

- STARTER SET RULEBOOK -

CITY of MIST



A DETECTIVE ROLE-PLAYING GAME IN A CITY
OF ORDINARY PEOPLE AND LEGENDARY POWERS



STARTER SET RULEBOOK

**SON OF OAK
GAME STUDIO**

CITY OF MIST: STARTER SET RULEBOOK

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This game's rules are partially based on [Apocalypse World](#) by Vincent Baker.

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO THE CITY OF LEGENDS MADE FLESH.

In a corrupt and haunted metropolis,
individuals from all walks of life become
gateways to mythical powers from beyond,
torn between their personal lives and the
legend growing within them.

In the shadows of shiny skyscrapers and derelict residential blocks, ancient stories and urban legends assume physical form, choosing mortal beings as their Gateways to this world. But **the Mist**, a mystical veil known only to a select few, prevents the unwitting denizens of the City from ever acknowledging the miracles they witness daily, hiding their true nature from one another. Distracted by their everyday hopes and fears, the people on the streets remain oblivious to the clash of mythical forces that drive and control the very life of the City.

You were an ordinary person—until the seed of the legendary awoke within you. Now you seek answers to questions about your powers, but the truth always seems to elude you. Yet at the same time, you still want what every human being wants: love, money, power, peace of mind. Together with your ragtag crew of gifted individuals, you work to reveal the powers operating in the dark smoky alleys of the City, just as those very powers seek you out for what you are. You will hit the streets in search of the strange cases, loose ends, and unsolved mysteries that will lead you to the truth, inevitably clashing with other legends in mortal form, agents of the powers beyond the Mist.

Be warned—the truth is as dangerous as the forces that hide it. Only when you find yourself sacrificing that which is dearest to you will you truly learn the answer to the ultimate question: ‘who am I?’ . But will it be worth it?

City of Mist is a role-playing game of film noir investigation and super powered action. It is set in a modern metropolis rife with crime, conspiracies, and mysteries. The protagonists are **Gateways**, ordinary people who became the living embodiment of a legend, their **Mythos**. While your Gateways may seek to strike a balance between the mysterious nature of their Mythos and their mortal aspirations, the powers within them always threaten to tear their lives apart. They have unwittingly become a part of a secret world of clashing stories, and soon other legends will come looking for them with demands.

City of Mist is based on the story-driven [Apocalypse Engine](#), but it takes a step further into narrative gaming by introducing several new features:

- **Rich character motivations built around compelling Mysteries and Identities.** Follow your characters' themes to gain their benefits and evolve them or go against them to discover new aspects with a unique non-linear character evolution system.
- **Know no limits for powers, abilities, traits, gear, or allies.** Everything in City of Mist is described by free text tags, so you can create exactly the character you want.
- **Full-on narrative engine, with an edge.** Every action you take in the game is based on the interpretation of your tags, using moves to deliver dramatic outcomes that drive the story forward.
- **Status spectrums, a new system of 'narrative damage.'** You can use descriptors to create any imaginable setback or advantage so that every action in the fiction, in and out of combat, can have lasting gameplay implications.

In this Starter Set, you will find everything you need in order to run your first few games of City of Mist, including:

- This book, containing a brief review of the setting and the basic rules
- Seven pre-generated character playbooks

You can download free playable content (Cases) and game aids from the City of Mist website at cityofmist.co :

- A first sample Case (a playable scenario): *V is for Going Viral*
- A second, more advanced Case: *Demons in Cross End*
- Printable game aids: the moves sheet, status spectrum cards, crew themes, and MC sheets.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Before you start playing, the game host or **MC** (Master of Ceremonies) should read this book and become familiar with the game. All other players can read the player chapters or leave it for the MC to explain the rules. Then, get together with ample free time and snacks, pick your characters, have the MC open the first page of *V is for Going Viral*, and enter the shadowy alleys of City of Mist.

Find out more about the game at: cityofmist.co





SETTING

L'ESTRANGE'S GUIDE TO THE CITY

Two worlds exist side by side in the City. There's the world you see: the world of coffee stains and rush hour traffic, of nervous drug dealers and smug politicians. Look around you; what do you see? A plumber plodding along on the rainy streets after a long day of work, or a homeless woman aimlessly wandering the subway train.

Then there's the world of legend: myths and stories, symbols and ideas, swirling in a vastness you cannot fathom. They're more real than reality itself, the foundation of all life. The truth is there, but you cannot see it: the trafficker is literally a vampire; the politician is Narcissus himself. The plumber is a primordial reptilian from a time when fire and water were still one. The homeless woman is a revenant, an angel of death waiting for a destined soul.

