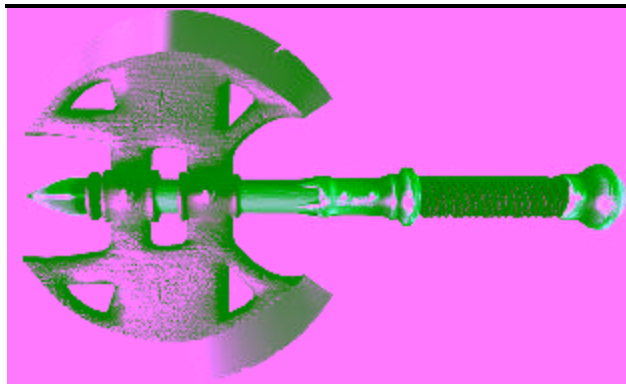
The massive great axe can only be used by a few warriors. This enormous, dual-bladed weapon is useful for sweeping attacks and is heavy enough to be used for outright bludgeoning as well. The fear of being struck by this gargantuan weapon is almost as powerful as its stroke.

GREAT MACE

Cost: 650 Coins		**S/T:** 8/6
Damage: 1dP 1dB		**Range:**
Power Die: d8		**Modifiers:** PHY:Strength + 1, 2-Handed
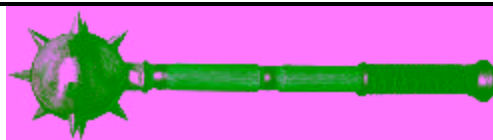
The great mace is a fearsome weapon to encounter on the battlefield. Large spikes protrude from the globed, metal end mounted on a strong oakheart handle with leather bindings on the grip. A central metal core terminates in a bob at the handle end, providing good balance and additional weight.

HAMMER

Cost: 550 Coins		**S/T:** 8/7
Damage: 1dB		**Range:**
Power Die: d8		**Modifiers:**

This is no "tool," but a weapon designed to smash through armor and skulls. Though heavy and a tad unwieldy, War Hammers are nonetheless very popular for their sheer power and shock value.

HAND AXE

Cost: 75 Coins		**S/T:** 6/4
Damage: 1dC		**Range:**
Power Die: D6		**Modifiers:**

Small and lightweight, this compact axe is traditionally thrown at the target. A spiked back to the blade ensures that regardless of how it's thrown, the Target will either be cut or pierced.

MACE

Cost: 400 Coins		**S/T:** 6/6
Damage: 1dB		**Range:**
Power Die: D6		**Modifiers:**

Where the Sword dances, the Mace merely stomps about. A brutal hunk of metal (often spiked or flanged) sets atop a wooden or metal shaft, and it is used to bash things.

MAUL

Cost: 750 Coins	**S/T:** 10/9
Damage: 2dB	**Range:**
Power Die: D10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity –1, 2-Handed

Yet another workman's tool appropriated for the battlefield, this ponderous and gargantuan two-handed hammer can turn an opponent's skull into mush.

OGRE AXE

Cost: 1,050 Coins	**S/T:** 12/7
Damage: 2dC 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity –4, 2-Handed
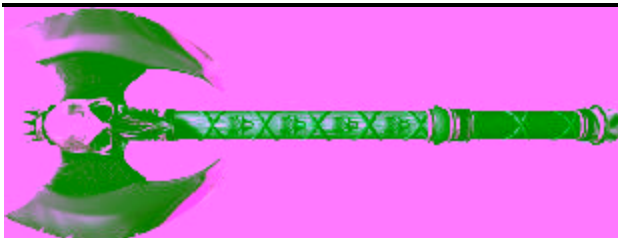
The largest of the bladed axes, the Ogre axe dwarfs even the Great Axe due to it's massive, carved head, and an embossed haft bound by metal rings. Too large to properly show here, this axe can only be wielded by giant class creatures.

WAR CLUB

Cost: 150 Coins	**S/T:** 8/3
Damage: 2dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -1

Some cultures do not have the luxury of forged metals to create weapons from. Using hard wood and stone, they can fashion something as effective as a War Club and stand against more well-equipped foes with surprising ability.

WARHAMMER

Cost: 950 Coins	**S/T:** 10/9
Damage: 2dB (1dP)	**Range:**
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity –2, 2-Handed
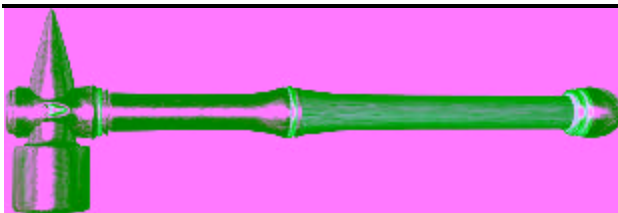
This military issue hammer is designed specifically for the purpose of cleaving the helms and armor from the bodies of opponents. The hammer can be alternated between a piercing spike point or the blunt bludgeoning tip.
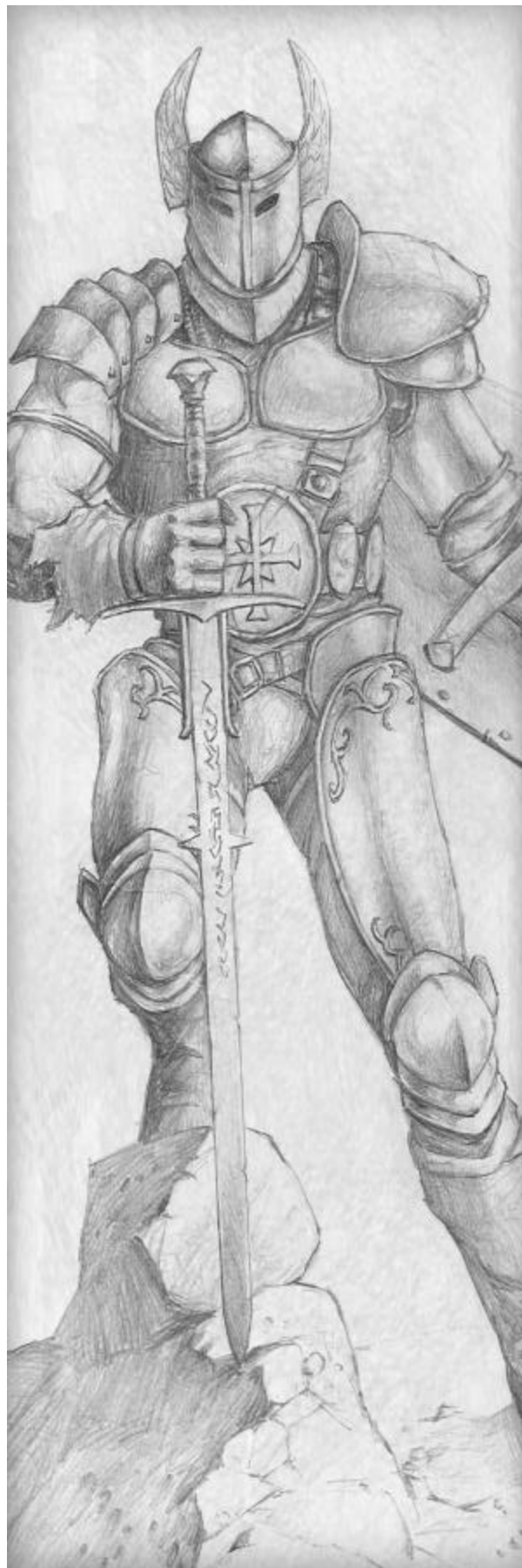
Figure 7 - Human Knight

MISSILE WEAPONS

ARBALEST

Cost: 3,000 Coins	**S/T:** 20/15
Damage: 3dB 2dP	**Range:** 1000m
Power Die: d20	**Modifiers:**

A particularly large and heavy crossbow that is designed to be mounted on castle ramparts or on the sides of wagons and ships. However, very large and/or strong Heroes have been known to carry one around and use them in the same fashion that normal warriors use a regular crossbow. When not used like this (as when mounted on a castle wall), a claw-and-pulley system is usually employed so that a person with a PHY:Strength of 4 can reload one in 2 full Rounds.

BOW

Cost: 500 Coins	**S/T:** 4/1
Damage: 1dP	**Range:** 100m
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:** Reload, 2-Handed
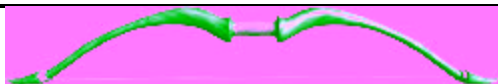
The smallest in the family of bows, this one is favored by most hunters and the average warrior. The bow is generally made from cured, flexible wood with cloth or leather-bound grips.

CROSSBOW

Cost: 850 Coins	**S/T:** 6/2
Damage: 1dP	**Range:** 100m
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:** Reload

Similar in every respect save size to the Heavy Crossbow, this is standard fare for the average warrior. The crossbow benefits from the ability to be used single-handedly once it is loaded. The loading time is also shorter than the Heavy Crossbow.

HEAVY CROSSBOW

Cost: 1,100 Coins	**S/T:** 8/3
Damage: 2dP	**Range:** 200m
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity −1, Reload II, 2-Handed
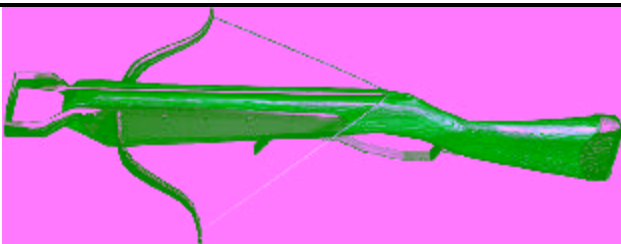
Large, accurate, and deadly, the Heavy Crossbow is favored by many stronger warriors who don't wish to deal with the mobility problems caused by a Longbow or Heavy Longbow.

LONGBOW

Cost: 850 Coins	**S/T:** 6/1
Damage: 1dP	**Range:** 200m
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:** Reload, 2-Handed

One of the most famous ranged weapons in all the world, the development of the Longbow changed the face of warfare forever. Longbow archers are worth their weight in gold, but they need some protecting on the battlefield when they are firing.

SLING

Cost: 250 Coins	**S/T:** 3/0
Damage: 1dB	**Range:** 50m
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:** Reload

Used to hurl stones at high velocities, Slings have the advantage of being able to utilize one of the most common sources of ammunition in the world. Slings also have an advantage in that the user's PHY:Dexterity is used in the attack rather than PHY:Strength.

SLINGSHOT

Cost: 600 Coins	**S/T:** 3/1
Damage: 1dB	**Range:** 50m
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:** Reload, 2-Handed

An extremely clever variation on the classic Sling that uses elastic materials instead of the usual leather, thus enabling the user to employ a "pull back and aim" motion rather than the "swing around and sling" motion normally required.

STAFF SLING

Cost: 300 Coins	**S/T:** 4/2
Damage: 2dB	**Range:** 100m
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:** Reload, 2-Handed

Another variant on the Sling, this one entails a sling-like apparatus placed on one end of a Staff (the user should determine if they want it to be a Light Staff, Quarterstaff, or Heavy Staff, and they will need to pay the appropriate cost for that as well). Like the Sling, the user's PHY:Dexterity is used in the attack for this weapon.

THROWING AXE

Cost: 400 Coins	**S/T:** 6/5
Damage: 1dC	**Range:** 20m
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

Not quite as large or imposing as a Battle Axe, Hand Axes are more easily carried and can be effective throwing weapons.

WHIP

Cost: 200 Coins	**S/T:** 3/1
Damage: Grapple	**Range:** 4m
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:**

A long, treated piece of leather, tapered at the end and requiring some true skill to make the best use of it as a weapon. Note that whips can be used to actually Grab opponents or items as well as strike for Damage.

POLEARM

CAVALRY LANCE

Cost: 450 Coins	**S/T:** 8/6
Damage: 2dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:** 2-Handed

This is a shorter, "common soldier" version of the Knight's Lance, designed more for warfare than for jousting. As a mounted weapon, it is truly superb. However, when used on foot, it is highly unwieldy. Lances are most effective when the Mounted Charge Maneuver is used.

FLAIL

Cost: 550 Coins	**S/T:** 8/5
Damage: 1dB 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

As shields have become more and more popular, it was only natural that someone would come up with a weapon that is particularly effective at getting past them. Essentially a heavy piece of metal (possibly with flanges or spikes) attached to a handle by way of a chain, the Flail can be whipped around or swung overhead to bypass shields and be very hard to block.

GREAT FLAIL

Cost: 850 Coins	**S/T:** 10/7
Damage: 2dB 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Strength + 2, 2-Handed
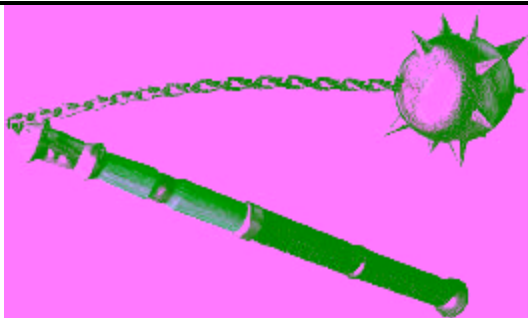
This is the larger version of the standard flail with more length to the shaft and the ability to strike out higher and farther. The length of the haft and the increased velocity obtained by the longer swing increases the damage, but requires time to reset.

HALBERD

Cost: 700 Coins	**S/T:** 12/9
Damage: 2dC (1dP)	**Range:**
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity −2, 2-Handed

Essentially a "short Pole Arm," the reach and the power of the Halberd still makes it a favored choice amongst those who prefer two-handed weapons. A long pole with a hook-and-axe blade on one end and a spike on the other, Halberds are particularly favored as guard weapons. They are easier to master by those who are not as strong as the warriors who lean towards the bladed weapons.

HARPOON

Cost: 350 Coins	**S/T:** 6/3
Damage: 2dP	**Range:** 10m
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

This particular version of the Spear is found almost exclusively on a ship, particular one that is used for hunting whales or other large sea creatures. The end opposite the spearhead is a loop, through which a rope is normally tied.

JAVELIN

Cost: 300 Coins	**S/T:** 4/2
Damage: 1dP	**Range:** 50m
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

Somewhat shorter than a Spear, Javelins can be wielded one-handed and thrown easily. They are also deadly in the hands of someone skilled enough to use them to probe past an opponent's armor.

MORNING STAR

Cost: 650 Coins	**S/T:** 8/6
Damage: 1dB 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

The Morning Star lies between the one-handed and two-handed members of its family of weapons, the flails.

SPEAR

Cost: 400 Coins	**S/T:** 4/3
Damage: 1dP	**Range:** 30m
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

One of the oldest weapons known in the world, a long stick with a sharp end. It can be thrown, used with or without a shield, and in the right hands is quite effective for getting past bothersome armor.

BRAWLING

CHAIR LEG

Cost: 1 Coins	**S/T:** 3/1
Damage: 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:**

A true "weapon of opportunity" to be found in just about any barroom brawl. Cost: Whatever the barkeep charges

CLUB

Cost: 1 Coins	**S/T:** 6/3
Damage: 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

A Club is pretty much a really hefty, well-carved Stick that is meant to whack people.

GIANT CLUB

Cost: 150 Coins	**S/T:** 12/9
Damage: 4dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity –4, 2-Handed

Essentially, this is a club that is made for really, really big people.

KNIFE

Cost: 5 Coins	**S/T:** 4/4
Damage: 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

This is truly a household item that can come into play during any barroom brawl… however it does elevate the intensity a bit.

PITCH FORK

Cost: 100 Coins	**S/T:** 3/2
Damage: 1dP	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:** 2-Handed

Awkward and unwieldy, but an angry farmer can kill someone quite dead with one of these if they are of a mind to.

SAP

Cost: 15 Coins	**S/T:** 3/3
Damage: 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:**

This is not a weapon meant for all-out combat. Rather, thugs are fond of using one of these to sneak up on someone and knock them out cold. Saps are often a flexible piece of leather with a heavy weight sewn or tied into one end.

SCYTHE

Cost: 250 Coins	**S/T:** 3/2
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:** 2-Handed

This is another example of a farming tool that can, if the need arises, be called into service as a weapon.

SLAVER'S WHIP

Cost: 350 Coins	**S/T:** 4/1
Damage: 1dC	**Range:** 2m
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

Heavier and more vicious than the typical Whip, the Slaver's Whip has razor-edged blades embedded in its striking tips on multiple strands. This whip's strands are too short to Grapple but in some cases can tangle enough to accomplish this.

SLEDGEHAMMER

Cost: 150 Coins	**S/T:** 6/4
Damage: 2dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity –1, 2-Handed

Using one of these as a weapon is only slightly easier than trying to smack someone with a cow, but if a blow is landed, it will most definitely hurt.

STEIN / BEER MUG

Cost: 5 Coins	**S/T:** 3/0
Damage: 1dB	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:**

Some people like to drink from very stout, formidable mugs. Here are the attributes for one in case your Hero needs to use it in a fight. Though there are no unskilled penalties, Cost: A really good pint of ale (because cheap ale doesn't come in a good mug)

WOOD AXE

Cost: 200 Coins	**S/T:** 3/2
Damage: 1dC	**Range:**
Power Die: d3	**Modifiers:**

This is literally the "garden variety" axe that is most commonly found on a farm or among foresters. As with the Hammer, it can become a decent weapon in the hands of one who knows how to use it.

ARMORY

Medieval combat is not an elegant thing, people fight, people get wounded, and people get killed. Armor was an invention to not only preserve the Ruler's investment in his loyal subjects, but became an element of status and style as well.

Armor is defined by the following:

Name (Structure/Tolerance, Coverage, Modifiers, Notes)

EXAMPLE:

Chain Hauberk (20/12, COV: T, MOD: PHY:Stamina-2, NOTE: CUT)

or more concisely:

Chain Hauberk (20/12, T, PHY:Sta-2, CUT)

DEFINITIONS:

Structure: This value indicates the Power Die that is the basis for the armor's structural capacity (the amount of damage it can sustain).

Tolerance: This is the amount of Damage that can be absorbed per Round before actual Damage is done to the item.

Coverage: This defines what portions of the body this armor is designed to cover. We identify each body part as follows (although the GM can add others):

Head	**H**
Arms	**A**
Legs	**L**
Torso	**T**

A complete coverage would be shown as **HALT** with a more precise example showing percent coverage would be H(20)A(80)L(80)T(80)

Modifiers: These indicate which SubStats receive modifiers during the use of this item, due to the item being very heavy, unwieldy, or conversely easier to use, lighter, etc. These modifiers apply to the wielder only and are not cumulative with any special attacks with this weapon.

Notes: There are some special circumstances for some of these items that can be touched on in this section of the item description. Some of the most common are:

CUT = Any bludgeon damage that exceeds the Tolerance can pass through Cutting Damage since the materials of the Armor (such as chain mail) will dig into the flesh on an impact of this magnitude.

NH = The Hero Needs Help to dress and undress this suit of armor, so combat readiness will be affected if the Hero is not "set for battle"

ARMOR LISTING

Armor	S/T	Cover	Mod	Notes	Cost
Hide Armor	4/1	ALT			350c
Leather Cuirie	6/3	AT			800c
Studded Cuirie	6/4	AT			1,200c
Scale Hauberk	10/7	AT	PHY:Dex-1		3,000c
Scale (Full)	10/7	ALT	PHY:Dex-2		3,600c
Chain Hauberk	12/10	AT	PHY:Dex-2	CUT	5,000c
Chain (Full)	12/10	ALT	PHY:Dex-3	CUT	6,250c
Field Plate Cuirass	20/16	AT	PHY:Dex-4	NH	25,000c
Field Plate (Full)	20/16	ALT	PHY:Dex-5	NH	33,000c
Plate of Proof (Cuirass)	20/20	AT	PHY:Dex-4	NH	42,000c
Ceremonial Plate	12/8	ALT	PHY:Dex-6	NH	50,000c

Helms	S/T	Cover	Mod	Notes	
Padded Hood	4/1	H			10c
Basinet	6/3	H			300c
Chain Coif	6/5	H			500c
Closed Helm	6/4	H	PHY:Acc –1		400c
Crusader Heaume	8/8	H			1,800c
Full Helm	8/4	H			500c
Great Helm	10/6	H			2,600c
Horned Helm	8/6	H			800c
Leather Helm	6/2	H			100c
Pot Helm	4/3	H			200c
Visored Helm	8/4	H	PHY:Acc-1		1,200c

Shields	S/T	Cover	Mod	Notes	Cost
Hand Shield	4/2		PHY:Dex+1		50c
Small Wooden Shield	6/3	T			250c
Small Metal Shield	6/5	T			600c
Heater Shield	10/8	T	PHY:Dex-1		1,200c
Tower Shield	12/10	LT	PHY:Dex-3		2,000c

Table 12 - Armor Listing Chart

ARMOR

HIDE ARMOR

Cost: 350 Coins	**S/T:** 4/1	
Coverage: ALT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**	

The cheapest and most make-shift of all armor types, this style represents piling on a load of quilted cloth, animal hides, or a combination of both. Unfortunately, such armor also offers only minimal protection, barely blunting the damage of even a dagger.

LEATHER CUIRIE

Cost: 800 Coins	**S/T:** 6/3	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**	

This is a front and back chest "shell" crafted from boiled and treated leather. Flexible and lightweight, it offers some protection while imposing little hindrance.

STUDDED CUIRIE

Cost: 1,200 Coins	**S/T:** 6/4	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**	

This improvement to a standard Cuirie has metal studs and additional stitching to reduce the possibility of blades simply slicing through the shell.

SCALE MAIL HAUBERK

Cost: 3,000 Coins	**S/T:** 10/7	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -1	

Cloth and leather sections with metal plates bolted in overlapping patterns all over the body, much like the scales of a lizard (or a dragon). This is often the best level of armor that a mere militiaman can hope to wear without being dangerously hindered.

SCALE MAIL (FULL)

Cost: 3,600 Coins	**S/T:** 10/7	
Coverage: ALT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -2	

This is a full suit of Scale Mail that limits movement but offers full body protection.

CHAINMAIL HAUBERK

Cost: 5,000 Coins	**S/T:** 12/10	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:** CUT	
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -2	

Hundreds upon hundreds of metal rings interlocked into a flexible mesh of steel, worn like a coat (usually over light cloth or leather). This is one of the most popular styles of armor in many Realms.

CHAINMAIL (FULL)

Cost: 6,250 Coins	**S/T:** 12/10	
Coverage: ALT	**Notes:**	
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -3	

A longer coat, with chain-over-leather arm and leg guards. At this stage, mobility is most certainly being sacrificed for protection.

FIELD PLATE CUIRASS

Cost: 25,000 Coins	**S/T:** 20/16	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:** NH	
Power Die: d20	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -4	

Articulated metal plates, linked over a combination of chain and leather under-sections. This is the version of plate that is still practical for military campaigns.

FIELD PLATE (FULL)

Cost: 33,000 Coins	**S/T:** 20/16	
Coverage: ALT	**Notes:** NH	
Power Die: d20	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -5	

The head-to-toe version most commonly seen on knights.

PLATE OF PROOF (CUIRASS)

Cost: 42,000 Coins	**S/T:** 20/20	
Coverage: AT	**Notes:** NH	
Power Die: d20	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -4	

This hardened steel Cuirass is forged specifically to repel missile fire. Due to the nature of the forging and folding process, it is impractical to make anything but the Cuirass but provide excellent protection.

CEREMONIAL PLATE

Cost: 50,000 Coins	**S/T:** 12/8	
Coverage: ALT	**Notes:** NH	
Power Die: d12	**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -6	

This is the armor classically worn by knights for ceremonial purposes, during jousts, tournaments, and on the field of large-scale, open ground battles. It is grotesquely expensive and requires many months to create for an individual, because each metal section must be carefully molded to the wearer. Plate Armor must be bolted into place, making it highly impractical for anything but situations where much preparation is possible.
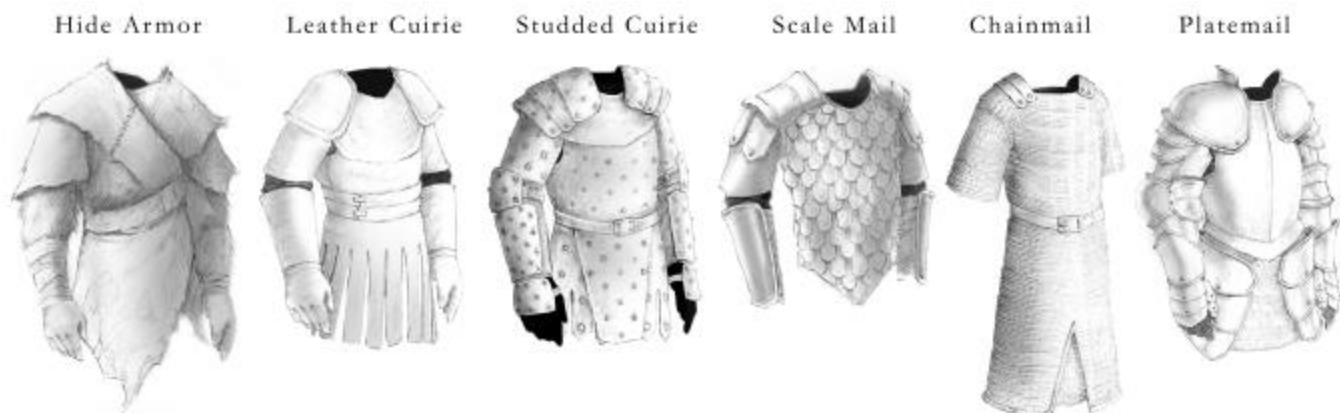
Figure 8 - Armor Types

HELMETS

Helmets have the advantage of increasing the overall Coverage of the armor worn, but they also restrict the wearer in some ways, generally related to vision.

BASINET

Cost: 300 Coins	**S/T:** 6/3
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

This open-faced metal helm is the standard fare of the conscripted soldier. Quick to produce and easy to maintain, this helm provides protection to the skull without impeding the vision of the wearer..

CHAIN COIF

Cost: 500 Coins	**S/T:** 6/5
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

This chainmail "sack" drapes over the head and provides a relatively strong barrier, especially to missile weapons and piercing attacks as the links will bunch up around any penetrating weapon and absorb the inertia of the attack.

CLOSED HELM

Cost: 400 Coins	**S/T:** 6/4
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:** PHY:Accuracy -1

This is a standard tourney helm used less frequently in combat because of the limited view through the helm, but is a popular choice for jousts and other tourney combat.

CRUSADER HEAUME

Cost: 1,800 Coins	**S/T:** 8/8
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

The crusader helm covers the majority of the face with a descending nose guard and plates wrapping around the cheek. combined with the same forging qualities of Armor of Proof, specifically designed to protect from piercing damage.

FULL HELM

Cost: 600 Coins	**S/T:** 8/4
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

This helm provides maximum coverage with the most visibility and respiration and is the standard choice of the noble's retinue in combat.

GREAT HELM

Cost: 2,600 Coins	**S/T:** 10/6
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d10	**Modifiers:**

Functional in every way, and forged to be the strongest steel, the Great Helm costs a pretty penny but offers some of the best protection known.

HORNED HELM

Cost: 800 Coins	**S/T:** 8/6
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:**

This Full Helm is augmented with ornamented horns rising up from either side. Although this provides a disadvantage in deflecting blows, it is ominous to an opponent..

LEATHER HELM

Cost: 100 Coins	**S/T:** 6/2
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d6	**Modifiers:**

This lightweight helm is commonly found with squires our tourney yards and is more effective as a practice helm than for any combat scenarios.

PADDED HOOD

Cost: 10 Coins	**S/T:** 4/1
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

This cloth protector is not very useful but happens to be quite common, offering a bit of obscuring of the features without looking too conspicuous and has extra padding and stitching to provide that small bit of extra protection when sneaking around.

POT HELM

Cost: 200 Coins	**S/T:** 4/3
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d4	**Modifiers:**

This is basically a metal cap with a noseguard hanging down for limited protection of the front of the face. Inexpensive to produce, it's a mainstay for the army on a budget.

VISORED HELM

Cost: 1,200 Coins	**S/T:** 8/4
Coverage: H	**Notes:**
Power Die: d8	**Modifiers:** PHY:Accuracy –1 (with visor down)

This helm offers the maximum in protection while enabling the warrior to life the visor for unlimited vision. The perfect blend of form and function, this helm is a certain favorite and is decorated and stylized for each noble class.

Figure 9 - Helmet Types

SHIELDS

Shields are very popular and effective means of providing a Hero with extra protection. Using a shield makes it much more difficult to land a blow or hit with a ranged weapon. However, lugging a shield around can also hinder a Hero, so the trade-off must be considered when you look at adding a shield to your Hero.

Shields can be made of either wood or metal; the latter is clearly more sturdy, but also more expensive and heavy, normally requiring a beast of burden for travelling. Shields are rated in three terms:

HAND SHIELD

Cost: 50 Coins		**S/T:** 4/2	
Coverage:		**Notes:**	
Power Die: d4		**Modifiers:** PHY:Dex +1	

This is either a forearm-strapped buckler or a small hand-held disk, about the size of a decent pot lid normally used with dueling or just a low-end form of protection.

SMALL WOODEN SHIELD

Cost: 250 Coins		**S/T:** 6/3	
Coverage: T		**Notes:**	
Power Die: d6		**Modifiers:**	

This is the most common shield found on a battlefield. Strapped to a forearm and gripped by a handle, it can cover the entire torso of an average man or woman.

SMALL METAL SHIELD

Cost: 600 Coins		**S/T:** 6/5	
Coverage: T		**Notes:**	
Power Die: d6		**Modifiers:**	

This small shield provides an extra level of protection without over-burdening the common infantryman.

HEATER SHIELD

Cost: 1,200 Coins		**S/T:** 10/8	
Coverage: T		**Notes:**	
Power Die: d10		**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -1	

This shield is the typical sized shield for knightly combat and generally bore the coat of arms of the Lord.

TOWER SHIELD

Cost: 2,000 Coins		**S/T:** 12/10	
Coverage: LT		**Notes:**	
Power Die: d12		**Modifiers:** PHY:Dexterity -2	

This is the large "kite" or "tower" shield that an average man can get down behind and almost completely hide if desired. Cost: 200 Coins

Figure 10 - Shielded Warrior

OTHER GEAR

The following lists provide items and services common to many Realms in Core. Prices are listed in terms of Coins (c) or Ten-Coins (tc).

Gear	Price	Notes
Amulet, Exquisite	50+ tc	Gold with jewels
Amulet, Fine	5+ tc	Silver with gems
Amulet, Plain	5 c	Iron, copper, e tc.
Anvil, Large	200 c	Weighs 120kg
Anvil, Small	100 c	Weighs 60kg
Arrow (Light or Med)	2 c	
Arrow (Longbow)	3 c	
Backpack, Framed	25 c	200kg
Backpack, Large	16 c	80kg
Backpack, Small	12 c	50kg
Barrel, Small	8 c	7 Gallons
Barrel, Large	15 c	15 Gallons
Barrel, Very Large	25 c	30 Gallons
Bedroll, Light	5 c	
Bedroll, Heavy	10 c	
Bell	3 c	
Bolt (Crossbow)	3 c	
Book, Large	100+c	
Book, Small	50+c	
Boots, Hard	15 c	
Boots, Soft	8 c	
Bottle, Large	5 c	2 Gallons
Bottle, Small	3 c	½ Gallon
Brazier	20 c	"Fire-Holder"
Bucket	4 c	2 Gallons
Cable (steel)	100 tc	10m, hold 8000kg
Candle	1 c	Light up to 4m, 1 Hour
Chalk (10 Pieces)	2 c	
Chest, Large	30 c	200kg
Chest, Small	20 c	75kg
Chest, Tiny	25 c	40kg
Climbing Gear	30 c	Pitons, Spikes, e tc
Clothes, Fine	100+c	
Clothes, Good Travel	50 c	
Clothes, Greater Noble	100+ tc	
Clothes, Lesser Noble	50+ tc	
Clothes, Poor	10 c	
Clothes, Travel	30 c	
Cord	3 c	5m, hold 200kg
Crampon	5 c	
Fishing Net	20 c	
Fishing Pole and Hooks	10 c	
Flint and Steel	3 c	
Grappling Hook	25 c	Holds 800kg
Hammock	8 c	
Healing Pouch	15 tc	
Hourglass	50 tc	
Ink (Pot)	5 c	
Ladder	6 c	up to 10m
Lantern, Large	20 c	Light up to 25m
Lantern, Small	12 c	Light up to 10m
Lockpicks	10+ tc	
Mirror	50 c	
Oil (Metal Flask)	5 c	
Padlock	10-100+ tc	(10+ 1 per 5 tc spent) Difficulty to "pick"
Pan (metal, cooking)	6 c	
Paper (1 sheet)	1 tc	
Parchment (1 sheet)	5 tc	
Perfume, Cheap	5 c	1 Vial
Perfume, Fine	5 tc	1 Vial
Pot (cooking)	10 c	
Pouch, Large	2 c	25kg
Pouch, Small	1 c	5kg
Quills (3)	5 c	
Quiver, Large	4 c	30 Arrows/Bolts
Quiver, Small	3 c	20 Arrows/Bolts
Ring, Exquisite	100+ tc	Gold with jewels
Ring, Fine	10+ tc	Silver with minor gems

Gear	Price	Notes
Ring, Plain	10 c	Iron, copper, e tc.
Rope	10 c	10m, holds 800kg
Rope, Heavy	25 c	10m, holds 2500kg
Sack	2 c	100kg
Saddle, Bridle, Bit	100 c	
Saddlebags, Small	20 c	60kg
Saddlebags, Large	40 c	120kg
Scabbard	30 c	Belt or Shoulder
Sundial	25 c	
Tarp	3 c	
Tent (1 person)	12-15 c	
Tent (2 people, 1 pole)	20-30 c	
Tent (4 people, 2 poles)	45-60 c	
Tent (20 ppl, 16 poles)	75-120 c	
Tinderbox	2 c	
Tools, Heavy	20+c	Sledgehammers, Pickaxes
Tools, Light	10+c	Hammers, Saws, e tc.
Torch	1 c	Light up to 8m, 1 Hour
Vial, Glass	10 c	4 ounces
Vial, Metal	25 c	5 ounces
Water/Wineskin, Large	4 c	5 Gallons
Water/Wineskin, Normal	2 c	½ Gallon
Whetstone	1 c	
Whistle (metal)	20 c	

Food/Services	Price	Notes
Beer/ale (pint)	1 c	
Brandy (pint)	2 c	
Bread (loaf)	1 c	
Bribe (low office)	5+c	
Bribe (high office)	5+ tc	
Cheese, Ball of	1 c	
Cider (pint)	1 c	
Fine (lesser offense)	30-50 c	
Fine (greater offense)	100-500 c	
Lodging, Poor	1 c	Bed (if that) only
Lodging, Average	4 c	Dinner and Bed only
Lodging, Good	8 c	Dinner, Bed, Breakfast, Bath
Mead (pint)	2 c	
Meal, Average	3 c	
Meal, Good	1 tc	
Meal, Poor	1 c	
Meat, Joint of	2 c	
Mercenary, Average	8-12 c	Per Week
Mercenary, Good	3-5 c	Per Week
Mercenary, Thug	2-5 c	Per Week
Sausage, Smoked	1 c	
Servant	5+c	Per Week
Stable	2 c	Per Night
Trail Rations (1 week)	5 c	
Wine, Fine (bottle)	1+ tc	
Wine, Poor (bucket)	1 c	

Transport/Services	Price	Notes
Boat, Row	400-600 c	6 People
Boat, Small Sail & Oars	80-120 tc	15 People
Boat, Long	250-400 tc	40 People
Canoe	40-60 tc	3 People
Coach, Fine (4 Horse)	100-150 tc	20m Run, 30m Sprint
Coach, Normal (2 Horse)	60-85 tc	18m Run, 27m Sprint
Coach Service	1-3 c/mile	
Ferry Service	2-5 c/mile	
Hand-cart	8-12 tc	
Horse	600 c	Normal, Draft Horse
Horse-cart, Single (open)	20-35 tc	
Ship (small, single-mast)	800-1200 tc	100+ People
Ship (medium, double-mast)	1500-2000 tc	160+ People
Ship (large, triple-mast)	7000-10,000+ tc	250+ People
Ship Passage, Fair	1-5 tc/mile	
Ship Passage, Fine	10-50 tc/mile	
Ship Passage, Rough	1-5 c/mile	
Wagon, Two Horse	40-60 tc	
Wagon, Four Horse	75-90 tc	

Table 13 - Gear Listings

IMPROVING YOUR HERO

Over the course of any story, Heroes change. They learn things, they get better at what they know how to do, and they develop all-new skills and abilities. Sometimes Heroes simply become the very best at what they do. Sometimes they shift focus and become something utterly different than what they were when they began.

All that is certain, in fact, is that Heroes do change.

In Shards of the Stone, these changes are reflected mainly through the use of Experience Points. The ShardMaster awards these Experience Points (also called EP) to their Players, the Players can then spend these Points to make changes to their Heroes.

There are two factors that impact the spending of Experience Points. One is the actual process of spending them. The other is the condition or set of conditions that the ShardMaster may impose on a Player before those points can be spent.

These conditions are derived from what it is the Player wishes to spend their EP on.

IMPROVING A STAT

After Character Creation, it is quite a bit more expensive to upgrade a Stat. Some ShardMasters will not allow for Stat upgrades, but if they do, then the following chart may help:

SubStat Aspect	Cost
Power	150 EP
Speed	250 EP
Endurance	50 EP
Focus	75 EP
Resource	100 EP

Table 14 - Stat Improvement Costs

Normally, a Player will need only to save up and spend the required Experience Points (EP). However, any such expenditure must still be approved by the ShardMaster, who may require that an improvement be made over time (in the game world), not instantly. Also, no more than one point of a particular Stat can ever be purchased per Session through spending EP.

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

In these instances, a Player may be required to have their Hero seek training or undergo intensive research before they can spend their EP.

In the latter case, the Hero will have to make a roll less than the required SubStat to successfully learn the new ability. If they have an appropriate related Skill, that will be what is rolled. Otherwise, a raw Stat (often, but not always, Intelligence) will be rolled. Consult the following chart:

To Learn	Will take
An easy to moderate Skill	1 Week
A difficult Skill or Ability	1 Month
A normal Spell	3 Months
A special Spell	1 Year

Table 15 - Skill Learning Times

The ShardMaster is the final arbiter as to which Skills are "easy," "moderate," and "difficult" to learn.

Teachers can make learning anything much, much easier (or, if they are poor teachers, they can make it a lot harder). If someone is teaching your Hero something, they roll their Teaching Skill as per the "Helping Others" rules.

Assuming that your Hero has made the roll needed, or they didn't need to roll at all, you will then spend your Experience Points as per the rules and charts that follow.

BUYING NEW SKILLS OR PROPERTIES

To buy Skills with Experience, you simply pay the listed number of EP required to purchase it. You would indicate the Stage Level on your Character Record Sheet and update the bonuses, etc. as well.

REMOVING DEFECTS

It may be possible to "buy down" and even "buy off" Defects with Experience Points. If the ShardMaster permits it, you must pay twice the amount of EP that was gained from the Defect.

EXAMPLE OF HERO CREATION

Here is where it is all put together, and we show you an example of putting a Hero together. Let's look at our friend, Tavin Kell, from the Examples in the Skills sections, and see how he was created. We will begin with the Ten Questions:

THE TEN QUESTIONS

1)   What kind of Campaign are we playing in?

Tavin Kell will be a Hero in a "Heroic" **d10** Campaign. This means he will have 100 Experience Points (EP) to purchase Stats and 100 EP to purchase Skills, Properties and Spells. Furthermore, we can select Properties that are Defects up to a value of 100 to add that many more EP to Tavin. Your character's total number of points spent may not exceed 300.

Knowing that Tavin is going to be in a "Heroic" level game, we can plan for a Hero that has been around a bit, seen and done some things, and can expect to be one of the better-known folks around.

2)   What is the Name of my Hero?

Well, we already know that, obviously. From the beginning, this Hero was conceived as a dashing, roguish figure, with a tendency towards comedic circumstances befalling him. The name "Tavin Kell" somehow sings that, and it is certainly more story-oriented than "Ted the Thief" or "Steal-and-Kill 99."

3)   What Race will my Hero be?

With all of the wondrous options available, we decide to make Tavin a Human. We see him as someone we can completely identify with - a man who is surrounded by the terrifying and the fantastic who is just trying to make his way in the world and somehow winds up center stage amidst grand adventures.

4)   What role in the story do I want to see my Hero fulfill?

We see Tavin as the cheerful, dashing rogue, a man who has learned how to survive on the edge of society while being able to move within it at will. In his past, he became accustomed to scraping by and pilfering what he needed to survive. He doesn't need to do that anymore, but old habits die hard, and he is something of an expert thief and would-be con artist. We also see him as a man who can take care of himself, usually with panache and style.

Within a Guild, Tavin is the wiseacre and foil to anyone who takes themselves too seriously. However, he's there when the chips are down, and can be surprisingly serious when the need arises. For the most part, however, he will be charming to a fault and annoying to anyone who knows him too well.

5)   Will my Hero wield Magic of some sort?

We don't see Tavin as having the gift for Magic of any sort. He's a man who lives by his wits and luck (sometimes pushing the latter way too far).

Figure 11 - Warrior Horseman

6)   What other kind of training and education has my Hero undergone?

Tavin came up in the streets, and most of his early learning is of the "survive or die" variety. However, he was too smart and too charismatic to live among the downtrodden for long, and he has floated in and out of many different social circles. He learned to read, and has picked up a few things about many subjects (always believing that at least a little knowledge is more powerful than total ignorance, and you never know where it might get you).

Tavin had at least one mentor, and probably spent some time in a thieves' guild, where he mastered numerous Skills of that trade. Much of the rest of his training and education comes from the "School of Life," as it were. He has also spent time in a circus and at court, where he has learned many other useful skills.

7)   What kind of combat training (if any) does my Hero have?

We don't see Tavin as a "slug it out" kind of guy. He will tend towards more speed and finesse. Tavin will have picked up skill in Small Blades, and he will be very good at throwing knives. Tavin is the kind of Hero who excels at getting out of harm's way.

8)   What is the history of my Hero before they began the life they are about to lead?

We've already hinted at such things in the previous discussions, but here we decide on a few more details. Tavin

started life as a merchant's son, but at a very early age he lost his whole family to criminals who exacted a terrible revenge for a bad business venture. Tavin only lived because a family friend managed to secret him away before the villains struck. The friend, however, fell afoul of the same people and he, too, was murdered. Tavin was barely old enough to speak, but he managed to survive as an urchin on the streets, and various people within the "underside" culture did what they could to help him make it to the point where he could steal his own bread and find safe places to sleep.

Cleverness and luck led Tavin to become very good at these things, and soon he graduated from mere survival to making such activities a profession, eventually becoming an apprentice to a master thief. Tavin took up travel after that, anxious to leave the city that had been his home, but also his prison, for so long. Tavin's travels led him to the sea (where he lived as a pirate and sailor for a time), a circus caravan (where he became an accomplished acrobat and performer), and even a royal court (where he became the trusted consort of a lovely, widowed baroness).

In this last experience, he became embroiled in a political intrigue that threatens not only the kingdom, but many of the people and nations of the surrounding areas. It is here that we expect the story of the Campaign will begin.

9) What kinds of problems does my Hero have to deal with?

Tavin craves excitement, whether he wants to admit it or not. He secretly loves the thrill of danger and being caught up in a real challenge. Tavin's reliance on his luck has racked up a serious debt with Fate, and this debt is regularly paid off with incidents of his luck turning sour.

Deep in his heart, Tavin cannot abide cruelty. Though he has been a thief, he has never been a murderer or tyrant, and he cannot stand idly by when he feels that innocents are being mistreated. Tavin has had very few friends in his life, and he is coming to feel that those who truly befriend him are worthy of his loyalty. Whether he likes it or not, Tavin is slowly gaining a sense of purpose and nobility (which is bound to ruin a great deal of his fun, as he is certain to tell anyone who will listen).

For all that he is becoming a more "noble" figure, Tavin still can't seem to keep his hands out of the coffers or off of a pretty bauble. His light-fingered tendencies still catch up with him often.

10) Does my Hero have any special quirks, talents, items of clothing, habits, or anything else that serves as a kind of "tag" or trademark?

Having lived in poverty too long, Tavin prefers to dress as well as his circumstances will allow, and is often prone to lamenting the latest tear or stain on his "new favorite coat." Both good and bad luck follow Tavin around like a favorite and reviled uncle, respectively.

Finally, one of the reasons that Tavin is considered so clever, and the reason he picks things up so easily, is that he has a high degree of the Ability, Perfect Memory. Of course, this also tends to get him in a lot of trouble.

QUICKSTART

Before we delve into the details of this example, here is a list of things that we will be doing in order:

1. Select your Power Die
2. Choose your Race
3. Purchase Stats and set Tolerances
4. Buy Properties
5. Buy Skills and Spells
6. Buy Fighting Styles
7. Buy Gear

STATS

Now that we have answered the Ten Questions, we can begin spending our Experience Points (EP). Since we know we are not going to acquire any Spells for Tavin, we can focus on spending all of the EPs on his Stats.

The ShardMaster determines that we are going to purchase our Stats using the Simple Rules so we use our Power Die (d10) for the maximum value and choose the following:

PHY – 3
MEN – 6
SPI – 2
EMO – 4
SOC – 5

Our total expenditure is 3+6+2+4+5 = 20

In Simple Rules each Stat point costs 5 EP so we multiply 20 x 5 = 100 EP. We've spent all we can for now on our Stats and here's how we justify it.

Physical - Tavin is no brute, and he is no brawler. We decide on a 3, so that he can handle reasonable Strength-related Methods and not be considered a complete "weakling." Besides, acrobats have to have some musculature.

Mental - In our answers to the Ten Questions, Tavin's wits and cleverness came up a lot. We decide that this should be one of his highest Stats, making him one of the smarter Heroes you are likely to meet. A Mental Rating of 6 seems to fulfill this idea well.

Spiritual - Tavin's connection to the "other world" is tenuous at best. Though he very much believes in Magic (he's certainly dodged its effects enough times), he does not have any serious link to such things. Tavin also tends to believe more in his own "luck" and skill than in anything larger or greater than himself. As such, his Spiritual is a minimal 2 (because a 1 is simply too low for any Hero of Tavin's stature to have in any Stat).

Emotional – Tavin has a certain depth of soul and stability that has brought him through some very rough times. He also tends to just be a nice guy most of the time, having lived in the slums and pilfered from the rich, he can empathize with most people.

Social - On the one hand, Tavin seems to have a problem keeping himself out of trouble. On the other hand, he has the strength of purpose to survive a very difficult personal history. He is also very streetwise and has a comely personality. A Social of 5 seems to reflect this truth well enough.

We've been trying to spend wisely, since we only have 200 EP.

This leaves us with 100 base EP remaining, but we also have the opportunity to take Properties that are Defects that will give us even more EP to play with. We know we are going to do this, and in fact we are planning on acquiring the maximum allowed -100, so this will give us a total of 200 EP to spend from here on out.

TOLERANCE

Once we have assigned the Stats for Tavin, we need to determine the Tolerances for each Stat. This indicates how many actions Tavin can perform per round using this stat without exhausting himself. Tolerances are awarded for each Racial Sympathy (minus any Racial Antipathies) and then are further modified by choosing Properties. We will check the Racial makeup of Tavin, which is Human who have no Sympathies, so the Tolerance for each of his Stats is 1. Had Tavin been an Elf for example, he would have had a Tolerance of 4 for Spiritual and a 2 for Emotional.

Now we have Stats of:

PHY – 3/1

MEN – 6/1

SPI – 2/1

EMO – 4/1

SOC – 5/1

Now that we have finalized his Stats, it's time to choose Properties, which could potentially change our Stats and our Tolerances for our Hero.

PROPERTIES

Let's go to Properties first. Remembering that EP can flow like water if we get too crazy, we try to keep focused on what really makes the most sense for a Hero like Tavin, what makes him more compelling to us as a character in the story we want to tell.

Ambidexterity certainly fits, so we pick that up (10 EP). We know that he is good-looking, but not too much of a "pretty boy," so we give Tavin a single level of **Handsome** (10 EP). His charm and wittiness is more important, so we give him two levels of **Charismatic** (10 EP x 2 = 20 EP). We definitely see Tavin as a "swashbuckling" type who doesn't walk around in armor all the time, so we decide to give him the maximum amount of **Exceptionally Fast** possible (10 EP x 4 = 40 EP). We look longingly at such Abilities as **High Pain Tolerance** and **Hard to Kill**, but we realize that they don't make as much sense for Tavin (and the Points only go so far).

Sleeping on the streets would tend to give anyone **Light Sleeper** (10 EP), and we've already established that Tavin has Literacy (10 EP). Resisting the urge to "max it out," we decide to buy 3 out of the 5 possible levels of Lucky (45 EP). Looking longingly at **Night Vision**, we skip on down the list to **Perfect Recall** and attain one level (20 EP).

At this point, we just stop and take stock of how much we have spent on Properties.

165 Experience Points! Gah! What were we thinking? In actuality, this is a fairly common mistake that many Players make. The Properties can be very, very tempting as a means of defining your Hero. Each and every one of the

Properties we chose makes a certain amount of sense, but if we left them alone, we would only have 35 EP left to spend on Skills we might want for Tavin. That's not going to be enough.

Not every nimble rogue is Ambidextrous, so we drop that. As charming as we think he should be, Tavin's natural SOC:Charisma will have to do - we drop both levels of Charismatic We really like the Exceptionally Fast Property, but it's either that or Tavin's luck. Of the two, Lucky is the more important, so we resign ourselves to Tavin wearing armor more often (he'll just have to wear stylish coats over it, or make sure it is well-tailored). We agonize a bit, and finally relent to shave off his Perfect Recall.

This painful exercise in "shaving" drops the total cost for Abilities down to 75 EP, a much more reasonable amount, leaving us 125.

SKILLS

Going through the list, and very much keeping in mind what we know about Tavin from the Ten Questions, we come up with the following:

5	Acting
10	Concealment
5	Courtier
10	Disguise
5	Forgery
5	Gambling
5	History
10	Interaction
5	Language - Human (Native)
5	Language - Fae
10	Lockpicking
5	Merchant
5	Mimicry
5	Politics
5	Sailing
10	Sleight of Hand
10	Stealth
5	Streetwise
10	Trapwork

When we add this up, we realize we've spent 130 EP! We did it again, overspending by quite a bit (5 points worth, in fact). Once again, we have to "shave" points off by dropping Sailing and we're out of points to spend.

This spends every last one of the EP we managed to come up with, leaving no Points at all for anything like Spells or Fighting Styles. We aren't prepared to "shave" any more points from anywhere else.

Thus, we revise our thinking of his story to reflect these changes - the Baroness is missing, presumed dead, and Tavin has been framed for it. He's had to run for his life, with only what he could carry, in the middle of the night.

Hopefully, you can see how the actual process of spending points, adjusting those expenditures, and rethinking how to spend them is not only a vital process to making sure your Hero is fairly built alongside everyone else's, but it's also an incredible source of additional story and background for your Hero.

DEFECTS

Now we need to come up with those Defects that we promised we'd take to get those desperately-needed extra EP. Again referring to the Ten Questions, and adding in the new ideas we got from the process so far, we come up with the following:

Kleptomania. Tavin is prone to snatching up valuables, a habit born of his very early years. It happens frequently so we take four levels (4 x -5 = -20 EP) and it takes a lot to get him to stop and think about it. Remember, Defects are expressed as negative values, indicating that they are "paying the debt" of additional EP, so the value of this Defect is –20 EP.

Adrenal Addiction. As mentioned in the Ten Questions, Tavin has a deep-seated craving for dangerous situations, though he won't admit it even to himself. It only comes up infrequently so we buy three levels (3 x -5 EP), and only if he has had reason to become bored. This Defect tends to manifest itself as Tavin volunteers for the most insane parts of any adventure. At any rate, the total value is –15 EP.

Code of Honor. Tavin does not wish to see those he sees as "innocents" suffer, and he will never willingly steal from anyone who fits his idea of "innocent." This sometimes comes into conflict with his Kleptomania, as he finds himself having to return things to such people and explain to them why he has the items. This comes up rather frequently so we buy three levels (3 x -5 = -15 EP), for as a Hero, Tavin has numerous opportunities to view the suffering of others.

Sense of Duty. Tavin has come to respect and cherish those who would call him "friend," and this manifests as a minor sense of loyalty so we take one level (-5 EP).

Disrepute. Tavin has been around the block a time or two and has a reputation in town as a scoundrel many times over. We decide to charge up four levels of Disrepute (4 x 5 EP) for a total of 20 EP.

Dishonesty. Tavin has complemented his Kleptomania with a chronic inability to even admit the truth of what he does. This certainly contributes to his Disrepute but also puts him on an interesting peer basis with the other thugs in his neighborhood…. Nobody trusts him, but nobody crosses him either. We purchase four levels (4 x 5 EP) of this as well for a total of 20 EP.

Split Personality. Tavin often speaks to his "other friends" while he engages in any of his "less desirable" activities… This comes from the schism between his innate Code of Honor and his compulsion to steal and lie. He is a being in conflict and deals with it by having multiple sides of himself. He has four distinct personalities in addition to his "normal one" (4 x -10 EP = 40 EP).

Low Pain Tolerance. Tavin takes extra care to be sure that he's out of harm's way, hence his chosen profession of sneaking rather than wading into the thick of battle. This comes at a cost however and he is vulnerable to being knocked out much easier when engaging in face to face combat…. It just isn't his strength. We decide to take two levels of Low Pain Tolerance for a total of 2 x –10 EP = -20 EP).

A quick tally will reveal that the total value of Tavin's Defects is -145. All of these Defects make a lot of sense for Tavin, and they are very much a part of who he is in our minds.

FIGHTING STYLES

Now that we've taken enough Defects to give us a bit more EP, we can purchase one Fighting Style and the only reasonable one for our Hero is Fencing which costs 25 EP. We also purchase Parry and Retreating Slash for 10 EP each for a total of 45 EP, spending all of our points again!

GEAR

The next part of the process is to go "shopping" for Tavin Kell, thus determining what he has at the start of the first actual Session of the Campaign. The ShardMaster could just go with the idea of deciding for us what Tavin managed to grab as he ran away (which, frankly, is the better choice in this instance), but let's look at how we would spend the money if it were assigned to us.

Tavin is in a "Heroic" Campaign, which means he gets 4,000 Coins to purchase items with. We look first at weapons and armor:

Foil (an excellent choice for his Style, Strength and Dexterity), 1,500 Coins

3 Daggers (useful for Throwing as well as back-up weapons), 3 x 50 = 150 Coins

Studded Curie (the best choice for his Strength and need for mobility), 1,200 Coins

This spends 2,850 Coins right off. Does Tavin have a horse? Having been a "city boy" all his life, he's never really needed to know how to ride, but his current circumstances may well warrant going faster than his feet can carry him. The ShardMaster rules that he probably grabbed one from the stables as he fled, and we pay 600 Coins for it.

This may seem odd - we are "paying" for something that the ShardMaster is telling us we "stole." The starting money for a Hero doesn't necessarily represent a pouch full of Coins that are then taken to market the day before the Campaign starts. This money also represents to overall value of beginning possessions, regardless of how they were attained.

Tavin was smart enough to grab a horse that had been prepared for riding (saddle, bridle, bit, and large saddlebags all coming to 150 Coins. The bags actually have gear for travelling and some food - the ShardMaster tells us to mark off 300 Coins, and he will give us a list later of what we managed to acquire for Tavin.

Finally, we decide that Tavin left wearing clothes that are fit for a lesser noble, and the GM tells us to mark off another 200 Coins for that. All told, we've spent 3,900 Coins on gear. This leaves Tavin with 100 Coins in his pockets, fleeing into the night.

All that remains is to fill in Tavin Kell's Hero Record and we are ready to play!

ARCHETYPES

The following ten Heroes are examples of more-or-less "typical" Heroes that might be found in many Realms of Core. They are meant to stand as both examples of Heroes you might create, as well as "out-of-the-book" Heroes that you can immediately begin playing with, if you so desire. You can even take one of these Archetypes and "tweak" them to suit your tastes.

These Archetypes are all created for varying Power Die levels, so you can adjust their stats by increasing or decreasing their Power die levels for your particular campaign… or leave them as-is for some formidable opponents/allies.

We have also made these archetypes available in our Character Record packs that you can get from your local hobby shop which you can find at our retailer locator at www.ShardsOfTheStone.com. These character packs have full-color illustrations of each of the Archetypes along with 10 Avatar record sheets in Advanced FiveStat or SimpleStat.

You can also create your own Archetypes by submitting them online at our website. On the website you can decide to retain the archetype for your own personal library, making it available only to campaigns you run, or you can opt to donate it so that all players can utilize that same archetype in their own games and publications. Each time your archetype is used, you will receive more Fragments to use to create more assets within the world and other benefits that will help enrich your gameplay.

It is important that you also develop your own character if you use these archetypes. Our stories are designed to give you ideas on how the Avatar's personality might be, but feel free to leap ahead and make that Avatar into anything that you may wish. Be creative and do let us know what adventures your Avatars have… we'll make sure it gets published in our online newsletters and you may be starting a new storyline that could be incorporated into the core plots of the Realms.

ARCHETYPE LISTING

Archetype	Power Die	PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
Avanar Priestess	d10	6/2	7/2	10/5	7/1	8/2
Dwarven Knight	d8	7/3	5/1	3/1	5/2	2/1
Dwarven Stonemage	d10	7/3	9/4	5/1	6/1	5/2
Goblin Scout	d6	4/2	2/1	3/1	6/3	5/2
Human Swashbuckler	d6	4/3	5/2	3/1	4/1	5/3
Ogre Druid	d8	8/5	5/3	8/4	4/2	5/2
Orc Mercenary	d6	6/4	3/1	3/2	4/1	2/1
Raun Gladiator	d8	5/3	3/1	4/3	8/6	3/1
Sauran Savant	d10	9/3	10/6	5/2	8/4	6/3
Elven Mystic	d8	4/1	8/4	6/1	5/1	3/2

Table 16 - Archetype Listings Chart

Figure 12 - Noble Savage

Avanar Priestess

"The Light speaks to me. Perhaps it is because I fly so close to its beacons in the sky – I don't know for sure. All I know is that the Light speaks to me, and I carry its message to the world below. Usually I speak the message, but lately I have been moved to convey it through visual images – paintings, sketches, and other such means."

"Where chaos and hate reign, we must bring order and love. Where law has given over to tyranny, we must unshackle the bound. Where shadows engulf the frightened, we must bring the Lights and renew their faith. It's fairly simple, really. I'm not foolish enough, however, to think it easy. Perhaps you can help me in my endless quest, and in return, I can provide some measure of aid in yours. If you consider me potentially easy prey, however, you will find that the Light is not weak, and neither are its servants."

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
Light Staff: 2dB, Blinding Attack
Righteous Wrath: 2dB
Defense Methods:
Chaos Diffusion: 1 per hour
Faith Armor: 14/8

Properties:
Winged
Seer
Beautiful
Susceptible: Black Iron – x2
Susceptible: Bludgeon Damage – x2

Skills/Spells:
Pure Guiding Light
Pious Hands
Aerial Combat
Flight

PHY 6/2	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 7/2	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 10/5	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 7/1	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 8/2	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	8	A	Intellect	10		Faith	15		Passion	5		Charisma	4	
Dexterity	6		Perception	8	S	Inspiration	8		Intuition	6	A	Attraction	9	
Stamina	5		Sanity	5		Conviction	9	S	Dedication	8		Humility	9	
Accuracy	6	S	Concentration	6	S	Discernment	8		Empathy	7		Persuasion	10	
Adrenaline	5	A	Memory	6		Purity	10		Ego	9	A	Will	8	

Dwarven Knight

"Long have I stood in the defense of my homelands, opposing all who'd come against the Clans. For my services and loyalty, and for the blood that runs through my veins, I was raised to the noble status of knighthood. Now I'm called to engage in a quest for my people, and as the mountain stands unflinching in the fury of the storm, so shall I never waver in my duty."

"If it so transpires that we can walk the same road, and you have a noble purpose in mind, I'm happy to share the travels with you. Just do not ask me to stray from my duty, nor expect me to stand idly by if I am faced with an act of tyranny or evil. That's simply not my way."

POWER DIE
d8

Attack:
Broadsword: 1dC
Hammer: 1dB
Crossbow: 1dP
Defense:
Plate of Proof: 20/20 (PHY:Dex-4)

Properties:
Magic Resistance
Long Life
Thermal Vision
Direction Sense
Immunity
Cannot Swim

Skills/Spells:
Riding
Sword Master

PHY 7/3	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 5/1	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 5/2	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 2/1	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	10	S	Intellect	4		Faith	5		Passion	6	A	Charisma	1	
Dexterity	5	S	Perception	6		Inspiration	2	A	Intuition	3		Attraction	1	
Stamina	9	A	Sanity	3		Conviction	4		Dedication	5		Humility	3	
Accuracy	4	A	Concentration	6	S	Discernment	2		Empathy	3		Persuasion	1	
Adrenaline	7	S	Memory	6		Purity	2		Ego	8		Will	4	

Dwarven Stonemage

I believe in a blend of conflict and harmony. There is strength deep beneath us; in the bones of the mountains and in the bones of our souls. I have learned the arcane arts, despite the perceived limitations of my Clansmen, yet I am also no stranger to the weapons of war either. I yearn to explore the mysteries that are held all around us but I cannot, for my obligation is to protect my people from an almost certain destruction… so I forsake that which I desire and pursue that which is needed for the good of all. Perhaps one day I will be blessed to finally learn those things that will answer these burning questions I so wish to be answered. Until then, I am off to battle… against my foes and against my own selfish regrets.

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
Battle Axe: 8/7, 2dC
AxeMaster: Chop 1dC
AxeMaster: Spin Throw: 1d C 30m
AxeMaster: Dual Slice: 3dC
Defense Methods:
AxeMaster: Block

Properties:
Night Vision

Skills/Spells:
Pattern Lore
Disguise
Leadership
Transmutation
Rockwall
Morphmeld

PHY 7/3	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 9/4	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 5/1	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 6/1	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 5/2	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	9	A	Intellect	12	S	Faith	5	A	Passion	4	S	Charisma	7	A
Dexterity	7	S	Perception	9	S	Inspiration	4	S	Intuition	6	A	Attraction	2	S
Stamina	8	A	Sanity	7	A	Conviction	6	A	Dedication	7	A	Humility	6	A
Accuracy	5	S	Concentration	8	A	Discernment	5	S	Empathy	8	S	Persuasion	4	S
Adrenaline	6		Memory	9		Purity	5		Ego	5		Will	6	

Goblin Scout

"It is not all flashing blades and burning magic, my friend. Not at all. Sometimes you must crawl in the dirt, wiggle through a crack, sneak past the guards, and get past the nasty traps your enemy has laid for you. Sometimes the only way is the quiet way. My way."

"Don't get me wrong – I'll draw a blade or pull back my bowstring when the fighting starts, and you would be ill-served to underestimate me. I just think there are too many folks who are too anxious to start the killing when another way to get the job done may be available. I'm at home in the woods, but I can handle a city's streets just fine, too. If you need to find your foe, or something you've lost, I can help there. If you think bashing your way through things is the only way to go, good luck. I will probably be waiting for you on the other side, a lot less beat up."
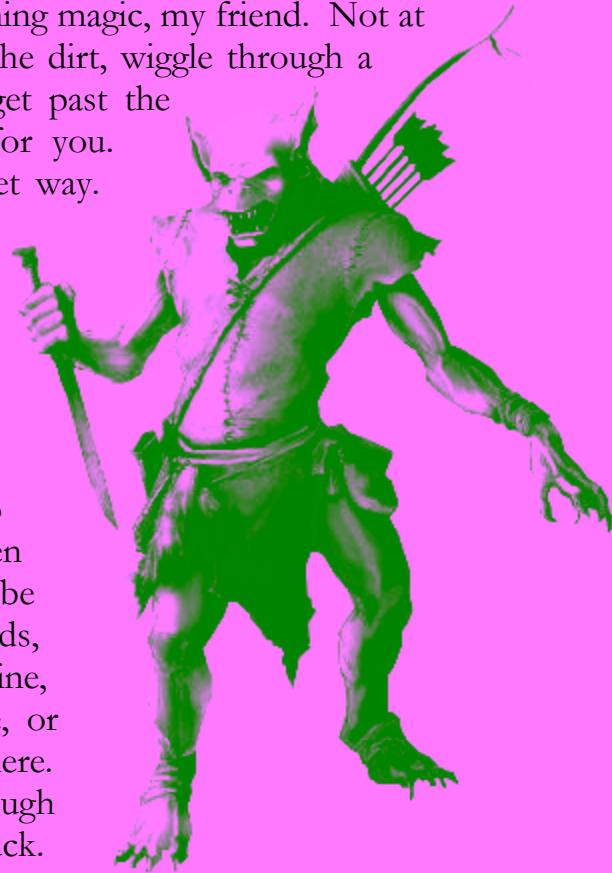
POWER DIE
d6

Attack:
Short Sword: 1dC
Bow: 1dP
Defense:
Leather Cuirass: 6/2

Properties:
Double Jointed
Quick Draw
Light Sleeper

Skills/Spells:
Riding
Poison Alchemy
Archery
Acrobatics
Streetwise

PHY 4/2	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 2/1	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 6/3	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 5/2	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	2	A	Intellect	2		Faith	1		Passion	5		Charisma	2	
Dexterity	6	S	Perception	3	A	Inspiration	3		Intuition	8	S	Attraction	2	
Stamina	2	A	Sanity	1		Conviction	4		Dedication	3		Humility	2	
Accuracy	5	S	Concentration	2	A	Discernment	5		Empathy	8	S	Persuasion	9	
Adrenaline	5		Memory	2		Purity	2	A	Ego	6		Will	10	S

HUMAN SWASHBUCKLER

"Some say this world is too chaotic, too driven by conflict and danger. I say – could there be a more exciting time to live? Opportunities for adventure abound, and if I make a little profit here and there, so much the better, aye?"

"I know my way around many circles, and I dabble in many things. It helps to be useful to many people, especially when you travel as much as I do. I love the high seas, but my time is through. Is where you're going dangerous? Then it will be fun to come along! Is there profit to be had? No matter, we'll see what turns up when we get there."

POWER DIE
d6

Attack:
Estoc: 1dP
Throwing Knives: 1dP
Defense:
SwordMaster: Parry, Block

Properties:
Beautiful
Quick Draw
Literate
Impulsive

Skills/Spells:
Sailing
Sleight of Hand
Forgery
Gambling

PHY 4/3	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 5/2	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 4/1	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 5/3	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	4		Intellect	4		Faith	2		Passion	7		Charisma	8	
Dexterity	6		Perception	8		Inspiration	4		Intuition	4		Attraction	8	
Stamina	4		Sanity	4		Conviction	3		Dedication	2		Humility	3	
Accuracy	3		Concentration	4		Discernment	3		Empathy	2		Persuasion	3	
Adrenaline	3		Memory	5		Purity	3		Ego	5		Will	3	

Ogre Druid

"Life and Spirit does not flow through only the 'pretty races,' so do not act so surprised at my calling. I am not here to ravage this place. The spirits of the world flow through my soul. They allow me to understand things beyond your ken, but I will happily teach you if you have but the patience to learn."

"The paths of Nature are all my allies, but it is the Earth that is strongest in me. Ah, I see that, at least, does not surprise you. Very good, for its strength and its power flow through me, and this can serve your cause… or oppose your plans, should I deem you an enemy to the spirits I honor."

POWER DIE
d8

Attack:
Staff: 1dB
Defense:
StaveMaster: Block, Parry, Whirling Block

Properties:
Sense of Duty
Thermal Vision
Enhanced Senses: Smell

Skills/Spells:
Language: Human, Ogre
Tracking
Druidry
Athletics

PHY 8/5	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 5/3	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 8/4	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 4/2	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 5/2	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	10	S	Intellect	5		Faith	12		Passion	2		Charisma	5	
Dexterity	6	A	Perception	7	A	Inspiration	7		Intuition	6	S	Attraction	3	
Stamina	8	A	Sanity	4		Conviction	7	S	Dedication	6		Humility	7	
Accuracy	6		Concentration	4	A	Discernment	6		Empathy	3		Persuasion	5	
Adrenaline	10		Memory	5		Purity	8		Ego	3	A	Will	5	S

Orc Mercenary

"Combat is my life. To say otherwise is to be a fool, and my parents did not spawn such. Granted, my brothers and sisters think me unwise to throw myself so freely into the battles of others, but I was not one to wait around for battle and adventure to find me. I have training and am considered good at what I do. I could be better – I will be better."

"Money buys my loyalty, for now. Perhaps, should I find something worthy of my faith and belief, I will find a new path. Until then, pray you do not stand in the way of the path I am on."
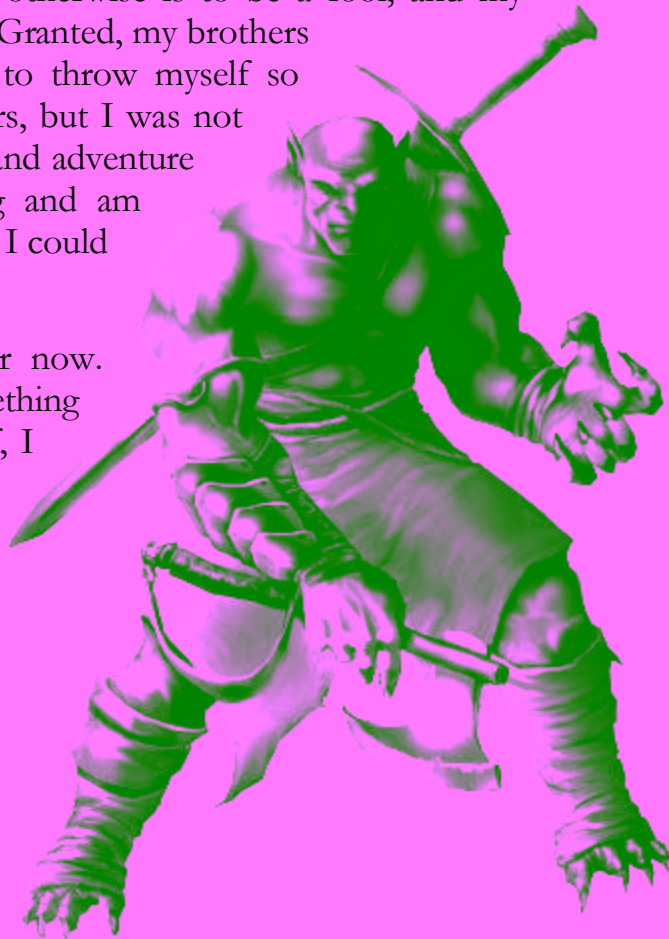
POWER DIE
d6

Attack:
Battle Axe: 8/7 2dC
Broad Sword: 8/6 1dC
Longbow: 6/1 1dP
Hand Axes: 6/5 1dC
AxeMaster: Chop, 2 Axe, Throw

Defense:
Studded Cuir Gambeson : 6/4
AxeMaster: Block

Properties:
Thermal Vision
Enhanced Senses: Smell
Fast Running

Skills/Spells:
Athletics
Archery
Language: Orc, Human
Tracking
Streetwise
Wilderness Lore

PHY 6/4	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 3/1	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 3/2	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 4/1	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 2/1	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	10		Intellect	4		Faith	1		Passion	12		Charisma	1	
Dexterity	8	S	Perception	4	A	Inspiration	5	A	Intuition	2	S	Attraction	1	
Stamina	4	A	Sanity	2		Conviction	3		Dedication	2		Humility	1	
Accuracy	4		Concentration	3	A	Discernment	5		Empathy	2		Persuasion	2	S
Adrenaline	4		Memory	2		Purity	1		Ego	2	S	Will	5	

Raun Gladiator

"Why do you stare at me? You think me weak? I will show you the error of your ways if you wish to test me. I have come a long way to escape the bonds that held me, and I have left behind the blood pits in which I fought weekly for my life. I entertain my master no more, but do not think that I will shirk a fight, if you so desire one."

"In truth, it is all I know. You think me ignorant? Perhaps, but I think me alive. Where I have come from, that is all that matters. I will learn other things now, with no lash to keep my eyes from books and my ears from those who will speak things I wish to hear. Perhaps I will show you the one thing I know outside of the arena of battle, for I learned to dance as a means of soothing the soul. So, shall it be a dance for movement's sake, or the dance of battle? You choose."

POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:
Martial Arts: Guarding Strike, Balanced Strike, Forceful Strike, Tangled Weeds
Defense Methods:
Martial Arts: Water on Stone, Shielding Way, Even Hands, Flowing Way

Properties:
High Jumper
Claws
Enhanced Senses: Vision, Hearing, Smell

Skills/Spells:
Athletics
Language: Human, Raun
Stealth
Martial Arts: Gift of the Trees
Field Dressing

PHY 5/3	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 3/1	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 4/3	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 8/6	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	4	A	Intellect	4		Faith	2		Passion	12	S	Charisma	2	
Dexterity	10	S	Perception	5		Inspiration	3		Intuition	6		Attraction	5	
Stamina	3	A	Sanity	2	A	Conviction	2		Dedication	7		Humility	1	
Accuracy	3	S	Concentration	2	S	Discernment	3		Empathy	7		Persuasion	4	
Adrenaline	4		Memory	2		Purity	10		Ego	8		Will	3	A

Sauran Savant

"You intrigue me, so out of balance are you. You do not yet understand how to combine your parts to make you whole. Then again, so few do. It is just as well – such as you make the world more interesting."

"My Beast and my Peace are as one now, and they give me power over the world around me. Those who give too freely to their Beasts must be swayed from their road, lest the world fall to them. Those who live only with their Peace are ill-equipped to deal with the others. This is why I do what I do. Why do you?"
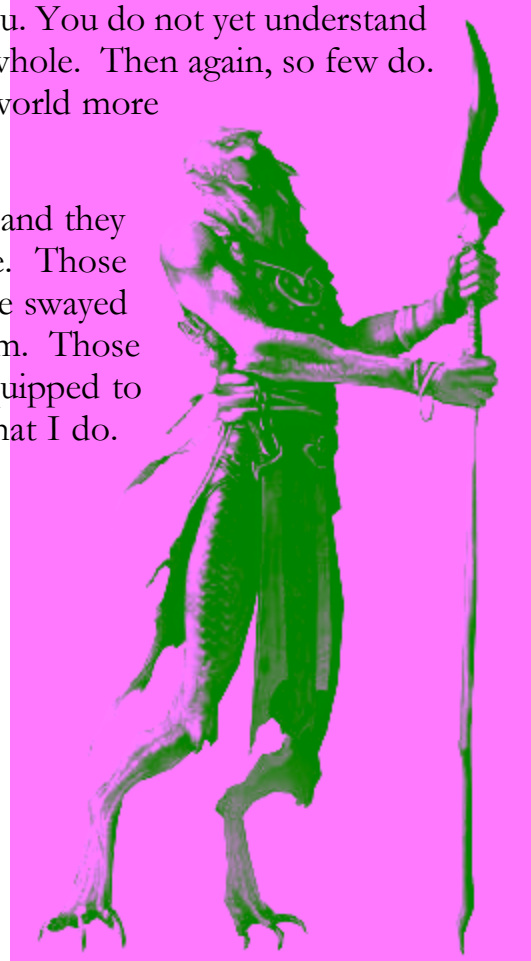
POWER DIE
d10

Attack:
Spear: 4/3 2dP
Defense:
Obsidian Scale: 10/4 HT

Properties:
Gills
Scaled
Prehensile Tail
Swimmer
Thermal Dependence

Skills/Spells:
MindWalker Aura
Will Sap
Mob Rage
Inner Beauty
Suggestion

PHY 9/3	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 10/6	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 5/2	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 8/4	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 6/3	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	9	S	Intellect	12		Faith	5		Passion	6	S	Charisma	10	
Dexterity	9	S	Perception	12		Inspiration	3	A	Intuition	12		Attraction	4	A
Stamina	13	S	Sanity	8	A	Conviction	7	S	Dedication	8	A	Humility	5	
Accuracy	9	S	Concentration	7	A	Discernment	4		Empathy	7	A	Persuasion	5	
Adrenaline	5		Memory	11		Purity	6		Ego	7		Will	6	S

ELVEN MYSTIC

"We come from Magic. We were Magic, before the dooms of our past brought us to this existence. I can still feel it flowing through me, and I have studied long and hard to understand its patterns and ways. I know the Magic, now… and it knows me."

"There is so much that I do not know, however – so much that no one knows. I have gleaned some understanding of what has happened to our world, however, and I know that the key to our future is learning even more. I travel the lands, seeking the ancient places and the forgotten lore. I will master the Magic, and I will understand its sources, before those who brought the Magic master us all."
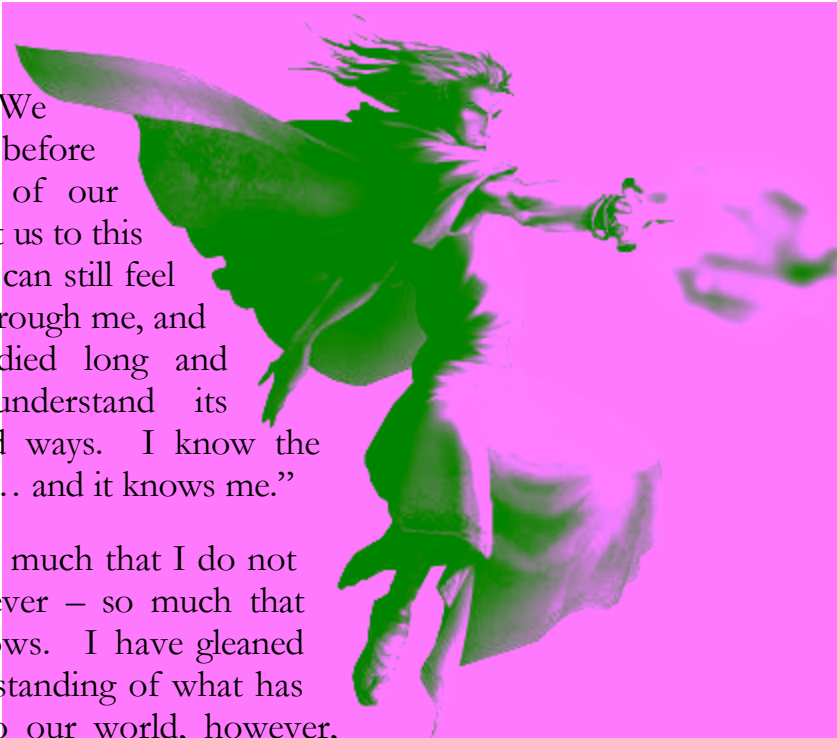
POWER DIE
d8

Attack:
Light Staff: 2dB, Blinding Attack

Defense
Illusory Shield: 8/8

Properties:
Literate
Enhanced Senses: Vision, Hearing
Beautiful
Longevity

Skills/Spells:
Psychic Vision
Eldritch Blast III: 60m, 3dB
Temporal Stutter
Crystallization

PHY 4/1	SubStat	Affinity	MEN 8/4	SubStat	Affinity	SPI 6/1	SubStat	Affinity	EMO 5/1	SubStat	Affinity	SOC 3/2	SubStat	Affinity
Strength	3	A	Intellect	10		Faith	5		Passion	3	A	Charisma	2	
Dexterity	5		Perception	8	S	Inspiration	7	S	Intuition	3	A	Attraction	2	
Stamina	4		Sanity	7	S	Conviction	7	S	Dedication	7	S	Humility	4	A
Accuracy	5		Concentration	7	S	Discernment	6		Empathy	6		Persuasion	3	S
Adrenaline	3	A	Memory	8		Purity	5		Ego	6		Will	3	
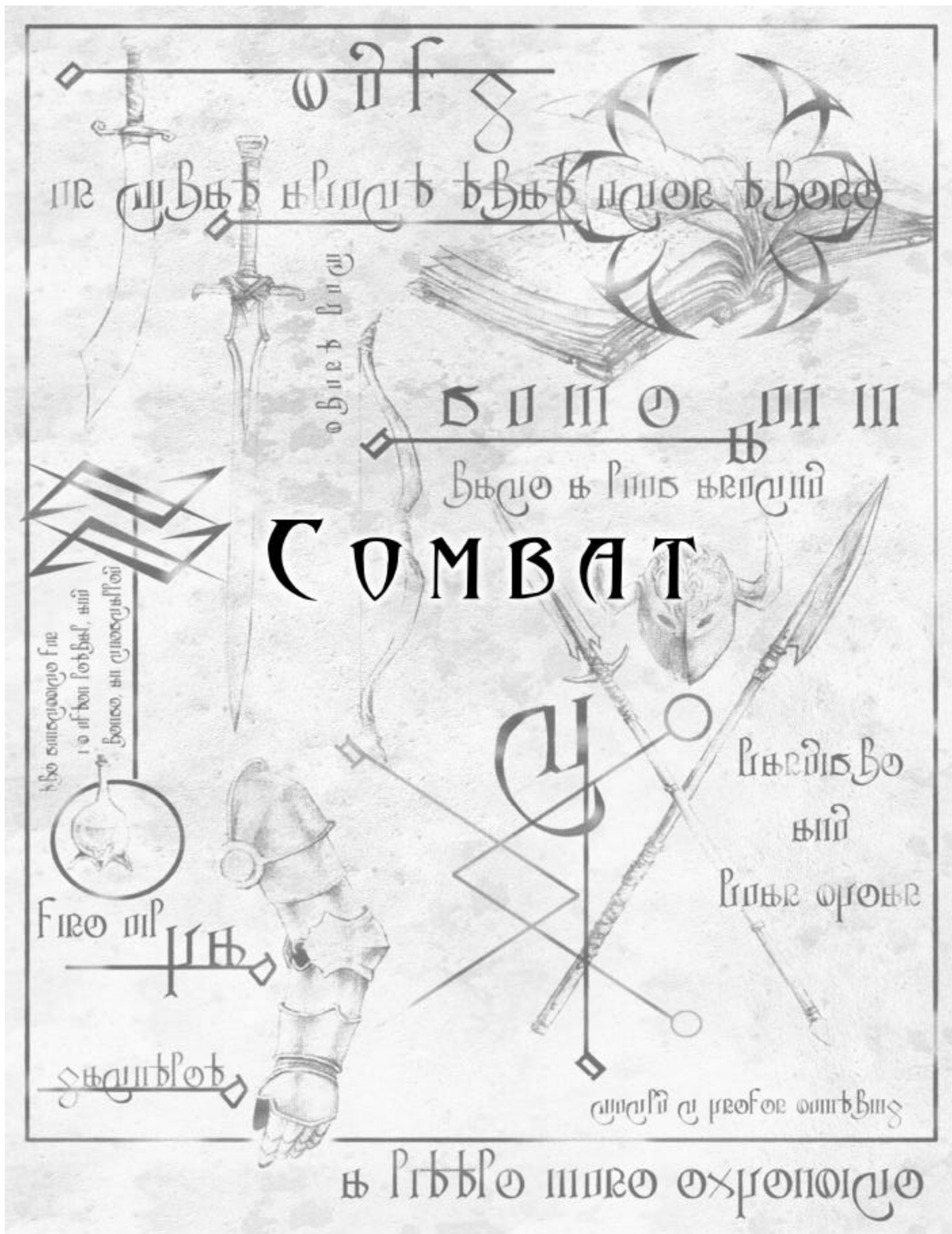
COMBAT

THE RINGING OF BLADES

The sounds of blades ringing from their sheath, the guttural war cry, and the ensuing sounds of battle are horrifying yet morbidly compelling. Eventually as your Heroes travel, they will encounter a combat situation, and even though there are numerous ways to avoid such, it is inevitable that the conflict will begin. In this chapter we will cover the details of combat and how to prepare your Heroes and your Campaigns for it.

WHEN TIME STOPS

The moment of adrenal rush when you know that danger is imminent is the precise moment when time rolls to a stop and you can almost feel your heart pumping in your ears while the events churning around you seem to go at a snail's pace. These inevitable moments are measured for game purposes in the following time segments:

10 Seconds	1 Round
6 Rounds	1 Minute

Although a lot can happen in ten seconds, it can also seem like an eternity to the Characters and actually can take a long time for the Players as well.

WHO GOES FIRST?

Initiative is the die roll we use to decide "Who goes first?" Each Player rolls their Power Die plus their PHY:Dexterity plus any extra Fatigue points each Player wants to burn to improve their roll (Fatigue points must be declared before the roll). These are added together and compared among the other players, highest going first.

Power Die + PHY:Dexterity + Fatigue Points

If there is a tie, then the Players can go simultaneously (which adds an extra layer of fun and suspense) or you could re-roll… depending on the ShardMaster.

Of course, the ShardMaster may decide that certain events are based on Mental speed (MEN:Perception) or other Stats rather than Physical.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The next series of events involve making **Declarations**, executing **Methods** (also called Skills, Abilities, Spells, etc), triggering **Events**, and applying **Effects** (also called Results).

Let's walk through a standard Combat sequence and then we'll go back through and explain it in more detail:

"In a deep, dark cavern with stalactites dripping overhead, G'rath is sneaking up behind a party of adventurers, eyeing the fat pouches they have strung on their hips and whispering to himself hungrily. He attempts to pinch a purse undetected and fails his attempt (see Skill Resolution), but the humans turn to face him with weapons drawn. The victim of the purported theft, a human warrior named Darek, turns to G'rath and sinisterly motions with his fingers that this combat will be one-on-one."

ROLL INITIATIVE:
Now the two Players roll their Power Die to decide who goes first. G'rath gets a higher roll due to his higher Dexterity so he gets first shot and Darek goes second.

MAKE DECLARATIONS:
G'rath says, "I whip out my dagger, glare ominously at the human scum and use my KnifeMaster Thrust Attack"

Darek decides, "I'm going to dodge and then try to Grapple him"

The GM ponders on how he wants to run this round and says, "Ok, G'rath, you get a +1 PHY (Physical) because they weren't expecting you to open up so fast. Darek, you're at a disadvantage, but your dodge should be fine, but you're at -2 PHY for your Grapple."

EXECUTE METHODS:
G'rath checks his KnifeMaster Fighting Skill and notes that it checks against PHY:Strength, making his PHY:Strength of 4 add up to a 5 for this attack. He rolls his Power Die (a d6) and gets a 4, adding that again, so 4+1+4 gives him a 9 for his Physical Attack.

Darek knows all too well that he is checking his dodge against his PHY:Dexterity of 6 but winces as he deducts the –2 penalty imposed by the ShardMaster. He rolls his Power Die (a d6) and gets a 6! A perfect roll! "Aha!" yells Darek's Character. G'rath moans loudly and the ShardMaster hides his face while he laughs.

TRIGGER EVENTS:
"As Darek's exultations echo throughout the chamber, the nefarious trap looming above engages, with a series of ropes and pullies spinning wildly, and the entire ceiling of stalactites crashes to the floor."

APPLY EFFECTS:
The simultaneous combination of all of these events leave our two Heroes at the mercy of not each other, but of their environment. They discard the need to fight one another and turn to the errand at hand, sheer survival.

However, as all Fatigue has been expended for either one, they take the full brunt of this new foe, with the ShardMaster rolling a d6 in damage as at least one stalactite strikes each one of the Heroes.

Damage is dealt, all Fatigue points are restored, the round is reset and it's on to more adventure!

FATIGUE AND EXHAUSTION

There are five Stats used in Shards of the Stone: Physical, Mental, Spiritual, Emotional and Social. Of these five, the most used in Combat is Physical (naturally) and is tracked using Fatigue and Exhaustion

A Stat block looks like this:

Physical (PHY)

Fatigue   Endurance

☐ ☐ ☐ | ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ■ ■ ■

This represents a Physical Stat of 7 (there are seven open boxes) with a Tolerance or Fatigue of 3 (seen to the left of the vertical bar). Note that the blacked out boxes are not available to this Player.

There is a Stat block available for each Stat (Physical, Mental, etc)

The Stat block is one of the most important things to learn about how Shards of the Stone works.

FATIGUE

This is the number of points that can be expended in a Round for this particular Stat. This is represented by the vertical line you see above… after the third box. For example, if you are going to swing a sword and that swing cost 1 Fatigue, then you could swing a sword three times in one Round (or 10 seconds). You're a pretty fast swordsman! Fatigue is very rarely marked off… you just burn it up in a Round and then it's recharged.

ENDURANCE

Endurance represents the number of "over-exertions" you can use in a given day. For example, you decide to block an attack (consuming 1 Fatigue), attack with a Power Strike (consuming 3 Fatigue), and Dodge (consuming 2 Fatigue) all in the same Round. This used a whopping 6 Fatigue and you only have 3 available… so three of your boxes are marked off from the right to the left as such:

Physical (PHY)

Fatigue   Endurance

☐ ☐ ☐ | ☐ ☑ ☑ ☑ ■ ■ ■

This effectively means that you have exerted yourself so much that some of your pool of Physical energy is expended and you're going to need to sleep it off.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS

Once you have over-exerted yourself enough, your body will tell you that you've had enough. Once you've gotten this far, your body just shuts down and you're out for the night. Let's take our example one step farther and look at the next Round. Your Hero is in a pitched battle with a formidable foe, but everything is on the line. If you don't win, all is lost. So, you decide to over-exert once again by attempting another Power Strike (consuming another 3 Fatigue) along with another Dodge (consuming another 2 Fatigue) which burns your 3 available Fatigue and deducts another 2 remaining from your Endurance.

Your Stat block now looks like this:

Physical (PHY)

Fatigue   Endurance

☐ ☐ ☑ | ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ■ ■ ■

Now you have not only decreased your available pool of Fatigue points, but now you are very close to losing your grip on consciousness and you are staggering a bit. The ShardMaster may see fit to penalize future attacks in your weakened state.

You glare at your foe, however and decide that if you cannot win, then he won't win either. You prepare a Mortal Blow Attack which consumes 5 Fatigue to attempt. Now you're in trouble… you land the blow and finally vanquish the foe but your two remaining Fatigue are expended, leaving 3 more that you just didn't have in you… 2 of these are checked off your endurance, effectively making you go unconscious, and the remaining 1 indicates an over-exertion so fierce that you actually hurt yourself and you lose one point from your total PHY Stat (note the X in the box indicating Damage).

Your Stat block now looks like this:

Physical (PHY)

Fatigue   Endurance

☑ ☑ ☑ | ☑ ☑ ☑ ☒ ■ ■ ■

A good night's sleep will recover all of your Endurance points (the ones that are checked off) and only one Damage point (the one that is crossed off), so you want to be very careful when you exert yourself to the point of taking damage, however this allows you to truly bend your entire might to Heroic deeds if the need arises, whether Physically, Mentally, Spiritually, Emotionally or Socially.

OF DEATH AND DYING

Taking Damage will cause not only a decrease in available Endurance or even Fatigue, but taking enough Damage will also surely cause you to go unconscious or even die. Without any armor or shielding, the body is actually quite a fragile thing. When you are struck by an opponent, you can absorb only as much Damage as your Fatigue or Tolerance level (marked by the vertical bar), but any other points of Damage are crossed off your Stat block. If you are not exerting in any way, then the moment the last point is crossed off, you're dead. If you are close to Death and you make any exertions, odds are you'll pass out from exhaustion first.

There are five ways to die in Shards of the Stone:

PHYSICAL DEATH

In a Physical death, your corporeal body is damaged so severely that structurally it simply isn't holding together enough to function. Sometimes this is the result of a critical hit to a vital organ, but other times you just get smashed around so badly that your number is up. It is very common to pass out before your final hit is made, but in very severe cases where an extreme amount of damage is done all at once, it can be unavoidable. In the moment of Death, your Soul leaves your body and is interred in the Corelisian Realm where only myth and legend can guide you.

MENTAL DEATH

Even the most powerful of warriors can succumb to this alternate form of death. When all of your Mental Stat points are damaged, the Hero becomes unable to function mentally or is "brain dead." The Soul still remains in the body, but is quite literally imprisoned in a live body with no capacity for thought. The ShardMaster may determine that such extreme Mental damage causes the failure of vital Physical functions, also causing a Physical Death, but the two are quite distinct.

SPIRITUAL DEATH

The most gruesome of ways to pass on… even the Soul, which was destined for the afterlife, is destroyed, leaving the Physical form empty and lifeless. The Spiritual form of any being, or Soul, is that which links the Essences of its creation with the merged Body and Spirit, forming a live being. A spiritual death even makes resurrection quite impossible.

EMOTIONAL DEATH

The sanity framework for this individual is completely destroyed beyond repair. Absolute insanity ensues and although the mind and body are there and can function, the insanity driving the being is thoroughly debilitating. Reconstructing the emotional framework of the Hero is near impossible and far more complicated than restoring a Physical form.