The veil of **the Mist** hides the true world from us. The Mist envelops us all in familiar forms, distracts us, and makes us forget the wonders and horrors that lie beyond it. In the City, the Mist makes all legends seem filthy, creased, and washed-out. They wear a crust of mundanity, and forget what they are.

But you, you are a **Gateway** through the Mist. You are hope and despair. You can bring your legend to life, if you dare let go of the illusion you call a life.

WHO AM I?

You are just trying to eke out a living in the City like everybody else, right? You have your home, your loved ones, your things, and whatever it is you do with your time. But you're also a gateway to a strange legendary force: a **Mythos**.

Nobody really knows what the Mythoi are, or for that matter, what Gateways are. The vast majority of people in the City don't even know the Mythoi are real. In all likelihood, you are still one of those people.

What you do know is that lately you've started feeling a strange presence inside of you: something unknown and yet immensely familiar, like an old childhood memory. Maybe an accident triggered it or maybe it was something you discovered within yourself gradually. Now it's a part of you, and when you connect with it wondrous and horrible things happen as the power of your Mythos is unleashed into the world.

OF MYTHOI AND MIST

A Mythos is a story that is trying to manifest itself in the City. It can be an existing myth or legend (for example, of a legendary creature or object), like Excalibur, Salamander, or Kitsune. It can be a theory or a concept, like an evolutionary leap or the idea of omnipresence. And it can even be something vague and abstract, a feeling or a sensation, like anger itself or the spirit of well-being.

The Mist prevents the Mythoi from directly influencing the City. This allows the City to exist as it exists now; otherwise, it would become a chaotic canvas where stories mix, clash, and rip each other to shreds.

To influence the City, Mythoi must manifest through Gateways, portals through the Mist. Some kind of awareness or an awakening of the soul is needed to become a Gateway, so the most common form of a Gateway is a human resident of the City. However, even places and objects can be infused with enough awareness to serve as Gateways. Such an object is called a **Relic**.

Nevertheless, the Mythoi are not an alien force trying to invade the City—they are its heart and the blood that runs through it. Everything in the City is there because the Mythoi live inside it and animate it, despite the Mist. It's possible that without the Mythoi the City would simply cease to exist.

WHAT DO I WANT?

You want a lot of things. You want to keep your job, you want to make your mom happy, or maybe you just want to find the best blueberry muffins in the City. You also want to take revenge on those who have hurt you or show your true worth to someone. There are different sides to your **Identity**, each desiring different things.

Then, there is your Mythos. It wants you to go deeper, beyond your petty human desires and beyond what you know and so habitually cling to. There is a story inside you, a legend that transcends your personality and the circumstances of your life. It's calling to you to find it, to unravel it. It's a **Mystery** that you feel compelled to follow.

WHO IS AFTER ME?

Many Gateways —after realizing there's something strange going on— ask themselves, “Why don't I just forget about all this and focus on my life?” In theory, that would be a good idea. But even if you could resist the call of your Mythos, there's one fact you can't ignore: there are other Gateways out there. People like you, perhaps of a less savoury nature, driven by their Mythos, looking for new opportunities to further their goals. They may be scheming in the shadows or going on an open rampage through the City streets; sooner or later, one of these legends will find you.

Other Gateways might be as new to the game as you are or they might be almighty legends who have been around for a long time, gaining power and influence in the City. Some of them might even have a personal interest in you, especially if there is a relationship between your Mythoi: your stories may be connected, whether or not you realize it.

Not all Gateways pose a threat, though. The City has enough shades of gray to accommodate a wide spectrum of motives, and you may find Gateways who will be willing to help you out for their own reasons. Learn to be flexible—enemies and allies can change sides faster than you think.

CREWS AND CASES

Being a Gateway means having questions in a city where all answers are hidden. You live in a City where countless forces and interests collide; like it or not, you will get involved in a **Case** that at least at first might seem completely mundane and unrelated to your Mythos. Scratch the surface just a little, though, and you'll find that the evidence doesn't always add up. This is the nature of your condition, your destiny—you're simply attracted to these bizarre incidents and unsolved mysteries, the mark of the presence of other legends.

To find the answers you are looking for, you will need a broader spectrum of skills, abilities, and resources than you have. You can, however, team up with other Gateways who are seeking the same answers or at least need your help with their own questions. That's why many Gateways end up forming some kind of **crew** with fellow Gateways they've picked up along the way.

It's up to you to decide what kind of crew you want to set up, but here are a few examples.