SOCIAL DEATH

Although this form of death may seem counter-intuitive, the EGO or ID of a being is a core part of being "alive." As a being's EGO is deconstructed and destroyed, a Hero is left in a state where their ego and self confidence is absolutely shattered. An abject, consuming fear of everything descends upon the Hero causing them to be unable to function for any effective means, cowering mindlessly and afraid of everything.

RECOVERY

You can recover from damage that is inflicted but it can take many forms. One universal method of recovering from damage that has occurred is quite simple… SLEEP! There's not much that a good night's sleep can't fix, but you only recover one point from each Stat per 8 hours of sleep. Other faster methods or restoration may include healing potions (PHY) or meditative states (MEN) or sacred places/sanctuaries or more. One unique way to be restored completely is visiting one of the major Stone Shrines that are located throughout the world. In a Stone Shrine, days are like hours and recovery can happen much faster.

RESTORATION

Once a Hero has died, restoring that Hero to life is quite a challenge. First of all, restoration is quite a miraculous event so there is no rulebook to follow for an effective way to be restored. The ShardMaster surely can enlighten you on the various possibilities, but legend tell of dedicated Priests actually traversing the Realm of Corelisia to redeem lost souls, or MindWalkers that are so powerful that they can enter the mind of the emotionally ravaged and rebuild their sanity, one step at a time, or the intervention of the Ascended when it suits their whim or furthers their cause.

Just remember that the cure should match the cause, so a person that is mortally wounded Spiritually is going to require a Spiritual Restoration.

INITIATIVE AND STUN

WHO GOES FIRST?

Every combat Round begins with a quick check to see who gets to go first. This is called the **Initiative Check.** Generally each Hero rolls their Power Die and adds the result to their Speed SubStat to determine who goes first. The highest roll wins, followed by the next highest, etc.

In certain circumstances, the ShardMaster may deem that the Initiative should be more related to a Mental Speed factor (MEN:Perception), but in most cases the PHY:Dexterity SubStat is used for Initiative checks.

There are many things that can influence the Initiative results, aside from ShardMaster intervention but carrying too much equipment is the primary inhibitor to Initiative rolls.

The doughty knight that may prowl the dungeon deep, but he also is carrying a kite shield, full plate armor, and a big sack full of loot. This Hero is loaded to the hilt with equipment that forces him to take his time and causes him penalties to his Initiative rolls. Obviously this requires the ShardMaster's decision but modifiers are listed in the Armor Listing section earlier in this book to provide guidelines.

SURPRISE

There are times when you sneak up on someone so effectively that the ShardMaster determines that they do not get an Initiative roll. This is called Surprise and can be a very effective tool in Combat.

Surprise can also happen when you do something so completely unexpected or grandiose that it stuns the awareness of your opponent for a brief moment. This form of Surprise would only result in a penalty to the PHY:Dexterity (-1 for example) or other Speed SubStat of the opponent.

It may be appropriate to let Surprise affect the opponent for more than one round, depending on the nature of the circumstance.

FEAR

Do not confuse Surprise with Fear… This is a much different way of stunning an opponent. Fear is caused by disturbing the Focus of the opponent by intimidating them, horrifying them, or otherwise destabilizing their normal control over themselves. This type of Stun can take several forms.

When you instill fear in an opponent, they can be affected Physically, Spiritually, Mentally, etc.

Perhaps the fearful opponent's hands begin to shake (PHY:Accuracy-1) or they simply cannot keep their mind focused due to horrifying thoughts racing through their mind (MEN:Concentration –1) or they may be infiltrating as a spy in disguise but were nearly discovered (SOC:Persuasion –1). You get the idea. Needless to say, this give the ShardMaster a lot of flexibility in deciding how the Character is affected by Fear.

SHOCK

Shock is a much more visceral form of Stun where the opponent is quite literally reeling from the effects of an Attack… so much so that they not only lose the ability to react as quickly, but their subsequent efforts are sapped of their Power or Endurance. Shock is caused when the Character suffers a blow that exceeds his Tolerance by a multiple of 2 or higher.

"Darek dodges out of the way of as many of the falling projectiles as he can but finally gets clocked by one of the larger stalactites as they plunge from the ceiling. The blow glances off his skull but leaves a long, deep gash down his head, ripping a large wound in his chest and knocks him down to his knees."

"Darek staggers blindly to his feet, unable to see or even hear momentarily and wonders what just happened?"

Now without medical attention, Darek may eventually by in serious trouble, but the physical shock of this attack affected him Physically overall and even Mentally perhaps. To handle this type of Stun, the ShardMaster may just assign a global Physical penalty of PHY –2 which means that all five SubStats are reduced by 2, or he may isolate to just one or two particulars.

Shock can last as long as the ShardMaster deems but generally for the battle-hardened it will wear of in a minute or so (6 rounds).

OTHER VARIANTS

You could take these rules even farther, introducing a Stun based on the Resource SubStats that could be disease, illness, or other "sapping" conditions but the above three are the most common forms of Stun in this game.

MOVEMENT

There are a variety of forms of movement in any given campaign. Each type of movement is most often a function of the Speed of the Hero.

As usual, a MindWalker traversing the sphere of the mind can move using his MEN:Perception (Speed) while a warrior walking the field of battle can move using his PHY:Dexterity.

Just because a Hero can move quickly doesn't mean they can move forever. Endurance quickly comes into play as the Hero is moving about. We'll go into all of these concepts in depth.

TYPES OF MOVEMENT

There are many ways to move. In addition to Running, Walking, and Sprinting, we have Burrowing, Swimming, Flying, and much more.

This table illustrates the types of movements and how to determine your abilities in them

Movement	SubStat	Increments
Walk	PHY:Dexterity	15m / Fatigue
Swim	PHY:Dexterity	10m / Fatigue
Burrow	PHY:Strength	1m / Fatigue
Jump	PHY:Strength	½ m / Fatigue
Fly	PHY:Dexterity	30m / Fatigue

Table 17 - Movement Types

When you're ready to travel, simply declare that you're going to walk for this Round, noting that one Fatigue is being expended and you'll travel 15 meters.

If you need to get somewhere in a hurry, you can Walk twice in the same round (what we call Running) or you can Walk three times (otherwise known as Sprinting), but then you must consume a Fatigue for each one.

The ShardMaster reserves the right to allow over-exertions for Movement. The ShardMaster may decide that you simply cannot Move any faster than your Fatigue dictates.

Although we have convenient terms for Walk, Run and Sprint, you can do the same for Fly, Burrow, etc. If you need to call it something, you can call it Burrow I, Burrow II, and Burrow III or just tell the ShardMaster that you want to Burrow three times.

If you want to give bonuses (Optional!) for higher PHY:Dexterity then you can use the basis that each Point of PHY:Dexterity will enable your Hero to walk 3m… so a PHY:Dexterity of 6 would mean the Hero could Walk 18m / Fatigue

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

Movement is highly dependent on the terrain you are attempting to cross. When you are traversing unfamiliar terrain for example, the ShardMaster may penalize your Movement by reducing your available PHY Tolerance or he may simply reduce your Move Increment from 15m / Fatigue to 10m / Fatigue. Here are some guidelines that will help you determine what the appropriate Movement rates should be:

Movement (per Fatigue)	Walk	Burrow
Dirt/Grassland	15m	1m
Rocky Terrain	10m	½ m
Loose Sand	5m	3m
Water	0m	5m

Table 18 - Environmental Modifiers to Movement

ENDURANCE

Where most Combat Movement is centered around running towards, around (and away from) an opponent, there are also times when long-term movement needs to happen. This involves the trek from city to city, or an extended pursuit. Either way, another set of guidelines may be able to help you handle these situations.

Long-term Movement consumes Endurance points.

Physical (PHY)

Fatigue   Endurance

☐ ☐ | ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ■ ■ ■

Generally every hour of uninterrupted travel will sap an Endurance point from your PHY Stat. This can be combined with Running or Sprinting so this Hero can actually Run for 7 hours without passing out because maintaining a Run requires 2 Fatigue (which he has to the left of the bar) and he can keep it up for five Endurance points (to the right of the bar).

ATTACKING

HIT AND MISS

The art of conflict is more a dance of strategy… learning from your opponent, studying their strengths and capitalizing on their weaknesses. We have developed a set of rules that stray far from the traditional Strength vs. Strength type of combat and introduces something much more rich and more realistic.

When you decide that an Attack is required, you must first decide what type of Attack you are going to attempt. Physical combat is by far the most common and mainly involves PHY:Strength, PHY:Dexterity and PHY:Accuracy with the duration and length of combat determined by PHY:Stamina and PHY:Adrenaline.

Alternatively you may want to just play it simply and only use the PHY Stat in your combat sequences. This is a bit less precise but makes for very simple and smooth game play. Your ShardMaster will decide whether the simple rules or advanced rules will be used. If you use simple rules, just use the PHY Stat for anything based on a Physical SubStat.

ROLLING AN ATTACK

Attacking is very simple. Use PHY:Accuracy to roll your attempt against the PHY:Dexterity of your opponent. When you hit successfully, you calculate damage using the Damage value of the weapon you are using.

RANGE AND AREA OF EFFECT

Each weapon has a listed Range and Area of Effect that applies to the Effects listed for each weapon. Although we provide some of the Effects here, you will find much more precise detail for your Attacks in the Weapons Listings earlier in this book.

OTHER ATTACK METHODS

There are innumerable other means of Attacking your foe, but you can find some other more specialized Attack Methods listed under Fighting Styles earlier in this book.

VISIBILITY

To attack your foe, you must be able to see them. The ShardMaster may decide to assign penalties to PHY:Accuracy of –1 to –3 depending on low visibility, magical darkness or other conditions.

ATTACK LISTING

Attacks	Notes
Chop	Cutting Damage w/ possible Bludgeon
Slash	Cutting damage only
Thrust	Piercing Damage
Disarm	Foe loses one weapon
Fire	Shoots projectile - Piercing
Grapple	Entangles target
Throw	Launches bladed weapon – Cutting or Piercing
Enhancements	**Notes**
Aimed Shot	Targets Head, Arms, Legs or Torso (HALT)
Avoid Armor	Attempts to find ways around armour/shields
Charge	Inertial momentum added to attack
Legendary Force	Supreme over-exertion
Sweep	Drop and kick – tackle opponent with recovery
Effects	**Notes**
Bludgeon Damage	Smashes primary shield with full pass-through
Cutting Damage	Cuts through each shield in order
Piercing Damage	If successful, can pass most damage through
Impact Damage	Causes Bludgeon to all Items simultaneously

Table 19 - Attack Listings Chart

Figure 13 - Flight of Battle

ATTACK METHODS

AIMED SHOT

This is actually not an Attack Method but an enhancement to another Attack. Picture a crossbow sharpshooter quietly waiting until the precise moment to make his shot and then he shoots! This level of concentration requires that the Hero is not disturbed and also consumes all of the Hero's fatigue per Round. However the result is the Hero is granted a +1 PHY:Accuracy for each Round that he aims. The maximum number of Aim bonuses are the number of Fatigue Points available to the Hero for their PHY Stat.

Naturally, as with all other Methods, this can be based on a Focus SubStat for Mental or others, depending on what type of Attack you are contemplating.

BYPASS ARMOR

This is the art of knowing the various means of finding the weak spots in the armor of others. This is one of the unique Attack Methods that is based on a Mental acuity in the midst of combat rather than a Physical skill. The Hero must check against their own MEN:Perception to add a bonus of +1 to their PHY:Accuracy SubStat while consuming an extra Mental Fatigue for their effort.

CHARGE

This is an enhancement to another Attack that enables the Hero to launch his body at a full run toward his prey, terminating the round in a violent Attack. The penalties for a Charge mean the Hero will go last in the Round, despite any Initiative rolls and suffer a PHY:Dexterity penalty of −2. The Hero conversely receives a damage bonus of 1d

CHOP

This is a standard Attack that involves raising the weapon above the head and dropping it with full force. The Chop attack normally causes Cutting Damage if used with a bladed weapon, but can also cause Bludgeon damage if the Chop is done with a blunt weapon.

SLASH

The Slash is a more refined means of dealing damage, more focused on incapacitating a foe than killing them outright, by sliding a sharply edged blade along the target, causing grievous gashes and wounds. The Slash Attack causes Cutting Damage when used with a bladed weapon.

THRUST

The Thrust Attack is as simply defined as skewering your opponent with the tip of the blade. This type of damage harms the armor that it penetrates less than the actual target that receives the force of the blade. The Thrust attack causes Piercing Damage when used with a bladed weapon but can also be used with a blunt weapon for focused Bludgeon Damage.

DISARM

This Attack is rolled like a normal attack, but a successful roll means that the opponent is disarmed rather than damaged. To Disarm, the Hero must roll at a disadvantage of PHY:Accuracy-2

FIRE

This Attack is used with missile weapons and is simply the act of firing the bow or crossbow at a target.

GRAPPLE

This Attack variant is rolled like a normal attack but is based on PHY:Dexterity at a −2 to check to see if the Hero can wrap his arms around the opponent in an effort to hold them. Subsequent Rounds will inevitably involve the opponent attempting Defensive Break Free attempts to get out of a Grapple. Variants of the Grapple include the Tackle, the Trip and other names for the same Method.

LEGENDARY FORCE

The Legendary Force enhancement means the Hero is putting an extra effort into their attack, reaching deep down inside to pull the ultimate in strength and power into their strike. Legendary Force adds 1d of Damage to their Attack but consumes 1 Endurance point for the effort, regardless of any remaining Fatigue points that may be available. For each available Fatigue point, the Hero may double up this enhancement so a Legendary Force II will consume two Endurance and upgrade damage to 2d. This enhancement must be Declared in the Declaration phase… it can't be added to an Attack once the Attack has happened.

SWEEP

The Sweep enhancement means the Hero is attempting to target more than one opponent. Although the Attack is rolled only once based on the Hero's PHY:Dexterity, each opponent rolls his defense separately. Sweep consumes an additional Fatigue per additional target in addition to the Attack Method cost and also penalizes the ambitious Hero with a −1 PHY:Dexterity for each additional target.

THROW

Very similar to the Fire Attack Method, Throw involves the hurling of a weapon at an opponent. Those that are unskilled in this Method of Attack must do so at a −3 PHY:Accuracy while those that have this skill may do so normally.

Figure 14 - Grappling Blade

EFFECTS

You rear back and deliver the decisive stroke in mortal combat with your enemy, but somehow he evades your attack and plunges his blade into your shoulder. You've been hit! But what does this mean? Damage can take a variety of forms… some can be very life-threatening where other types can be very debilitating.

BLUDGEON DAMAGE

Caused by a harsh impact by blunt object, Bludgeon Damage goes along with Concussions, Shock, and many other Effects. Bludgeon Damage is designed to create a forceful impact that will pass through any interposed objects, whether shields or armor, and still pass through collateral damage to the wearer inside through simple brute force of impact while not doing much damage to the armor itself. This type of Damage is messy, brutal, and macabre.

In our illustration to the right, if the attacker were wielding a war hammer, then the Bludgeon Damage is absorbed by the Tolerance of the defender's shield. Any remaining damage is passed through to all objects behind the shield severally so if 5 points of Bludgeon Damage made it past his shield then his armor and his body both would receive the 5 points and would be dealt with separately. The Attacker may choose to target only the shield however, so all damage that was not absorbed would be deducted from the actual Structure of the shield, in an attempt to break it.

CUTTING DAMAGE

Caused by the blunt impact of a sharpened blade, Cutting Damage is designed to destroy not only the protective armor of the target, but also to wreak havoc on the wearer's body once the armor has been penetrated. This is the damage that hacks shields, severs limbs and lops off heads.

Again, in our sample illustration, once the attacker's damage exceeded the Tolerance of the shield, damage would be applied to the Structure of the shield. When the shield is destroyed, then damage would pass through to the armor. When the armor is destroyed then the body would receive Damage.

PIERCING DAMAGE

Caused by the penetration of a slender, pointed tip of a weapon, Piercing Damage is the most innocuous of Damage types but the deadliest. This Damage type does little harm to the protective armor that it pierces but transfers all of its death dealing to the wearer. This is the Damage that pierces the heart while leaving little trace of the wound.

If our sample attacker were wielding an Estoc and hit the defender's armor while exceeding the armor's Tolerance, then only one point per die of damage is absorbed by the Armor… all of the rest passes through to the Target.

Figure 15 - Combat Damage

IMPACT DAMAGE

This is very similar to Bludgeon Damage except it is damage that an Item does to itself by throwing itself against something at a high velocity. If I were to throw our defender off a cliff, then his own inertia and mass would cause Impact Damage.

In this situation, Damage would be calculated separately for every item attached to the fallen Hero independently. Naturally all fragile items would be broken and each individual item would have its Tolerance measured against the full damage of the fall… including the body of the Hero.

OTHER DAMAGE EFFECTS

There are a variety of other possible damage effects including Heat Damage, Cold Damage, Light Damage, Vacuum Damage, Freezing Damage, Acid Damage, and much more so use your imagination and feel free to extend your list of possible Damage Effects.

You are now able to contribute more Damage Effects, if you are interested, you can just go to our website at www.ShardsOfTheStone.com. Just click on the Forge to add your own to our library and we'll make sure you appear in the credits for your efforts.

FIGHTING STYLES

Fighting Styles represent an advanced level of combat training or expertise that most warriors never attain.

Allowing Fighting Styles is an option that ShardMasters should not feel they have to permit.

If Fighting Styles are permitted, some portion of the Hero's Experience Points must be constantly spent on the Fighting Style until all of the Maneuvers are attained… otherwise the training does not "stick" and the Hero will not be able to use any of the Maneuvers until the EPs start going back into the training.

The following are only four of the many Fighting Styles that you will find in the world of Core. Many of the upcoming Realm Books will contain more such styles appropriate to those Realms. Fighting Style Maneuvers are purchased with Experience Points in addition to the EP cost for the Style. If a Hero starts training in a Style during a Campaign, the Maneuvers must be purchased in the order they are listed.

Maneuvers are listed as follows:

NAME (Source SubStat Modifiers, Target SubStat Modifiers, Damage Type, Effect)

Source SubStat Modifiers: This reflects the SubStat used to check success in the move with any relevant modifiers.

Damage Type: This indicates the type of damage caused by this attack: Bludgeon, Piercing, or Cutting.

Effect: This specifies the Power Die damage value as well as any other consequences of success (or failure).

When using a Fighting Style Maneuver, there will often be a modifier to your SubStat values in computing success of an attack. These are key reasons for why masters of Fighting Styles are so dangerous - they know how to fight more efficiently, more effectively. Fighting Style Maneuvers also tend to modify the Damage done by an Attack or have some other special kind of effect.

For more information on how Maneuvers work in Combat, see Chapter Three.

FIGHTING STYLE LISTING

AxeMaster	55 EP	Effect	Die	Fatigue	EP
Block	PHY:Strength +1	Block		1	10
Chop	PHY:Strength+2	Cutting	2d	1	10
Spin Throw	PHY:Dexterity	Cutting	1dC	2	20
Dual Slice	PHY:Dexterity-1	Cutting	3d	3	30
Brawling	**50 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Punch	PHY:Strength	Bludgeon	1d	1	10
Block	PHY:Strength	Block		1	10
Grapple/Tackle	PHY:Dexterity	Grapple		2	20
Haymaker/Kick	PHY:Strength	Bludgeon	2d	3	30
Flying Tackle	PHY:Dexterity	Bludgeon	1d	2	20
Vicious Blow	PHY:Strength + 2	Bludgeon	3d	4	40
Fencing	**25 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Parry	PHY:Dexterity	Block		1	10
Retreating Slash	PHY:Strength – 2	Cutting	1d	1	10
Slash	PHY:Strength	Cutting	1d	2	20
Disarm	PHY:Accuracy	Disarm		2	20
Lunge	PHY:Dexterity	Piercing	2d	3	30
KnifeMaster	**45 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Block/Parry	PHY:Dexterity –3			1	10
Thrust	PHY:Strength	Piercing	1d	1	10
Blunt Throw	PHY:Dexterity	Bludgeon	1d/2	2	20
Throw	PHY:Accuracy +1	Piercing	2d	2	20
Two Blade Chop	PHY:Dexterity	Cutting	2d	3	30
Stab Drag	PHY:Strength	Piercing	1d	3	30
		Cutting	1d		
Martial Arts	**100 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Water on Stone	PHY:Dexterity	Recover		0	0
Shielding Way	PHY:Dexterity	Block		1	10
Guarding Strike	PHY:Strength - 2	Bludgeon	1d	1	10
Flowing Way	PHY:Dexterity	Dodge		2	20
Balanced Strike	PHY:Strength	Bludgeon	1d	2	20
Even Hands	PHY:Accuracy	Disarm		2	20
Forceful Strike	PHY:Strength	Bludgeon	2d	2	20
Gift of the Trees	Add stick or staff to any maneuver (+1 Damage)				10
Tangled Weeds	PHY:Strength + 3	Grapple		3	30
Water in the Hands	PHY:Adrenaline	Recover		3	30
StaveMaster	**25 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Block/Parry	PHY:Dexterity			1	10
Half Strike	PHY:Strength	Bludgeon	1d	1	10
Thrust	PHY:Strength+1	Bludgeon	1d	2	20
Full Strike	PHY:Strength +2	Bludgeon	2d	3	30
Whirling Block	PHY:Dexterity+2	Bludgeon	3d	3	30
SwordMaster	**25 EP**	**Effect**	**Die**	**Fatigue**	**EP**
Slash	PHY:Dexterity	Cutting	1d	1	10
Parry	PHY:Dexterity	Block		1	10
Thrust	PHY:Strength	Piercing	1d	2	20
Defensive Slash	PHY:Dexterity	Cutting / Block	1d	2	20
Overhead Chop	PHY:Strength	Cutting	1d	3	30
		Bludgeon	1d		
Charge	PHY:Dexterity+2	Cutting	2d	3	30

Table 20 - Fighting Style Listings Chart

AXE MASTER

This fighting style is vicious and brutal, aimed at the quick incapacitation or elimination of an opponent. The core style favors large sweeping strokes of a single axe, but the more refined forms also include the smaller, and just as deadly, hand axes and throwing axes, making this skill suitable for ranged combat and close quarters.

BLOCK

Modifier: PHY:Strength +1	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: Blocking	**Fatigue:** 1

The Block is an attempt to wedge the opponent's weapon in the crook of the axe blade and hilt, stopping their momentum and absorbing the force of their blow into the hilt and forearms. A successful Block means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round but an axe is not the most suited to this form of defense and is subject to penalties.

CHOP

Modifier: PHY:Strength +2	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: 2d Cutting Damage	**Fatigue:** 1

A proper Chop maneuver is a half-strike, landing the blade of the Axe with a good amount of force in an attempt to sever a limb or penetrate armor. This is the standard attack used to wreak havoc on armor and shields. Cutting damage is the result, although a sizeable hit may even cause Bludgeoning damage if the Chop is fully absorbed.

SPIN THROW

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: 1d Cutting Damage	**Fatigue:** 2

The attacker can launch their axe, whether hand-held (1dC) or a full size axe (2dC) in a spinning motion designed to terminate the spin with the blade contacting the target. Those that do not have this fighting style skill will only strike blade first, even though they hit, 25% of the time.

THROW

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 1d Piercing Damage	**Fatigue:** 2

This Maneuver also relieves the Hero of a weapon but gives the attacker a ranged method of delivering Piercing damage.

DUAL SLICE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity −1	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 3d Cutting Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

This rapid strike attack turns the axe blade into a slicing weapon. Rather than executing a full bore chop maneuver, the attacker pulls the hilt, forcing the blade to slice against his foe with a second slice to the reverse direction. This move is very difficult to pull off but can cause a lot of damage if landed properly.

BRAWLING

This Fighting Style represents less a structured set of forms than it does either years of pub-crawling experience or a natural gift for pummeling people (and not getting too pummeled in return). Despite its crude foundation, there is a certain artistry to it that true warriors cannot help but respect. Brawling is a non-weapon Fighting Style.

PUNCH

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 1

A rapid-fire strike that leaves the brawler well poised to block or swerve any counter-attack.

BLOCK

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: Block	**Fatigue:** 1

As an Action, the Hero can intercept an incoming Attack. A successful Block means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round.

GRAPPLE/TACKLE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: Grapple	**Fatigue:** 2

With this Maneuver, a Hero simply grabs someone. After that, they can throw them to the ground, squeeze them, or just maintain a grip without doing any harm. To break a Grapple the opponent must check their PHY:Strength against the PHY:Strength of the Attacker. The opponent, while Grappled, suffers a reduction of half of their PHY:Dexterity for any further Dodges or other Evades.

HAYMAKER/KICK

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 2d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

Either a full-on, wide arc punch that places everything the brawler has into it, or else a powerful kick placed to a joint or soft spot. This attack often surprises opponents, but it usually leaves the brawler open to counter-attacks.

FLYING TACKLE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage and Grapple	**Fatigue:** 2

This is one of the rare Maneuvers that can be performed by a Hero with enough Fatigue to pull it off. Launching into the air, the Hero tackles their opponent, and both end up on the ground. The opponent is Grappled, just as with the Grapple Maneuver and also takes a die of Bludgeon damage.

VICIOUS BLOW

Modifier: PHY:Strength +2	**Cost:** 40 EP
Result: 3d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 4

A hard chop to a vital spot or a wrenching grasp of a joint that results in more permanent Damage than most Brawling Maneuvers.

FENCING

A very artistic and formalized form of swordplay that originated in gentlemanly circles and cultures where style is honored more than force. Fencers must be skilled with either Small Blades or Swords, and Fencing is strictly a one-handed weapon Fighting Style (though fighting "Sword-and-Dagger" is permitted).

PARRY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 10 EP
Result: Parry	Fatigue: 1

As an Action, the Hero can intercept an incoming Melee or Hand to Hand Attack. A successful Block means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round.

RETREATING SLASH

Modifier: PHY:Strength –2	Cost: 10 EP
Result: 1d Cutting Damage	Fatigue: 1

An extremely efficient and effective Maneuver that tends to be the "default" for most fencers. A quick slashing attack, followed up by a highly defensive stance.

SLASH

Modifier: PHY:Strength	Cost: 20 EP
Result: 1d Cutting Damage	Fatigue: 2

A more direct, blunt attack that has more force than a Retreating Slash, but still leaves the fencer fairly well-positioned for defense.

DISARM

Modifier: PHY:Accuracy	Cost: 20 EP
Result: Disarm	Fatigue: 2

One of the more effective tools of a fencer, this Maneuver gives the user an opportunity to relieve their opponent of their weapon… usually with style and flourish.

LUNGE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 30 EP
Result: 2d Piercing	Fatigue: 3

The most devastating attack in a fencer's arsenal, defensiveness is sacrificed for a lightning stroke full of power and thrust.

KNIFE MASTER

This fighting style caters to the less apparent warrior who favors one or many daggers or knives rather than the unwieldy swords or staves. Preferring art and flourish to brute damage, these Maneuvers can still be quite deadly and result in the more perilous Piercing Damage which poses quite a threat even to armored opponents.

BLOCK/PARRY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity –3	Cost: 10 EP
Result: Block or Parry	Fatigue: 1

The Block/Parry attempts a redirection of an incoming attack using the hilt guard and the blade of the knife to angle an incoming attack to a harmless place. This is effectively a Block but does not stop the impetus of the attacker's momentum, leaving him in a less defensible position. A successful Block means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round but a knife is not the most suited to this form of defense and is hard to do properly.

THRUST

Modifier: PHY:Strength	Cost: 10 EP
Result: 1d Piercing Damage	Fatigue: 1

A proper Thrust maneuver originates from a reset position, throwing the counter-momentum of the opposite hip, pivoting all of the bulk of the body into an extension of the knife arm directly into the opponent. This Maneuver is harder to block since any redirection will still be likely to make contact. This is one of the few attacks to cause the more deadlier Piercing Damage and is useful for piercing armor, but is much less effective against Shields.

BLUNT THROW

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 20 EP
Result: ½ d Bludgeon Damage	Fatigue: 2

This Maneuver leaves the Hero without his weapon but allows for the knife to be briefly balanced then thrown with the intent of landing hilt-first for a Bludgeoning attack.

THROW

Modifier: PHY:Accuracy +1	Cost: 20 EP
Result: 2d Piercing Damage	Fatigue: 2

This Maneuver also relieves the Hero of a weapon but gives the attacker a ranged method of delivering Piercing damage.

TWO BLADE CHOP

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 30 EP
Result: 2d Cutting Damage	Fatigue: 3

Fighting with two knives takes a lot of practice and is generally accompanied by a dancing method of fighting, involving spins, etc. The Hero gets himself into the position of being able to spin full-circle, driving both blades in turn into an awe-inspiring flurry of Cutting Damage.

STAB DRAG

Modifier: PHY:Strength	Cost: 30 EP
Result: 1d Piercing and 1d Cutting Damage	Fatigue: 3

This vicious Attack leverages both the piercing and cutting capabilities of your knives by enabling the Creature to attempt to stab the blade through the target's defenses and then drag the blade along for maximum cutting damage.

MARTIAL ARTS

This is a "generic" version of the formalized Fighting Styles that many cultures develop as a path to both mental focus, spiritual enlightenment and self-defense. Such arts emphasize self-reliance, inner peace, and harmony of motion. However, they also stress power and self-defense against better-armed or stronger foes. The Style presented is very much like a combination of karate and aikido. Martial Arts is normally a non-weapon form of combat, though one of the Maneuvers actually allows for the martial artist to be able to use the other Maneuvers with staves, sticks, and clubs.

WATER ON STONE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 0 EP
Result: Recover	Fatigue: 0

This is the first thing that all martial artists are taught - how to fall. In knowing this Maneuver, a Hero who is thrown (normally from a Grab) or has been knocked down can re-roll a defense using their MEN:Concentration + Power Die against the opponent's Attack roll to see if they recover right back to their feet (or other reset position).. Use of this Maneuver is automatic and requires no Action to perform. No Damage is avoided by this Maneuver.

SHIELDING WAY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 10 EP
Result: Block	Fatigue: 1

As an Action, the Hero can intercept an incoming Attack. A successful Block means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round.

GUARDING STRIKE

Modifier: PHY:Strength –2	Cost: 10
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage	Fatigue: 1

An extremely efficient and effective Maneuver that tends to be the "default" for most martial artists. A quick hand or foot strike, followed up by a highly defensive stance.

FLOWING WAY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	Cost: 20 EP
Result: Dodge	Fatigue: 2

By doing nothing else but getting out of the way, the martial artist turns their entire focus to evading an attack. Flowing Way allows the Martial Artist to roll twice in Defense and choose the higher value.

BALANCED STRIKE

Modifier: PHY:Strength	Cost: 20 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon	Fatigue: 2

An efficient punch or kick that leaves the martial artist well poised for receiving a counter-strike.

EVEN HANDS

Modifier: PHY:Accuracy	Cost: 20 EP
Result: Disarm	Fatigue: 2

One of the more effective tools of a martial artist, this Maneuver allows the user to use their PHY:Accuracy in a combination Parry and Disarm Defense. If successful, Damage from the incoming Attack is Parried and the opponent is Disarmed.

FORCEFUL STRIKE

Modifier: PHY:Strength	Cost: 20 EP
Result: 2d Bludgeon Damage	Fatigue: 2

An extremely powerful punch or kick, this Maneuver is easier for an opponent to see coming, but the martial artist is still left in a balanced, defensible stance.

Figure 16 - Jungle Arts

GIFT OF THE TREES

Modifier: +1 to Damage	Cost: 10 EP
Result: Add stick or staff to any maneuver	Fatigue: 0

This is not exactly a Maneuver. Instead, it represents a stage of training during which the martial artist learns how to make use of sticks, clubs, and staves as effective weapons as part of the Martial Arts Fighting Style. Having this Maneuver means that all other Martial Arts Maneuvers can be used with a stick, club, or staff.

TANGLED WEEDS

Modifier: PHY:Strength +3	Cost: 30 EP
Result: Grapple	Fatigue: 3

With this Maneuver, a Hero simply grabs someone. After that, they can throw them to the ground, squeeze them, or just maintain a grip without doing any harm. To break a Grapple the opponent must check their PHY:Strength against the PHY:Strength of the Attacker. The opponent, while Grappled, suffers a reduction of half of their PHY:Dexterity for any further Dodges or other Evades.

WATER IN THE HANDS

Modifier: PHY:Adrenaline	Cost: 30 EP
Result: Recover	Fatigue: 3

A Hero with this Maneuver who is Grappled can roll an additional Defense using their PHY:Adrenaline for the purposes of breaking the hold.

STAVE MASTER

This fighting style is tailored toward a less-brutal method of subduing an opponent or for those that do not favor the more violent (and bloody) forms of bladed combat. Based solely on Bludgeon Damage, this combat style still makes a Hero a person to be contended with.

BLOCK/PARRY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: Block or Parry	**Fatigue:**

The Block/Parry attempts a redirection of an incoming attack using the length of the stave to angle an incoming attack to a harmless place. This is effectively a Block but does not stop the impetus of the attacker's momentum, leaving him in a less defensible position. A successful Block means that they may automatically follow without expending any fatigue (for the Block only) with a Half Strike and they gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round.

HALF STRIKE

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 1

Gripping the staff at its mid-point, the Hero can deliver a rapping blow that causes Bludgeon damage and leaves the Hero in a good reset position for the next attack.

THRUST

Modifier: PHY:Strength +1	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage with Piercing	**Fatigue:** 2

With one hand circling the staff and the other pushing with all momentum, the Thrust allows the Hero to focus all of the Bludgeoning Damage directly to one section of the target's body or armor. If successful, 1d of Tolerance points of the target's armor can be Bypassed before pass-through damage is calculated.

FULL STRIKE

Modifier: PHY:Strength +2	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 2d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

With enough preparation, the Hero can slide both hands to the end of the staff and swinging over-head with a full-Strength attack to the target. Although more easily Parried than Blocked, if this attack gets through, it can cause serious Bludgeoning Damage to the Target.

WHIRLING BLOCK

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity +2	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 3d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

A unique defensive attack, the Whirling Block involves spinning the staff with a complicated set of hand movements, Parrying just about any incoming attack, and terminating with the staff under the Hero's arm, ready for an immediate Half Strike in the next Round.

SWORD MASTER

This is a weapon-based Fighting Style using the flat-bladed, one-handed sword, although much more direct and brutal than the graceful Fencing forms. For two-handed swords, simply add one Fatigue to each Maneuver where appropriate.

SLASH

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: 1d Cutting Damage	**Fatigue:** 1

An efficient, slicing cut, emphasizing drawing the blade across the target rather than chopping. This type of Maneuver causes less damage but allows for a proper recovery for the next attack or defense.

PARRY

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 10 EP
Result: Block	**Fatigue:** 1

The Parry allows for a simple redirection of an incoming attack along the blade of the sword to a harmless place. This is effectively a Block but does not stop the impetus of the attacker's momentum, leaving him in a less defensible position. A successful Parry means that they will automatically gain the Initiative against their attacker on the next Round.

THRUST

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: 1d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 2

A proper Thrust maneuver originates from a reset position, throwing the counter-momentum of the opposite hip, pivoting all of the bulk of the body into an extension of the sword arm direct into the opponent. This Maneuver is harder to block since any redirection will still be likely to make contact. This is one of the few attacks to cause the more deadly Piercing Damage and is useful for piercing armor, but is much less effective against Shields.

DEFENSIVE SLASH

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity	**Cost:** 20 EP
Result: 1d Cutting Damage with Block	**Fatigue:** 2

An extremely efficient and effective Maneuver that tends to be the "default" for most fighters. A quick swing or thrust, followed up by a highly defensive stance.

OVERHEAD CHOP

Modifier: PHY:Strength	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 1d Cutting and 1d Bludgeon Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

An extremely powerful, over-the-head swing, this Maneuver is easier for an opponent to see coming, and leaves the fighter in a much less defensible stance, but it delivers a hefty blow.

CHARGE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity +2	**Cost:** 30 EP
Result: 2d Cutting Damage	**Fatigue:** 3

This is one of the rare Maneuvers that can be performed by a Hero who enough Fatigue to pull it off. Moving all out to get to an opponent, the fighter sacrifices some accuracy and defensiveness, but they gain the distance and can still inflict Damage in the bargain.

DEFENDING

DEFENSIVE METHODS

In the thick of battle, your Hero still needs to move around… if not more so than at other times.

Combat movement requires a bit of precision since where the opponents are and how fast they got there may mean the difference between life or death.

Following is a summary of the Methods that are available for Movement when in Combat situations:

DODGE

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity +2	Cost: 0 EP
Result: Dodge	Fatigue: 2

The dodge is a classic attempt to get out of the way. A dodge can be as effective as the effort put into it, so the Hero can choose a simple Dodge for 2 Fatigue Points or he can throw everything he's got into a stage II Dodge (costing 4 Fatigue) or even a stage III Dodge (6 Fatigue). Either way, each stage of Dodge that is attempted can add +2 to the Hero's PHY:Dexterity when rolling his defensive maneuver.

BREAK FREE

Modifier: PHY:Strength +1	Cost: 0 EP
Result: Break Free	Fatigue: 1

This combat Method enables a Hero to free himself from a Grapple situation. Generally this is treated like an inverse Attack where the Hero that is Grappled pits his PHY:Strength (plus his Power Die) against the Grappling opponent's PHY:Strength (plus his Power Die).

RECOVER

Modifier: PHY:Dexterity +1	Cost: 0 EP
Result: Recover	Fatigue: 1

When a Hero is knocked down or was just on the ground (sleeping or otherwise) they can attempt to Recover which puts them in a combat stance ready for whatever is coming next. Recover requires 1 Fatigue.

IMPROVING YOUR DEFENSE

There are a variety of ways that you can alter your choice of battlefield to improve your defensive (or offensive) position. The following chart highlights some other scenarios that the ShardMaster may consider for use in combat sequences:

Scenario	Attacker
Target is moving	PHY:Accuracy -1
Target is mounted and Attacker is on foot	PHY:Accuracy -1
Target is on foot and the Attacker is mounted	PHY:Accuracy +1
Target is silhouetted by light behind them	PHY:Accuracy +2
Target is half obscured behind rocks, trees, etc	PHY:Accuracy −2
Target is mostly obscured behind a door or corner	PHY:Accuracy −3
Target is prone (in ranged combat)	PHY:Accuracy -2

Table 21 - Defense Modifiers

Figure 17 - SwordMaster
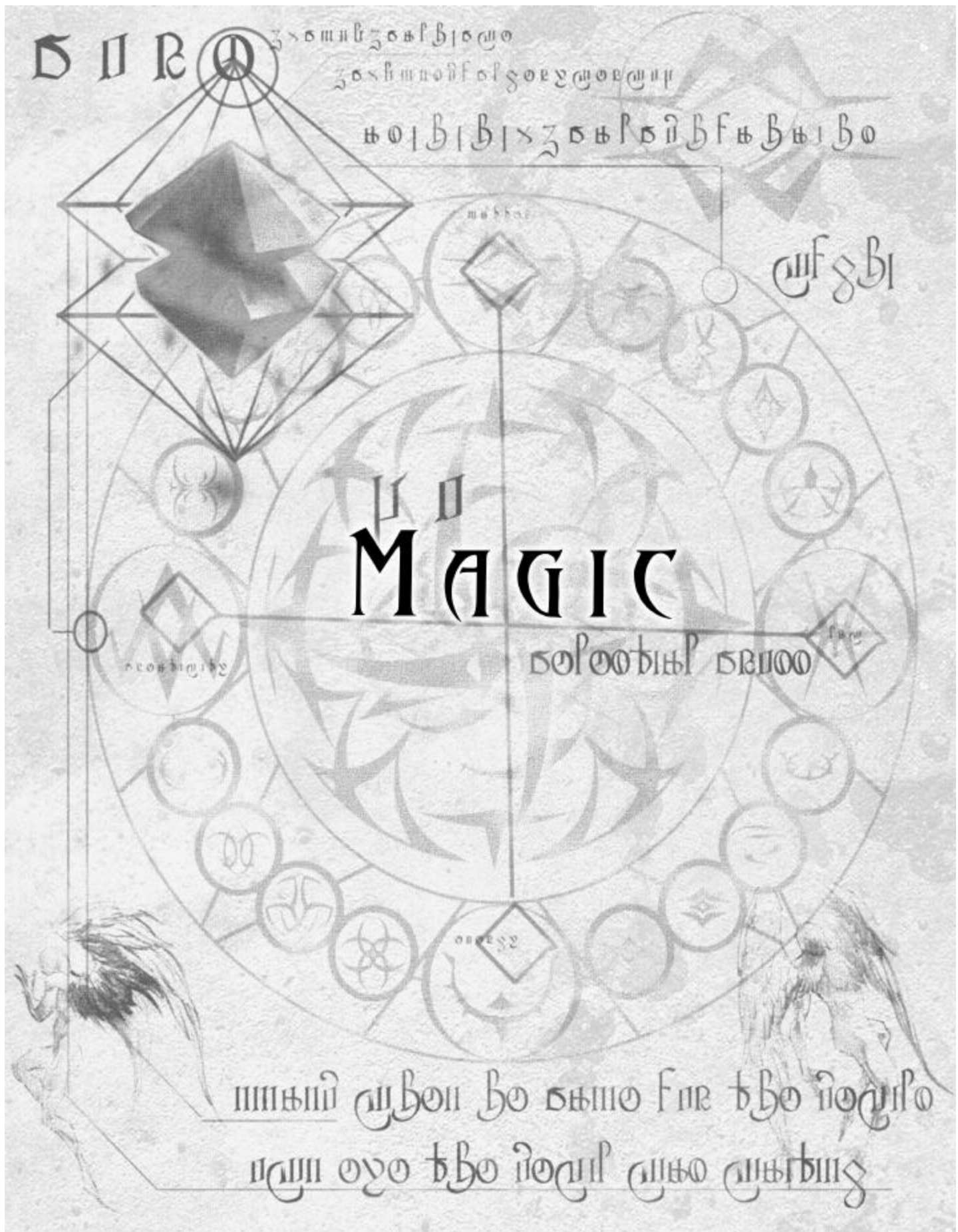
MAGIC

FRAGMENTED MAGIC

Magic is not just a part of the Core world of Shards of the Stone… Magic IS the Core world. Forged at its very core, the world surrounds and is surrounded by the essence, Fragments, and Shards of the CoreStone. Magic is the variety of permeating energies that exude from these arcane sources and retains properties and features of the native Fragments that it emanates from.

Discard your common thoughts regarding magic that was taught to you… you are also created from Magic at your very core. Your physical strength issues forth from the very rocks and stones… your mind and its infinite power derives its energy from the very emanations of Light and Order and so forth.

The Progeny in its own wisdom and perhaps folly formed each of the races of the world from the very aspects of the Shards of the Stone, imbuing each race with its own unique imbalances and powers. With magic at your very core of formation, you too can harness your own intricate pattern of energy and perform magical deeds that will astonish those that you know and will introduce you to an entire new realm of brethren that will come to know you better than you know yourself.

FRAGMENT BURN

You can look around you with your mortal eyes and never see the things that I see. I look and I behold not the trees or the creatures, but arcane symbologies and patterns that are woven throughout all matter and energy, animate or inanimate. I can look upon you and see beyond your mind, beyond your soul, to your very framework of the twenty and five sacred elements that form your magical construction.

You think yourself mundane but I say to you that in the moment of your creation, Fragments were consumed and their mystical energies transferred into your corporeal and spiritual being.

When you learn to harness your powers, you too will begin to see the Fragments around you and meld them to your own will, according to your own, innate nature. Cast a spell and bend the elemental forces near you to merge with your own magical structure, and imbue your incantations with a force so compelling and so potent that you will forever humble yourself before its power… yet you will also ply to become its master.

As you take so shall you give. You will ensure that balance is restored to the Realms and you will visit your Stone Shrine often to help in the worthy cause of monitoring the balance.

You will become our Valiant. Not with your blade or your wealth, but with the invisible mind. Your intellect will become a piercing, edged weapon in your own progression and in the service of Balance itself.

Hone your skills, endeavor to improve your knowledge, and increase your capacity to exercise your mental might.

Only thus will you become the Hero of magic that we all expect you to be.

- G'Zuldjian the StoneMage

THE STONE UNSUNDERED

To begin your trek toward learning magic, you must come to a more complete knowledge of the very nature of the Balanced CoreStone.

THE CORE

The central element of the CoreStone is the only element that does not have an antithetical partner, Time. Time is that around which all else revolves, and through which all must pass. It is also the element to which only eight of the Shards of the Stone are attached. If you traced a line from Order to Law to Matter to Order, from Order to Law to Time To Order and from Order to Time to Matter To Order, you would be able to visualize only one of the Core Shards that form the eight faced core of the CoreStone. Realms and beings that are based on one or more of these Shards stand to gain considerable power, and considerable danger, as in the Culmination of things, they will be the final participants.

THE PRIMAL ORDER

The Primal Order consists of the four elements lined up along the center of the CoreStone: Reality, Order, Chaos and Unreality. Two of these four elements are linked to all other elements in one way or another. These tend to be extremely powerful as well, but also tend to be a bit obscure in their practical use.

THE CELESTIAL CROSS

These elements form the binding and backbone of the CoreStone and are truly the functional workhorses of magical energy. Draw a line from Matter to Energy and then from Law to Creativity to see the Celestial Cross within the heart of the CoreStone. At the Culmination, this is where the final two halves of the CoreStone will be re-joined, and can only be re-joined with both halves assembled properly and simultaneously merged at the Celestial Cross. From the elements of the Celestial Cross you find the perfect balance of Order and Chaos… Unreality and Reality. Matter is no more ordered or chaotic than Energy, in fact they are one in the same, as are Law and Creativity hence their placement as the Joiners of the Stone, the only Elements that would be joined..

THE VERTICES OF CONSEQUENCE

Here you encounter all aspects of the CoreStone in its wonder and mystery. There are innumerable combinations of the various elements that combine in all sorts of mystical patterns and designs, such that understanding all of them will drive the mind insane but not understanding them may well serve to mean the destruction of the very world that we serve.

Raw natural elements like Water, Earth, Fire and Air are all derived from their mother element Matter. You can see that they protrude from the CoreStone as Vertices of all of the other Shards of the Stone, hence their name, but you also can see that there are other groups; Vertices as powerful and intricate: Life, Honor, Pride and Spirit; Light, Love, Dark-ness and Hate; Truth, Faith, Fear and Deception. All form families of sorts that when focused on in study can lend truly powerful essences and magicks, but when isolated from their brethren can isolate you from even further potentials unknown to you now. True power takes its form when you can learn aspects of each of the families of the Vertices of Consequence but none yet have accomplished such a task. It is said that only a great warrior can gather the Shards necessary for even one half of the CoreStone, but they can only be fused by a single mage that has mastered each aspect of the Shards that he is attempting to rejoin. Rumors also abound that to rejoin these Shards may even require the lives of those doing the Joining. Such is the bittersweet power and sacrifice needed to save the World and its peoples. Who will step forward to master the intricacies of the Shards of the Stone? Who will be worthy to wield them as they are gathered?

Figure 18 - CoreStone Diagram

THE ESSENCE OF MAGIC

ANTIPATHIES

Magic in its natural form strives to maintain its balance at all times. To that end you will find that the less costly spells to master are those that do not combine elements that are diametrically opposed. This diametric opposition is called an Antipathy and means that the two Elements in question are polar opposites, black and white, the yin and yang for each other. Examples of such combinations include the lesser-powered combinations of Earth and Water or Light and Darkness but also comprise the volatile mixtures of Order and Chaos or, unfathomably, Reality and Unreality.

Creatures too tend to follow a similar bias, generally based on the fact that they too are formed from the very aspects of the Shards of the Stone as well. Creatures of Chaos will shun Creatures of Order and so forth.

Just because that is the natural order of things does not necessarily mean that such combinations must be avoided however. Magic spells that strive to combine antithetical Elements are very volatile and dangerous, but also are extremely powerful.

Maintaining the magical control required in casting such a spell requires five times the required Fragments if you include antithetical elements, and that number increases by an exponential factor as you introduce two more antithetical elements to a particular mix.

SYMPATHIES

A Sympathetic combination of Elements is the most harmonious of combinations and creates spells of stunning power without the need for the wards and controls that antithetical combinations require.

A sympathetic combination involves mixing a parent Element with one of its derived children such as Law and Honor or Reality and Earth or Chaos and Hate.

These synergistic compounds are less challenging to utilize in spells and are far less costly when examining Fragment burn, but provide for a far less diverse mix of spells to choose from.

Creatures themselves also have innate sympathies to other elements. As you examine your own Racial makeup you will find Elemental aspects of your own nature that make you able to utilize higher levels of Elements that are sympathetic to your own nature.

MAGICAL STYLES

Every mage must select their particular focus of spellcasting. There are innumerable styles of magic derived from the primary Quadrants but these are the most powerful:

ADEPT

Adeptery is the exploration of the Psyche, the ID, and the Ego. This substrate layer of the mind itself involves an entirely separate realm in which the Adept can enter and probe the realms of the inner being. Adepts are driven by the quadrant of Emotional elements: Hate, Light, Love and Darkness.

CHANNELER

The Channeler beckons to the Progeny themselves and invites them to invest their powers in their humble servants as instruments for the gods. The Channelers focus on the Spiritual quadrant of Faith, Fear, Life and Spirit.

PSION

The Psion masters the powers of suggestion, mind control, and persuasion. These political mavens not only attempt to dictate and control the Social environs of the Creatures of the world, they enjoy meddling with it, to its own catastrophic loss. Psions exploit the Social elements of: Honor, Deception, Truth, Pride and derive their resource of power from the will of imposed Law.

SORCERER

The Sorcerer taps the strength of Time itself to power arcane magicks that combine the elements of Unreality, Chaos, Reality and Order into extremely powerful yet supremely perilous spells. Control of these incantations can only come as a result of years of dedication and study and is actually not based on a quadrant of magic… it is the center column of Magic and is based on the Primal Order.

WIZARD

The Wizard is quite simply a combat mage. Leaning toward the study of the crude elemental quadrant of Matter, these mages study those Elements most tactile and visceral: Earth, Air, Fire and Water. These mages strive to harness the furies of the volcano, the stoic bones of the mountains themselves, the hurricanes churning in the seas and the juggernaut swells of the oceans depths. Patternology is their realm, forming intricate, twisting designs of formulae that are incomprehensible to the untrained eye but drive power and effects that rival that of the gods themselves.

CREATING A SPELLCASTER

SELECT A QUADRANT

The creation process for a Spellcaster is identical to the creation of a standard Warrior until you get to the process of Skill selection. Mages have an untold burden placed upon them to explore the arcane mysteries, compiling each mystical formula they master into a library of their own discovery.

These spellbooks consist of Methods called Spells or Prayers, or Incantations, depending on their chosen Quadrant of magic. A beginning Mage must decide which Quadrant they are going to pursue and once decided they will begin the process of selecting the Spells in their Quadrant that match their particular style.

Mage Type	Quadrant	Aspect	Cost
Empath	Energy	Emotional	**50 EP**
Channeler	Creativity	Spiritual	**30 EP**
Psion	Law	Social	**70 EP**
Sorcerer	Time	Mental	**100 EP**
Alchemist	Matter	Physical	**20 EP**

Table 22 - Mage Types Chart

Figure 19 - Windows of Incantation

SELECT A STYLE

Each magical Style is derived from one (or more) Quadrants and aligns its objectives to that of the Quadrant that they serve. You will find a rich set of magical Styles as you travel between Realms, but here are some magical Styles to get you started:

Magic Style	Mage Type	Quadrant
Druid	Empath	Emotional
Priest	Channeler	Spiritual
MindWalker	Psion	Social
GateKeeper	Sorcerer	Mental
StoneMage	Alchemist	Physical

Table 23 - Magic Styles Chart

Of course it is up to your ShardMaster if any of these Quadrants are available to you or if you can make alterations to the existing ones. Most Realms have their own variations on these types of Styles and Quadrants so as you move from Realm to Realm (if in fact you do) so you may have to re-learn a few things or perhaps even adopt a new Quadrant if necessary.

SELECT YOUR SPELLS

Although the ShardMaster may choose to dictate spell availability, generally during Character creation you can choose a few spells to get started with. Each spell not only will cost Experience Points (EP) to purchase, but also may require some form of study, maintenance cost, or even may alter your natural composition.

SPELL FORMATS

Spells are listed with the principal information for each one listed as such:

Cost: EP Cost for Spell	**Range:** Range and Type of Range
Source: Source Substat	**Area:** Area of Effect
Target: Target SubStat	**Duration:** Duration of Spell
Essence: List of Fragment/Reagents Needed	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Level 1 Result	Fatigue Consumed

Full Description of the Spell including casting methods, how it can be countered, etc.

SOURCE
This indicates the SubStat that will be used in the execution of the Spell Method. The caster rolls his Power Die and adds it to their SubStat listed here when using the Spell against an unwilling target. To cast things on himself or a willing target, the Caster simply must roll his power die and get a result lower than this Source SubStat value to succeed.

TARGET
This indicates the SubStat that the target will use to defend against this spell. Similarly the target would roll his power die plus his SubStat value and try to overcome the caster's influence.

RANGE (R)
The number of meters over which this spell can extend for each stage of the spell purchased. Sometimes a special range is used such as Self (S), Touch (T) or Line of Sight (LoS). If the Range depends on how the SubStat value, then it will show x10 meaning that ten meters multiplied by the SubStat value.

AREA OF EFFECT (A)
The number of meters that this spell covers including the Area Types: Radial (R), Linear (L), Cubical (C), Sheet (S), or Pinpoint (P). If the Area depends on the SubStat value, then it will show x10 meaning that ten meters would be multiplied by the SubStat value.

DURATION (D)
The number of Rounds or Minutes or Hours or Days that the spell lasts for each Stage that is purchased. The notation x10 means that 10 minutes is multiplied times the SubStat value. Permanent (P) and Instant (I) are also valid values.

FATIGUE (F)
This involves the number of Fatigue that must be expended each Round to maintain this spell. Some spells can also require Endurance to be expended or even Damage to be expended to cast this spell. This is shown as 1F 2E 1D, where Fatigue, Endurance and Damage are abbreviated.

SPELL METHODS LISTING

Druid	Source	Target	R	A	D	EP
Empath Aura	EMO:Empathy	EMO:Ego	S	x10	x1	5
Animal Speech	EMO:Empathy	EMO:Ego	S	*		10
Fear Drain	EMO:Passion	EMO:Ego	T		*	20
Peaceful Touch	EMO:Empathy	EMO:Intuitioin	T	T	x10	20
Hard as Stone	EMO:Passion	EMO:Ego	S	S	x1 day	20
Nature Travel	EMO:Empathy	EMO:Ego	T	T	x10	20
Passion Burst	EMO:Passion	EMO:Intuition	x1	T	I	20
Touch of Transference	EMO:Dedication	PHY:Adrenal	T	T	I	30
Rolling Fog	EMO:Passion	EMO:Discern.	S	Per 5	x100	30
Become One	EMO:Empathy	EMO:Ego	T	S	x100	30
Sword of the Storm	EMO:Passion	PHY:Stamina	x5	T	I	40
The Call	EMO:Empathy	SOC:Will	x10		x10	10

GateKeeper	Source	Target	R	A	D	EP
Psychic Vision	MEN:Perception	MEN:Sanity	10	x10	x10	10
Awareness	MEN:Perception	SOC:Will	x10	T	x10	10
Eldritch Blast	MEN:Intellect	PHY:Stamina	x10	x1R	I	10
Temporal Stutter	MEN:Memory	MEN:Sanity	S	S	I	10
Eldritch Arrow	MEN:Concen	MEN:Perception	x20	P	I	10
Eldritch Bonds	MEN:Concen	PHY:Strength	x10		x10	10
Illusory Shield	MEN:Sanity	MEN:Sanity	T	T	*	20
Chaos Blast	MEN:Perception	MEN:Concent	x10	x1R	I	20
Crystallization	MEN:Concen	MEN:Perception	T	T	P	30
Deconstruction	MEN:Perception	MEN:Concent	T	T	P	40

MindWalker	Source	Target	R	A	D	EP
MindWalk Aura	SOC:Will	SOC:Humility	S	x1	x10	10
Truth Detector	SOC:Will	SOC:Humility	T	T	x1	10
Will Sap	SOC:Attraction	SOC:Will	T	x2	*	20
Mob Rage	SOC:Persuasion	SOC:Will	S	x10R	x10	30
Suggestion	SOC:Charisma	SOC:Will	x1	x1R	x10	10
Fools Folly	SOC:Will	SOC:Humility	T	x1R	P	30
Inner Beauty	SOC:Attraction	MEN:Perception	S	x10R	x20	40
MindWalk	SOC:Will		S	S	*	50

StoneMage	Source	Target	R	A	D	EP
Pattern Aura	PHY:Adrenal	PHY:Strength	x10		x10	10
AirBolt	PHY:Accuracy	PHY:Dexterity	x20	T	I	10
Altering the Way	PHY:Adrenal	*Special	x1		I	10
Binding Earth	PHY:Adrenal	PHY:Dexterity	x1		x10	20
Carrying Winds	PHY:Dexterity	PHY:Adrenal	T	T	x10	20
Transmutation	PHY:Stamina	PHY:Strength	T	x1cm	I	50
Liquid Form	PHY:Dexterity	PHY:Stamina	T	T	x10	20
Passway	PHY:Strength	PHY:Strength	T	*	I	30
Rockwall	PHY:Stamina	PHY:Strength	x1	x1	x10	30
Pattern Shift	PHY:Accuracy	MEN:Perception	S	S	I	30
Stillair	PHY:Accuracy	PHY:Stamina	x1		x1	30
MorphMeld	PHY:Accuracy	PHY:Stamina	S	S	x10	40
Rift	PHY:Strength	PHY:Adrenal	T		I	40

Priest	Source	Target	R	A	D	EP
Seer	SPI:Inspiration	SPI:Discernment	x10		x10	10
Faith Armor	SPI:Faith	EMO:Ego	T	T	x10	10
Chains of Justice	SPI:Conviction	PHY:Strength	T	T	x10	10
Devout Conviction	SPI:Conviction	SPI:Purity	S	S	x10	20
Pure Guiding Light	SPI:Inspiration	SPI:Discernment	S	*	x10	10
Pious Hands	SPI:Purity	SPI:Faith	T	T	I	10
Immutable Soul	SPI:Conviction	PHY:Stamina	T	T	x10	30
Searing Light of Purity	SPI:Faith	SPI:Purity	x10	L	I	30
Holy Strength	SPI:Inspiration	PHY:Stamina	T	T	x10	40
Unyielding Wall	SPI:Purity	EMO:Passion	x5	*	x10	40
Righteous Wrath	SPI:Faith	SPI:Purity	x2	x1R	I	50
Channel Block	SPI:Purity	SPI:Faith	x10		x1	10

Table 24 - Spell Methods Chart

S PELLS

D RUID (E MPATH)

Although the Druid walks among the elements and lives in harmony with all of them, their particular specialization is their ability to Emotionally attach themselves to the raw, natural motivations of the animals, the trees, even the stones around them. Such a mage can manipulate the very emotions themselves, introducing happiness or despair, love or hate, alignment or misalignment at will. They spend their time either creating harmony and peace or stirring up conflict and war.

A NIMAL S PEECH

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** Self	
Source: EMO:Empathy		**Area:** Special	
Target: EMO:Ego		**Duration:** EMO:Empathy x 10 min	
Essence: 5 SunGold, 3 Oakheart, 2 Heartstone			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Able to communicate with d3 Creatures or lower–10m R	1 EMO
2	Able to communicate with d4 Creatures or lower–20m R	2 EMO
3	Able to communicate with d6 Creatures or lower–30m R	3 EMO
4	Able to communicate with d8 Creatures or lower–40m R	4 EMO
5	Able to communicate with d10 Creatures or lower–50m R	5 EMO

In the Emotions of creatures, there are far broader spectra of communication that is possible… without the limitations of crude syllabic tones to try to express the infinite scope of thoughts and feelings. Emotional communication is harsh, blunt and violent, and much more difficult to disguise or engage in deception. It is hard to lie with one's emotions, yet the lower powered creatures have an almost deeper mastery of Emotional sense than do the "higher" creatures. This spell enables the Empath to attune his own emotional responses and reach out with feelings to the hearts of surrounding creatures, transmitting pleas for help, or communicating fear and anxiety. Creatures are borne of instinct and with the proper messages, can be reasoned with.

This spell in no way implies any form of suggestion or coercion… merely communication.

B ECOME O NE

Cost: 30 EP		**Range:** Touch	
Source: EMO:Empathy		**Area:** Self	
Target: EMO:Ego		**Duration:** EMO:Empathy x 100 min	
Essence: 4 NightStone, 1 Grey Diamond, Fragments to match target Creature Essence			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Can become any d3 Creature	1 EMO
2	Can become any d4 Creature	2 EMO
3	Can become any d6 Creature	3 EMO
4	Can become any d8 Creature	4 EMO
5	Can become any d10 Creature	5 EMO
6	Can become any d12 Creature	6 EMO

This type of polymorphism allows the caster to take on the Abilities and physical Properties of the Target creature by touching them, absorbing their Aura and mimicking their own center. The caster truly can look like the target and can perform the same Abilities that are innate or racially based, however no skills, spells or other "learned" Methods are transferred. This talent enables the caster to have a deeper insight into how others feel and how they see life so additional bonuses may apply for subsequent social interactions with creatures that have been the target of this spell.

Figure 20 - HawkMage

E MPATH A URA

Cost: 5 EP		**Range:** Self	
Source: EMO:Empathy		**Area:** EMO:Empathy x 10m	
Target: EMO:Ego		**Duration:** EMO:Empathy x 1 min	
Essence: 5 SunGold			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	General perception of emotional beings can be detected	1 EMO
2	Differing types of Empathic activity can be identified	2 EMO
3	The level of a particular Empathic Spell can be identified	3 EMO
4	Traces of recent emotions can be detected/identified	4 EMO
5	Full awareness of things Emotional in origin	5 EMO

This specific type of vision enables the Empath to identify emotional auras from any creature that is capable of emotional expression. This vision takes the form of a colored spectrum where the Empath sees extreme emotions as bright reds and extreme diffidence tending toward the cooler blues and whites. Keep in mind that this type of "vision" can identify emotive beings but cannot be used to see physical details… only the details of the emotional responses of creatures. Other Empaths, when examined using this spell, will stand out in brilliant contrast to any other creature due to the intensity of their own emotional emissions.

FEAR DRAIN

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Touch	
Source: EMO:Passion	**Area:** Target	
Target: EMO:Ego	**Duration:** *Special	
Essence: 10 DreadStone, 1 Grey Diamond, 8 Emerond		

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Saps 1 Point of Physical Fatigue per round of contact	1 EMO

This horrifying spell enables the caster to sap the Physical resources of the Target while the Caster is touching him. The Target's soul is imbued with such feelings of fear, distress and anxiety that he is Physically sapped of his strength. Fatigue is leeched for every round that the caster remains in contact and with extended exposure can be quite debilitating although no damage can be caused by this spell… only a complete consumption of Fatigue and Endurance until the Target falls unconscious … out of fear or exhaustion.

Figure 21 - Hunter Hunted

HARD AS STONE

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Self	
Source: EMO:Passion	**Area:** Self	
Target: EMO:Ego	**Duration:** EMO:Passion x 1 day	
Essence: 14 Crimson Vile, 1 Grey Diamond, 4 Emerond		

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/1d - Structure/Tolerance	2 EMO

This interesting form of transference and hibernation enables the caster to enter a trance-like coma for a number of days equal to their EMO:Passion substat value. They must be in contact with solid stone and during the course of their hibernation will leech the physical structure of the stone itself into a carapace identical to the form of the caster. While inside, they are resting peacefully, their roiling emotions are trapped in stasis within the tough outer covering that surrounds them. For each level of this spell and effort expended, the carapace takes on one Power die per level for Structure and also Tolerance, making an almost impermeable barrier. Should this barrier be breached, the uncontrolled rage that infuses this shell will return suddenly to the soul of the caster who will erupt in an unimaginable fury, attacking all who are present, friend or foe. The caster cannot willingly exit from this spell earlier than the number of days indicated by their EMO:Passion SubStat.

NATURE TRAVEL

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Self	
Source: EMO:Empathy	**Area:** Self	
Target: EMO:Ego	**Duration:** EMO:Intuition x 10 min	
Essence: 14 NightStone, 1 Grey Diamond, choose 4 from Emerond (Earth), Infernite (Fire), Crystal Blue (Water) or Chrysaris (Air) based on the emulated Creature.		

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Assume an Instinct from a d3 Creature	1 EMO
2	Assume an Instinct from a d4 Creature	2 EMO
3	Assume an Instinct from a d6 Creature	3 EMO
4	Assume an Instinct from a d8 Creature	4 EMO
5	Assume an Instinct from a d10 Creature	5 EMO

This spell compels the surrounding terrain to accept the Physical body of the Empath as if it were a creature of nature and aligns the instincts of the Empath to that of the creature as well, so one instinctive ability can be utilized by the Empath with as accomplished skill as if the Empath had been born with the ability. Useful forms of this include Swim as a Fish, Plant Walk, Soar as a Bird, Run as the Deer.

PASSION BURST

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** EMO:Passion x 1m	
Source: EMO:Passion	**Area:** Target	
Target: EMO:Intuition	**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 16 Crimson Vile, 2 GlowStone		

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1dB Emotional Damage	2 EMO

This is a rare, direct assault on the sensibilities of the Target, bypassing any Physical protection the Target may possess and overloading their psyche with an explosion of impassioned energy.

PEACEFUL TOUCH

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Touch	
Source: EMO:Empathy	**Area:** Target	
Target: EMO:Intuition	**Duration:** EMO:Empathy x 10min	
Essence: 16 NightStone, 4 HeartStone		

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Restore 1d Emotional Damage, EMO:Intuition + 1	1 EMO

The calming effect of a skilled Empath can be highly useful in many circumstances. The touch of peace by an Empath will stem the tide of any progressive Empathic damage and will reverse some of its effects. This also has direct physical effects of calmness, including reducing the heart rate and generally calming a Target down to its most serene state. This is useful in prolonging the time it takes poisons to take effect and other physiological effects that can be improved through relaxation.

ROLLING FOG

Cost: 30 EP	**Range:** Self	
Source: EMO:Passion	**Area:** Special	
Target: EMO:Discernment	**Duration:** EMO:Passion x 100 min *	
Essence: 20 Crimson Vile, 1 Grey Diamond, 8 Chrysaris		

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Generate 5 cubic meters of Fog	2 EMO

Nature can be an angry master at times, and there are none more aware of that than the Empath. This spell is a very dangerous spell since it acts as merely a catalyst of nature, diffusing the caster's own Emotional tempest into the surrounding weather, causing roiling thunderheads to appear overhead and condensing the tears of rain into a massive column of fog that collapses and spreads throughout the area surrounding the Empath. Although the Empaths like to think that they can control nature, they are but seeding more energy into an unpredicatable maze of winds, tempests, and tornados. It is hard to tell if Nature truly has a soul, but it does seem evident that Empaths that abuse their ability to manipulate nature itself normally are punished by their own creations, so this spell should be used with care.

SWORD OF THE STORM

Cost: 40 EP		**Range:** EMO:Intuition x 5m	
Source: EMO:Passion		**Area:** Target	
Target: PHY:Stamina		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 20 Crimson Vile, 10 SunGold, 1 Grey Diamond, 4 GlowStone			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Electrical Damage	2 EMO

Quite literally the wrath of the Progeny, this spell draws upon all of the most virulent energies in the emotive sphere and focus them down upon a single target in the form of lightning bolts. This is an Emotional attack that causes Physical damage to the target, however it can be resisted through the Target's own dedication and emotional stability.

THE CALL

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** SPI:Inspiration x 10m	
Source: EMO:Empathy		**Area:** N/A	
Target: SOC:Will		**Duration:** SPI:Inspiration x 10 min	
Essence: 2 NightStone, 1 Chronum, choose 1 Maelstrome (Chaos) or 1 Geomecron (Order)			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Able to call d3 Creatures or lower–10m R	1 EMO
2	Able to call d4 Creatures or lower–20m R	2 EMO
3	Able to call d6 Creatures or lower–30m R	3 EMO
4	Able to call d8 Creatures or lower–40m R	4 EMO
5	Able to call d10 Creatures or lower–50m R	5 EMO

The Empath can broadcast a flurry of emotional pleas for assistance that not only communicates urgency but actually compels the surrounding creatures to come to the Empath's aid. This will affect creatures of like make, so if the Empath is a Chaos-based entity, chaotic creatures will come to their call, whereas an Order based entity will draw beings of Order to their cause.

TOUCH OF TRANSFERENCE

Cost: 30 EP		**Range:** Touch	
Source: EMO:Dedication		**Area:** Target	
Target: PHY:Adrenal		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 5 HeartStone, 5 Grey Diamond, 5 GlowStone, 5 Crystal Blue			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Transfer 1d Emotional to Physical, Restore Fatigue	1 EMO

The Touch of Transference bridges the gap of the Body and Mind to transfer Emotional essences to the Physical form. This transference can take the Emotional essence from the caster and transfuse the Target with the same Physical energies in the form of healing or restoration of Endurance. This can also be reversed to extract Emotional essence from the Target to the caster, although on an unwilling Target this will be seen as the ultimate violation.

Figure 22 - MageStorm

GATEKEEPER (SORCERER)

The GateKeeper mage is a sorcerer that has learned the Primal concepts of Time, Reality, Unreality, Order and Chaos… the central core of all of the other Elements. With a foundation in the very backbone of the magical hierarchy, these mages are powerful beyond compare, but also delve into magicks that are truly perilous and risky. Only these mages have learned the arcane arts of travel between realms, as only they can master the incantations necessary to meld the physical form into the unreal essence that can travel from one river of time to another. Their talents also can forge real from the unreal, and make the unreal appear real. They can dictate structure or disintegration at the mere beckoning of their mind.

AWARENESS

Cost: 10 EP	Range: MEN:Perception x 10m
Source: MEN:Perception	Area: Single Target Intellect
Target: SOC:Will	Duration: MEN:Perception x 10 min
Essence: 1 Maelstrome, 1 Void, 1 Geomecron	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	1 sensory awareness allowed (sight or sound, etc)	1 MEN
2	2 sensory awarenesses allowed simultaneously	2 MEN
3	3 sensory awarenesses allowed simultaneously	3 MEN
4	4 sensory awarenesses allowed simultaneously	4 MEN
5	5 sensory awarenesses allowed simultaneously	5 MEN
6	Sensory isolation allowed for 1 sensory awareness	6 MEN

Awareness enables the spellcaster to link his mind to that of a willing (or overcome) target intellect, utilizing the target's own sensory messages for his own. This allows the caster to see through the eyes of another, or hear through their ears, or any other sensory input that transfers its information mentally through the target's brain. For a willing target, this is a check against the caster's own MEN and for an unwilling target, is checked against the target's SOC.

It should be noted that this spell does not come without its risks. When you are linked to a sensory target, you also receive the brunt of any Mental damage to that creature while attached. Their pain is your pain, their mental anguish is your own, so use this spell with caution.

More advanced levels allow for a more comprehensive awareness, even to the point of complete mastery (level 6) where awareness is allowed but sensory impact is isolated from the caster's own mind.

CHAOS BLAST

Cost: 20 EP	Range: MEN:Perception x 10m
Source: MEN:Perception	Area: MEN:Perception x 1m Radius
Target: MEN:Concentration	Duration: Instant
Essence: 4 Maelstrome, 2 Void	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Mental Bludgeon Damage	3 MEN

This destructive force assaults the mind of the intellectual target with a destabilizing blast of mentally shattering energy. This combat weapon is the invisible killer, driving its targets completely insane or mentally vapid. Its shock can be equally devastating, although temporarily so. The true essence of this spell is a chaotic scrambling of un-logic in the mind of the target, so drastic and shattering that the target must pool its own sense of order and logic into defending itself from the Chaos Blast.

CRYSTALLIZATION

Cost: 30 EP	Range: Touch
Source: MEN:Concentration	Area: N/A
Target: MEN:Perception	Duration: Permanent
Essence: 2 Geomecron plus choose 12 from Grey Diamond (Matter), Viscerium (Creativity), GlowStone (Energy), or Mandorite (Law)… or 5 from Chronum (Time) depending on the level chosen. Counts are cumulative for Level 6 and beyond.	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	10 cm³ forged from elements of the Matter Quadrant	1 MEN
2	10 cm³ forged from elements of the Creativity Quadrant	2 MEN
3	10 cm³ forged from elements of the Energy Quadrant	3 MEN
4	10 cm³ forged from elements of the Law Quadrant	4 MEN
5	10 cm³ forged from elements of the Time Quadrant	5 MEN
6	Combinations of the first Five levels that add up to 6	6 MEN
7	Combinations of the first Five levels that add up to 7	7 MEN
8	Combinations of the first Five levels that add up to 8	8 MEN
9	Combinations of the first Five levels that add up to 9	9 MEN
10	Combinations of the first Five levels that add up to 10	10 MEN

Making the real from the unreal is the core essence of the deceptively-named Crystallization spell. The Mage has the ability to make matter seemingly appear from nothing and alloy the result into an object of relatively any form. Only limited to the tier of levels acquired, a Mage at level three could choose to expend his three Fatigue for the 10cm³ of the Energy elements or could opt to combine the equivalent of the two lower levels, spending two Fatigue for the level 2 elements and 1 Fatigue for the 1st level elements in a combined mix. At no time can the caster expend more cumulative Fatigue than is allowed by the highest level of this spell.

DECONSTRUCTION

Cost: 40 EP	Range: Touch
Source: MEN:Perception	Area: N/A
Target: MEN:Concentration	Duration: Permanent
Essence: 10 Void	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	10 cm³ of matter disrupted	4 MEN

This aberration of the Crystallization spell strikes terror into the hearts of many a Mage due to the peril of its casting. Upon touching a target, the Mage can dissemble the delicate bonds that make the target matter cleave to its own state of reality. The target may resist the deconstruction and if successful, the effects of the spell are turned against the caster in an attempt to cure the imbalance caused by the surge of unreality energy so focused in a single location.

ELDRITCH BLAST

Cost: 10 EP	Range: MEN:Intellect x 10m
Source: MEN:Intellect	Area: N/A
Target: PHY:Stamina	Duration: Instant
Essence: 1 Void, 2 Maelstrome	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d of Physical Bludgeon Damage	1 MEN

This sorcery converts a mentally projected force at extreme velocities and alters the unreal forces into a real, tangible physical impact. This stunning blow is treated as a normal, physical attack but can be quite devastating at higher levels. This Mental force must target an intellect, so it cannot be aimed at an inanimate, non-intellectual object. If a non-intellectual object happens to be in the path between the caster and an intellectual target, then the bludgeon damage is dealt normally.

ELDRITCH BONDS

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** MEN:Perception x 10m	
Source: MEN:Concentration		**Area:** N/A	
Target: PHY:Strength		**Duration:** MEN:Perception x 10 min	
Essence: 1 Geomecron, 1 Grey Diamond, 5 Emerond			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Physical Binding	2 MEN

Mental force coalesces around the target in an invisible barrier powered by the strength of the caster's own mind. This barrier is not actually there, since it has only entrapped the target's mind in the sheer notion of the impossibility of movement, so the bonds cannot be used to block an attack nor suffocate a target… air passes normally through the perceived wall of force. Additionally, no other targets can be affected by this spell… only the mind of the target is so imprisoned. However, it still requires a powerful Physical effort by the target to break free of the bonds that hold him.

ELDRITCH ARROW

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** MEN:Concentration x 20m	
Source: MEN:Concentration		**Area:** Pinpoint	
Target: MEN:Perception		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 1 Geomecron, 1 Grey Diamond, 5 Chrysaris			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1 Projectile causing 1dP	1 MEN

Once a Sorcerer has mastered the Eldritch Blast (required), they can then hone their Mental skills into shaping the force of that blast into arrow-point projectiles. These piercing mental forces are transmuted into physical forces that can pierce armor just as a normal projectile would. As more levels are purchased, more projectiles can be formed from the raw forces being projected, however it is up to the ShardMaster whether their hits are rolled together or severally. Regardless, they can only be "aimed" at one intellect and cannot be directed at one or multiple objects that have no intellect, however objects in the path between the caster and an intellectual target are pierced normally. Level may not exceed that of Eldritch Blast.

ILLUSORY SHIELD

Cost: 20 EP		**Range:** Self	
Source: MEN:Sanity		**Area:** Self	
Target: MEN:Sanity		**Duration:** As long as Fatigue is expended	
Essence: 2 Absolite, 1 Grey Diamond, 2 Crystal Blue			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/½d (Structure/Tolerance) Shield vs 1 adversary	1 MEN

A shimmering haze envelops the caster and repels the Physical and Mental attacks of the unknowing adversary. Only a successful check of the attacking creature's Sanity will dispel the illusion that the barrier is simply a mental construct of the caster. As levels increase, more than one adversary can be "duped" into believing the illusory barrier is there. Even if a companion is told that the effect is illusory, a failed sanity check will still cause the creature to persist in believing in the reality of the shield. Damage caused is treated like normal armor using the cumulative Structure and Tolerance values for each level of this spell.

PSYCHIC VISION

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** MEN:Perception x 10m	
Source: MEN:Perception		**Area:** N/A	
Target: MEN:Concentration		**Duration:** MEN:Perception x 10 min	
Essence: 2 Maelstrome, 1 Absolite			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	General perception of intellects or beings can be detected	1 MEN
2	Differing types of Mental Sorcery can be identified	2 MEN
3	The level of a particular Method can be identified	3 MEN
4	Residual traces of recent sorceries can be detected and identified	4 MEN
5	Full awareness of things Mental in origin	5 MEN

This specific type of vision enables the GateKeeper mage to peer from the real to the unreal and vice versa. This is very useful for countering magicks that utilize illusory images or tricks of the mind. This spell is never 100% successful and certainly depends on the Mental power of the other spellcaster who cast the original illusion. This spell also can be used to detect objects that have no physical form but have intellect. To the GateKeeper Mage, these intangible creatures can be seen in darkness or light as if it were in full sunlight. The same can be said for other GateKeeper Mages, who are steeped in the essence of Mental power and stand out like brilliant beacons to those empowered by this spell.

TEMPORAL STUTTER

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** Self	
Source: MEN:Memory		**Area:** Self	
Target: MEN:Sanity		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 2 Chronum			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Leap forward 1 round (10 seconds)	2 MEN

This arcane power allows the GateKeeper Mage to unravel the fluid motion of Time itself and cause the corporeal form of the Mage to stutter forward one round per level of this spell. This rift in time can only transport one intellect and any non-intelligent objects that are held by the caster. At no time can this be used to go backwards in time… It simply enables the Mage to bypass a small segment of time. Note that this does not involve any physical movement, so the Mage will be in the same exact spot in the next round, with the consequences of that being what they may, especially if that space is occupied at the time of arrival. This reduces its effectiveness as a defensive spell, although it has been known to have been used at close quarters… sometimes with disastrous consequences.

Figure 23 - Swashbucklers

MINDWALKER (PSION)

The sheer, innate ability to open a gate into the realm of the mind and walk about, not physically, but through sheer force of Will, is the domain of the Psions of MindWalking. They have mastered the law of Will, bending the thoughts of men to their own desires, tapping the resources of Will in others to their own incantations and generally possess the power to dominate the aspects of Social power.

FOOLS FOLLY

Cost: 30 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Will	Area: SOC:Will x 1m Radial
Target: SOC:Humility	Duration: Permanent
Essence: 10 Mandorite, 5 BloodGold, 5 CloakStone,	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Convince the Target to do something they don't like	2 SOC
2	Convince the Target to do something they hate	4 SOC
3	Convince the Target to do something they abhor	6 SOC
4	Convince the Target to do something that is painful	8 SOC
5	Convince the Target to do something that is suicidal	10 SOC

This powerful Psionic emanates from the caster's Willforce in a short-range perimeter, allowing the caster to directly influence the will of those close by. This is much more powerful than a Suggestion as it can be used to convince a being to do things counter to their very nature, including putting their own lives in peril. It should be apparent that a being that resists this immoral tampering will be an enemy for life and will not only be angered, but will feel violated by the intrusion. It is rare that Fools Folly, once resisted, will ever work on the same target again.

INNER BEAUTY

Cost: 40 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Attraction	Area: SOC:Attraction x 10m Radial
Target: MEN:Perception	Duration: SOC:Attraction x 20 min
Essence: 20 CloakStone, 10 Touchstone, 10 White Silver	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	+2 to SOC:Attraction, 2 Targets affected	1 SOC

Inner Beauty is quite different from Fools Folly in that the caster becomes genuinely more attractive to those surrounding him. This boosts the caster's interactions with other creatures, however any abuse of this to try to influence, suggest, or otherwise manipulate those in the Area of Effect to do something counter to their innate nature will nullify this spell. Since there is not an overt manipulation, creatures that resist the effects of this Psionic are generally unaware of it altogether.

MINDWALK

Cost: 50 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Will	Area: Self
Target: SOC:Will	Duration: Special
Essence: 20 Mandorite, 5 Absolute, 2 Chronum	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can project Willforce for 1 hour	1 SOC

This advanced Psionic allows the Mindwalker to enter a meditative state and project his own willforce outside of his corporeal form. This does not infer any sensory ability although this is commonly used in tandem with Mindwalk Aura which enables a limited form of sensory Willforce detection. The primary use of this Psionic is to change the origin point from which other Psionics are then cast.

Figure 24 - Mind over Matter

MINDWALK AURA

Cost: 10 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Attraction	Area: SOC:Attraction x 1m
Target: SOC:Persuasion	Duration: SOC:Attraction x 10 min
Essence: 10 CloakStone	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	General perception of beings with Will can be detected	1 SOC
2	Differing types of Psions can be identified	2 SOC
3	The level of a particular Method can be identified	3 SOC
4	Residual traces of recent sorceries can be detected and identified	4 SOC
5	Full awareness of things Mental in origin	5 SOC

This spell enables the detection of will forces, whether in daylight or darkness. The Psion is attuned to the ebb and flow pulses created when creatures exert their force of Will, becoming plainly visible to the MindWalker Psion. It should be noted that there are some creatures that have no Will and therefore are 100% invisible when detected in this manner. Other Psions appear like bonfires in the darkness to a MindWalker using this spell. Keep in mind that this type of "sight" is more like an infrared pattern… there is no light spectrum reflecting colors here, so the intensity of will being exerted determines the visibility that is detected with this spell.

MOB RAGE

Cost: 30 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Persuasion	Area: SOC:Persuasion x 10m Radial
Target: SOC:Will	Duration: SOC:Persuasion x 10 min
Essence: 20 BloodGold, 6 CloakStone, 2 Mandorite	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Any d4 or lower creatures can be incited	3 SOC
2	Any d6 or lower creatures can be incited	6 SOC
3	Any d8 or lower creatures can be incited	9 SOC
4	Any d10 or lower creatures can be incited	12 SOC
5	Any d12 or lower creatures can be incited	15 SOC

This Psionic is a dangerous weapon involving the manipulation of the Willforce of other creatures. The caster must come up with a reasonable subject to become enraged about and it must be relevant to the particular species' in the Area of Effect. Mob Rage can easily backfire as well, since those that manage to resist the tampering will immediately know who was inciting his fellows and will become just as enraged, if not more so, toward the caster. This is a powerful tool when used in conjunction with Will Sap.

SUGGESTION

Cost: 10 EP	Range: SOC:Charisma x 1m
Source: SOC:Charisma	Area: SOC:Charisma x 1m Radial
Target: SOC:Will	Duration: SOC:Charisma x 10 min
Essence: 6 White Silver, 2 Mandorite	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	+1 to SOC:Charisma when using Suggestion on 1 Target	1 SOC

This is a much more focused adaptation of Mob Rage that allows the Psion to specifically compel the target to have the Will to do a particular task, believe a particular thing, or desire a particular object. This is a short-range spell that puts the spellcaster in very close proximity with the target (or targets as more levels are added) while giving the Psion an additional bonus to his rolls.

TRUTH DETECTOR

Cost: 10 EP	Range: Touch
Source: SOC:Will	Area: Target
Target: SOC:Humility	Duration: SOC:Will x 1 min
Essence: 6 TouchStone, 2 Mandorite	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Can generally detect that something just said was a lie, but not specifically	1 SOC
2	Can isolate the particular phrase that was a lie	2 SOC
3	Can detect more subtle forms of misdirection or omissions of truth	3 SOC
4	Can detect beings with a propensity for dishonesty	4 SOC
5	Can convince a touched being that something is true	5 SOC

The Truth Detector is an unpredictable spell that leaves a lot to the interpretation of the ShardMaster since it involves the detection of truth or lies. Since the definition of what is true or false can sometimes be interpreted, this spell may not have the desired results… Just because a person is saying something is untrue does not mean that the person doesn't believe it, so this is more a determination of the Will a being exerts to believe in something rather than the actual truth of the concept. If the target is convinced it's true, then he'll pass the test of the MindWalker Psion.

WILL SAP

Cost: 20 EP	Range: Self
Source: SOC:Charisma	Area: SOC:Attraction x 2m
Target: SOC:Will	Duration: Until Recovery
Essence: 10 White Silver, 6 BloodGold, 2 Mandorite	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1 Target sapped of Social Fatigue and 1 Social Endurance	2 SOC

The MindWalker Psion can create an aura of Willpower that extends in a small perimeter around their own Willforce, whether in the caster's body or not. This debilitating force drains all Social Fatigue and one Social Endurance point per casting from the number of targets allowed for the level of the Psion. Although this seems harmless enough, it makes the targets much more susceptible to suggestion and lowers their own defenses against further Will-based spells.

PRIEST (CHANNELER)

The Priest is committed to his cause, striding boldly among the people of the World declaring the will of the Progeny in its various forms and cultural interpretations. These stalwarts lend their talents toward the Spiritual plane, researching the after worlds of Corelisia, and helping their fellow man find their own balance once again.

CHAINS OF JUSTICE

Cost: 10 EP   **Range:** Touch
Source: SPI:Conviction   **Area:** Target Soul
Target: PHY:Strength   **Duration:** SPI:Conviction x 10 min
Essence: 5 Oakheart, 1 Grey Diamond, 3 Emerond

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Physical and Spiritual Binding	2 SPI

Justice sometimes demands extreme measures and the Chains of Justice serve their purpose well, whether to imprison the unfaithful or to snare the sinner and drag them back to be judged. The Priest with this Incantation can call upon the gods to punish the Target with Spiritual and Physical bonds (albeit invisible ones) that can resist some of the strongest attempts to escape. This Incantation is bound to the hands of the Priest, so whomever is bound by the Chains of Justice will be compelled to follow the Priest from that point forward (as long as the Incantation is in effect).

CHANNEL BLOCK

Cost: 10 EP   **Range:** SPI:Purity x 10m
Source: SPI:Purity   **Area:** N/A
Target: SPI:Faith   **Duration:** SPI:Purity x 1 min
Essence: 4 Viscerium, 2 Aurite

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Block the Channel of any d6 Creature	2 SPI
2	Block the Channel of any d8 Creature	4 SPI
3	Block the Channel of any d10 Creature	6 SPI
4	Block the Channel of any d12 Creature	8 SPI
5	Block the Channel of any d20 Creature	10 SPI

This defensive incantation enables the Channeler to disrupt the flow or channel of another Channeler. Disrupting the flow of another Channeler can create enmity between the targets' Progeny and your own as well as making you a target for the other, so use this incantation with care or against those that oppose your own essence. This also enables you to block the Channeling from a target Channeler to their target. For example, a Priest is attempting to Death Grip one of your allies. You can not only assault the Channel between the target Priest and his Progeny but you can also try to disrupt the Channel between the Priest and your ally by rolling against your ally's Discernment. Either would accomplish your goal of disrupting the enemy Channeler's incantation.

DEVOUT CONVICTION

Cost: 20 EP   **Range:** Self
Source: SPI:Conviction   **Area:** Self
Target: SPI:Purity   **Duration:** SPI:Conviction x 10 min
Essence: 10 Oakheart, 3 Absolite, 1 Chronum, 1 Viscerium

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Raise Mental Tolerance by 2 Points	2 SPI

The Priest is dedicated to all things Spiritual, however there are times when they must be protected from outside influences. This Incantation was discovered while the Devouts were meditating to avoid impure thoughts and has evolved into a powerful means of protecting the mind from Mental attack or assault. The invoking Priest receives a temporary boost to their Mental Tolerance, enabling them to absorb Mental Damage without adverse consequence.

FAITH ARMOR

Cost: 10 EP   **Range:** Touch
Source: SPI:Faith   **Area:** Target
Target: EMO:Ego   **Duration:** SPI:Faith x 10 min
Essence: 5 Aurite, 3 Emerond, 1 Grey Diamond

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/½d (Structure/Tolerance) Shield around 1 Target	1 SPI

The Priest is able to invoke a spiritual field of protection around himself or his devout followers. This armor is not only Spiritual but also real and tangible enough to deflect Physical attacks as well. As such it is treated like normal armor. The explanation of how it works can only be described as the intervention of the Gods themselves, perhaps as a test of the Target's own Faith.

HOLY STRENGTH

Cost: 40 EP   **Range:** Touch
Source: SPI:Inspiration   **Area:** Target
Target: PHY:Stamina   **Duration:** SPI:Inspiration x 10 min
Essence: 20 DreadStone, 10 Emerond, 5 Grey Diamond

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	+1 to Physical Tolerance, +1 PHY:Strength for 1 Target	2 SPI

The Priest can summon forth divine might and resilience for their own use, or to be bestowed on another. When invoked, the Targets that do not resist will immediately receive bonuses to their Physical Tolerance and their Strength for the duration.

IMMUTABLE SOUL

Cost: 30 EP   **Range:** Touch
Source: SPI:Conviction   **Area:** Target
Target: PHY:Stamina   **Duration:** SPI:Conviction x 10 min
Essence: 10 Oakheart, 10 Crystal Blue, 5 Grey Diamond

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Add +2 to PHY:Stamina for 1 Target	2 SPI

The stoic conviction of the truly dedicated can be channeled with this power into a strong defense against any form of Physical magic that attempts an alteration or modification of the Priest protected by this Incantation. A temporary boost to the Priest's Stamina enables him to withstand these types of magical attacks.

PIOUS HANDS

Cost: 10 EP   **Range:** Touch
Source: SPI:Purity   **Area:** Target
Target: SPI:Faith   **Duration:** Permanent
Essence: 2 Viscerium, 1 Grey Diamond, 2 Crystal Blue, 2 Oakheart

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Heals 1d Spiritual or Physical Damage	2 SPI

By laying their hands on a soul that has been Physically or Spiritually damaged, a Priest can channel the forces of Life to infuse the Target with healing respite from their wounds. The antithesis of this spell is Death Grip which causes Spiritual and Physical Damage instead of healing it.

PURE GUIDING LIGHT

Cost: 10 EP   **Range:** Self
Source: SPI:Inspiration   **Area:** Special
Target: SPI:Discernment   **Duration:** SPI:Inspiration x 100 min
Essence: 5 Dreadstone, 5 Soulstone

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Light, 10m Radius	1 SPI

The Priest can call upon the powers above to channel the light of order to issue forth, driving back the darkness and chaos that plagues the Realms. Creatures that are formed from Unreality or Chaos will not receive the visibility benefits of this Incantation. This spell has an antithetical version, Chaotic Cloud, which masks the vision of those bound by Order and Reality. The Priest may only choose one or the other. When both are cast in the same place, levels of each are nullified instantly.

RIGHTEOUS WRATH

Cost: 50 EP		**Range:** SPI:Faith x 2m	
Source: SPI:Faith		**Area:** SPI:Faith x 1m Radial	
Target: SPI:Purity		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence: 20 Aurite, 10 DreadStone, 5 Viscerium,			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Spiritual Bludgeon Damage to Target 1d Spiritual Damage to Priest (no Tolerance)	4 SPI

In the ultimate sacrifice, Righteous Wrath allows the Priest to sacrifice a portion of his own soul to summon forth a blast of celestial energy to strike at the very soul of a Target and all those that surround the Target. This attack cannot be aimed and is centered around the Target soul.

SEARING LIGHT OF PURITY

Cost: 30 EP		**Range:** SPI:Purity x 10m	
Source: SPI:Purity		**Area:** Linear	
Target: SPI:Purity		**Duration:** Instant	
Essence:			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d Mental or Spiritual Bludgeon Damage to 1 Target	2 SPI

The Priest can call forth blinding light to disorient and disable their enemies. This Incantation invokes the pure essence of their own faith, channeling the purity of the Progeny through to an unbelieving Target. If the attack is not resisted, the Target may face Mental or Spiritual shock, depending on the type of attack selected. Permanent Blindness can be a direct result of this Incantation subject to the approval of the ShardMaster.

SEER

Cost: 10 EP		**Range:** SPI:Inspiration x 10m	
Source: SPI:Inspiration		**Area:** N/A	
Target: SPI:Discernment		**Duration:** SPI:Inspiration x 10 min	
Essence: 4 DreadStone, 1 Grey Diamond, 4 Chrysaris			

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	General perception of beings with Spirits can be detected	1 SPI
2	Differing types of Channelers can be identified	2 SPI
3	The level of a particular Incantation can be identified	3 SPI
4	Residual traces of recent Incantations can be detected and identified	4 SPI
5	Full awareness of things Spiritual in origin	5 SPI

This spell enables the detection of spiritual forces, whether in daylight or darkness. The Channeler is attuned to the Spiritual realm that exists in tandem with the Physical world, such inhabitants becoming plainly visible to the Priest. It should be noted that there are some creatures that have no Spirit and therefore are 100% invisible when detected in this manner. Other Channelers glow with a brilliant aura when seen through this incantation. Other intangible spirits can be detected using this incantation as well.

UNYIELDING WALL

Cost: 40 EP		**Range:** SPI:Purity x 5m	
Source: SPI:Purity		**Area:** Special	
Target: EMO:Passion		**Duration:** SPI:Purity x 10 min	
Essence: 20 Viscerium			

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/½d (Structure/Tolerance) wall, 2m high x 2m wide	1 SPI

This Spiritual wall is formed from the Purity of the caster to block any souls from passing through. Although completely ineffective against things that have no spiritual nature, this is a powerful defense against most living creatures.

The wall begins at 2 meters by 2 meters but can be sized in just about any way as long as it remains 2 dimensional. It also can follow any path at the discretion of the Priest, forming a single wall, or encircling a particular object, etc.

This wall can only be damaged by Spiritual attacks and as such poses quite an effective challenge to the faithless in the Realms.

The wall is transparent although to those Seers attuned to Spiritual sight it is a brilliant, shimmering vision of Spiritual Power and can be seen from quite a distance.

Figure 25 - Ogre Shaman

STONEMAGE (ALCHEMIST)

The StoneMage represents the very essence of practicality, serving his local community in a variety of functions: nurturing crops, divining for Stone Coin, and investing their powers into enhanced weaponry. Let not this humble façade fool you into thinking their powers are not of the strongest in the Realms. Their Alchemist mentors seclude themselves underground or at the heights of the mountains and forge such grand magicks and artifacts that no man would comprehend. More in touch with their fellows than other Mages, the StoneMage is often seen defending home and hearth utilizing their arcane abilities to defend those that they serve.

AIRBOLT

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:** PHY:Accuracy x 20m
Source: PHY:Accuracy	**Area:** Target
Target: PHY:Dexterity	**Duration:** Instant
Essence: 4 Chrysaris, select from 6 Emerond (Earth), 6 Infernite (Fire), 6 Crystal Blue (Water), 6 Chrysaris (Air) based on bolt type	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1 Airbolt causing 1dB Damage (add bolts per level not Damage)	1 PHY

The Airbolt is formed from the exertion of the Caster's Physical essence in commanding the elements to obey with such velocity that it creates a wave of kinetic energy sufficient to bludgeon the target with a burst of concentrated, focused air while the surrounding identical elements are forced to move out of the path of the missile. Other varieties of this can be exerted (waterbolt, etc).

ALTERING THE WAY

Cost: 10 EP	**Range:** PHY:Adrenal x 1m
Source: PHY:Adrenal	**Area:** N/A
Target: *Special	**Duration:** Instant
Essence: 2 Grey Diamond, 2 Maelstrome	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can attempt to Alter any 1st level spell	1 PHY

One of the first things that a Sorcerer is taught is how to unweave the Patterns of other spells. This Spell will work against any discipline in the Physical Quadrant. This Spell can be used to target a Spell that is active on someone already or it can be used to cancel a Spell that is being cast. When targeting an incoming Spell, the Sorcerer will roll his PHY:Adrenal against the Source SubStat of the incoming Spell.

BINDING EARTH

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** PHY:Adrenal x 1m
Source: PHY:Adrenal	**Area:** N/A
Target: PHY:Dexterity	**Duration:** PHY:Adrenal x 10 min
Essence: 5 Grey Diamond, 10 Emerond	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/0 - Structure/Tolerance of Binding Earth	1 PHY

The caster's inner reserve of Strength is called forth and passed into the very earth itself, summoning forth a powerful, grasping tentacle or mound of earth which attempts to grasp the Target and bind it to the ground.

CARRYING WINDS

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Touch
Source: PHY:Dexterity	**Area:** Target
Target: PHY:Adrenal	**Duration:** PHY:Dexterity x 10 min
Essence: 10 Chrysaris, 10 Infernite	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can transport 20D worth of Creatures	2 PHY

The caster becomes attuned with the Physical beings that are targeted and their surrounding elements, consuming the Target's fatigue as well as the caster's to summon winds that buoy up their physical forms and swirl them in the direction specified by the caster. As more levels of this spell are purchased, the caster can transport 2 x 10D creatures while a caster with the 4h level of this spell can transport 5 x 8D creatures (40D total). You cannot transport inanimate objects that have no PHY essence since the spell required the Fatigue of the target to function (unless the inanimate objects are attached to a creature with PHY).

LIQUID FORM

Cost: 20 EP	**Range:** Touch/Self
Source: PHY:Stamina	**Area:** Target
Target: PHY:Strength	**Duration:** PHY:Dexterity x 10 min
Essence: 4 Grey Diamond, 2 Crystal Blue, select from 10 Emerond (Earth), 10 Infernite (Fire), 10 Crystal Blue (Water), 10 Chrysaris (Air) based on form	

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Can transform self or 6d Creature	2 PHY
2	Can transform self or 8d Creature	4 PHY
3	Can transform self or 10d Creature	6 PHY
4	Can transform self or 12d Creature	8 PHY
5	Can transform self or 20d Creature	10 PHY

If sufficient water is available (equal to the mass of the Target) then the caster can attune the essence of the water to that of the Target, merging the two into a diluted Physical state, enabling the Target to flow even as the water would flow. This effect only applies to the Physical form of the Target and not any of his inanimate accoutrements. The Target Creature must retain contact with the rest of his liquid form to be released from the Liquid Form spell. If a portion of the Target creature is missing and the spell expires, then the Target can choose to remain in its liquid stasis or can choose to let the spell expire, dealing with the consequences of the missing essence… perhaps missing a limb, etc. If the Target chooses to remain in stasis, he Physically remains unconscious and comatose and possibly risks insanity if left for too long.

MORPHMELD

Cost: 40 EP	**Range:** Self
Source: PHY:Accuracy	**Area:** Self
Target: PHY:Stamina	**Duration:** PHY:Accuracy x 10 min
Essence: 4 Grey Diamond, 8 Emerond, 8 Infernite, 8 Crystal Blue, 8 Chrysaris	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can MorphMeld with material based on 1 Fragment	2 PHY

This unique spell allows the Sorcerer to modify the natural Physical acceptance of an item to match that of the Spellcaster's own body. A Spellcaster could MorphMeld with his own blade for example, making it an extension of his own body. There is no distinction in this between inanimate or animate objects as well, although most intelligent creatures are formed from so many Fragment types that the cost of the spell would be deadly. Once MorphMelded, the Spellcaster also has the option of expending Fatigue in the amount of the Power Die value of the Target item to make the melding permanent, discarding that portion of his own body in favor of the melded material. Some very odd looking Creatures have been found … the remains of insane MorphMelders gone awry.

PASSWAY

Cost: 30 EP	**Range:** Touch
Source: PHY:Strength	**Area:** *Special
Target: PHY:Strength	**Duration:** Instant
Essence: 10 Emerond, 5 Grey Diamond, 5 Crystal Blue, 5 Chrysaris	

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can pass through 1 cubic meter of material / round	2 PHY

The caster can transform his own physical form to that of the material he is in contact with, enabling his physical form to intermingle with that of the target material enabling travel. Fatigue must be consumed for each round of travel, and unexpected obstacles of a uniquely different material will require yet another instance of the spell in addition to the one already cast. It is possible for a spellcaster to become trapped… unable to cast the essence necessary to exit through a new, foreign material while needing to maintain the existing spell to enable him to survive in the medium he's presently passing through. Some enterprising miners have found the fossilized remains of such.

PATTERN AURA

Cost: 10 EP	Range: PHY:Adrenal x 10m
Source: PHY:Adrenal	Area: N/A
Target: PHY:Strength	Duration: PHY:Adrenal x 10 min

Essence: 2 Grey Diamond, 6 Emerond

Level	Description	Fatigue
1	Can discern Order items/creatures from Chaos	1 PHY
2	Can discern Quadrants in item/creature's creation	2 PHY
3	Can discern Elements used in item/creature's creation	3 PHY
4	Can discern proportions of Elements used	4 PHY
5	Complete understanding of how item/creature is made	5 PHY

The arcane nature of the Pattern is a mystery to all but the Alchemists. Pattern Aura enables the Alchemist to look beyond the physical appearance of an object and see the actual formative structure of an object's Pattern of elements. This does not allow an Alchemist to peer "through" anything…it merely allows an Alchemist to determine the aura Elements that were used in the object's creation and to see their structure. Once an Alchemist has discerned a particular "pattern" then he is less apt to be fooled by things such as disguises, etc. This spell is also handy for the discernment of objects and their functions, although it provides no ability or skill in the use of any particular item.

PATTERN SHIFT

Cost: 30 EP	Range: Self
Source: PHY:Accuracy	Area: Self
Target: MEN:Perception	Duration: Instant

Essence: 10 Chrysaris, 1 Chronum, 5 Maelstrome

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can Pattern Shift 5 meters	1 PHY
10	Can memorize one location to return to	10 PHY

Pattern Shift is the art of telling each particular particle of the Spellcaster's body that its natural location is a short distance away. The elements of the caster's body respond by "shifting" to that location instantaneously. There is some degree of risk involved in this spell as it is important that nothing interferes with the Pattern Shift. It has been known to fail miserably when another Patternologist interferes with another caster's shifting. At an advanced skill level, the caster can stand in a location and rather than shifting, his elemental makeup will become "burned" into the Physical space in a sort of mystical Pattern imprint. This imprint can be returned to only once and when the caster returns, the imprint is lost forever. Although this is a powerful aspect of the spell, enabling the caster to "return home" from great distances, it also poses a risk since an abandoned "imprint" could be exploited if it is found by another Patternologist.

RIFT

Cost: 40 EP	Range: Touch
Source: PHY:Strength	Area: N/A
Target: PHY:Adrenaline	Duration: Instant

Essence: 5 Grey Diamond, 20 Emerond, 1 Void, 2 Maelstrome

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Create Rift 1m deep and 10m long	3 PHY

By altering the pattern of one structure with the pattern of its opposing elements, the caster can create a rift in just about any material. For example, solid rock could have a rift of air created through it, while ice would have a rift of fire carved through it. What happens next is unpredictable and up to Nature and the Progeny, and this spell is generally not able to be aimed or controlled… it can only be initiated by the caster with the consequences to be dealt with by all in the area.

ROCKWALL

Cost: 30 EP	Range: PHY:Stamina x 1m
Source: PHY:Stamina	Area: PHY:Stamina x 1 cu m
Target: PHY:Strength	Duration: PHY:Stamina x 10 min

Essence: 10 Crystal Blue, 10 Emerond, 5 Grey Diamond

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	1d/1d - Structure/Tolerance wall	2 PHY

By commanding the elements of the rock and stone itself, the caster can cause a wall of rock to issue forth from any source of stone with enough material to form around, in front of, or beneath the target Creature. This wall cannot move once placed and the elements used in its formation will not obey subsequent commands from the spellcaster, making a permanent sentinel and testament to the will of the caster.

STILLAIR

Cost: 40 EP	Range: PHY:Strength x 1m
Source: PHY:Accuracy	Area: *Special
Target: PHY:Stamina	Duration: PHY:Strength x 1 min

Essence: 20 Chrysaris, 4 Grey Diamond, 3 Void

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Create StillAir vacuum in 1 cubic meter of space	1 PHY

The normal chaotic motion of the air particles is structured, organized, crystallized and then obliterated in a cubic area subject to a command of Order placed on them. This causes the "air" itself to flee that ordered space, creating a vacuum of sorts and wreaking havoc on all creatures within that space who rely on air to survive. When the incantation is over, there is a deafening "clap" as the air fills the vacuum once again which can cause deafness or even madness in low Power Die Creatures.

TRANSMUTATION

Cost: 50 EP	Range: Touch
Source: PHY:Stamina	Area: PHY:Stamina x 1 cu cm
Target: PHY:Strength	Duration: Instant and Permanent

Essence: 5 Grey Diamond, 5 Void, 5 Absolite

Level	Description	Fatigue
Per	Can transmute material composed of 1 Fragment	4 PHY

This handy spell can transmute small quantities of Fragments into that of another Fragment. Although it seems simple, this is an energy-sapping effort and defies some of the more reliable laws of Physics in the Core World, essentially "burning" the Fragments and creating a tiny vortex of energy similar to that seen in a massive scale in the StoneShrines, forcing the desired Fragments to distill in the place of the expended Fragments. As you gain levels of this ability, you can transmute more complex patterns that contain more Fragment types although the amount stays relatively static. Also, to transmute the more base Fragments to the more complex will require a ratio of transmutation. 5 Chaos Fragments for 3 Time Fragments for example.

MAGIC ITEMS

Items are a key component of enjoying the Realms of Shards of the Stone. These magical constructs are made from the Fragments themselves and are imbued with not only the essences of the Fragments, but in some cases, the essences of the wielder or creator. Learning a full understanding of how the Fragments work and interact with each other will give you a lot of insight into creating your own items based on the Fragments of the Shards of the Stone. We thought we should give you a few to work with here in the Core Book, but make sure you visit our website to create items of your own… and who knows… maybe the next item you create will be selected for our next book!.

ITEM FORMATS

Items are listed as follows:

Cost: Cost in Coins	**S/T:** Structure/Tolerance
Type: Type of Item	**Uses:** Charges or Doses
Power Die: Power Die value	**Essence:** Fragment Makeup

Method	Effect
Method Name	Effects of Method

Full Description of the Item including unique uses, examples, etc.

TYPE
The category that this item belongs in, such as Arms, Armor, Arms, Helms, Shields, Flora, Fauna, Minerals, Terrain, Art/Jewelry, Clothing, Tools, Provisions, Furniture, Transport, Alchemy, Services, Artifacts, Creatures, etc.

POWER DIE
This indicates the Power Die basis for this Item which is used for any die rolls when this items uses it's own innate methods.

STRUCTURE/TOLERANCE (S/T)
Structure is the number of points of damage the item can sustain before it is destroyed. Tolerance is the number of points of damage the item can absorb before removing points from its own structure.

USES
This is the number of times that this item can be used before it becomes useless, destroyed, or loses its magical nature.

ESSENCE
Each item is constructed from certain Fragments which are listed here in their proportions.

COST
This indicates the relative purchase price for this item in a balanced marketplace. Of course these values will vary from Realm to Realm.

ITEM LISTING

Creature	Die	S/T	Effects	Cost
Bottled Shadows	d6	2/0	Cloud of Darkness	5,000
Mental Restorative	d6	2/0	+1d Mental End	2,000
Elixir of Might	d4	2/0	+1d PHY:Strength +1d Physical End	2,000
Elixir of Nimbleness	d4	2/0	+1d PHY:Dex +1d Physical End	2,500
Eldritch Blade	d10	6/6	-1 Phy End for +1 Damage	100,000
Eldritch Mail	d10	8/6	Absorb Chaos	200,000
FishScale Cuirie	d6	5/4	Swim as a Fish	80,000
Field Cure	d4	2/0	Cure Poison	1,000
Concentration Crystal	d8	8/1	+2 Men Tolerance +2 Emo Tolerance	80,000
Healing Potion	d4	2/0	Restore 1d Damage	1,000
Healing Potion, Greater	d10	3/0	Restore 1d Damage	4,000
Heartseeker Arrow	d8	5/1	1dP, double attack roll	80,000
Vial of Explosive Consequences	d10	2/1	2dI + Fire Damage	40,000

Table 25 - Magic Item Listings Chart

Figure 26 - Alchemistry

BOTTLED SHADOWS

Cost: 5,000c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 1 dose	
Power Die: d6		**Essence:** 500 x Nightstone	
		100 x Chrysaris	

Method	Effect
Open/Break	Cloud of Darkness (Area: 1d x 1 cu m)

This potion, when poured out or shattered onto the ground, creates a cloud of magical shadow that cannot be seen through by any means; the cloud conforms to natural barriers and will mold around objects until it has spread itself out as much as it can. Only the user is unaffected, so long as they touch a tiny quantity of the potion to their eyes within 1 hour of using it.

MENTAL RESTORATIVE

Cost: 2,000c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 6 doses	
Power Die: d6		**Essence:** 300 x Oakheart	
		300 x Absolite	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Restore 1d of Mental Endurance

This rather famous formula is the spellcaster's best friend in times of magical need. A few doses of this will give them more Mental Endurance to burn, or restore them after extensive casting. Less useful for those who do not wield magic, it can still help someone who has been leached from by less scrupulous mages or necromancers.

ELIXIR OF MIGHT

Cost: 2,000c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 4 doses	
Power Die: d4		**Essence:** 400 x Emerond	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Add temporary bonus of 1d to PHY:Strength
	Recover 1d of Physical Endurance

This particular formula is prized by any alchemist with connections to mercenaries or other warriors, for it can keep them wealthy for the rest of their days. The gained Strength fades away at a rate of 1 point per Turn (ten Rounds), whereas the recovered Endurance is permanent. This "fade" applies to stats boosted above the character's normal level; any recovery of points lost to magical attack, a Creature's special ability, or other hazard is restored permanently with this potion.

ELIXIR OF NIMBLENESS

Cost: 2,500c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 4 doses	
Power Die: d4		**Essence:** 400 x Infernite	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Add temporary bonus of 1d to PHY:Dexterity
	Recover 1d of Physical Endurance

Another highly prized formula, for many of the same reasons listed above. The gained Dexterity fades away at a rate of 1 point per Turn (ten Rounds). This "fade" applies to stats boosted above the character's normal level. Points previously lost to magical attack, a Creature's special ability, or other hazard is restored permanently with this potion.

ELDRITCH BLADE

Cost: 100,000c		**S/T:** 6/6	
Type: Arms		**Uses:** Unlimited	
Power Die: d10		**Essence:** 4000 x Infernite	
		2000 x Grey Diamond	
		4000 x Emerond	

Method	Effect
Strength Infusion	Consume 1 Physical Endurance to add +1 Damage to any attack

This represents the "typical" magical sword. It is very lightweight and has no hindrances associated with it. Its blade is capable of easily cutting through almost any metal or other surface. The wielder can add 1 point of Damage to any attack with this weapon for every point of Physical Endurance they choose to expend.

Figure 27 - Staff of Concentration

ELDRITCH CHAINMAIL

Cost: 200,000c		**S/T:** 8/6	
Type: Armor		**Uses:** Unlimited	
Power Die: d10		**Essence:** 4000 x Geomecron	
		16000 x Emerond	

Method	Effect
Block Chaos	Will absorb all damage from Chaos-based attacks

This represents the "typical" suit of magical chain armor. It is very lightweight and has no movement hindrances associated with it. It inherently covers the Arms and Torso. The Fragment-forged metal of this suit of chain is so strong that even weapons that can pierce Armor are resisted quite handily. Due to its construction and basis on Order Fragments, this Eldritch ChainMail will absorb all damage caused from Chaos(Maelstrome)-based attacks.

FISHSCALE CUIRIE

Cost: 80,000c		**S/T:** 5/4	
Type: Armor		**Uses:** Unlimited	
Power Die: d6		**Essence:** 3000 x Oakheart	
		3000 x Crystal Blue	

Method	Effect
Nature Travel:	Wearer can swim with the instincts and skill of a fish
Swim as a Fish	

This sleek suit of large-scaled fishskin has been formed into a magical Cuirie that can be worn by any humanoid creature. Its unique nature makes it a hardy defensive armor as well as enabling the wearer to swim with the equivalent ability of the first level Nature Travel Spell, Swim as a Fish.

FIELD CURE

Cost: 1,000c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 4 doses	
Power Die: d4		**Essence:** 100 x Viscerium	
		200 x Sungold	
		100 x Oakheart	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Cure d4 specified poison
Ingest double	Cure d8 specified poison
Ingest triple	Cure d12 specified poison

This refers to any curative potion created in the field to treat a specific disease or poison. This is not "universal" in application; once created, it will only work against the poison or disease it was created to combat. This is listed to guide GMs who wish to allow Alchemists, Priests, and Druids to attempt to treat poisons and diseases that they encounter in their travels.

CONCENTRATION CRYSTAL

Cost: 80,000c		**S/T:** 8/1	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** Unlimited	
Power Die: d8		**Essence:** 2000 x Sungold	
		4000 x Glowstone	
		2000 x Geomecron	

Method	Effect
Concentrate	Increase Mental and Emotional Tolerance by 1d
Wear	Increase Mental and Emotional Tolerance by 2 points

This specially-handled Crystal (varies in color) provides the user with extraordinary resistance to many Mental and Emotional Attacks. It also helps the user focus on a given Method, increasing their concentration exceptionally. Whenever the Crystal is in use, it glows with a bright blue light.

HEALING POTION

Cost: 1,000c		**S/T:** 2/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 5 doses	
Power Die: d4		**Essence:** 400 Oakheart	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Restore 1d points of Physical Damage

A very popular item, but not always very easy to obtain. The difficulty lies in that Alchemists tend to be better with Patternology concepts than Channeling, and healing definitely lends itself to the latter. So it is normally a Priest or Druid with training in Alchemy that must create such a potion

HEALING POTION, GREATER

Cost: 4,000c		**S/T:** 3/0	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 2 doses	
Power Die: d10		**Essence:** 1000 Oakheart	

Method	Effect
Ingest	Restore 1d points of Physical Damage

An enhanced version of the Healing Potion, similar in all aspects (but more concentrated).

HEARTSEEKER ARROW

Cost: 80,000c		**S/T:** 5/1	
Type: Arms		**Uses:** Unlimited	
Power Die: d8		**Essence:** 1,000 Chrysaris	
		1,000 Nightstone	
		2,000 Dreadstone	
		4,000 Soulstone	

Method	Effect
Fire	1dP Damage, double roll to hit.

These very rare arrows are a real treasure for any archer. Magically shifting shape and size to fit any bow (although not usable in crossbows), a Heartseeker will fly true to any target the archer can see, no matter the distance.

VIAL OF EXPLOSIVE CONSEQUENCES

Cost: 40,000c		**S/T:** 2/1	
Type: Alchemy		**Uses:** 1 use	
Power Die: d10		**Essence:** 500 Infernite	
		500 Chrysaris	

Method	Effect
Break	2dI (Impact) and Fire Damage (Area: 1d meters)

A frightening formula that would perhaps be more common in Core if it were not such a jealously guarded secret among the Dwarves. Simply shake the contents and then hurl the bottle at the intended target; it will shatter with devastating effect. Of course, carrying one of these things around can be quite dangerous, while carrying a collection could be downright disastrous for everyone involved.

Figure 28 - Collection
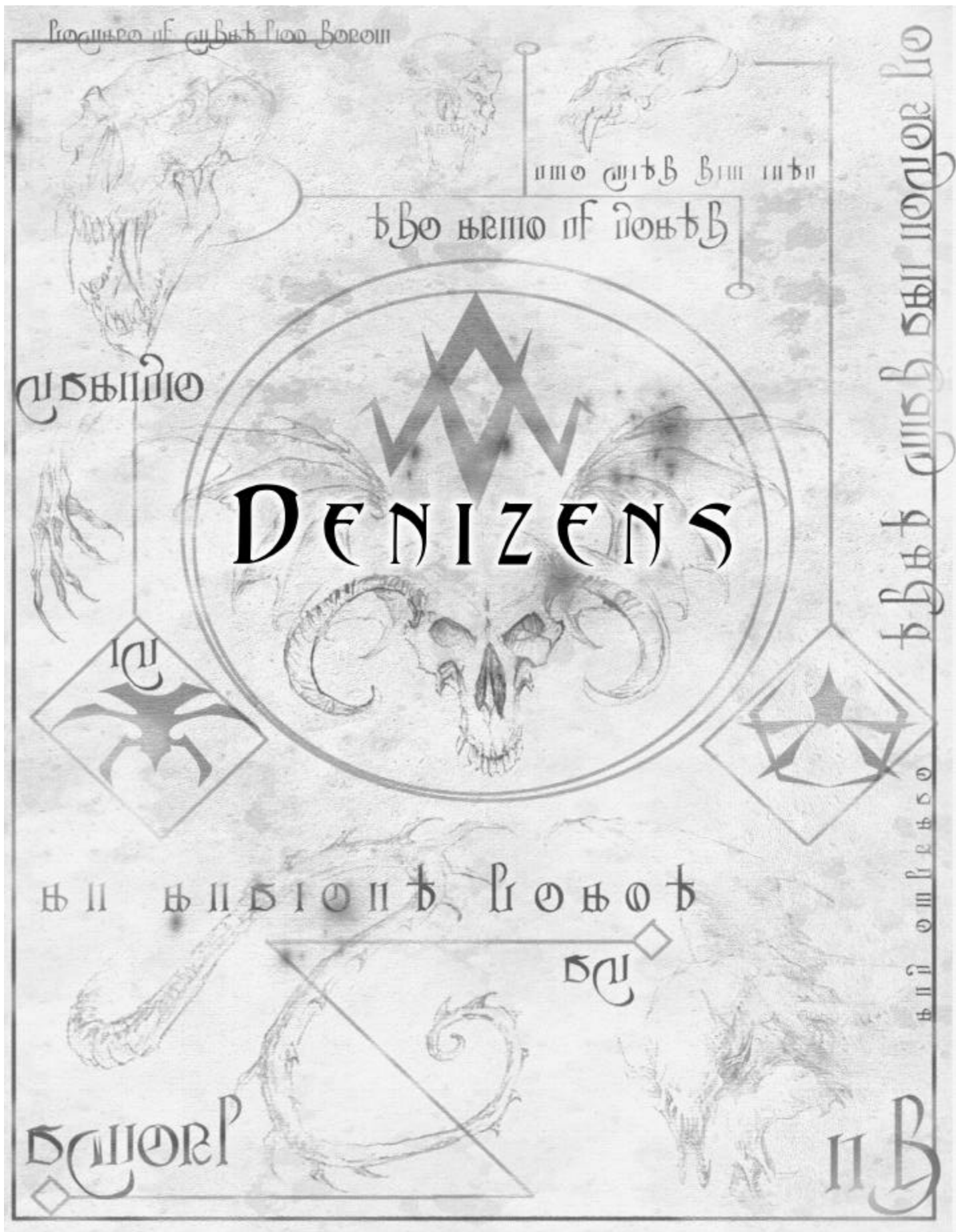
DENIZENS

DENIZENS

Herein you will discover many Creatures, Villains, and other entities that Heroes may face in their journeys across Core. This Chapter focuses on entities that will present various challenges to the Heroes, either in Combat or by other means.

What follows is hardly an exhaustive presentation of all that may challenge a Hero. Many, many more such Creatures and Villains will appear regularly on our web site and in future Realms books, so be sure to link there often for new challenges and new ideas.

The first section provides a glimpse into the past as we present Creatures who dominated the world before the Stone was Sundered and the Shards and Fragments were scattered across the Realms. Some few of these beings still roam the world; encountering them should be the centerpiece of a great story.

The second section has more "common" antagonists that the Heroes might face in a typical story. Note that even these "common" encounters may be a rare sight, depending on the Realm your Campaign is set in.

Finally, we have rules for constructing your own Creatures and Villains. As with Magic, we seek to empower the ShardMasters and the Players to create great and wondrous things for their own games, as well as to share with the rest of the Shards of the Stone universe. You will even find rules for creating your own Racial Templates there.

Much of the information presented here is in the "Short Form" format described in Chapter Five, so please refer to that chapter for a detailed explanation. Also look through the Creature Construction rules later in this chapter, along with the Spell Construction rules presented in Chapter Four.

CREATURES OF CORE

In the days before the Sundering, many fantastic and terrible Creatures ruled the lands of Core. Each had a place and a purpose, though most would seem utterly unfathomable to the average inhabitant of the Realms today.

The Sundering caused the extinction of many, many species, and even those that survived were devastated. However, a few beings did survive, and they wander the Realms to this day, seeking to fulfill their purpose - or to merely survive. These are not Creatures that a Hero should expect to simply stumble across - they are beings that shift and shape the world around them, to be treated with fear and respect.

CREATURE LISTING

Creature	Die	PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
Astral Warden	d20	8/1	12/2	8/1	16/8	6/1
Automaton	d30	25/12	0/0	12/2	0/0	0/0
Basalisk	d10	6/2	5/2	3/1	3/1	4/1
Blight	d8	4/2	3/1	2/1	6/4	2/1
Clockwork Serpent	d30	26/15	0/0	18/8	0/0	0/0
Dreamcatcher	d12	6/1	7/3	5/2	11/2	3/1
Gargoyle	d8	8/4	5/2	4/1	4/2	3/1
Grey Man	d10	4/1	6/2	8/3	6/3	3/1
Incubus	d12	7/2	9/3	10/2	7/1	5/1
Infernum	d20	11/4	8/2	6/1	12/2	4/1
Leviathan	d10	8/4	6/2	5/1	4/1	6/2
Magistrate	d12	5/1	6/2	4/1	7/2	9/4
Marsh Dweller	d20	16/8	8/1	11/2	14/4	8/1
Phoenix	d8	3/1	4/1	6/2	7/5	3/1
Revenant	d10	7/2	3/1	9/4	6/2	6/1
Shade	d8	2/1	7/2	3/1	2/1	8/4
Shadow Weaver	d6	2/1	3/2	6/3	4/2	3/1
Sphinx	d12	7/2	6/2	4/1	4/1	10/5
Succubus	d6	3/1	4/2	3/1	3/2	6/3
Unicorn	d20	8/3	10/3	12/5	9/2	11/3
Vile	d20	18/6	15/3	14/3	12/3	6/2
Viscerid	d10	5/1	7/2	4/1	9/4	3/1
Whisperer	d6	3/1	2/1	3/2	3/1	5/3
Wraith	d8	5/2	3/1	6/3	7/3	2/1

Table 26 - Denizens Chart

VILLAINS AND MINIONS LISTING

Creature	Die	PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
Elite	d8	6/2	4/1	3/1	4/1	6/2
Evil Mage	d10	5/2	8/4	4/1	6/3	7/2
Dark Adept	d10	2/1	4/1	3/1	7/4	4/2
Minotaur	d6	8/5	6/1	8/2	6/3	6/2
Ratling	d6	4/3	3/1	2/1	3/1	2/2
Skeleton	d6	3/3	2/1	0/0	0/0	0/0
Soldier	d6	3/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1
Thug	d6	3/1	2/1	1/1	1/1	1/1
Vampire	d12	6/3	8/4	10/8	3/2	7/3
Zombie	d6	5/3	3/2	0/0	0/0	1/1

Table 27 - Villains and Minions Chart

Astral Warden

Beings of the purest, most glorious, blazing light, Astral Wardens are rarely ever seen in the physical realms. It is believed by some scholars who study the Astral Realm that these entities are that plane's guardians, set there to protect against corrupting and unwanted visitors. Some theologians believe the Astral Wardens work for certain celestial beings, guiding spirits through the Other World and warding against evil influences, while others believe that these beings were created to be harsh deliverers of punishment, meant to harm anything that does not fit their ideal of perfection.
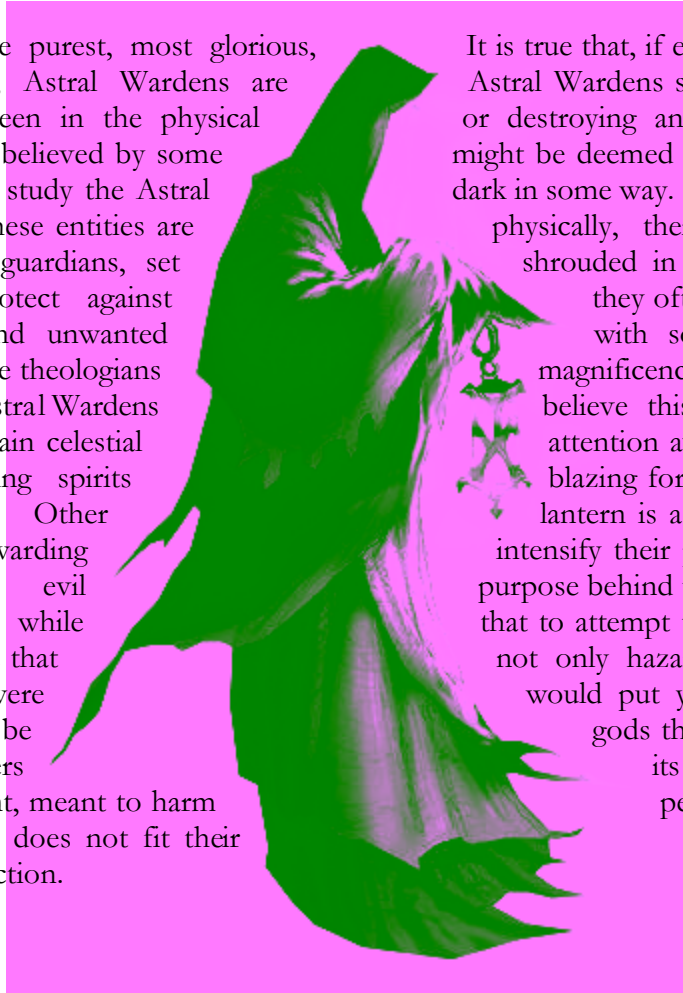
It is true that, if ever drawn into conflict, Astral Wardens seem intent on harming or destroying anything or anyone that might be deemed "corrupt" or otherwise dark in some way. When they do manifest physically, their glowing forms are shrouded in cloaks and robes, and they often carry a lantern filled with some measure of their magnificence. Certain scholars believe this is meant to distract attention away from their hidden, blazing forms. Others believe the lantern is a focus that helps them intensify their powers. Whatever the purpose behind these artifacts, it is clear that to attempt to obtain one of this is not only hazardous, but most likely would put you in jeopardy of the gods themselves, which brings its own type of risks and perils.

POWER DIE
d20

Attack Methods:
Sword of the Storm
The Call
Defense Methods:
Rolling Fog
Illusory Shield

Properties:
Unique Features: Illumination
Levitation: Self
Longevity

Skills/Spells:
Lore: (Select 3)
Empath Aura
Healing Touch
Psychic Vision
Temporal Stutter

PHY 8/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 12/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 8/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 16/8	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 6/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	5	A	Intellect	14	S	Faith	12	A	Passion	17	S	Charisma	1	A
Dexterity	6	S	Perception	14	S	Inspiration	7	S	Intuition	16	A	Attraction	1	S
Stamina	10	A	Sanity	10	A	Conviction	5	A	Dedication	15	A	Humility	12	A
Accuracy	11	S	Concentration	12	A	Discernment	8	S	Empathy	14	S	Persuasion	8	S
Adrenaline	8		Memory	10		Purity	8		Ego	18		Will	8	

Automaton

This odd but devastating beast was apparently used for the sole purpose of clearing anything out of its path. With its tentacles ending in blade-like claws and spikes and using its many sharp and powerful legs, there is very little that the Automaton cannot slice and hack its way through. Worse, it seems to consume anything – rocks, trees, animals, practically anything of physical substance will feed this creature. These slate-gray monstrosities (their bodies standing nearly 9 meters tall) are nearly mindless and some scholars surmise that they once had very powerful masters who were responsible for guiding and controlling them. Left alone, an Automaton will simply clear its way through an area, destroying and consuming everything as it goes. On the apparently rare occasions that it is sated, it will lie motionless – utterly, completely still, making no sound or movement at all. It will ignore anyone that comes near it unless they actively attack. Automatoa were apparently given the ability to sense threats and to respond to those threats, which means they do have a survival instinct.
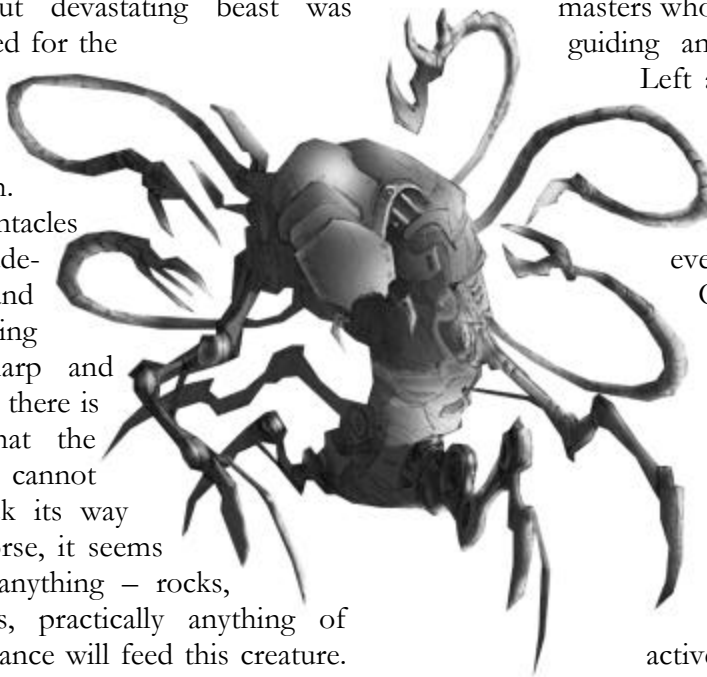
POWER DIE
d30

Attack Methods:
5 Back Tentacles – 1dP
2 Arm Pincers – 2dP
Mandibles – 4dP
Defense Methods:
7 Tentacle Parries

Properties:
Ambidextrous
Hard to Kill
Devout
Double-Jointed
Longevity

Skills/Spells:
Craftsman
Burrowing
Artisan
Smithing

PHY 25/12	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 12/2	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	29	S	Intellect	0		Faith	13		Passion	0		Charisma	0	
Dexterity	27	S	Perception	0	A	Inspiration	14		Intuition	0		Attraction	0	
Stamina	23	A	Sanity	0		Conviction	10		Dedication	0		Humility	0	
Accuracy	21	A	Concentration	0	S	Discernment	11		Empathy	0		Persuasion	0	
Adrenaline	25	S	Memory	0	S	Purity	12		Ego	0	A	Will	0	

BASALISK

Ugly, Vicious, Ornery, Hungry, Insane. Basilisks are all this and worse. They are creatures driven by a combination of instinct and destructive urges. There is no reason, no pattern to the behavior of a Basilisk. Basilisks are three-legged creatures roughly the size of a bear., and their coloration ranges from black to green to brown or mottle combinations thereof.

Though tough as nails and possessed of nasty, powerful claws and fangs, the most frightening attack of a Basilisk is its gaze. A Basilisk's eyes are weapons, with a random array of attacks that it might use at any given moment. There is no strategy to what one of these beasts might do, nor rhyme nor reason at all. This is what makes them so dangerous.

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Claws 1dP
Gaze (Stone, Fire, Fear, Death, Blinding)
Defense Methods:
Blinding Gaze

Properties:
Direction Sense
Night Vision

Skills/Spells:
Burrowing
Transmutation
Passway

PHY 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 5/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	14	S	Intellect	12	S	Faith	4	A	Passion	6	S	Charisma	2	A
Dexterity	10	S	Perception	7	S	Inspiration	8	S	Intuition	7	A	Attraction	2	S
Stamina	8	A	Sanity	6	A	Conviction	14	A	Dedication	10	A	Humility	2	A
Accuracy	8	A	Concentration	7	A	Discernment	8	S	Empathy	7	S	Persuasion	9	S
Adrenaline	10		Memory	8		Purity	6		Ego	12		Will	10	

BLIGHT

A bright orange ball of blazing, crackling energy, the Blight never fails to catch completely off-guard anyone unlucky enough to come across it. It floats through the air, bobbing along like some bubble hovering over a tub of water. From a distance, and in the dark, it could very easily be mistaken for a torch. When a group of Blights roam together, the illusion is even more effective. The lazy, quiet meandering of a Blight conceals its true speed and quickness. Once a Blight homes in on a target, it can move incredibly fast and with frightening accuracy. A Blight's focus is rather singular – it seeks to absorb energy from whomever or whatever it can. If truly pushed, the Blight can release some of this energy in a powerful burst, but would rather not. Once a Blight has taken its fill of power, it will speed away rather than continue a protracted fight.
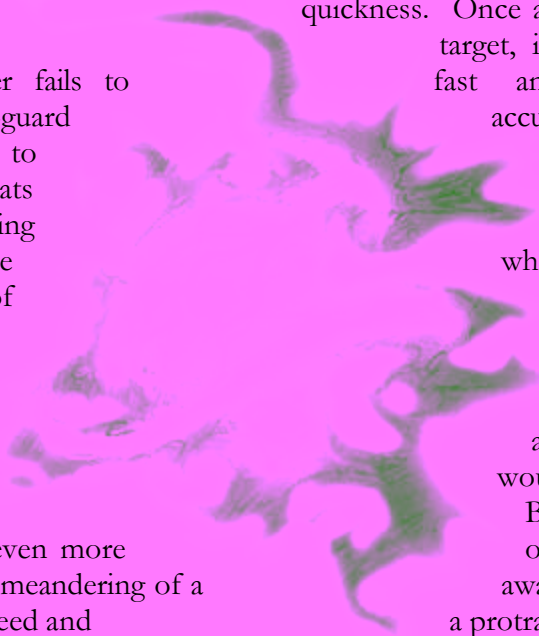
POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:
Hard as Stone
Sword of the Storm
Defense Methods:
Intangible

Properties:
Coward
Beautiful
Intangible
Unique Features: Illumination
Empathic Vision

Skills/Spells:
Flying
Healing Touch
The Call
Passion Burst
Fear Drain

PHY 4/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 6/4	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	2		Intellect	3		Faith	1		Passion	8		Charisma	1	
Dexterity	8		Perception	5		Inspiration	3		Intuition	5		Attraction	2	
Stamina	3		Sanity	2		Conviction	1		Dedication	4		Humility	1	
Accuracy	6		Concentration	2		Discernment	4		Empathy	3		Persuasion	4	
Adrenaline	1		Memory	3		Purity	1		Ego	10		Will	2	

Clockwork Serpent

Nearly perfect – and perfectly terrifying in form, the Clockwork Serpent is one of the most powerful and most mystifying creatures on all of Core. Gears and flanges, hinges and bolts, and racing flashes of magic energies, all flowing and connected with plates upon plates of impossibly strong and flexible Absolite. So precise and implacable in their movements and their efforts, it seems a certainty that Clockwork Serpents were created by very powerful beings long, long ago, probably as Stewards of Core. This role seems to carry them through to this day, for the Clockwork Serpents are the single-greatest threat any ship on the sea faces, especially if they dare the Mists.

No one knows why these machine-like beasts see fit to attack any sea-faring vessel they encounter. It does not appear that they seek sustenance or anything of value for once they have adequately destroyed the vessel, they are will be off again, leaving survivors to die on the open sea. They do not speak, nor do they show any emotion at all. Some records of a damaged one discovered not long ago indicate an impossibly intricate array of gears and pistons and other moving parts that would baffle even the most clever of artificers. One thing is certain about Clockwork Serpents – their power is virtually unmatched on this world, and their immunity to all things Magic makes this doubly so.

POWER DIE
d30

Attack Methods:
Bite 3dP
Razor Slice 1dC
Strangling Grasp 1dB/round
Defense Methods:
Violent Screech – Temporary Stun/Deafness

Properties:
Double Jointed
Exceptionally Fast
Mental Clock

Skills/Spells:
Swimming
Burrowing

PHY 26/15	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 18/8	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 0/0	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	28	S	Intellect	0		Faith	18		Passion	0		Charisma	0	
Dexterity	20	A	Perception	0		Inspiration	20		Intuition	0		Attraction	0	
Stamina	27	S	Sanity	0		Conviction	17		Dedication	0		Humility	0	
Accuracy	23	A	Concentration	0		Discernment	18		Empathy	0		Persuasion	0	
Adrenaline	32	S	Memory	0		Purity	17		Ego	0	A	Will	0	

DREAMCATCHER

This tiny, ephemeral, disturbing creature is not one to be found guarding a gateway or terrorizing a village (at least, not in the conventional sense). Dreamcatchers exist primarily in the Corelisian Realm (also known as the Dream Lands), where they are drawn to particularly powerful dreams and emotions. They seem to feed off of these dreams and feelings, while at the same time inducing dreams and feelings in the hosts they feed from. It is a kind of symbiosis, but one very few scholars have been able to completely fathom. What is known is that a Dreamcatcher will tend to turn bad dreams into terrible, gut-wrenching nightmares, while it absorbs peaceful dreams in such a way as to give the host a dreamless, restful night. Some scholars believe Dreamcatchers are the reason for why we tend to only remember particularly dark or disturbing dreams.
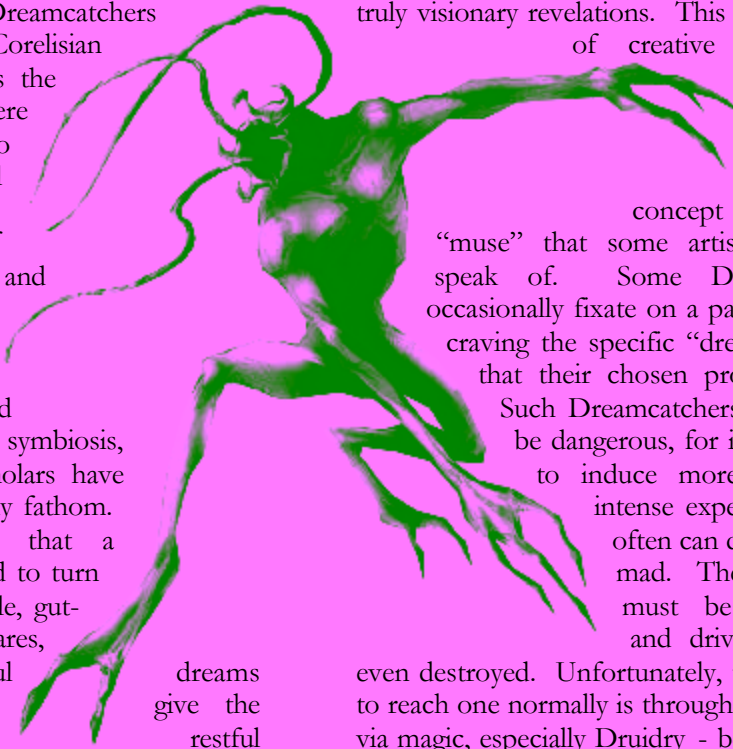
For those who dream of glory or things of importance, the Dream-catcher might sometimes open their dream-mind to deliver truly visionary revelations. This is the source of creative inspirations, visions of upcoming victories, and the concept of the "muse" that some artists or poets speak of. Some Dreamcatchers occasionally fixate on a particular host, craving the specific "dream essence" that their chosen provides them. Such Dreamcatchers can indeed be dangerous, for in their quest to induce more and more intense experiences, they often can drive the host mad. These creatures must be confronted and driven away, or even destroyed. Unfortunately, the only way to reach one normally is through Corelisia (or via magic, especially Druidry - because of the particular nature of the Dreamcatcher, it can be seen with both Druidic and magic sight.)

POWER DIE
d12

Attack Methods:
3 Boring Tendrils ½dP
Mouth Pincers 1dP
Defense Methods:
Leap

Properties:
Perfect Recall
Empath
Linguist

Skills/Spells:

Cryptography	Psychic Vision
Lore: All	Eldritch Bonds
Mindwalk	Chaos Blast
Fear Drain	Deconstruction

PHY 6/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 7/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 5/2	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 11/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	3		Intellect	10	S	Faith	2	A	Passion	11		Charisma	2	
Dexterity	8		Perception	5		Inspiration	8	S	Intuition	6	A	Attraction	2	
Stamina	4		Sanity	4	A	Conviction	6		Dedication	11		Humility	3	
Accuracy	9		Concentration	5		Discernment	4		Empathy	16	S	Persuasion	5	
Adrenaline	6		Memory	11	S	Purity	5		Ego	11		Will	3	

GARGOYLE

Made of living stone, Gargoyles are among the toughest creatures ever to walk the lands of Core. They can literally draw from any source of earth or stone and heal their body (literally – a small amount of whatever stone or dirt they are touching is drawn into their bodies) of what little damage someone might manage to do to them, making them implacable foes. Fortunately, most Gargoyles seem content to be left alone, for they do not need to consume food to survive and have no need to hunt.

However, Gargoyles are not "dumb animals." In fact, they are quite sentient and more than capable of becoming bored and desirous of something to do. Since fighting is something they do well, this often leads them to being employed to guard a palace, or strike against the enemies of a keeper. Though they do not need sustenance, Gargoyles are very fond of precious StoneCoin and gems and many find them a delicacy worth the servitude they sometimes endure.

POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Claws 2dC
Tail 2dB
Defense Methods:
Stoneskin 8/4

Properties:
Regeneration (where stone is present)
Light Sleeper
Impaired Senses: Deaf
Hard to Kill
High Pain Tolerance

Skills/Spells:
Morphmeld
Pattern Shift
Transmutation
Binding Earth

PHY 8/4	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 5/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 4/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	12	S	Intellect	4		Faith	4		Passion	4		Charisma	4	S
Dexterity	6		Perception	3		Inspiration	5		Intuition	4		Attraction	2	
Stamina	6		Sanity	5		Conviction	6	S	Dedication	6	S	Humility	2	
Accuracy	4	A	Concentration	7		Discernment	2	A	Empathy	5		Persuasion	1	A
Adrenaline	12	S	Memory	6	S	Purity	3		Ego	1	A	Will	5	

Grey Man

Another truly perplexing creature whose purpose in Core is not clear, the Grey Man is a bipedal, humanoid entity (blue-gray in color) that has the power to shape and form its body in an incredible variety of ways. From its body, a Grey Man can form weapons, shields, tools and instruments for almost any purpose. Though capable of taking on almost any shape it wants, a Grey Man will almost always maintain some human-oid characteristics. Grey Men do not seem to act on their own volition, and they rarely work alone. It is fairly apparent that they serve under the guidance of an unseen power, one that they serve with absolute loyalty and without question. Grey Men do not seem to fear death or pain: in fact, it does not appear that they even feel the latter, at least not in the same way that most people do. Grey Men are capable of speaking (in fact they can apparently speak any tongue fluently), but they rarely ever do. No one is quite certain where they come from, though there are some sketchy stories about strange "chambers" that seem able to produce more as soon as any one is destroyed. One thing is fairly certain – the mystery of the Grey Men seems to be very important to solve, for the sake of all Core.
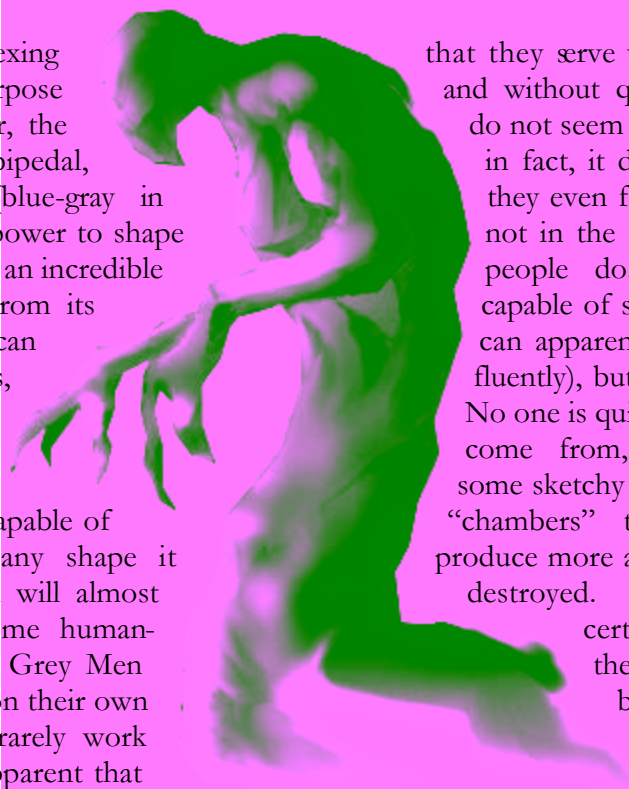
POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
* Special (formed weapons based on PHY)
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Linguist
Imparied Senses: Touch (no pain)

Skills:
Acting
Contortionist
Disguise
Language: All
Mimicry
Polymorph

Spells:
Immutable Soul
Holy Strength
Pious Hands
Transmutation
Channel Block

PHY 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 8/3	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 6/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	4		Intellect	9	S	Faith	8		Passion	4	A	Charisma	2	
Dexterity	3	A	Perception	8	S	Inspiration	6		Intuition	3		Attraction	5	S
Stamina	6	S	Sanity	3	A	Conviction	4	A	Dedication	10	S	Humility	2	A
Accuracy	5		Concentration	4	A	Discernment	10	S	Empathy	5		Persuasion	4	
Adrenaline	2	A	Memory	6		Purity	12	S	Ego	8	S	Will	2	A

Incubus

If there were a contest held to determine what creature was considered the most evil in all of Core, the Incubus would certainly be a front-runner. This terrible little beast lives for one thing, and one thing only – strife. It feeds and thrives off of anger and pain, anguish and spite. In fact, there is good reason to believe that the Incubus, Succubus, Whisperer, Viscerid, and Dreamcatcher are all related in some strange, unfathomable way. Some scholars maintain that one of the ancient beings from the Days Before selected a type of Demon and enhanced it to their purposes. The Incubus' appearance certainly bears this out, for it looks very much like a small demonic imp, complete with red skin and glowing eyes. That is, when it is seen. An Incubus spends most of its time invisible, preferring to toy with the minds and emotions of its chosen victims and driving them into conflicts with others. It will study its prey for a while, secretly searching out their dreams and desires and what they care most for with gentle probes into their minds. When it has attained the knowledge it seeks, the Incubus will influence their emotions and project images into their minds meant to direct their anger at a companion or nearby innocent. Even a nation can be led astray if one sovereign demonstrates weakness to these creatures.
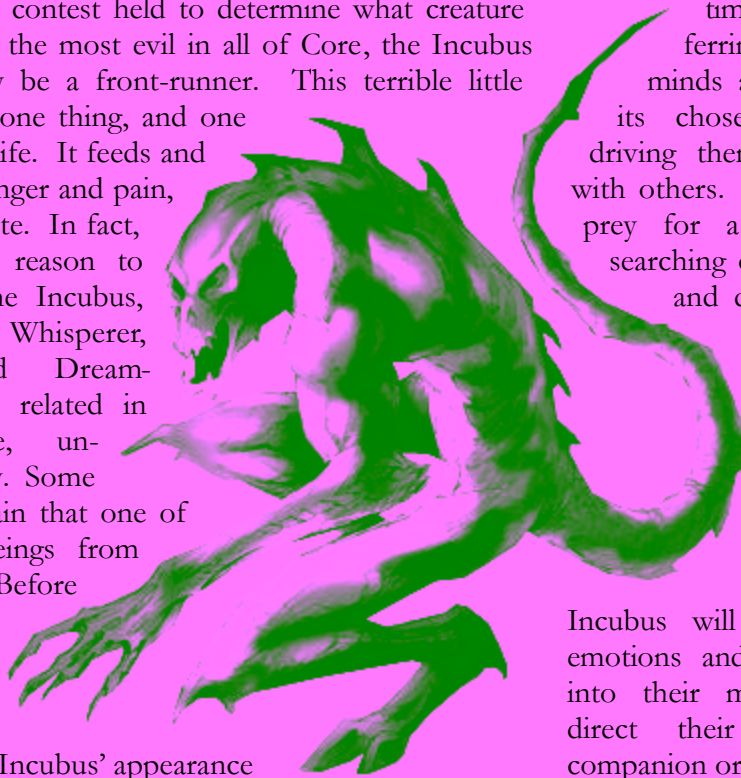
POWER DIE
d12

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Claws 1dC
Hooves 1dB
Tail 1dB
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Strong Willed

Skills:
Ventriloquism
Interrogation
Politics
Teaching

Spells:
Mindwalk Aura
Truth Detection
Project Lie
Will Sap
Mob Rage
Suggestion

PHY 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 9/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 5/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 7/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 10/2	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	5	A	Intellect	11	S	Faith	3		Passion	11	S	Charisma	5	A
Dexterity	7		Perception	14	S	Inspiration	2		Intuition	5		Attraction	13	S
Stamina	5		Sanity	2	A	Conviction	3		Dedication	3	A	Humility	13	
Accuracy	9	S	Concentration	5	A	Discernment	10		Empathy	6		Persuasion	12	
Adrenaline	6		Memory	13		Purity	7		Ego	10		Will	7	

Infernum

Like a living lump of crusted lava, flame still bursting through the cracks and licking all across the body, the Infernum is a devastatingly dangerous creature that should be avoided at all costs. Appearing like a nightmarish cross between a dragon and a demon, the flaming Infernum has only one apparent drive – to burn and destroy everything, turning the entire world into a hellish land of flame. Of course, these urges seem to come more from instinct than from any evil intent. Infernum are creatures of chaos and impulse, acting more on cunning than actual intellect. They feed off of flame (or more accurately, off of the transformed remains of just about anything that is burned), so they seek to burn everything in sight. The only time an Infernum seems to be at peace is when it can find itself inside the very heart of a volcano, a burning fissure or a similar place.
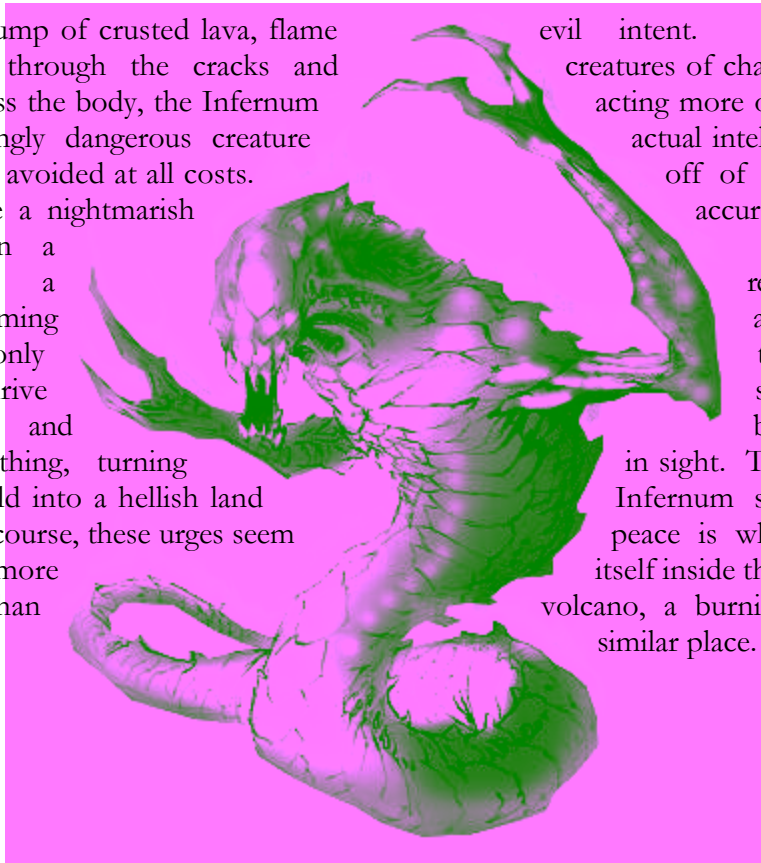
POWER DIE
d20

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Tail 2dB
Defense Methods:
Blinding Light

Properties:
Unique Features: Illumination
Empath
Rapid Healing
Susceptible: Water

Skills/Spells:
Contortionist
Pattern Aura
Firebolt
Thermal Lift
Liquid Form
Passway
Volcanic Rift

PHY 11/4	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 8/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 6/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 12/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	11		Intellect	9		Faith	4	A	Passion	14	S	Charisma	2	A
Dexterity	13	S	Perception	10	S	Inspiration	8	S	Intuition	12		Attraction	5	
Stamina	9	A	Sanity	8		Conviction	6		Dedication	10	A	Humility	4	
Accuracy	10		Concentration	6	A	Discernment	5		Empathy	11		Persuasion	6	S
Adrenaline	12		Memory	7		Purity	7		Ego	13		Will	3	

LEVIATHAN

When a Leviathan first appears, it seems as though the very sea (or lake or river) is coming to life, forming up from the waves. This creature can take on any shape it wants and it can range from the size of a turtle to that of a small whale as it sees fit. Its colors are that of the water it resides in, flowing and swirling depending on its actions and mood. The motives of a Leviathan are generally unfathomable. Such creatures are very rarely seen by land-dwellers, and they never venture from the water they inhabit.
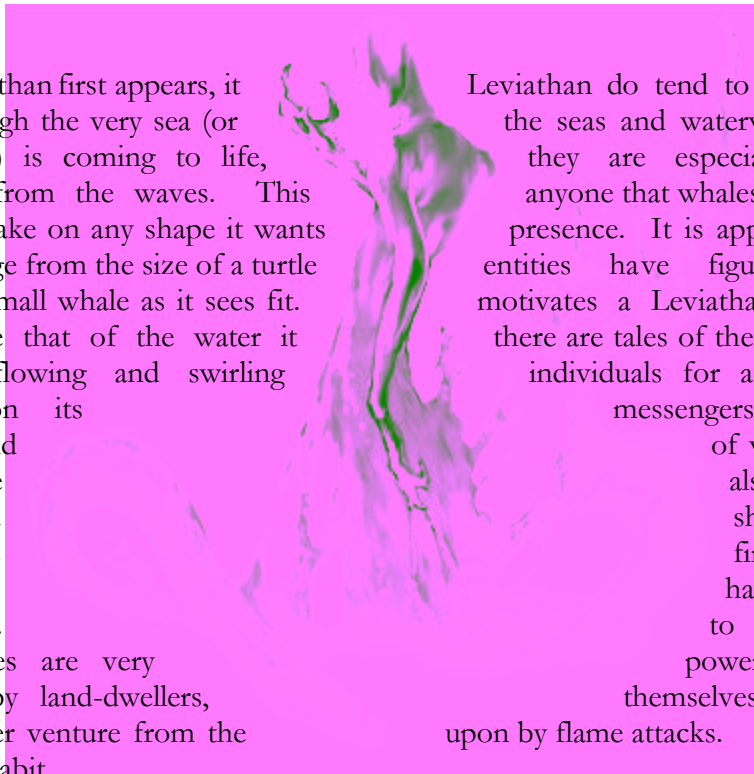
Leviathan do tend to be protective of the seas and waterways, however – they are especially harsh with anyone that whales or fishes in their presence. It is apparent that some entities have figured out what motivates a Leviathan, however, for there are tales of them serving certain individuals for a time (either as messengers or as guardians of waterways). It is also clear that they shun the affects of fire, although they have been known to marshal the powers of the Oceans themselves when beset upon by flame attacks.

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
* Special (depends on form)
Water Bolt 1dB
Defense Methods:
Water Wall (Based on PHY)

Properties:
Beautiful
Direction Sense
Susceptible: Fire

Skills:
Dance
Hypnotism
Mimicry
Navigation

Spells:
Pattern Aura
Water Bolt
Altering the Way
Currents
Semisolid Form
Water Wall
Calm Seas
Tidal Wave

PHY 8/4	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 5/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	6		Intellect	4	A	Faith	5		Passion	4		Charisma	8	S
Dexterity	5	A	Perception	6		Inspiration	6		Intuition	5		Attraction	5	
Stamina	10	S	Sanity	8	S	Conviction	7	S	Dedication	5		Humility	6	
Accuracy	8		Concentration	7		Discernment	3	A	Empathy	4		Persuasion	4	A
Adrenaline	11	S	Memory	5		Purity	4		Ego	2	A	Will	7	

MAGISTRATE

Riding forth on ghostly steeds and clad in metallic burgundy plate armor, the Magistrates are a terrifying sight for anyone who may have transgressed the laws they were created to uphold. They speak in deep and commanding voices, and they brook no interference in their tasks. It is clear that they were once Human (or at least of a similar stock), but their powers and their quest have changed them beyond any normal understanding. Magistrates were apparently tasked with meting out justice in the World Before, according to laws that are barely known in modern Core. They are both judge and enforcer, and normally the only crimes they seek to punish are ones that call for death in their eyes (though on some occasions, a Magistrate has been known to remand a prisoner to local authorities, if they deem those authorities worthy of their position). Present-day scholars have been able to determine the founding principle of the laws that Magistrates follow – "You shall not unrighteously deny another of their Life, their Possessions, or their Dignity." The solitary few Magistrates that remain from the World Before are unwaveringly committed to enforcing those same laws, and their interpretations of what comprises a transgression can be fairly harsh. It is possible to discuss the matter with a Magistrate, but it is highly unlikely they will take anyone's counsel but their own. After all, they can look into the mind and heart of a man or woman and know their guilt or innocence. At least, as far as the Magistrate's sense of law is concerned.
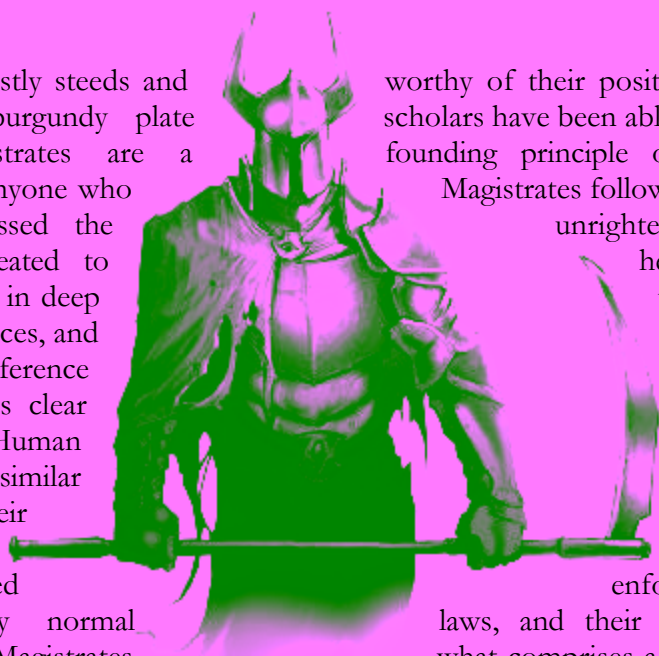
POWER DIE
d12

Attack Methods:
Punch 1dB
Scythe 2dC
Chop 1dP
Defense Methods:
Plate of Proof (20/20 AT PHY:Dex-4,NH)
Crusader Heaume (8/8 H)

Properties:
Strong Willed
Perfect Recall
Charismatic
Devout
High Pain Tolerance

Skills:
Horsemanship
Lore: (Select 3)
Fletching
Tactitian
Tracking
Interrogation

Spells:
Truth Detect
Will Sap
Calm the Mob
Suggestion

PHY 5/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 9/4	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	8		Intellect	7		Faith	4		Passion	5		Charisma	11	S
Dexterity	4		Perception	4	A	Inspiration	5		Intuition	12	S	Attraction	7	A
Stamina	4		Sanity	3		Conviction	5		Dedication	5		Humility	7	S
Accuracy	7		Concentration	8	S	Discernment	4		Empathy	3	A	Persuasion	6	A
Adrenaline	3	A	Memory	8		Purity	2	A	Ego	10	S	Will	14	S

Marsh Dweller

In the deepest, wildest reaches of the wilderness, where the vegetation grows so thick that every step is a battle won, it may be possible to find one of these reclusive, mesmerizing creatures. They are the foliage come to life, the trees and the vines and the flowers and the thorns given form to move, to act… if necessary. Marsh Dwellers are, thankfully, peaceful by nature. They prefer to commune with their natural surroundings and simply live undisturbed. However, should anyone or anything come into their land and cause unwanted destruction, a Marsh Dweller will be moved to great displays of power and rage. A single tree cut or a single animal slain for food will not stir the Marsh Dweller – such things are common in Nature, acceptable parts of the Cycle. However, mass deforestation or the senseless slaughter of beasts will draw forth one of these creatures in a berserk rage that is nothing less… than a Force of Nature.

POWER DIE
d20

Attack Methods:
Punch 1dB
Haymaker 2dB
Vicious Blow 3dB
Defense Methods:
Grapple

Properties:
Susceptible: Fire
Impaired Senses: Mute
Hard to Kill
Rapid Healing

Skills:
Bind Wounds
Lore: Wilderness
Alchemy (Natural)

Spells:
Pattern Aura
Altering the Way
Morph Meld
Empath Aura
Animal Speech
Hard as Stone
Plantwalk

PHY 16/8	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 8/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 11/2	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 14/4	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 8/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength		S	Intellect			Faith			Passion		S	Charisma		
Dexterity		A	Perception			Inspiration			Intuition		A	Attraction		
Stamina		S	Sanity			Conviction		S	Dedication		A	Humility		
Accuracy		A	Concentration			Discernment		A	Empathy		S	Persuasion		
Adrenaline		S	Memory			Purity			Ego		A	Will		

PHOENIX

The heart of a storm given the form of a great raptor – that is the rare, beautiful, terrifying visage of the Phoenix. Its every movement is a gust of wind, its voice a peal of thunder – and its wrath a blaze of lightning. It is believed that a Phoenix is drawn to the worst of storms, or perhaps that it is born within them, for that is the only time one of these devastating creatures is ever seen. Though sentient and even capable of speech, a Phoenix seems driven mostly be instinct.

To what purpose, however, remains a mystery. Phoenix do seem to be fond of gems and jewelry, for they will take vast quantities of them whenever possible. There are at least a few tales where a Phoenix was given a quantity of gems and it chose to leave rather rather than attack. Some scholars believe that, in general, Phoenix simply despise all things that walk on the ground. This theory is further supported by the fact that they never seem to harm Avanar that take to the skies.

POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Talons 1dC
Sword of the Storm
Defense Methods:
Evasion

Properties:
Obsessive: Stonecoin
Enhanced Senses: Vision
Susceptible: Water
Unique Features: Illumination

Skills/Spells:
Flight
Navigation
Empath Aura
Sword of the Storm
Human Speech

PHY 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 7/5	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	2	A	Intellect	4		Faith	4	A	Passion	4		Charisma	3	
Dexterity	3		Perception	5		Inspiration	8	S	Intuition	9	S	Attraction	2	
Stamina	3		Sanity	4		Conviction	5	A	Dedication	7		Humility	3	
Accuracy	5	S	Concentration	4		Discernment	7	S	Empathy	5	A	Persuasion	4	
Adrenaline	2	A	Memory	3		Purity	6		Ego	10	S	Will	3	

REVENANT

For some beings of utter, unquestionable conviction, the tasks they are driven to by their devotion defy even Death. These beings somehow return to their bodies and once again take up existence in the physical world, ceaselessly undertaking the tasks and causes that drove them in life. They look much the same as they did, except that their skin is now pale, graying and pulled a bit tighter across their bones. Their eyes are alight with the fire of their passionate belief, but this is the only real emotion they tend to feel anymore. Sometimes profound sadness or grim satisfaction will seem to cross their features, but you will never see a Revenant express joy or mirth. Revenants will still bear the mark of the wound that slew them, but all other wounds will heal with great speed.
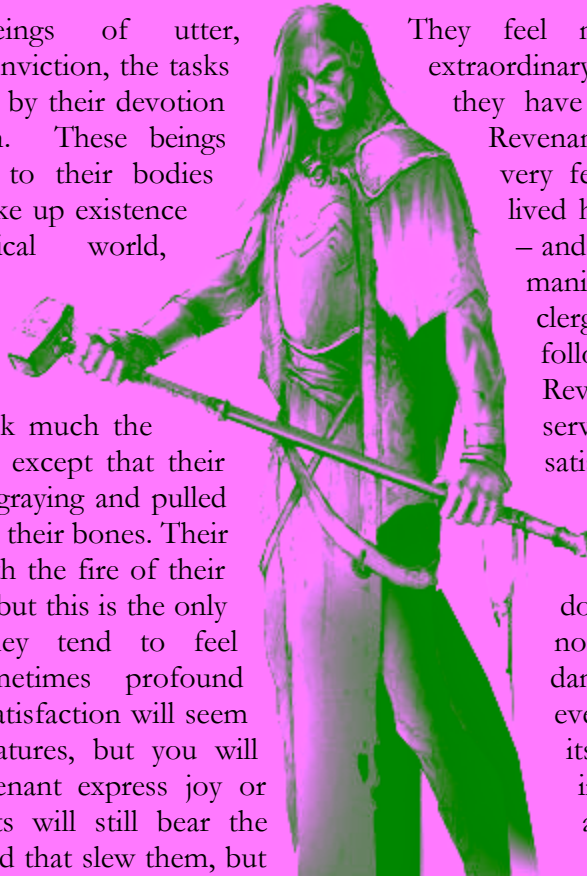
They feel no pain, and it takes extraordinary force to stop one once they have committed to a course. Revenants are extremely rare – very few beings who have ever lived have had that kind of faith – and the majority of those who manifest were members of the clergy or otherwise devout followers of a religion. Once a Revenant feels that they have served their cause to satisfaction, they will finally be able to rest peacefully. This is the only way a Revenant can truly be done away with; otherwise, no matter how badly one is damaged or destroyed, it will eventually return to continue its course, with the added incentive of vengeance to add to its driving motivations.

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
Punch 1dB
Hammer 3dB
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Devout
Light Sleeper
Undead
Night Vision

Skills/Spells:
Feign Death
Seer
Faith Armor
Chains of Justice
Devout Conviction

Pure Guiding Lig
Hands of the
Damned
Immutable Soul
Holy Strength
Unrighteous Wrat

PHY 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 9/4	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 6/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	9	A	Intellect	1		Faith	12	S	Passion	8	S	Charisma	7	
Dexterity	5		Perception	2		Inspiration	6	A	Intuition	4		Attraction	5	
Stamina	8	S	Sanity	1		Conviction	14	S	Dedication	5		Humility	6	
Accuracy	4		Concentration	1		Discernment	6	A	Empathy	7		Persuasion	8	
Adrenaline	9		Memory	10	S	Purity	7	S	Ego	6		Will	4	A

SHADE

Possibly some of the most terrible creatures to have survived the Sundering, Shades do not have "lives" of their own. Instead, they murder other living beings and take those lives for themselves. In the process of killing someone, a Shade can "absorb" complete and total knowledge of that person and effectively become that person in all ways that matter to the outside world. Because Shades are not, in their natural form, very formidable combatants, they take their victims through stealth and subterfuge (which they are quite good at). Some Shades will go on in the guise of someone for many, many years, but most become bored after a few weeks.
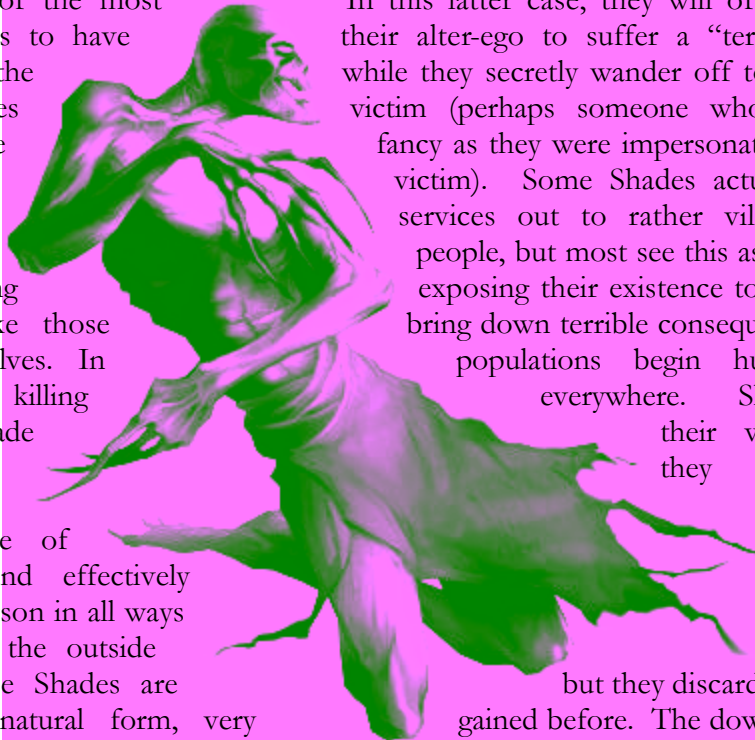
In this latter case, they will often arrange for their alter-ego to suffer a "terrible accident" while they secretly wander off to find another victim (perhaps someone who caught their fancy as they were impersonating their latest victim). Some Shades actually hire their services out to rather vile and terrible people, but most see this as a terrible risk; exposing their existence to anyone could bring down terrible consequences as entire populations begin hunting Shades everywhere. Shades become their victims utterly; they gain all knowledge, abilities, methods, properties – everything but they discard what they had gained before. The downside to this is that a Shade cannot access any of its own natural abilities while in the form of someone else. The information that follows presents a Shade in its "natural" state. Shades who have taken on the form of someone else should be simply written up as that Character.

POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:
Claws 1dC
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Head For Numbers
Strong Willed

Skills/Spells:
Flight
* Special – depends on host

PHY 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 8/4	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	1	A	Intellect	9	S	Faith	5		Passion	1		Charisma	4	A
Dexterity	3		Perception	10	S	Inspiration	4		Intuition	1		Attraction	10	S
Stamina	3		Sanity	5	A	Conviction	2		Dedication	2		Humility	6	A
Accuracy	4	S	Concentration	4	A	Discernment	3		Empathy	2		Persuasion	9	S
Adrenaline	1	A	Memory	7		Purity	1	A	Ego	4	S	Will	11	S

Shadow Weaver

These dark and disturbing creatures reside primarily in Corelisia, where they seem to be embarked on an endless quest to enshroud the entire world of Core in a web of shadows. They do seem to feed on the life essences of other beings, so they will occasionally extend their powers into the physical world of Core to ensnare unsuspecting travelers who wander dark, uncivilized areas. Grotesque and frightening, these spider-like beasts seem to be made of living shadow. They are almost impossible to look at, so complete is the blackness that is their form.

Though more than capable of direct physical confrontation, they prefer to trap a victim in their shadowy webs, which seem to sap the will and strength of those captured. They will then come and feed – slowly – over many weeks on the very essence of their captive. For this reason, Shadow Weavers seem to prefer spellcasters over other victims where possible. Most disturbing of all is the tendency of Shadow Weaver victims to return as corrupt lifeless husks of the people they once were. These entities are very much like Zombies. For this reason, some scholars believe that the Shadow Weavers once served some greater purpose for some powerful, dark entity of the World Before.

POWER DIE
d6

Attack Methods:
Bite 2dP
Legs 1dP
Defense Methods:
Web Entangle

Properties:
Ambidextrous
Enhanced Senses: Touch
Exceptional Jumper
Exceptionally Fast
Fragile
Glands: Poison
Glands: Web

Skills/Spells:
Artisan
Quickdraw
Climber

PHY 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 3/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 6/3	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 4/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	1		Intellect	5		Faith	3	A	Passion	4		Charisma	3	
Dexterity	3		Perception	1	A	Inspiration	8	S	Intuition	2	A	Attraction	1	A
Stamina	2		Sanity	2		Conviction	5	A	Dedication	3		Humility	4	S
Accuracy	3		Concentration	5	S	Discernment	9	S	Empathy	5	S	Persuasion	3	
Adrenaline	1	A	Memory	2		Purity	5		Ego	6	S	Will	4	

SPHINX

Sphinx are some of the most puzzling creatures in all of Core. It is clear that they mean to both gain and impart enlightenment through their actions, but their reasons (and their methods) are beyond the ken of most scholars. The fact that they are willing to take on the apparently menial task of guarding treasures or other locations, merely for the opportunity to test those who approach them, is puzzle enough. Add to that their willingness to slay anyone who fails their "tests" and you have a dangerous enigma indeed. These oddly-shaped creatures are beautiful in a strange, haunting way – part feline, part humanoid, with almost demon-like wings and a long, serpentine tail. They will sit perched on a column or rock for untold days, and somehow the very environment itself seems to leave them at peace. Some Sphinx remain in one place for so long that they take on a stone form; as soon as someone approaches them, however, they can break free from this "shell" and conduct their "test." The test itself is nothing so simple as a mere question with an answer. Most often, a Sphinx will ask a very difficult riddle. However, some will ask a question of philosophy or perhaps a purely open-ended query meant to provoke deep thought and discussion. Different Sphinx have different goals in their efforts, it would appear. For some, an absolute and precise answer is required; anything else will draw their unbridled rage and terrible violence as they seek to kill the unenlightened. Other Sphinx seem to care less for the answer than for the discussion that surrounds it. If the tested individual shows foresight, logic and enlightened thinking, the "test" may be passed. Failing a test, or refusing to take it, can bring about a vicious confrontation. Passing a test will provide the individual one of the greatest treasures of all – an absolutely truthful answer to any one question they wish to ask.
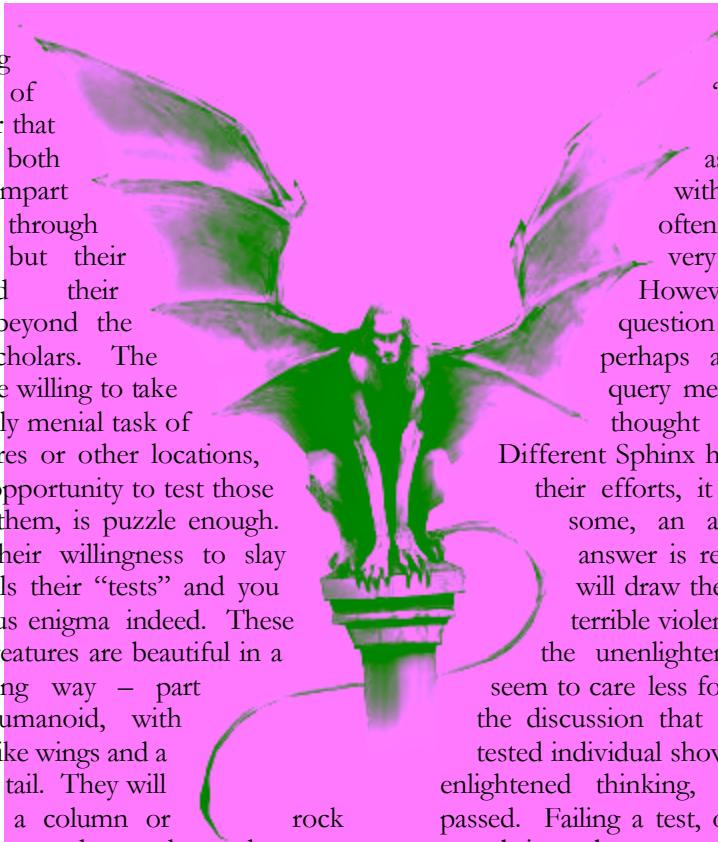
POWER DIE
d12

Attack Methods:
Claws 1dC
Stone Tail 1dP
Defense Methods:
Flight

Properties:
Light Sleeper
Longevity
Perfect Pitch

Skills:
Hibernation
Feight Death
Lore: All
Flight
Interogation

Spells:
Mindwalk Aura
Truth Detection
Mindwalk

PHY 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 10/5	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	5	A	Intellect	6		Faith	5		Passion	3		Charisma	6	A
Dexterity	7		Perception	4	A	Inspiration	4		Intuition	4		Attraction	5	A
Stamina	7		Sanity	7		Conviction	5		Dedication	5		Humility	14	S
Accuracy	10	S	Concentration	8	S	Discernment	5		Empathy	4		Persuasion	12	S
Adrenaline	6		Memory	5		Purity	1	A	Ego	4		Will	13	S

Succubus

There are many theories as to the origins of the Succubae. Some scholars consider them to be Incubi that discovered a "taste" for different experiences. Others maintain that a Succubus is a Fae who became transfixed on a mortal being and was changed. Still others hold out the theory that Succubae were simply created by some greater being to a purpose unknown in the world after the Sundering. Whatever their origins, these painfully beautiful creatures have power to instill lust and inspire undying devotion in anyone. They can be male or female as they choose (though many will pick a gender and stay with it).
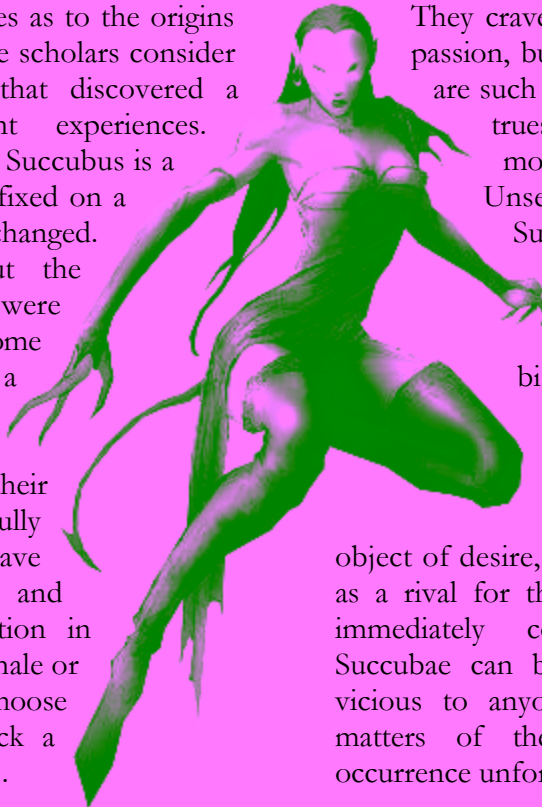
They crave attention, affection and passion, but their drives and means are such that they rarely attain the truest form of what they most wish for in the world – Unselfish Love. As such, Succubae tend to live very tragic lives, and this breeds a certain resentment and bitterness in them that can often result in acts of vengeance or pettiness. In particular, when a Succubus fixates on an object of desire, anyone who is perceived as a rival for that person's affections is immediately considered an enemy. Succubae can be particularly cruel and vicious to anyone who bests them in matters of the heart – a frequent occurrence unfortunately.

POWER DIE
d6

Attack Methods:
Passionate Gaze
Bite ½dP
Kick 1dB
Knifemaster
Defense Methods:
Back Leap

Properties:
Beautiful
Beautiful Voice
Charismatic
Lucky

Skills:
Acting
Contortionist
Courtier
Interaction
Merchant
Sleight of Hand
Streetwise

Spells:
Project Lie
Will Sap
Suggestion
Inner Despair

PHY 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 4/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 3/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 6/3	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	2		Intellect	6	S	Faith	3		Passion	1	A	Charisma	4	A
Dexterity	4		Perception	3		Inspiration	2		Intuition	3		Attraction	9	S
Stamina	3		Sanity	2	A	Conviction	3		Dedication	5	S	Humility	4	A
Accuracy	4		Concentration	5		Discernment	3		Empathy	4		Persuasion	8	S
Adrenaline	2		Memory	4		Purity	4		Ego	2		Will	5	

UNICORN

There is no more noble a creature in all of Core than the Unicorn. To even see one is considered one of the rarest and most treasured experiences most people would ever consider having. It is thought that there may be no more than a few dozen of these magnificent Creatures left in the world, and some believe the number may be far less. Most Unicorn are the purest of white, with gleaming gold horns, golden manes, and golden tails with hair around the hooves. However, some are of different and equally striking colors. Unicorn are tall and proud, standing a good head and shoulders above even the largest of horses. They are strong and powerful, quick and graceful, and extremely intelligent. Unicorn are also charismatic and have a bearing that only the most wicked of beings will not respect.
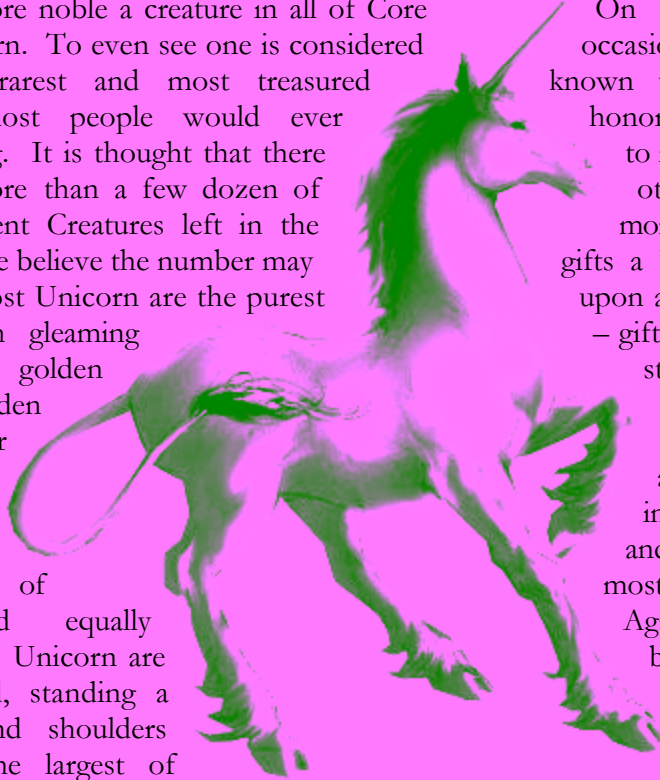
On some very rare occasions, Unicorn have been known to choose particularly honorable and noble Heroes to impart some wisdom or other message to. Even more rare are the special gifts a Unicorn might bestow upon a truly worthy recipient – gifts of insight, courage or strength. A Unicorn can heal any wound, restore health to anyone (even someone in their Final Moments) and bring peace to the most troubled of minds. Again, such gifts will only be granted to those the Unicorn deems worthy: the noblest or most innocent of beings. Anyone who would assault a Unicorn, or perform dishonorable deeds in their sight, risks a wrath unbridled and devastating.

POWER DIE
d12

Attack Methods:
Horn Charge 2dP
Hooves 1dB
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Beautiful
Lucky
Perfect Pitch

Skills:
Dance
Lore: Wilderness
Horsemanship
Interaction
Language
Tracking

Spells:
Seer
Faith Armor
Chains of Justice
Pure Guiding
Light
Immutable Soul

Spells:
Light of Truth
Holy Strength
Inner Beauty
Will Shield
Mindwalk

PHY 8/3	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 10/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 12/5	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 9/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 11/3	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	10	S	Intellect	7	A	Faith	16	S	Passion	7	A	Charisma	13	S
Dexterity	6	A	Perception	6	A	Inspiration	9	A	Intuition	12	S	Attraction	9	A
Stamina	11	S	Sanity	13	S	Conviction	17	S	Dedication	13	S	Humility	12	S
Accuracy	6	A	Concentration	12	S	Discernment	8	A	Empathy	8	A	Persuasion	6	A
Adrenaline	9	S	Memory	12	S	Purity	10	A	Ego	5	A	Will	15	S

VILE

In the annals of all Core's history, no creatures more alien or more terrifying have ever been known. Ever-changing, ever-adapting and usually appearing in devastating swarms, the Vile defy understanding on anything but a very basic level. They seem to follow a hive mind, under the guidance of master entities. They can consume other entities and creatures and absorb their abilities. This doesn't include learned or trained Skills or even magical knowledge, but any natural Property or Racial Method can become part of the Vile as one absorbs these abilities and somehow passes them on to other Vile in their Hive.
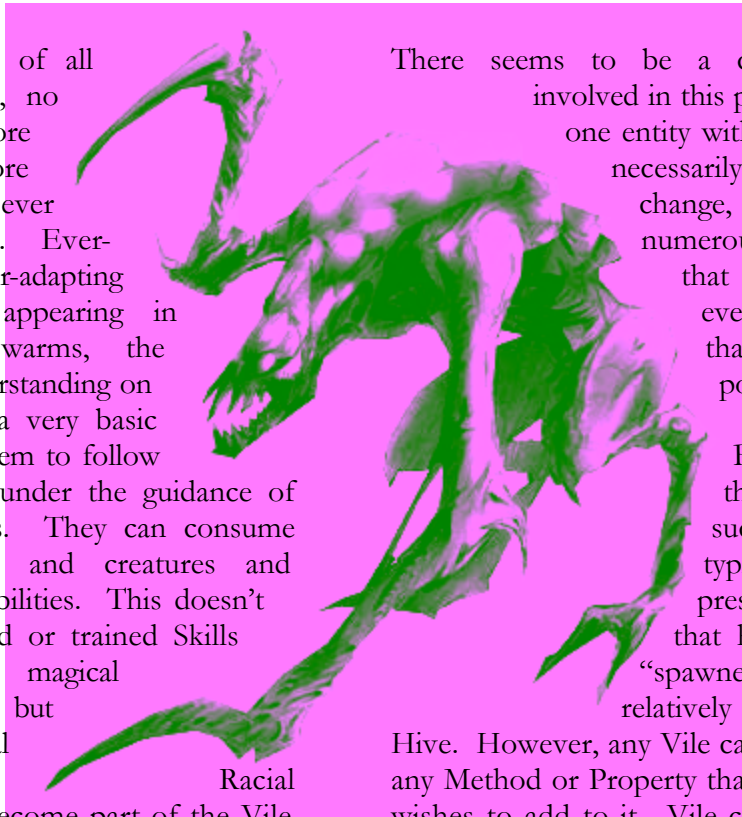
There seems to be a cumulative effect involved in this process: absorbing one entity with an ability won't necessarily result in a change, but absorbing numerous entities with that ability will eventually manifest that ability within a portion of the Vile population. Because of this, there is really no such thing as a typical Vile. What is presented here is one that has been recently "spawned" from a relatively inexperienced Hive. However, any Vile can have just about any Method or Property that the ShardMaster wishes to add to it. Vile can also be larger, smaller or any shape imaginable. It is also very rare to meet a single one; it is far more likely to encounter a large number of them at a time.

POWER DIE
d20

Attack Methods:
Claws 1dP (chop)
Claws 1dC (slash)
Bite 2dP
Spit Acid 2d Acid
Poison (claws or spit) 1d Poison
Defense Methods:
Chaos Diffusion: 1 per hour

Properties:
Hive Mind:+1 PHY:Adr per nearby Vile
Mind Link with other Vile
Susceptible: 2x Damage by Antipathy Fragments

Skills/Spells:
Burrowing
Spawning: Vomit another Vile 1 per day
Leadership

PHY 18/6	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 15/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 14/3	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 12/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 6/2	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	18	S	Intellect	16	S	Faith	12	A	Passion	14	S	Charisma	4	A
Dexterity	19	S	Perception	17	S	Inspiration	16	S	Intuition	11	A	Attraction	9	S
Stamina	17	S	Sanity	13	A	Conviction	12	A	Dedication	10	A	Humility	4	A
Accuracy	18	S	Concentration	13	A	Discernment	15	S	Empathy	15	S	Persuasion	8	S
Adrenaline	18	S	Memory	16	S	Purity	15	S	Ego	10	A	Will	5	A

VISCERID

Feeding on fear and flesh, the Viscerid is by far the most horrifying creature in all of Core (with only the Vile as rivals in terror). This is "the monster under the bed," the horror meant to make children behave and keep travelers away from certain parts of the forest. The Viscerid is the reason why people don't go into cellars alone. Hovering in the air, waving tentacles about, slithering and drooling, the Viscerid's own appearance is awful enough, but it is rarely ever seen. A Viscerid will choose a victim and delve into their subconscious, seeking out their worst nightmares and fears. It will then subject them to those fears, leaving them in a state of utter catatonia.
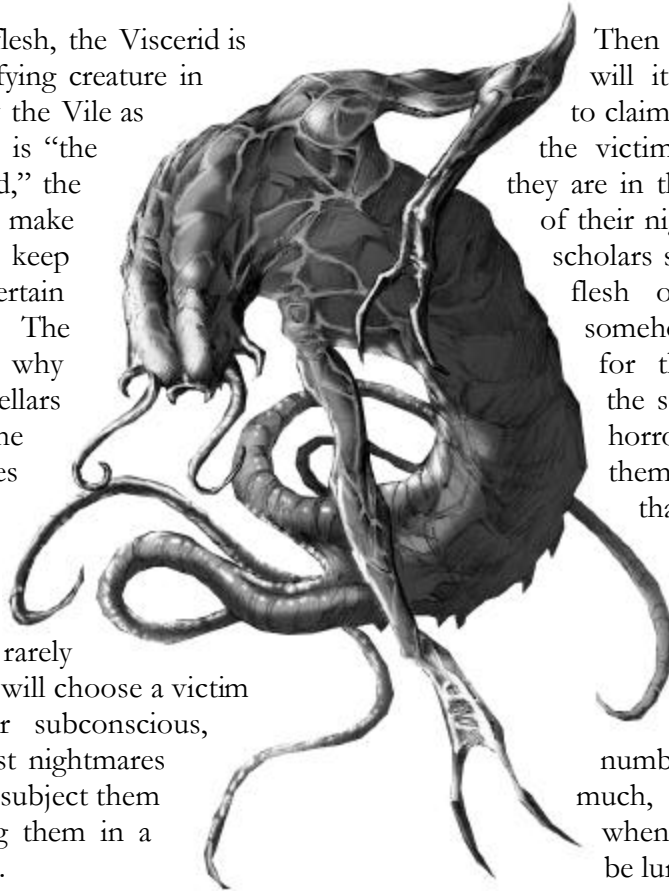
Then and only then will it come forward to claim its prize, eating the victim alive, even as they are in the death throes of their nightmare. Some scholars surmise that the flesh of a victim is somehow sweetened for the Viscerid by the state of absolute horror it instills in them. It is certain that very few living entities stand a chance against such a beast alone. Safety in numbers means much, much more when a Viscerid may be lurking about.

POWER DIE
d10

Attack Methods:
Mandibles 1dP
Boring Tendrils 1dP
Claws 1dB
Leg Tentacles 1dB
Defense Methods:

Properties:
Horrific Appearance
Empath
Empathic Vision
Glands: Acid (mouth)

Skills:
Burrowing
Interrogation

Spells:
Psychic Vision
Awareness
Eldritch Blast
Eldritch Arrow

Spells:
Eldritch Bonds
Illusory Shield
Chaos Blast
Empath Aura

PHY 5/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 7/2	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 4/1	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 9/4	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	7		Intellect	9	S	Faith	5		Passion	5	A	Charisma	3	
Dexterity	4		Perception	8	S	Inspiration	4		Intuition	11	S	Attraction	2	
Stamina	6		Sanity	6	A	Conviction	4		Dedication	5	A	Humility	3	
Accuracy	5		Concentration	5	A	Discernment	4		Empathy	13	S	Persuasion	2	
Adrenaline	3	A	Memory	7		Purity	3		Ego	11	S	Will	5	

WHI8PERER

It would be too easy and too convenient to blame all the troubles and strife in the world on tiny, wicked creatures preying on the weakness of others, but it is fair to say that some of the conflicts in Core are caused by Whisperers. Almost certainly "cousins" to the Incubi, Whisperers revel in the plotting and politics of other sentient species (they have a particular affinity for Humans, it appears), and they literally feed off of greed, ambition and corruption. These tiny, impish beings seek out men and women of some influence, and they secretly urge them to covet more. Merchants, courtiers, lieutenants – anyone who might have reason to look for a "step up" in the world – are common targets. Different Whisperers have different preferences, one enjoying the vanity of an aspiring actress, another the arrogance of a noted bard. Once a Whisperer has chosen an object for their "affections" they will initiate a relationship that links them to their protégé magically. For this reason, they are very, very careful with their choice, selecting only those they are certain will accept their gifts and not betray their presence to others. Whisperers will then go about the task of gathering information, planting evidence, and otherwise sneaking about to help their chosen one achieve their ambitions. The grander their host's ambition and desires, the more gratifying the relationship becomes for the Whisperer, and the more destructive to their host. If, somehow, their host ever becomes truly satisfied with their lot in life, the Whisperer will seek to engineer their downfall (usually by choosing one of their now ex-host's rivals to suddenly give assistance to). By the time the host begins raving about the "tiny demon", the Whisperer will be long gone, seeking out a new victim to begin the dance again.
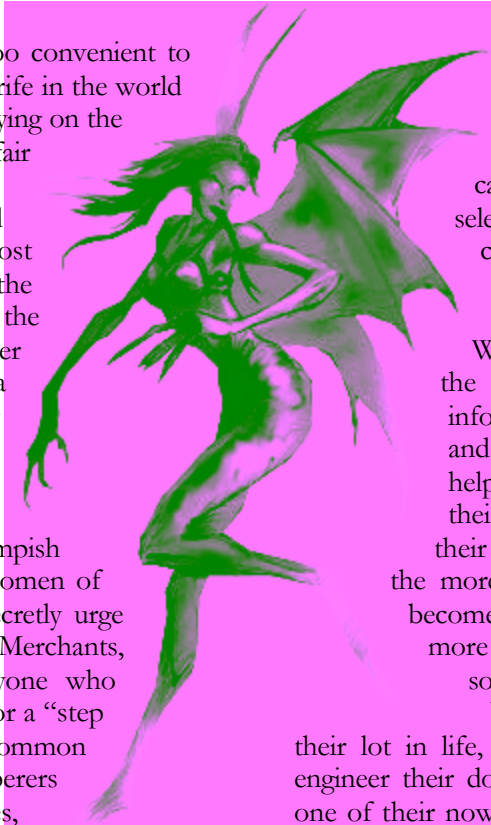
POWER DIE
d6

Attack Methods:
Claws 1dC
Defense Methods:
Flight

Properties:
Charismatic
Exceptional Jumper

Skills:
Interaction
Courtier
Interrogation
Language
Lip Reading
Politics
Ventriloquism

Spells:
Mindwalker Aura
Will Sap
Project Lie
Suggestion
Inner Despair

PHY 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 3/2	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 5/3	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	1	A	Intellect	2		Faith	3		Passion	1	A	Charisma	2	A
Dexterity	5		Perception	3	S	Inspiration	2		Intuition	3		Attraction	9	S
Stamina	2		Sanity	2		Conviction	1	A	Dedication	4	S	Humility	3	A
Accuracy	4	S	Concentration	1	A	Discernment	4	S	Empathy	3		Persuasion	8	S
Adrenaline	3	A	Memory	2		Purity	6	S	Ego	4	S	Will	3	A

WRAITH

Spirits with no sense of belonging anywhere, no sense of where they should go now that they are no longer of the World – these are the origins of the tragic and terrifying Wraiths. These creatures know only the utter, cold loneliness of an afterlife that has no meaning for them, because they never gave it meaning in life and don't know how to now. Instead, they hover in the Corelisian Realm, on the fringes of Core, watching a world they can no longer live in. Many of these sad creatures merely watch, content to simply lament their existence, and perhaps, occasionally pass a message on to someone capable of perceiving them. Some Wraiths, however, decide that the agony of un-life is too much to bear without lashing out, and these are very dangerous entities indeed. Such Wraiths will use their powers to cause fear and harm, preferring to make others suffer as a means to alleviate their own suffering. Unscrupulous people who can reach them will give these Wraiths a kind of purpose by employing them to dark ends. When a Wraith is present, there is normally a more sinister master nearby.

POWER DIE
d8

Attack Methods:

Defense Methods:

Properties:
Intangible
Empathic Vision
Strong Willed

Skills/Spells:
Flying
Seer
Faith Armor
Hands of the Damned
Unholy Strength
Soul Drink

PHY 5/2	SubStat	Sympathy	MEN 3/1	SubStat	Sympathy	SPI 6/3	SubStat	Sympathy	EMO 7/3	SubStat	Sympathy	SOC 2/1	SubStat	Sympathy
Strength	3	A	Intellect	3		Faith	4	A	Passion	8	S	Charisma	1	
Dexterity	5		Perception	4		Inspiration	9	S	Intuition	7	A	Attraction	1	
Stamina	6		Sanity	1		Conviction	3	A	Dedication	6	A	Humility	1	
Accuracy	7	S	Concentration	2		Discernment	8	S	Empathy	9	S	Persuasion	3	
Adrenaline	4		Memory	5	S	Purity	6		Ego	5		Will	4	

VILLAINS AND MINIONS

This section provides the ShardMaster with opponents for Heroes that are less "cosmic" and "legendary" in their scope, but still quite deadly if treated too lightly. Antagonists of different power levels are presented for use in each type of Campaign, so keep an eye on the Attack, Defense, and Magic Powers listed.

ShardMasters should feel free to tinker at will with these listings. For example, most of the initial entities are assumed to be Human; GMs will need to modify accordingly when they want to use these listings for other Races.

ELITE

POWER DIE

d8

Attack:
Great Sword : 2dC, 1dB
Longbow: 1dP
Defense:
Dodge
Parry
Shield (12/9, TL, PHY:Sta-1,None)

Properties:
Skills /Spells:
Tactitian
Interrogation

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
6/2	4/1	3/1	4/1	6/2

These are the lieutenants of Master Villains, the leaders of bandit armies, and otherwise extremely tough and powerful individuals who will give even Epic Heroes a run for their money.

EVIL MAGE

POWER DIE

d10

Attack:
Mage Staff: 2dB
AirBolt: 4 x 1dP
Defense:
StillAir

Properties:
Skills /Spells:
RockWall: 8/4, 40r
Passway: Burrow 5m

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
5/2	8/4	4/1	6/3	7/2

When the powers of Magic are brought against the Heroes, it is a frightening, dangerous time indeed. The write-up for the Practitioner in Chapter Five is an example. This is a much more frightening Mage who has delved into the mysteries of the Arcane, the kind of individual who could well be the Master Villain for even an "Heroic" Campaign.

DARK ADEPT

POWER DIE

d10

Attack:
Staff: 1dB
Defense:

Properties:

Skills /Spells:
Mob Rage
Will Sap
Truth Detect
Suggestion

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
2/1	4/1	3/1	7/4	4/2

Possibly even more dangerous than an Evil Mage, the Dark Adept delves into powers that most Heroes are not well-equipped to resist. Even so, such Adepts tend to work in the background rather than draw attention to themselves. An Adept such as the one listed here (well-suited as a mid-level Villain in an "Early-Career" or "Heroic" Campaign) will make sure that they have more physically gifted allies to give them cover to escape. However, if they are pressed in a conflict, they will reach out and convert one or more of their enemies into an ally in a hurry.

MINOTAUR

POWER DIE

d6

Attack:
Battle Axe: 2dC
Giant Club: 4dB
Horns: 2 x 1dP
Defense:

Properties:
Disease Carrier
Night Vision
Enhanced Senses: Smell
Skills /Spells:
Pack Tactics
Tracking

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
8/5	6/1	8/2	6/3	6/2

The mystery of the Ratlings extends to the Minotaurs; their origins are uncertain, but it is clear that they seem out of place in just about every Realm on Core. Minotaurs are full of rage and power, and they are often employed as "overseers" in armies of Ratlings and similar Creatures. They are crafty, and certain individuals have shown great intelligence and mastery of many arts. The average Minotaur, however, is an oafish brute who seems to enjoy widespread destruction for its own sake.

Rivaling Ogres in size and strength, Minotaurs range in coloration from light brown to pitch black. They love to use large, hulking weapons. Some will wear armor, but they find it difficult to find any that will fit them.

RATLING

	POWER DIE
	d6

Attack:
Claws: 2 x 1dP
Fangs: 1dP
Tail: 1dB
Short Sword: 1dC
Defense:

Properties:
Disease Carrier
Night Vision
Enhanced Senses: Smell
Skills /Spells:
Pack Tactics
Tracking

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
4/3	3/1	2/1	3/1	2/2

It is not entirely clear where these ugly, angry Creatures come from, though many scholars surmise that they are from a Realm that is at least in part ruled by Demons. This theory comes from separate incidences where Ratlings accompanied a Demon Lord on one quest or another, and they do seem rather servile towards such entities (as well as Minotaurs, which they are often seen with as well).

Ratlings are about the same height as Dwarves, though thinner and wiry. They are bipedal humanoid rats, fully capable of using tools, forming social groups, and acting in concert. They are more cunning than intelligent, and alone will be an utter coward in the face of danger. It is only in packs that Ratlings succeed (with some rare exceptions). Ratlings tend to require strong supervision to keep them in line, generally by Minotaur.

Ratlings are usually found in a Realm either in the service of some powerful, evil master, or else wandering aimlessly and trying to survive because they have been stranded from their home after some failed scheme or another. Ratlings in this latter state tend to revert to thievery (and worse) to survive.

SOLDIER

	POWER DIE
	d6

Attack:
Broadsword : 2dC
Lt. Crossbow: 1dP
Defense:
Dodge
Parry
Shield (10/6, T, PHY:Sta-1,None)

Properties:

Skills /Spells:
Tactitian

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
3/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1

These are men and women who have training and equipment. They may serve as guards, or mercenaries, or hired muscle for an evil crime lord. Their roles and uniforms may be different, but the same basic abilities apply.

SKELETON

	POWER DIE
	d6

Attack:
FingerBone Claws: 2 x 2dP
Defense:
Properties:
No Stun
Night Vision
Susceptible: Light

Skills /Spells:
Mob Rage
Will Sap
Truth Detect
Suggestion

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
3/3	2/1	0/0	0/0	0/0

When the evil spirits of the Undead take up residence in the bones of long-decomposed corpses, the result is a Skeleton. Even more mindless than Zombies, Skeletons retain no semblance of the person they once were. Though nowhere near as strong, Skeletons do have the advantage of being quicker and more agile. In most other ways, they serve the same functions as Zombies - guardians and servants for necromancers and greater Undead.

THUG

	POWER DIE
	d6

Attack:
Short Sword : 1d
Dagger: 1d
Defense:
Leather Armor

Properties:

Skills /Spells:
Pickpocket
Mob Tactics

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
3/1	2/1	1/1	1/1	1/1

Lowlifes. Scum. Street thieves. Road bandits. Ill-equipped and ill-tempered, they can still be quite dangerous in large numbers. These are the bad folks who give good folks bad days.

VAMPIRE

POWER DIE
d12

Attack:
Claws: 2 x 2dP
Fangs: 1dP Poison, Dominate
Defense:

Properties:
LifeStealer Touch
Night Vision
Susceptible: Light
Impervious
Susceptible: White Silver
Regeneration: Daily
Skills/Spells:
Dark Confusion
Unholy Strength
Wrath of the Damned
Soul Armor

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
6/3	8/4	10/8	3/2	7/3

While Zombies and Skeletons are mere servants, doing the will of those who rule the Undead, Vampires are those masters. According to legend, they are the chosen "children" of one of the Progeny, intended to rule Core. Scholars who study such matters believe that they are one of the ruling races of the Nether, and they have used their secret paths and means to infiltrate and, in a sense, "infect" the rest of Core with their dark ambitions. Vampires are usually pale and gaunt, though some have mastered techniques to hide these tell-tale signs. They otherwise look quite Human; though most are almost unnaturally beautiful, this can often be attributed to having Fae blood in the family. Though they do possess rather impressive fangs, Vampires are skilled at hiding them (some can even retract them at will). For every legend or classic belief about Vampires, there are plenty of individual members of the species who defy those expectations. The only things that are known to be true (about most Vampires, at least) is that the sun truly is their enemy and they require blood to stay strong and animated (treat their need for blood as an Addiction that cannot be broken, as per the Defects). It is also true that a wooden stake through the heart will immobilize a Vampire, and wood in general will affect them better than most weapons. Fire is also a powerful weapon against them.

Vampires are corruption personified, and as a whole they seek nothing less than the total domination of the rest of the world. There are some rare instances of a Vampire rejecting their inherent nature, at least for a time, but these are so few and far between as to be almost meaningless to the average person. The information presented here is for a relatively recent addition to the Vampire population; this one does not possess the full range of potential vampiric powers by any means. It takes older and more powerful Vampires to create and master new ones, for example, as well as to perform many of the classic "tricks" often attributed to these Masters of the Night. Future books and online sources will provide more information on these deadly, dangerous foes.

ZOMBIE

POWER DIE
d6

Attack:
Punch: 2dB
Defense:

Properties:
No Stun
Night Vision
Susceptible: Fire
Skills/Spells:
Mob Rage
Will Sap
Truth Detect
Suggestion

PHY	MEN	SPI	EMO	SOC
5/3	3/2	0/0	0/0	1/1

The "living dead" are not what most people think at all. Undead are not the dead come back to life, but monsters inhabiting the mortal shells of a person whose spirit has passed on. This shell has been corrupted and dominated by an evil force that has taken residence in the body. This evil entity often "imprints" on the shadow or aura that remains in the body, which is why many Undead cause the living to think they are the dead person come back to life. However, these evil spirits only connect to the darker, baser impulses left behind in the "shadow aura," causing the Undead to display the more evil traits of the "host."

Zombies are the basest form of all Undead, capable of displaying only rudimentary awareness. Very few Zombies can even speak, and they have no capacity for actual thought or reasoning. They simply obey the commands of the entity that raised them (usually a vile necromancer or a more powerful Undead Creature), or else they wander aimlessly, seeking flesh to consume in an effort to satisfy their endless hunger.

Undead appear in many Realms of Core, and it is believed that the powers that spawn them come from the dismal and corrupt Realm of the Nether, seeping across the rest of Core even through the Veil.
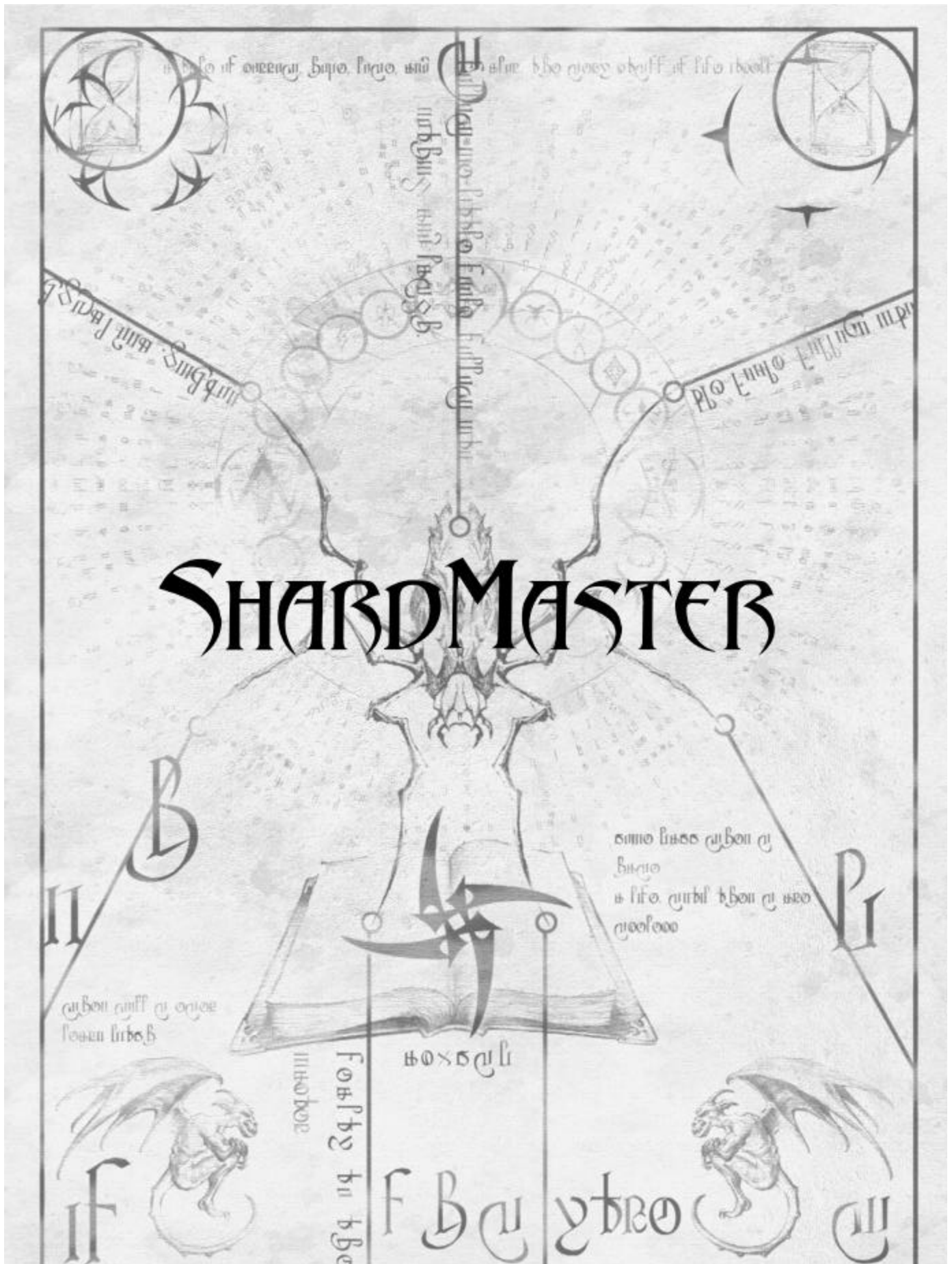
SHARDMASTER

SHARDMASTER SECRETS

WHAT IS A SHARDMASTER?

No Shards of the Stone Campaign can happen without a ShardMaster, for they are the single most important participant. The world lives through them, and the Heroes need them to judge what can and cannot occur in the course of a story. This chapter focuses on helping a new ShardMaster bring heroic adventures to life.

First we will first give you an idea of just what a ShardMaster is and what he does.

Next, we will provide guidelines on what kinds of stories and Campaigns you might want to run in Shards of the Stone, as well as guidance on choosing a Campaign Level.

Following that, we will offer some useful tips, shortcuts, and other information for making your Method as the ShardMaster run more smoothly and effectively.

Finally, we provide guidelines for rewarding your Players and their Heroes, with Experience, Hero Points, and Properties.

If you are a player in an existing campaign, it's my sincere suggestion that you check with your ShardMaster before reading further or the game just won't be as much fun for you… Let's begin!

WORLD BUILDER

This is the role that should come before any of the others are dealt with. As the ShardMaster, you will be responsible for the setting in which the story and the players' characters will exist. Even if you choose to use a world or universe already created by someone else (which is an extraordinarily good idea if you are new to this and can find one that you like), you will still need to make it your own.

In Shards of the Stone, you can set your Campaign in one of the many Realms that we will be publishing or create a Realm of your own.

If you are brand new to the Method of ShardMastering, we highly recommend that you explore the first option. We have put a lot of time and effort into giving you intriguing Realms to explore and shape as you see fit. Using them will free you up for the many other roles that you face as a GM.

However, one of the things that drives many people to be ShardMasters is the need to create, and there is no greater thrill than creating a Realm or world of your own. If you decide to go this route, the Realm Books and online resources provided by our website will still be very helpful to you. Seeing how others go about the process is the easiest way of figuring out how to do it yourself.

Even if you choose one of our Realms, you will still need to immerse yourself in it, making it as much your own as possible. You need to understand how it moves, how it grows, what the key points of strife and conflict are, how the people live, and dozens of other issues related to the running of a world. You may also decide that there are changes you wish to make - best to be sure of those changes before the Campaign begins, or you will provide an inconsistent experience for your Players.

At the same time, you should also spend some time getting to know as much about the overall world of Core as you can. Its mysteries and magic are the catalysts that will drive epic plots for countless Players all over the world by the time we are done. Knowing and understanding these things will serve you well in participating in the "Bigger Picture" as we move forward.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Much as your Hollywood counterpart must send the call out early in the production of a movie or TV show, this is one of the things that you must do early on in a Campaign...

For example, if one of your players has shown a strength for playing outspoken heroic types, and you know that the story you want to tell will Property from having a noble knight who is willing to stand up for his beliefs, then it is entirely appropriate to discuss this idea with that player and see if they are up for it.

The rules for Hero Creation in SHARDS are extremely open-ended, allowing for a near-endless variety of Characters to be brought to life. However, not all Characters fit into all stories. As the ShardMaster, it is important that you participate in the decision-making process that your Players go through as they build their Heroes. You must work with them to make sure that the Heroes they create will fit the Campaign that you are going to run.

For example, if you wish to tell stories centered around the voyages of a privateer ship and her crew, a forest-bound ranger or a water-hating Dwarven mountaineer may be very bad choices for such a Campaign. Of course, there might be a way such characters could work, but this is something that you and the Players must work out well before the Campaign gets underway.

If you choose to just "open the gates" and let anything through, you run the risk of having a very disjointed, unfocused Guild of Heroes for your stories. This can be a blessing in disguise. Sometimes, the Heroes suggest the stories well before the setting and other issues are determined. Experienced GMs are particularly fond of this approach.

For your first efforts, it is probably a good idea to set the boundaries and even make suggestions to your Players as to what kinds of Heroes they should be considering.

STORYTELLER

In Chapter One, it said that a ShardMaster must have the "Heart of a Bard." If you've no desire to tell stories, or to help create them, then you may be doing a disservice to yourself and your Players.

The story you are going to tell is one you have only partial control of. Writers sometimes claim that they have no idea where their characters are going to take them. In an RPG, this is the literal truth! The GM sets the stage, comes up with the "Big Picture" as far as who (outside the group of characters controlled by the players) is doing what to whom, and when major events will happen. They may even have a very strong idea where the overall story is meant to go. However, the main characters are beyond the ShardMaster's control. It is the Heroes

the story truly revolves around. Their reactions to the situations and people that the ShardMaster describes to them determines the direction and outcome of the story.

There are, in fact, many different ways a game can be run, depending upon what kind of emphasis you place on such aspects as combat, puzzle-solving, and strategy. However, at least some attention must be paid to the telling of a story, or else your games are likely to be little more than an excuse to get together and "bash some heads."

And of course, it's always more fun to bash heads if you have a good reason as to why you are bashing them...

There are many, many stories that can be told in the world of Core. Later in this chapter, we have some ideas on that very subject. Hopefully, your head is already swimming with the possibilities of the stories that you and your Guild of Heroes will create.

ENCYCLOPEDIA AND ATLAS

As the ShardMaster, you will often be the sole source of information on many subjects during the game.

There is no way you can possibly prepare for every question that a Player might ask. The best you can do is to create the basic information you need, and then make the rest up on the spot as you go. Once you do, however, you had best be certain that you get it written down in your notes somewhere, because it's nearly certain that it will come up again.

Know your world as well as you can. Keep encyclopedias, atlases, sourcebooks, and textbooks on subjects that may be relevant nearby, or else be willing to rely upon the knowledge and expertise of your Players when your own knowledge fails. Learn how to make up names on the fly. More importantly, learn how to make up relationships on the fly.

Heck, learn to make up everything on the fly. It's probably the most important skill a ShardMaster can... well, master.

Fortunately for Shards of the Stone ShardMasters, this Core Book, the Realm Books, and our web site (www.ShardsoftheStone.com) will have a huge amount of just this kind of information right at your fingertips. Even so, not even our team of writers and designers can think of everything, so it really is a good idea to keep other sources on hand.

It is an even better idea to become good at inventing such information as you need it, then recording that information in your notes for later reference. Such consistency will be well appreciated by your Players.

DIRECTOR

Cinema is a wonderful source of inspiration for a ShardMaster. It is in movies (and, to a lesser degree, television) that we can see the importance of scenery, pacing, mood, pacing, special effects, pacing, sounds.

...and, of course, pacing.

The Director of a movie may or may not have written the screenplay. They may or may not be one of the actors. However, the Director's job is still to take the screenplay and the actors and use everything at their disposal to make the movie a good one. Developing something of the director's instinct will go a long way towards making you a decent GM, the kind that players speak fondly of.

Sometimes it is necessary to just let the players go, roleplaying at their leisure with no prodding or direction. There are other times, however, when the action is heating up and things are happening, where the GM must take a hand and attempt to maintain pacing and a sense of "motion" if they wish to get the players excited.

This is not, unfortunately, something that can be taught or even adequately explained. You will have to get a feel for the dynamics of the group you are running for. To move things forward requires that you be able to press the players into action, but you cannot press too hard or they will get frustrated and no longer enjoy themselves.

Pacing is not all that the Director part of the GM role entails. There are other elements of the story that must be wielded like tools, or better yet, instruments. Learning to craft the ever-unfolding story so that the players are completely into it will be very rewarding.

Part of this will be learning to describe things in a cinematic way. Visualizing things in your own mind as a "movie shot," you can then relate those ideas to your players, bringing them with you into the fantastic, strange place that your mind has envisioned. Create moods by making references to the lighting, the shadows, the ambient sounds, people's clothes, puddles of water, the smell of... OK, so you rarely smell anything at a movie, but this is where the virtual aspect of gaming comes into play. The characters are actually there; do everything you can to create a "scene" for your players, especially if where their characters are at the moment is particularly important.

You don't actually need to belabor every little detail; just give them enough to draw them in. Too much description can ruin the pacing just as badly as too little can ruin the mood.

At their best, the Director is able to get the players to help them tell the story and maintain the flow by getting them really involved. The "end" is far less important than the "getting there," and the ShardMaster who develops a Director's skills will get there with style.

There is actually very little we can add to the above, except to say that the world of Core has some very unique aspects that bear special attention when you are introducing them to Players. The Elements and the powerful Fragments that represent their power are excellent examples of things the Heroes will run into that demand extra attention on the part of the ShardMaster to handle well.

DIETIES AND DEVILS

I can almost see the raised eyebrows. Let me hasten to point out (in case anyone forgot) that we are discussing a game, an activity centered on using the imagination. We are pretending things happen that actually, in the real world as we know it, do not.

In the imaginary world that your players' characters inhabit, whatever sense of morality and ethics those characters have will derive from your ideas of right and wrong for that world. What's more, if you have anywhere near the variety of cultures in your imaginary universe that exist in our own real world, they will each have their own perspectives on "Right" and "Wrong."

You will have to decide what religions (if any) exist in your world, and what influence they have on the general populace. A trickier subject will be your choices as to what supernatural beings exist and how they are related to those religions.

In other words, is (or are) there a diety (or dieties)?

Within the context of the imaginary world you've created, you represent the intangible forces of Good, Evil, Chaos, Order, or whatever else you want to allow as influences. Perhaps there are no such influences active in your world; morality can derive from more mundane sources.

These issues are addressed in great detail in Shards of the Stone, and especially in each of the individual Realm Books. Not only are there the impossible-to-comprehend Progenitors and the incredibly diverse Progeny, but each Realm may have its own set of celestial or mythical beings that influence the belief systems and morality of the people who live there.

It is extremely important that, as the ShardMaster, you have a firm grasp on these beings and what they expect of those who deal with them. Your Players' understanding of morality, ethics, and religion within the fantasy setting that is Shards of the Stone will come entirely from what you tell them.

R EFEREE

It should be noted that it is considered very obnoxious to blow a whistle indoors.

That having been said, you will be required to fulfill the role of the Referee if you become a GM. As a matter of fact, that is one of the early names used for what we now know as the ShardMaster. Like so much to do with this hobby, this is an artifact of the "Old Days," when fantasy roleplaying games were an extension of the wargaming hobby.

As the concept of the nonzero-sum game [essentially, a game with no absolute winners or losers] was developed, where multiple players would be involved and each would seek their own unique goals, the idea of a disinterested party responsible for making impartial decisions and rulings came about. This person was called the Referee, and their role in wargames and military simulations became intrinsic to the way combative forces now train across the world.

As RPGs came about, they naturally relied upon the same principles as their predecessors. A Referee was needed to handle the actions of the monsters and other opponents that the heroes struggled against. It was also this Referee who handled the rulings on what would and would not work, who hit and for how much damage, and what the effects of a fireball would be within an enclosed corridor.

These days, the role of that disinterested party has expanded greatly, but the need for the GM to be "the last word" is still essential for the success of the game. The ShardMaster must be the final voice in any rules interpretation or adjudication. As the GM, you are the foundation upon which the world is built. The laws of how things work, though defined by the rules you utilize, are finally issued or rejected by you.

As the Referee, you need to be the one who knows the rules in the game. If you wish to change or re-interpret rules, you need to make certain that your players are aware of it. Your role as final arbiter is part of the job of GM, but you will get little respect or tolerance if you constantly change the rules or are inconsistent in your interpretations. Your authority as a ShardMaster lasts only as long as you have a game to run, which won't happen if you have no players.

Again, we don't need to add much to the above. We believe we have created a set of rules that are easy, playable, and extremely flexible, allowing you to run your game in exactly the way you desire. Just remember to be fair and consistent, and you should have little trouble with any reasonable Players.

As for unreasonable Players…

M EDIATOR

Roleplaying, if the Players really get into it, can be an emotionally involving experience. In fact, there are many in the hobby who think that's the only way to really play. This may or may not be true for you and your group, but it will be difficult to not invest something of yourself into the gaming experience.

Remember, the Players are being asked to identify with their Heroes, to assume the roles of these people. As such, they will at some level virtually experience what happens to those characters. There are likely going to be times when those experiences spill so heavily into their real emotions that they are very much affected by them.

Sometimes this is good.

"With a dying gasp, the Dark Conqueror hisses angrily at you before collapsing in a heap of dust and bone. His retinue drop their weapons, heads bowed in defeat."

"All right!!! We won! Man, this is great!"

"Yeah! That was excellent! Fantastic, Sean!"

" Thanks for a great game, guys!"

Sometimes this is not so good.

"Well, Fiona, after searching Ratburry's things, you find your magic ring wrapped carefully in an old cloth."

"Fred, you sneaky little creep! How could you?"

"Hey, Tricia, it was my character, not me!"

"I don't care! You still shouldn't have done it! You're just messing with my character for no reason!"

It is at this point that your job as Mediator will have to take the forefront. You can't afford to let this kind of thing run its course; your game will invariably suffer for it, as may some friendships in the process.

In the second example, your first Method will be to calm down Tricia and Fred. Tricia started out angry (she probably suspected that Ratburry had stolen Fiona's ring to begin with); now Fred is on the defensive and agitated as well. He is certain to claim that he was playing in character when he had Ratburry take the ring. There could be, in fact, any number of reasons for why things turned out the way they did; this is less important than dealing with the Real World tensions that have cropped up. Trying to get them to work it out "in-character" will only work if both are amenable and realize that's the best course.

Don't bet the farm on this.

You will have to assert yourself and your role as the ShardMaster to gain control of the situation. Having done so, you'll need to remind both Tricia and Fred (and everyone else playing, for that matter) that they are playing a game, that it isn't real, and that their characters are not actually them.

Of course, they may accept that on the surface ("Of course we're not our characters! That still doesn't excuse the fact that he's deliberately doing things to my character!"). At this point, there are probably a number of other things that need to be done. Taking a break is a really good idea here. Try not to have everyone choose sides or gang up on one player or the other.

You will know your group best, so you will have to make your own choices as to how to best address the situation. Obviously, you need to be as fair as you can be. If, in fact, you disagree with the actions of one of the players, you should take them aside and discuss it privately. This will go a long way towards building goodwill and trust in your judgement if you don't set one of your players up in front of the others. It's also a good idea to avoid showing any partiality or favoritism towards a character or player, especially in a situation like this.

We see a future in which Shards of the Stone ShardMasters and Players all around the world will be able to interact and inter-connect their Campaigns. This will be done via the Internet, as well as at conventions and in-store events.

It is in the midst of all this interaction that the best Mediators will be worth ten times their weight in gold.

MANAGER
If you have designs on a long-running and successful Campaign, you will have to put on the Manager's hat periodically to keep it going. This is when all the bookkeeping, note scribbling, and long-range planning is done. This is the time when you take a good look at where the Campaign has come from, where it is, and where it is headed.

You will want to make sure that your world is "alive." To that end, you will occasionally want to deal with events that are beyond the scope of what the Heroes are doing and where they are. Wars, disasters, treaties, economic opportunities or pitfalls, social changes, new discoveries - all these things will go a long way towards making your world seem more alive to your Players and yourself. However, you have to make the time to sit down and deal with these things, planning them out so that their occurrences and effects are not too haphazard.

You will also want to look at the Heroes in your game. You should make certain that your Players leave an up-to-date version of their Heroes in your possession at all times. As most games progress, characters improve and change in many areas. A good GM will monitor these changes carefully. Occasionally, you may want to recommend that someone look at improving an area that they are weak in; there are other times when you

may want to discourage (or even disallow) an improvement in an area they are already very good at.

There are other reasons it is important to keep a copy of everyone's character at all times. For instance, what happens when Fred doesn't make it one week? You or someone in the group will have to run his character. If no one has a copy of Ratburry anywhere, you're gonna be makin' it up, bucko!

Figuring out "what's next" is also a part of the campaign management process. Granted, the best ShardMasters rarely have much planned beyond the bare bones, preferring to let the actions of the characters move the story along. Even so, there is usually an overall plan. As the world is changed by the actions of the characters, the overall plan will need to adjust. Setting aside time to look at this is part of the process.

There are also all the "crib notes," player handouts, combat stat sheets, and other things that you will want to prepare for each session. Session preparation is a good thing. Prep work will go a long way towards improving the quality of your game as well as reducing the stress of running it. Even if it's just one hour before game time used to quickly scan through everything and take some notes, that will help you focus and be more ready to run.

We won't lie about it - this is the part that is often very off-putting for many potential new ShardMasters. This is the part that makes it most seem like "work." However, there are many folks who really enjoy the strategizing, organizing, and other details that go into such preparation and planning. These are the kinds of people who make good ShardMasters, and it is for them that we are writing this Chapter.

If managing a Campaign feels too much like work to you, you're probably right in thinking it's not a Method you want to take up. However, if you are the kind of person who loves to lay it all out, see where it's going, and move things along, Campaign management can be a very exciting and creative experience.

In the future, we are planning to put up many utility programs on our web site that will help GMs with just these Methods.

EVERYBODY ELSE!
In almost all games, each of the Players plays one Hero. Most players prefer to concentrate on and develop one character, immersing themselves in that persona and their story. This gives them a stronger connection to the events of the game as they perceive it from the perspective of that single "virtual self."

However, if you have five Players, this does not mean that your world only has five inhabitants. Not only would that be kind of silly, it would also be pretty boring.

So who is responsible for breathing life into all those other people? And what about the animals, monsters, celestial beings, and intelligent shades of blue?

The answer, my friend, is YOU. As the ShardMaster, it may at first appear that you don't get to do a lot of the one thing that is most enjoyable about RPGs - roleplaying. Nothing could be further from the truth.

You get to roleplay everyone, every living (or unliving) thing the Heroes come across and interact with. At a moment's notice, you could end up playing a god, a demon, a guard, a shop keeper, an evil sorcerer, a comely maiden, a beefed-up stud, or a gerbil with a serious attitude problem and a bad hair cut.

Even more interesting, you could end up playing some or all of the above roles (or more) at the same time!

There is nothing quite so surreal as "roleplaying with yourself." Not only does such an event trigger a great deal of amusement in your players, but it is a challenge to keep it all straight.

This kind of thing necessitates that you have at least a little something of the "ham" in you. You don't actually have to be a good actor (though that kind of thing never hurts), but it won't help you any if you are shy about performing.

One of the most important things to remember about running a good game is that everyone the Heroes come across has a personality. They had a life and they lived it before the Heroes came along, and they would probably just as soon go on living it after the encounter. You don't have to work out everything about each and every person the Heroes might encounter, but you should be prepared to create that information on the spot if it does come up.

A final note on this point. By adopting the roles of everyone the characters meet, you will be encouraging them to roleplay more themselves. This is one of the most important tools a GM can wield. Don't let them get away with "I go up and ask the bartender what he knows." When a Player says that, grab a small rag, pretend you're wiping down a counter, and look at him askance.

"Now what can I do for ye, lad? Have a drink, eh?"

Better still, have a glass or mug nearby and pour him a drink...

The importance of this role cannot be emphasized enough for the ShardMaster in a SHARDS Campaign. The GM will set the tone and the level of comfort for roleplaying for everyone else at the table. Being able to present yourself in different roles and personas comfortably, not as a professional actor, but as a roleplaying gamer, will ensure that everyone else who is playing will be just a little more inclined to "become" their Hero a little more deeply.

RPG STORYTELLING – A CHECKLIST

If you are having a hard time putting together in your head how to construct an interactive story, the following checklist will serve as an excellent starting place to help you build your first adventures:

INTRIGUE

You have a plot in mind, something that is happening that you want your Heroes to get involved in. You have to "put it out there" and get their attention. A messenger, an old friend, a note found on the ground, a scream in the night, a rumor about town... these are all classic means of getting the attention of the Heroes. Once you have done that, you have to make it clear that this is something that they are meant to (and qualified to) get involved in. Perhaps someone wants to hire them. Maybe a great treasure is to be found. One of the Heroes is related to an involved party. The King commands their presence. They're part of an organization, and it's their job. You get the idea.

HINT

The best RPG plots are the ones that ultimately lead to bigger and grander epics. If something about this story ties into the plans and machinations of your more important Villains, be sure to let the Heroes in on that in some way early on. If the incident they are currently involved in somehow connects to some aspect of the "cosmic whole" (such as the plans of the Grey Wanderer, or a plot to control one of the Shrines), this should be strongly hinted at. This will ensure the Players have a sense of connecting to something that will place their Heroes on the center stage of the adventure.

Even on the smaller scale, it is important to make sure the Heroes conclude that something more than meets the eye is going on: this dead body in the alley is more than just a random act of violence. Why is the left hand missing? An interactive story is one where the Players feel compelled to dig deeper and look more closely at everything. They will want to know what's going on, and in this way they will discover their part in it all.

HOOK

Let's face it; Heroes are Heroes for a reason. They are motivated by the kinds of things that keep lesser folk on the farm or in their shops. It should be fairly easy to move things in the story along to the point that the Heroes are in deep, with no thought of turning back. Once you have accomplished this, the current story, and in fact the entire Campaign, will start to "drive itself." You will find, more and more, that your Players are moving the story as much as (if not more than) you.

When the true Villains of the current story conclude that the Heroes are becoming a threat to their plans, their agents will begin to act to harm or even kill the Heroes. This is one classic way in which the Heroes become enmeshed in a plot past the point where they can just give up and go home.

REVELATION

Now that the Heroes are in up to their necks (or worse), it is time to bury them in it even deeper. By now they have a pretty good idea of what is going on, or at least some strong clues. Give them some more "pay-off." Perhaps it is time to confirm some of their suspicions. Perhaps it is time to correct a strong misconception, so that they can get back on the right path. Just be sure to reward their involvement and interest with something that reinforces their commitment to the tale.

CONFRONTATION

As traditional and even cliché, as it is, the "Final Battle" is the ultimate pay-off in any heroic adventure story. The Heroes have gotten in so deep that the only way out is to confront the main Villain (or Villains) and put an end to their plans. You have to be certain that your Villains are strong, developed, and more than just something to stick a sword through. If not, this big battle scene will have all the dramatic tension of a pick-up game of tic-tac-toe.

Don't be afraid for the most important Villain or Villains to escape (although if you don't put at least some effort into making the escape palatable to your Players, they will resent you strongly for it). A recurring Villain is a key staple to successful, long-term Campaigns. At the same time, be sure that the Heroes have enough other important "bad guys" they can finish off or capture to make it feel satisfying.

In the end, with the main Villain running and their plot at an end, the Heroes should feel like they have been in a truly great

story. This is when you inform them that this is only the beginning...

CAMPAIGN CONCEPTS

CAMPAIGNS IN SHARDS OF THE STONE
The world of Core is one of fantasy. Not a single "brand" of fantasy, but one where almost anything is possible. As such, there aren't many limits to the kinds of fantasy stories you can tell in Shards of the Stone.

Granted, there are some very broad boundaries. As a fantasy world, technology is limited to around the Renaissance Era of our own Earth (without gunpowder). Magical devices certainly exist, and some Realms even boast a kind of "steam-punk" atmosphere. However, in every Realm it should be skill and magic that win the day, not mechanical devices.

Everything is, in some way, defined by the Elements - they are the building blocks of the universe. However, they are hardly limiting in their scope, and there are many stories that can be told around them.

Each Realm Book will have its own set of rules, its own boundaries, and its own ways that things are done. However, the world as a whole has nearly endless possibilities, and each ShardMaster and Guild of Heroes are free to make their Campaign exactly the way they want it.

PLOTS RELATED TO CORE
The following are just suggestions, meant to stimulate your thinking about the kinds of plots, themes, and related ideas that can shape your Shards of the Stone Campaign. Remember that each Realm Book, as well as the web site (www.ShardsoftheStone.com) will have tons more material to work with.

What Progeny have taken interest in the area of your Campaign? Why? Will they interact with your Heroes in some way? Will they see your Heroes as a threat?

What Fragments are most common where your Campaign occurs? What Fragments are most rare and precious? What Fragments are completely unknown? Who seeks these Fragments, and what will they do to get them? What will they do once they have them?

The Grey Wanderer plots to reform the Stone - will your Heroes know of this? What role might they play in his schemes? Or will they oppose him?

What other entities vie for power and influence? Are there those who seek to displace the Progeny as caretakers of Core? How will your Heroes figure into their schemes?

TRADITIONAL FANTASY PLOTS
Of course, it is highly unlikely that all Heroes will even know of the Progeny or even of the Stone and its Sundering. At least, not at first. There are plenty of traditional stories that heroic adventurers can find themselves caught up in. It is probably a good idea to start with one or more of these before delving too deeply into the grander and more complex schemes that revolve around the Grey Wanderer and the other Progeny.

The child or children of nobles have been taken by their enemies. Will your Heroes find and rescue them?

A village is menaced by some horrid Creature from the terrible wilds. Who will save them from this beast?

A grand and ancient treasure lies buried beneath the ruins of a lost civilization, and an aging wizard has discovered the location in the desert. Will your Heroes be the brave ones to seek it out?

A powerful and evil Vampire Lord has begun a campaign to expand his territory. Who will stop him?

A very important message must be carried a great distance to avert a war. Can your Heroes make it past the spies and assassins of those who would see them fail?

In addition, just about any fantasy or adventure novel, television show, comic book, computer game, or motion picture will contain inspiration for stories you can tell in your Campaign.

Interestingly enough, almost any of the above-mentioned plot ideas could easily be tied into grander schemes that are directly related to Core. For example, the Creature that menaces the village may well be some ancient beast left over from before the Sundering. The ruins of the lost civilization may well date back to the almost utopian days before the Stone was shattered, and the ancient treasure may well be some item related to the Stone and the Progeny.

The Vampire Lord? Perhaps he is an agent of some other Realm, a faction out to control the lands your Heroes inhabit. The missing children and the agents out to stop the message can also be related to some serpentine plot.

SETTING UP A NEW CAMPAIGN

In preparing for a new Campaign, it is a very good idea for the ShardMaster to gather together all of their prospective Players and discuss just what everyone would like to see and experience in the game. These initial meetings are vital to the long-term success of most Campaigns, because nothing will kill one faster than having a bunch of Players (or a ShardMaster) who are disappointed at what they feel are unmet expectations.

A new ShardMaster should probably consider the following steps when preparing a new Campaign:

CONCEPTS
Just wanting to run a game is fine, but it can be an exercise in frustration and aimlessness if you don't have at least one solid concept from which you want to build. The concept could be tied to an organization you wish for the Heroes to be a part of (a troop of rangers; an order of knights; the crew of a privateer ship). It could be tied to a major plot that you see as the backbone of the entire Campaign (the Overlord's bid for Realm domination; a criminal organization out to control the economy of a region; the spread of an evil cult). Then again, the concept could be tied directly into the history of one or more of the Heroes you are looking at having in your Campaign (a search for someone's father; escaping the clutches of a slaver; a search for an ancient family treasure). If the concept truly inspires you, then that is what you should go with. If not, put together a few ideas and start tossing them around.

TALK TO YOUR PLAYERS
As previously stated, if you have a really strong inspiration about the Campaign you want to run, you should probably go with it. After all, you will be more motivated and have more energy if you are following your creative instincts. However, you should

still discuss it with your Players. They may have some really good ideas to enhance what you have in mind, and discussing the Campaign at this early stage will also greatly inspire their efforts in creating a Hero for it. Conversely, you may discover that the Players you want in your Campaign are not too thrilled with the ideas that you are proposing. If that happens, you have a couple of choices - you can either scrap your idea in favor of something that better fits what your Players want, or you can seek out new Players who might be more amenable to the Campaign concept you really want to create.

Of course, if you are still not sure about what kind of Campaign you want to run, your Players can help you brainstorm new and creative ideas.

There may be times when you don't want to talk to your Players about the Campaign. Perhaps you have come up with an idea that will only work if the Players are in the dark about what is going to happen. This can be very clever and exciting, but without their input, it relies more on your knowledge of your Players and your confidence that they will enjoy what you've come up with. It also counts on them having trust in you, so such a concept is best left to more experienced groups.

ESTABLISH THE CAMPAIGN LEVEL

A key factor in what kind of Campaign you run will be the Campaign Level that you choose. This is a decision that should be driven by the story you want to tell. It should also be driven by how long you want that story to last.

The instinct for many new GMs and Players will be to start out at the "Epic" Level. After all, that's where your Heroes can be really powerful, rich, and talented. However, if you begin a Campaign at this Level, you are establishing at the outset that the only challenges that mean anything to the Heroes are the world-shaking ones. Believe it or not, this can get old very fast, especially if the Players have not gone through the experience of "building up" their Heroes to meet those challenges.

Still, there are some concepts that will only work if the Heroes are at that Level from the start, so it is a viable choice.

Conversely, starting a Campaign at the "Off-the-Farm" Level can be entirely too restrictive. At first it may seem charming and intriguing to have the Heroes in a place where the only way to go is "up." However, you will quickly discover that such Heroes can do very, very little against more than the most mundane of challenges. As such, only limited concepts will actually sustain an "Off-the-Farm" Campaign Level.

Generally, "Early Career" games are best for most traditional Campaign Concepts, and "Heroic" games work when you want to jump-start to the "Big Stuff" quickly, but not too quickly.

One more thing - be careful about letting your Players talk you into a Campaign Level that is too high. This is one area where you are better served making the decision yourself.

PLAN THE FIRST SCENARIO

After you have established the Campaign Level and worked out the concept (and set the Players loose on creating their Heroes), it is time to start working out that first part of the story, where everyone will be first introduced to the Campaign. A lot of the earlier material in this chapter should help you figure out what to run. Here, we want to point out considerations for the first scenario.

First, this is where the Heroes will be introduced to each other, and where they will interact for the first time "on screen." Even if you decide that everyone is playing Heroes who have known each other in the past (which is really only a good idea if the Players all know each other well enough to pull it off), the first scenario is where they will begin the "dance" of interacting with one another and (more importantly) figuring out who will be doing what in the Guild. You should be sure to plan the scenario in a way that allows a lot of interaction time early on, so that the Players can become comfortable with their Heroes and each other.

Second, this first scenario will be also be your Players' first look at the setting of the Campaign. It's a good idea to prepare some kind of handout (or send an e-mail to everyone before the first Session) that gives an overview of the setting and the key features. Important political factions, the climate and terrain, and anything else that will give the Players an overall "sense of place" should be provided to them as soon as possible. The Realm Books will contain lots of such information, which should make it easy to put together and share.

Third, the Heroes of your Campaign will be meeting many of the key Supporting Characters of the Campaign at this stage. You need to be certain that you work them out in your own mind well before you try to play them, because the Players will expect a consistent interaction with these people over time. It is through these Extras that your Heroes will receive much of the key information and support they need to get more involved in the stories.

Finally, this scenario will establish the ground rules for how things will generally work throughout the Campaign. What kind of pacing do you want to have? How much "table talk" (non-game-related chatter) do you want to encourage or discourage? Are you going to keep certain die rolls secret from the Players? What optional rules are you going to use, and which ones are you going to prohibit? What new rules or other material are you using? All of these questions, and more, will need to be answered over the course of this first scenario, so plan accordingly.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

This section provides you with some ideas and useful tips for making a game both easier to run and more interesting. This only scratches the surface, though. Keep an eye on future products, and especially the web site, to learn even more helpful "tricks of the trade."

SUSPENSE AND SECRET DIE ROLLS

One aspect of roleplaying game is that when a Player rolls the dice, they can see the results immediately. This can be a very exciting, almost visceral thrill, but there are certain situations where it can hinder the story or dilute some of the mystery and suspense of a situation.

Three key situations where this can occur are Perception rolls, Stealth rolls, and any roll involving Lore.

In these cases, and others as appropriate, it might be a good idea for the ShardMaster to roll the dice for the Players. This should be done in a hidden fashion, such as behind a screen where the GM is keeping their notes out of the view of the Players. A Shard Master Screen is one of the first products you should pick up after obtaining this book, as it will have all the charts and basic information neatly organized for quick reference during a Session.

By making the rolls secretly, you can decide what to tell the Players (if anything), and they won't automatically know that they have "blown the roll" and that they should expect trouble. At the same time, they also won't know that they made their roll as well as possible, thus leaving some doubt as to the full results of the situation.

For example, a Hero may or may not spot a hawk that has been following them. You might roll their Perception for them, and only inform them if the roll is actually made. Otherwise, they don't know that anything is amiss, and their roleplaying is not affected by the Player having to deal with knowing something their Hero doesn't know.

(In the case of Perception rolls, in particular, it's a good idea to keep an index card with each Hero's Perception AVs handy. That way, you don't even have to ask them for their AV, thus ensuring they don't even know a roll has been made on their behalf).

As another example, a Hero may need to make a Lore check, and perhaps they blew it really badly. How much more entertaining and believable if you are able to give them misinformation and the Player actually believes the information is correct? This can only be accomplished if they do not see the results of the roll.

Of course, when a Hero is sneaking across a courtyard at night, they don't necessarily know if they are being sneaky enough. Consider the suspense if they don't know if they made their roll! Some ShardMasters may feel that this will either slow things down too much or keep information from their Players unfairly. However, it is an option that many GMs find will enhance certain portions of their games.

FUDGING

In Chapters Two and Three, you are given plenty of information to make good decisions about what needs to be rolled, and when, and how tough things should be. However, it's not a bad idea to understand some of the basic principles at work here, so that you can make better decisions about what bonuses and penalties to apply in a given situation, as well as what target values to impose in a situation.

As you are designing your campaigns you will be placing creatures, traps and other challenges that all have a mathematical basis… you're pretty much guessing at the abilities of the adventuring Guild and making a scenario to fit them. Still, there are times

when you are going to make mistakes. A Villain will be much too tough for your Heroes (tougher than you intended), or a lock will be impossible to pick, or some other situation will have too high a target value for anyone in the Guild to deal with. Entire stories can come to a screeching halt because of this, and entire Campaigns can even end up ruined as all the Heroes die, unable to handle the challenge.

What do you do in such situations? Fudge, of course. By "fudging," we mean that you should be willing to make changes to the numbers of just about anything at any moment that you desire. You are not "competing" with the Players. You are facilitating their experiences and empowering them to tell stories together. This is not a game about "winning and losing," it is a game about sharing adventures and stories together, and looking back at the end of a session and marveling at what everyone did, individually and as a group.

If you made something too tough, "fudge it" so that it's not as tough. When the Hero manages to roll that really hard-to-get 12, but their Attack would still miss by a couple of points (and everyone is frustrated because this Hero is the only one who seems to be able to even get close), go ahead and say they hit. Knock a couple of points off the defense of the Villain from that point forward.

Fudging works best when you can keep it out of the presence of the Players. They don't necessarily need to know that you are changing things a little to make it more possible for them to succeed. In fact, if they find out that you are doing it, they will likely feel bad or resent it. They would rather enjoy the excitement of "just pulling it off," so let them.

In some situations, it may not be as possible to hide your attempt at "fudging." Some Players are very good at keeping track of the math of things. They will remember what it took Fred to hit the Villain, and if James is suddenly hitting the Villain with an easier roll, they will call you on it.

This is where you explain that the Villain is exhausted from being pushed so hard, the great teamwork of the Guild is providing bonuses to hit, or some other condition has changed to give the Heroes the slim advantage they need to pull victory from the jaws of defeat.

It's not "cheating," though some ShardMasters will contest that it is. It is more like "illusion." Is the magician "cheating" when he pulls the quarter from your ear, or when he disappears down a trap door to reappear across the room with a flash? No, he is using misdirection and other tricks to entertain. Fudging is all about maintaining illusions that support the entertainment of the Players. Use it sparingly and wisely, but don't be afraid to use it when you've made a mistake that could ruin the game.

HEROIC DEATH AND FINAL MOMENTS

There are times when, no matter what anyone does, no matter how well a Hero is played or how generous a ShardMaster is in their judgement, a Hero dies. It is the very threat of this possibility that makes adventures so exciting and conflict with mortal enemies so thrilling.

Still, it can be sad and frustrating when it happens.

As stated in Chapter Three, a Hero is dead when their Stat is completely depleted of Points due to Damage. Sometimes this happens because a Hero bleeds to death, but more often than not it is the result of a single, devastating attack. Typically in a roleplaying game, the character is simply dead. Nothing else

happens. The Player stashes their character sheet somewhere (or tears it up and throws it away). Quite often, as the other Players and the ShardMaster awkwardly contemplate continuing the Session, that Player will start going through the steps of creating a new Hero to join the Campaign.

But where's the drama in that? Where is that Final Soliloquy? Where's the last act of Desperate Heroics? Where's the Great Sacrifice? These are things we are accustomed to seeing and reading about in other media, but they seem to be missing in most RPG experiences.

These guidelines are meant to deal with that lack, allowing the ShardMaster and the Players to add classic elements of storytelling when it comes to the death of a Hero. When a Hero's Hits total reaches the point where they are irrevocably dead, the ShardMaster should inform the Player that these are that Hero's "Final Moments." As a rough guide, the Hero will have a number of Actions equal to their Spiritual Tolerance with which to perform one of the following options:

1. Deliver a final blow, consuming all of their available Stat resources in one fell attempt to achieve the final victory.

2. Pause combat and allow for a final soliloquy… there can be many reasons for this. In some cultures when the enemy is so virulent and so worthy a competitor, when it is clear that his death is near, some cultures will stop and grant the dying warrior his last moments before continuing on… out of respect for his ultimate sacrifice. In other situations, perhaps the enemy is simply stunned that he managed to finally end the conflict and watches him die, etc… be creative and be sure it fits with the story.

3. Provide a cinematic description of their own demise, allowing them to take the lead in the production for a moment.

MANAGING COMBAT

Combat tends to be the most time-intensive part of any roleplaying game Session. The GM should try to know the rules as well as possible to ensure that things don't drag on forever. There are some additional tips that a ShardMaster can use to save time and make life easier.

1) Pre-figure Initiative for minions and lesser Villains. When you know what kinds of "bad guys" the Heroes are going to face, you can save some time by simply adding their PHY:Dexterity to ½ of their default Power Die and using that as their Initiative result throughout the Combat.

2) Shortcut wounds for minions. Instead of tracking Hits and Stun for large numbers of lesser opponents, you can just "eyeball" the Damage. Use Impairment to set their wound level - Minor (-1) if they're hurt at all, Major (-2) if they are at about half, and Extreme (-4) if they are barely standing..

3) If a Hero is rolling twice as many Dice in Damage as a minion's PHY Stat, don't bother. They're down, they're dead, let it go.

4) Save the "good stuff" for major Villains and Creatures. Don't bother with Luck, Recovering, special Maneuvers, and other such details when running minions and lesser "bad guys." Only use them when they serve the purpose of drama and the story, or for truly notable Villains and Creatures.

Keep and eye on www.ShardsoftheStone.com for even more such tips, but remember the most important rule of all. Fit the rules to the story. Never fit the story to the rules.

JUST REWARDS

In Chapter Two, the rules for developing and improving a Hero are presented. Players must spend Experience Points (EP) to do this, and it is the job of the ShardMaster to award those EP to Players at the end of each Session. The following are guidelines to help the GM decide how many EP to award each Player:

General Experience	EP
Per Scenario	+5
Successful Scenario	+5
Very Successful Scenario	+10
Extremely Successful Scenario	+15
Scenario Bonuses	**EP**
Scenario was Difficult	+5
Scenario was Very Difficult	+10
Scenario was a "Killer"	+15
Specific Experience	**EP**
Spent a day in training	+5
Spent a week in training	+10
Spent a month in training	+15
Creative use of Skills/Abilities	+5
Use of Skills/Abilities at own Peril	+10
Sacrificed Self for others in the game	+15
Sacrificed Item/Power for Good Roleplaying	+20
Experienced a Major Failure	+5
Experienced a Catastrophic Failure	+10
Penalties to EP	**EP**
Argued "Out of Character" (OOC) in the Game	-10
Injected too many distractions in the Game OOC	-5
Missed too many sessions of the game	-5

Table 28 - Experience Rewards Chart

For a typical Session, a Player should receive an average of around 20-30 EP, with more challenging Sessions resulting in anywhere from 35-50 EP

THE FORGE

ITEM CONSTRUCTION

WHAT IS AN ITEM?

An "Item" is a word that we use to generically refer to any tangible object that has mass, is defined by certain specifications such as "height," "width," and "depth," etc. Examples of inanimate items would be chairs, swords, mugs, saddles, etc. Examples of "animate" Items include dogs, eagles, humans, intelligent swords, certain artifacts, even the members of the Progeny are also defined in our rules system as Items. Another type of Item is a "Sub Item." This unique type of Item is quite simply a piece of another item, such as an arm, leg, torso, head, etc. It is actually quite rare that you would define a Sub-Item but it can come in handy for certain applications.

As you begin to develop your own game scenarios and start delving into the aspects of Worldbuilding, you will need various types of Items to fill your Realm with a rich, vibrant backdrop for your stories. Here is a general listing (although not an exclusive list) of the many types of Items that can be created in the Forge:

- Person/Creature
- Arms
- Armor
- Helm
- Shield
- Flora
- Fauna
- Mineral
- Terrain
- Art/Literature
- Clothing
- Tools
- Provisions
- Furniture
- Transport
- Alchemy
- Services
- Artifacts

ITEM CLASSES

The Forge also allows for the creation of master classes of Items, called Item Classes. These are overall guidelines and limitations for distinct categories or groupings of Items that can be created. As an example, there are Item Classes for Creatures that we refer to as "Races." The Item Class for the Avanar Race determines global characteristics for the Avanar Race, such as minimum and maximum lifespans, Sympathies and Antipathies to certain Fragments, etc. The RealmMasters are generally tasked with creating Item Classes, while ShardMasters are certainly able (and encouraged) to use any of the available Item Classes for their own Item Creation. Creating a new Race is exhorbitantly expensive, requiring 100,000 Fragments for every 1 Fragment needed in normal Item creation and must enlist the aid of one of the Progeny. Some examples of Item Classes include:

- Sauran Race
- Bladed Weapons
- Cutlery
- Sacks
- Boats
- Plants
- Quadrapeds
- Birds

It should relatively clear that Item Classes are groupings of items that share a lot of common elements with each other. This could be interpreted as the Genus classifications in modern anthropology/archaeology… most birds fly, most bladed weapons cause cutting damage, most boats float and can carry things, etc.

STATS

Unlike any other game, in Shards of the Stone, ALL Items that are "alive" are formed on the basis of the Fragments of the Shards of the Stone. This is recorded in the Creature's SubStats. Even if you plan to play using SimpleStat rules, it's important to go ahead and go through the SubStat assignment process so you will know the Item Stats (or the DNA) of the Creature.

The first step in determining the Stats for your Creature is deciding on the Item's Sympathies and Antipathies. This is generally listed with the Racial definition of the Item Class, but can be deviated from slightly if necessary. This essentially means that the Creature has a particular affinity with certain types of Fragments and is extremely vulnerable to others. As an example, if we created an Item with Sympathies toward Fire the natural Antipathy would be Water (see the CoreStone Diagram to understand the polar opposites of Fragments). This means that your fire-friendly creature would take extra damage from Water attacks, but can deal extra damage when it employs the aid of Fire or Fire Fragments.

Once you have determined the Creatures Sympathies and Antipathies, you can now assign the SubStats for the Creature. Each point you assign will cost 10 EP while points for Sympathy SubStats only cost 5 EP and Antipathy SubStats cost 20 EP.

For an animate item, the Structure/Tolerance value will be equal to the PHY value and the PHY Tolerance value.

For an inanimate item, you will need to specify its Structure/Tolerance value.

ATTRIBUTES

Once you have your Item's essence fleshed out, it's time to decide the values for the Attributes for your Item. The following Attributes do not cost any Fragments to define as long as they are within the limits set by the Item Class:

- Power Die
- Age
- Maximum Age
- Gender
- Height
- Width
- Depth
- Weight

This is certainly not an exhaustive list, but contains the minimum attributes required to enable your Item to function in the online game. If you feel any additional Attributes are needed, just let me know and we'll add it to the Forge.

DESCRIPTORS

When you are creating an Item for online or tabletop play you need to describe it several times:

1. Public Title – This is a very brief title that will be used when the Item is seen in a list.

2. Public Description – This is a comprehensive description of the Item when it is examined in detail, but leaves out any information about the item that is unknown or concealed to the casual viewer.

3. Private Description – This is a description of the Item that leaves nothing out…. Assume that the viewer is omniscient.

There are any number of other descriptors that could be used to illustrate an Item, such has descriptions of the Item's history and any others you might need. Just let us know if one needs to be added.

PROPERTIES

Properties are abilities or features of an Item that are always "turned on," such as Regeneration or Hard to Kill or Solid. You can now begin the process very similar to the Hero creation rules by selecting Properties that are relevant to your Item. Each property comes with a cost associated with it in Fragments and they generally make modifications to SubStat values (Effects) or provide unique abilities (Methods) or can even be triggered by certain things happening (Events). You can construct your own Properties later in this section.

ITEM METHODS

Methods are things that an Item can "do," such as Cut, Sleep, Explode, cast spells, etc. Methods come in some standard types:

- Skill
- Ability
- Spell
- Mutation
- Rite
- Prayer
- Psionic
- Proficiency

Each Method can cause Effects, be triggered by Events, and generally will consume Fragments each time they are used (such as reagents for a spell). Many Methods have a result table that goes along with them so that a successful Method check (Skill checks for example) would allow the ShardMaster to consult a result chart for a hint on what the outcome should be. You can also construct your own Methods as detailed later in this section.

EFFECTS

Effects are the results of initiating a Method or Property, such as Flaming Damage caused by the Fireball Spell, or Item altitude doubled caused by the Jump Skill, etc. Effects can deduct Damage points from a target, cause points to be drained from the Creature that cast the spell that caused the Effect, or it can simply affect an area such as an explosion. Other effects can alter the very nature of the target Creature, such as a Teleport spell that causes a Move Effect, effectively transporting the target Creature from one place to the other. You can create all the Effects that you need as you construct your own custom Items.

EVENTS

Events are conditional occurrences that happen only when something else happens, such as the clock striking 12, the kiss of a Prince, or the opening of a door. This would certainly include traps, wards, and other devices that rely on something happening for it to fire off. Each Event can cause Methods to fire, can cause Effects directly, and an even "contain" other Items, such as an encounter Event that had eight "Orc" Items wielding "Sword" Items and casting "Darkness" Spell Methods that attack when any Avatars come within 10 meters of their location.

As you can see, by chaining together Events, Methods, Items, Properties, and Effects, you can have a lot of fun!

CONSTRUCTING EFFECTS

As we begin to explore the creation of Items in the Forge, it's important to now go "backwards" from where we started. To assemble a proper custom Item, the ShardMaster must first start with the most minute pieces and then build from there, reusing what you've designed before and pulling pieces from the central library available in the Forge.

Some standard Effects include:

- Bludgeon Damage
- Cutting Damage
- Piercing Damage
- Impact Damage

However, you can create all sorts of custom Effects such as the following:

- Fire Damage
- Chaos Damage
- Teleport
- Perimeter Blast

Here are some questions you need to answer when designing a new Effect:

1. Does this impact the Source Item that caused the Effect? (such as the mage casting the spell, the person firing the arrow, etc)
2. Does this impact the Target Item that the Effect is aimed at?
3. How long does the effect last? (Instant, Temporary, Permanent)
4. Is this Effect visible?
5. Are the Items impacted by the Effect notified when it happens?
6. What happens when the Effect takes hold?

Keep in mind that while Effects are traditionally used to inflict Damage, they can also reduce Tolerances or Exhaustion; they can cause things to disappear; they can trigger other Effects; cause Gender changes; you name it… the Effects can change it.

Let's try a sample… I want to create an Effect called Sap Endurance. First I answer my six questions…

1. This Effect saps the PHY:Endurance of the Spellcaster by 1 point
2. This Effect doesn't impact the Target.
3. This Effect is Instant
4. This Effect is Invisible
5. The Spellcaster is not Notified when his PHY:Endurance is leeched.
6. Source PHY:Endurance – 1

Now I'm ready to make another Effect called Engulfing Flame. Again I answer my six questions…

1. This Effect doesn't impact the Source.
2. This Effect impacts the Target and all SubItems of the Target.
3. This Effect lasts for 1d Rounds
4. This Effect is Visible
5. The Target is Notified (he's on fire at the time)
6. Target PHY:Endurance – 2d per Round

That's all there is to it. You will rarely have to create new Effects since you reuse them. Now let's use these in a Spell!

CONSTRUCTING METHODS

There is an art to understanding what Methods are… A Method is something that can be "activated" or "executed" by an Item or an Event. Some examples might be a Spell that a Mage can cast or a Skill that can be used by a Race.

These are things that an Item can "do."

Once we have built our library of Methods, we then divide them up by the Type of Method as listed above. Then we categorize the Methods, such as Alchemy which is a category of Spell which all are Methods. You can create your own category of Spells so in your campaign you can create an entire new list of Spell Methods that you may decide to categorize as Tattoo Magic, or Patternology, or Necromancy.

We will be pulling from the two Effects that we have already added to our library (but remember, there is an entire archive of other Effects that you can use) to create our Spell that we are calling Sphere of Flame

When defining a method we need to answer the following questions:

1. What is the base Power Die for this Method? **d8**

2. What is the public description for the Method? **"This Spell causes a sphere of flame to envelop the target and cause the raw essence of the caster to infuse the interior of the sphere with fire and brimstone."**

3. What is the private description for this Method? **"This Spell can cause great harm, not only to the target but to the caster as well. This Spell is generally ineffective against water-based Creatures"**

4. What Fragments are used in the execution of this Method? **"Five Fire Fragments, One Chaos Fragment, and one Air Fragment"**

5. What is the range of the Method (in meters)? **20m**

6. What type of Area will the Method affect? (Linear, Spherical, Cubical, Radial, Temporal, Source, Target) **"Spherical"**

7. How large is the coverage of the Area? **1m**

8. What are the dimensions of the Area of Effect? **N/A**

9. What is the percent chance of success? **20%**

10. How long is the Preparation Time? **1 Round**

11. Can this Method be Aimed? **Yes**

12. How many of these Methods are available (charges)? **5**

13. Is this Method Visible? **Yes**

Once you have answered all of these questions, you need to decide which Effects are connected to this Method. In our example, we'll make the Sap Endurance and Engulfing Flame Effects be connected to our Sphere of Flame Method. Now we have a Spell called Sphere of Flame that saps the endurance of the caster and causes persisting damage within a wphere of effect around the target creature.

RANGE AND AREAS OF EFFECT

The various Areas of Effect should be explained briefly. Take a look at the following drawing to illustrate what needs to be defined to design a proper Method.
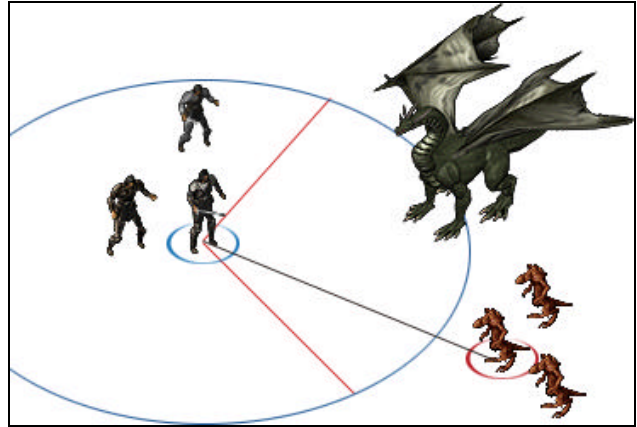
Notice the line connecting the Fighter and the encircled Target Creature… this is the "Range" meaning the distance between the Caster and the Target.

Note also the circle around the Target Creature… this is the Area of Effect (which is Spherical in this case)

When Areas of Effect can be defined by one measurement (in this case the radius of the Sphere) then you can specify the coverage of the Area… for irregular dimensions you must specify the Dimensions explicity (4' x 5' x 20' for a wall for example)

PERCENT CHANCE OF SUCCESS

For some Methods (like Skills) there is a percentage chance of success for each level of the Skill that is purchased. You would indicate that percentage here and it is cumulative based on the number of Levels purchased. Spells generally do not use this to determine success, but rather focus on trying to overcome a Target's defenses to be successful, although this does provide a mechanic for you to make "cranky" spells that are not guaranteed to succeed even if the Target's defenses are bypassed.

FRAGMENT COMPOSITION

In Shards of the Stone, Fragments are central to the nature of Spells and many other Methods. As such, whenever a Method is executed, these Fragments are consumed in the process. This applies to all Methods, whether Spells or Skills but is handled a bit differently. For Spells, the "Reagents" or Fragments must be in the caster's hand (for Reagent-based Magical Styles) or must be nearby (for Somatic or other Styles of Magic). Either way, they are consumed, and if Fragments aren't available, the Spell can go severely awry.

Skills are handled a bit differently, since the Fragment bases for these Skills must be available in the Fatige and Endurance of the Creature executing the Skill. As an example, the Acrobatic Skill will sap 1 Fatigue of PHY from the Creature that attempts the Skill. This is based on the fact that the Acrobatic Skill uses the Fragment Infernite which maps to Fire or PHY:Dexterity.

Keep in mind that Methods are stored using the metric system only.

This summary of the available Effects can be very handy in constructing your own Methods, Events and Items:

Effect Title	Description
Reduce / Augment	Reduce or increase SubStat Value
Sap / Boost	Reduce or increase available Fatigue Points for a Stat
Exhaust / Infuse	Reduce or increase available Endurance Points for a Stt
Paralyze / Restore	Eliminate or Replenish all available Fatigue of a Stat
Knockout / Awaken	Eliminate or Replenish all available Endurance and Fatigue of a Stat
Affect / Protect	Affects a particular Stat/ Blocks Methods from affecting a particular Stat
Bypass Defenses / Impenetrable	Enables Method to bypass Stat-specific armor/blocks Bypass Defenses
Continuous	Effects of Method repeat each round for the duration.
Target Class	Double Damage for certain Item Classes
Indefensible / Impervious	Tolerance absorbs none / all of attacks based on Stat or SubStat
Full Range Effect	No range penalties
Sensory Invisibility / Clarity	One sensory element within a Stat cannot detect / can detect this Method or Target
Stat Invisibility / Clarity	All senses of a Stat cannot detect / can detect this Method or Target
Sensory Deprivation / Enhancement	One sensory element of a Stat is blocked / enabled for all Targets within the Area of Effect
Selective Targeting	Can target selected creatures within Area of Effect
Tether	Imbue Item touching Source Creature with a Method
Sensory Burst	Overload one sense within a Stat
Sensory Explosion	Overload all senses within a Stat
Remote Effect	Source creature can initiate the Method from a remote location
Precise Control	Method can do precision tasks
Bestow Method	Source Creature can temporarily imbue Target Creature with a Method
Mutate	Method can trade points from one Stat to another, whether Base points or Tolerance
Memorized Locations	Method can be affect a memorized Target or Location at a future time.
Increased Range	Method can double its standard Range
Realm / Planetary Range	Method can be initated anywhere on the Realm / Planet
Increased Vector	Method can double its targeting vector
360° Vector	Method can target in a full circle

Table 29 - Custom Effects Chart

CONSTRUCTING EVENTS

Events can be thought of as encounters, conditions, traps, triggers, or occurrences. When an Event "activates" it sets of the chain of sub-Events, Methods, and Effects that are part of its cluster. We'll take a simple approach to an Event definition by creating a trap in a Dungeon. We will call this trap the "Flame Trap."

We need to answer the following questions to complete the definition of the Flame Trap Event:

1. What is the Power Die value for this Event? **d8**

2. What is the Public Description for this Event? **"You see a small wisp of smoke tendril up through the crevices of the stonework."**

3. What is the Private Description for this Event? **"Once a Creature steps within 1 meter of this trap, flame gouts out from the crevices in the wall, engulfing a 1m radius sphere in caustic flames for 1-6 rounds causing 1d of damage per round to anyone caught within the area of effect."**

4. Is this Event Visible? **"Yes"**

5. What activates this Event? (Proximity, Time, Date, Specific Item, Somatic Phrase, etc.) **"Proximity"**

Once we have defined the Event known as "Flame Trap" we now need to connect the Sphere of Flame Method to this Flame Trap Event and we're finished! Be sure when you are designing your Dungeon that you ensure that enough of the Fragments necessary to power your traps are within the area of the Dungeon, otherwise your cool engines and traps will run out of power.

An important distinction to recognize is that Methods are things that "can be done" and Events are things that "happen." It also should be noted that Methods can certainly cause Events; Items can execute Methods that cause Events; and Events can execute Methods that cause other Events. It may seem a bit confusing, but if we all can spend the time making sure that the Items, Events, Methods and Effects we create are designed properly, are structured, and defined, then whatever you create will work just as well on the tabletop as it will in the online versions of your Campaigns.

OUTCOMES

We allow for the pre-definition of outcomes if it's relevant. Many events come with preset "If you do this, then this will happen" situations that also allow to be stored in the Forge. Outcomes can also be linked to any Items, Events, Methods, or Effects. One example would be the Flame Trap with a Failed Dodge Outcome and a Successful Dodge Outcome. This allows you to write two different Descriptions of what happens based on the success or failure of the Players that triggered the trap. These scripts can be useful for a ShardMaster trying to use your Events or it can directly empower the online game to provide MUD-style interaction with your online Maps.

I hope you can also see that once the work is done one time, you save a ton of time now as you are constructing Events and Items… It's simply a matter of gluing the right pieces together and you've got a great adventure going!

OBJECT OUTLINE

Let's take a look at what we've done so far and sketch out the relationships that we've created:
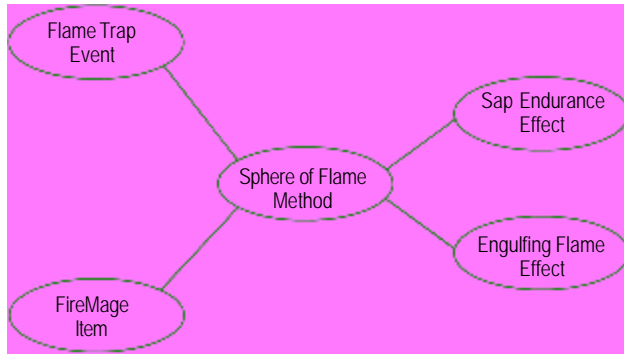
Each of these elements are their own separate and distinct "Objects" if you're familiar with that notation, and can be linked to just about any other Object that you can imagine in varying ways. We won't go into too much of that Object theory here, but suffice it to say that we are preparing all of the content in the Shards Realms to be compatible with XML and thus making the conversion from a printed book to an electronic game a relative snap.

CONSTRUCTING MAPS

The Forge allows you to create your own online maps. There are a variety of online map creation tools that you can use, including some upcoming import utilities that will even enable you to use map creation software from popular computer games to batch in map information to our servers. To edit maps for our online worlds you need to become familiar with a few concepts…

CELLS

These are 1m x 1m cubes that are entered into the Shards database server… much like toy bricks that you can just glue together to make designs such as hallways, forests, castles, etc. You can stack them on top of each other to form multi-level buildings, passageways, traps, mountains, etc. Each Cell can house Properties, Methods, Events, Items and all sorts of other things.

MASTER CELLS

These are Cells that are identified as "Global to the Room." In other words, to make a "room" out of Cells, you would identify one of the Cells as the Master Cell and attach all of the global information about that room to it, such as room descriptions, etc. All of the other Cells surrounding it have the Master Cell as part of their record indicating that each one of them belongs to the Master Cell's room. As you are designing your maps, this will be the single-most important thing to understand since there are Spellls that affect an "entire room" and other aspects such as what the surrounding players can hear, see, etc., which are basedon the definition of the Master Cell.

COORDINATES

All of the coordinates are based on a Cartesian coordinate system of X, Y, Z, and T. X obviously is the traditional East West direction, Y is the North South direction, Z is the Up Down direction and T is the Temporal position. Believe it or not, we design maps based on a Temporal value, so when a wall is shattered at a certain time, Avatars that go back in time will still see a wall that is whole.

TYPE

The Type of Cell is extremely important and can be cascaded… meaning that one Cell can be assigned multiple Types at the same time. The Types include: Open, Obstacle, Doorway, Teleport, Ramp. Each Type of Cell acts differently, for example Ramps (which can be stairs, or other inclined surfaces) alter the Z coordinate of the people passing over it in the proper direction, whereas Teleports take you to other places, and Open Cells are simply Cells that can be walked on and passed through.

TERRAIN

This defines the materials that make up the surfaces of this Cell. Some examples of Terrain include: Grass, Dirt, Trees, Rock, Lava, Water, Snow, Wood, etc.

Once you have saved your first Cell, you can then see it in the overview map pane as part of the larger map. Now you can link Events, Items, and all sorts of things to your Map Cell… essentially populating that cubic meter of space with your own creations. Start building walls and tunnels, and pretty soon, you've got a dungeon adventure brewing.

Map Cells are important assets as well. As the contributor of that Map Cell, your principal Avatar will begin to receive game "taxes" from other Avatars that utilize the Cells that you have created. This will lead to additional resources with which you can build even more in-game structures such as taverns, cities, dungeons, etc., or you can choose to use your in-game taxes (in the form of Fragments) to empower even more complicated and arcane spells.

These Map Cells can also be duplicated to other places (assuming you have the resources to do so) so you can go back to your existing Map Cells that may have all sorts of Creatures, Events, and Tricks and Traps, which can be readily cloned to other places within the Dungeon, saving you time and effort while expanding your influence on the Realm in which you are designing.

ROOMS

All Cells that have the same Master Cell can be called a "Room" collectively. Outside of a physical structure, you could refer to a similar arrangement as a "Zone" or an "Area." Any title works fine.

ONLINE SUMMARY

Now that you have gone through a summary of all of the aspects of Item design, make sure you visit the Forge where you can get going now in the creation process.

The address to get registered is:

http://www.ShardsOfTheStone.com/26.asp

The address for the Forge is:

http://www.ShardsOfTheStone.com/55.asp?ID=850

We truly hope that you can get involved in participating in the creation of these online realms while we do our best to make sure that the printed versions of these are simple to publish and inexpensive to obtain… This way our online and offline efforts can be shared and we'll mutually grow this world we call Core and this game we call Shards of the Stone into the largest, most detailed gaming world know.

SYSTEM CONVERSIONS

At some point your players are going to want to convert their FiveStat characters into other game systems. Five Stat is uniquely able to do this without too much fuss. The trick to doing conversions between systems is to take their standard set of attributes and find out which substats are appropriate for them.

As an example, let's take a system that relies on Strength, Agility, Beauty, Intellect, and Luck.. The first thing we need to do is map their stats to the FiveStats:

Target Stat	FiveStat
Strength	PHY:Strength
	PHY:Stamina
	PHY:Adrenaline
Agility	PHY:Dexterity
	PHY:Accuracy
Beauty	SOC:Charisma
	SOC:Attraction
	SOC:Persuasion
	EMO:Empathy
	EMO:Dedication
Intellect	MEN:Intellect
	MEN:Perception
	MEN:Sanity
	MEN:Concentration
	MEN:Memory
	EMO:Intuition
	SPI:Discernment
Luck	EMO:Passion
	EMO:Ego
	SPI:Faith
	SPI:Inspiration
	SPI:Conviction
	SPI:Purity
	SOC:Will

Table 30 - System Conversion Sample Chart

Now that you've mapped the SubStats to the Target system's stats, you can just average the values and you've got a conversion!

You also can adjust any Creature, Avatar, Item or Spell by just identifying the dice basis for the target game and scaling up the Creature or Avatar by increasing or decreasing their Power Die.

Of course there are other considerations to take into effect, such as how your Experience Points would convert, converting currency, mapping our spells to the spells of another system, and other aspects, but it can be done with relative ease and once you've figured out a particular system, please let us know!

Above all we want our players to be able to use these Realms using whichever mechanic they wish to. The story is what matters.

The World Wide Web of Shards

All through this book, you have seen references to our web site - www.ShardsoftheStone.com… It's even on the cover of our books; the titles actually read that way.

Why? Because we have a dream. We have a vision for bringing classic "tabletop" gaming into the 21st Century. We want to integrate the RPG hobby into what we call the "New Media." We want to give the Internet to actual Roleplaying Gamers (instead of leaving it in the hands of "click-and-slay" munchkins, where it lays now).

Shards of the Stone is more than just another RPG on the shelf. Certainly, we stand by it as the best fantasy roleplaying game you could ever want to play with dice, paper, and miniatures, and we will fully support that level of play. That's who we are, first and foremost. However, SHARDS is also meant to be your gateway to our dream - your gateway, and your tool set. You see, we want you to join us online.

WHAT YOU WILL GET ONLINE…

We don't just mean for you to come and see our pretty web pages and click on images. We mean really join in with what we are doing. The web site is designed to facilitate your complete immersion into the SHARDS concept. Message boards and chat rooms are there for you, to talk about the game, and to even tell stories "in Character." Pages are dedicated to displaying your creations - Spells, Magic Styles, Creatures, Antagonists, Items, Adventures, and pretty much anything else. A full featured set of creation tools are already up on the site so get going!

The best of what is shown there can lead to even greater creative opportunities, as the best creators are invited to join in on the design and development process of bringing SHARDS alive as the biggest, most intricate shared universe in the history of gaming.

We don't mean bodies crammed onto servers, all struggling to hack away at the same limited number of robotic monsters. We don't mean thousands of "newbies" served up as victims to a few experienced PK ("Player Killer") jocks.

We mean a living, breathing online world where you can be one of the designers and ShardMasters that makes things happen.

That's right - an online RPG run by online ShardMasters.

We are currently developing "The Virtual Gaming Table" to this very end - a graphic web-driven package that gives GMs and Players a very simple, friendly click-and-play, drag-and-drop set of tools to recreate the tabletop gaming experience online. You will be able to run enclosed, personalized campaigns of your own, or you can join in with the "official" online world of Core that we will build with your help.

Of course, we only want the best people playing in our world, not the kinds of gamers who only derive enjoyment from "messing things up." So you will have to earn your way into the "official story arcs" that are part of the continuity and shared "reality" of Core. Actual roleplaying, and willingness to participate in a manner that supports and enhances our collective goals, are the keys to being part of the "Real Deal." The opportunities to run taverns (or entire towns), play traveling minstrels, or run a Guild of cutthroat thugs will all be available, as will many more options.

But if that isn't your mug of ale, you can play any way you like - the site will support people running and playing games in any fashion they wish. If a GM wants to set up "Core Death Match 2000" and open the doors for "click-and-slay" mayhem, we are happy to provide the tools and the site for it.

We expect a lot of people will want to become part of the "Core Online" experience. The writers and designers of the Realms themselves will be a part of the game that we are all going to play, and you will have a chance to not only rub elbows, but share adventures and ideas with them. The best stuff that happens will become part of the collective continuity, as will special in-store events and convention extravaganzas, making the Shards of the Stone RPG the most truly interactive experience in the history of gaming.

So click on the site. Bookmark it, or even make it your home page. We want to see a lot of you there. More importantly, we want to see your ideas, your dreams, and your passions. We want you to help us make Shards of the Stone the greatest interactive entertainment experience ever seen.

More importantly, we want you to have fun, so tell us how to make sure that you do.

www.ShardsOfTheStone.com

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TABLE OF CHARTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHARACTER NAME
PLAYER NAME
AVATAR ID

CAMPAIGN LEVEL

PROPERTIES

SKILLS/SPELLS

Title   Effects   Title   Effects

PHY   MEN

EMO   Power Die   SPI

SOC

EXPERIENCE TOTAL _____
            SPENT _____

Fighting Styles

Title	Effects

Arms and Armor

Title	Effects

Other Gear

Title	Effects

Historical Background

PHY

Fatigue _____ Exhaustion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Level	Title	Effects	HP

Properties

MEN

Fatigue _____ Exhaustion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Level	Title	Effects	HP

Properties

SPI

Fatigue _____ Exhaustion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Level	Title	Effects	HP

Properties

EMO

Fatigue _____ Exhaustion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Level	Title	Effects	HP

Properties

SOC

Fatigue _____ Exhaustion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Level	Title	Effects	HP

Properties

ARMS

HP	Damage	Range	Modifiers	Structure / Tolerance

ARMOR

HP	Cover	Modifiers	Structure / Tolerance

MAGIC ITEMS

HP	Uses	Effects

Power Die

Magic

Source | Target | R | Y | D

Elements	Fragments	Qty	Aspects	SubStat	Values
				Strength	
				Dexterity	
				Stamina	
				Accuracy	
Motor	Physical		Resource	**Adrenaline**	
				Intellect	
				Perception	
				Sanity	
				Concentration	
			Resource	**Memory**	
				Faith	
				Inspiration	
				Conviction	
				Discernment	
			Resource	**Purity**	
				Passion	
				Intuition	
				Dedication	
				Empathy	
			Resource	**Ego**	
				Charisma	
				Attraction	
				Humility	
				Persuasion	
			Resource	**Will**	

Power Die

FIGHTING STYLES

Method	Bonus	Damage	League

SKILLS

Method	Source	Target	R	A	D

AVATAR HISTORY

Power Die