THE PROS

There's always a need for professionals who can get a job done. A team of Gateways can accomplish great things and there are plenty of wealthy movers-and-shakers willing to pay you to do their dirty work. When you get involved in this line of work, you invariably become mixed up with people who know people and who can lead you to what you're looking for. But remember who you're working for—one wrong turn and your powerful employer will be coming after you.

MASKED VIGILANTE INVESTIGATIONS

Gateways who are inclined to do right by their fellow citizens can't seem to sit tight when it comes to injustice. One way to tackle crime is to set up a facade that will allow you to snoop around places where you're not supposed to be: start a private investigation business! Later, at night, you can catch up with the bastards and ask the interesting questions, give or take a few broken bones.



DABBLERS IN THE MIST

For generations, the more aware residents of the City have tried to figure out the Mythoi, and fortunately for you, they've left a heap of toys to play with: artifacts, manuscripts, ruins, and relics. Dabbling in such things has the immediate effect of attracting other, older individuals or groups who have been dabbling for much longer, so consider yourself warned.

CONSPIRACY BUSTERS

It's an ugly job, but if you can stomach living in the back of a van, sipping cold coffee and chewing on dry donuts, you're more than likely to catch sight of some strange things happening in the City, things the media will never report. There seems to be a connection between the mysteries of the City and high-ranking government officials, filthy rich tycoons, and power-hungry crimelords. If you blow the lid, you better be prepared for some serious heat.



THE MIST

The public knows nothing. The mysteries you will encounter every night on the streets will never really be brought to light. When the work of legends is reported in the media, it's usually either completely skewed or purely anecdotal. People on the street know that something is going on, but most of them excuse it as something mundane or just forget about it. They're **Sleepers**; they'd much rather sink back into the drama of their lives, be it a boyfriend's possible infidelity or a TV show they just love to watch. Why? And why aren't you entirely like them?

Like the Mythoi themselves, the nature of the force that keeps them hidden is largely unknown, as is the reason for its existence and power over humanity. Different esoteric traditions mention it and give it their own names, like the Indian Maya or the kabbalist Ester, but these ancient lores aren't exactly common knowledge in the City. The vast majority of the residents of the City remains under this spell, ignoring or excusing even the most blatant miracle in their paths.

Not so for those touched by a Mythos. To the extent their awareness allows, Gateways can see with open eyes, remembering the wonders they witness. Unfortunately, they too are subject to the pull of the Mist; even the greatest of legends has mortal aspirations and attachments that may eventually bring her to forget her Mythos, if she does not keep them in check.

It is theorized that there is another player in this game of Mist and Mythos. Sometime, somewhere, someone must have known the origin of the Mist, enough to derive its name from the Greek word "μύω" (miyó) – "to conceal", and perhaps they are the only ones in the City who actually know it by this name. Who they are and what they know is a mystery for you to unravel.

SO I CAN DO ANYTHING, AND THE MIST WILL CLEAN UP AFTER ME?

Overall, Gateways can operate quite freely in the City as their Mythos powers are masked by the Mist. A thunder god's lightning bolts can be excused as a freak power surge or the hellhound companions of a succubus are later remembered as really big and nasty dogs. Deep in their hearts, Sleepers know what they saw, but they just can't bring themselves to acknowledge it. They get distracted, make up excuses, or simply forget.

There are, however, several reasons for Gateways to watch their step and curb the use of their Mythos powers on the streets of the City:

- **The Mist hides legendary powers, not their consequences.** For example, if a Gateway trashes a bar using her powers, the powers may be dismissed but not the destruction—she will still be held accountable for the mess (even though it might be hard to prove she did it).
- **You never know who is watching.** Not everyone is affected by the Mist the same way. Though the vast majority of the City residents are Sleepers, many others are awakening. Even at the very beginning of awakening, individuals can remember miracles they see, at least partially. Anyone, from your girlfriend to an unassuming bank clerk, could be one of those people, so you may find yourself surprised if you rely on the Mist too much. And, of course, there are plenty of other legends roaming the streets, so unchecked use of your Mythos powers has the potential of exposing you to great danger, attracting the attention of the ancient and powerful.
- **Exposing Sleepers to Mythos powers may awaken them.** It's hard to tell what exactly makes a person awaken—it's different for everyone. But there is no doubt that witnessing something extraordinary can break the Mist's hold over someone and birth a new Gateway. What this new Gateway will do with their powers is now indirectly your responsibility.
- **The Mist can bite back.** The Mist is an elaborate conscious force constantly working to maintain the ordinary reality. Normally, it works by making Sleepers forget, but if faced with a threat to its very fabric it may somehow intensify its efforts and try to permanently seal the offending Gateway. How this actually manifests is up to the MC to decide.

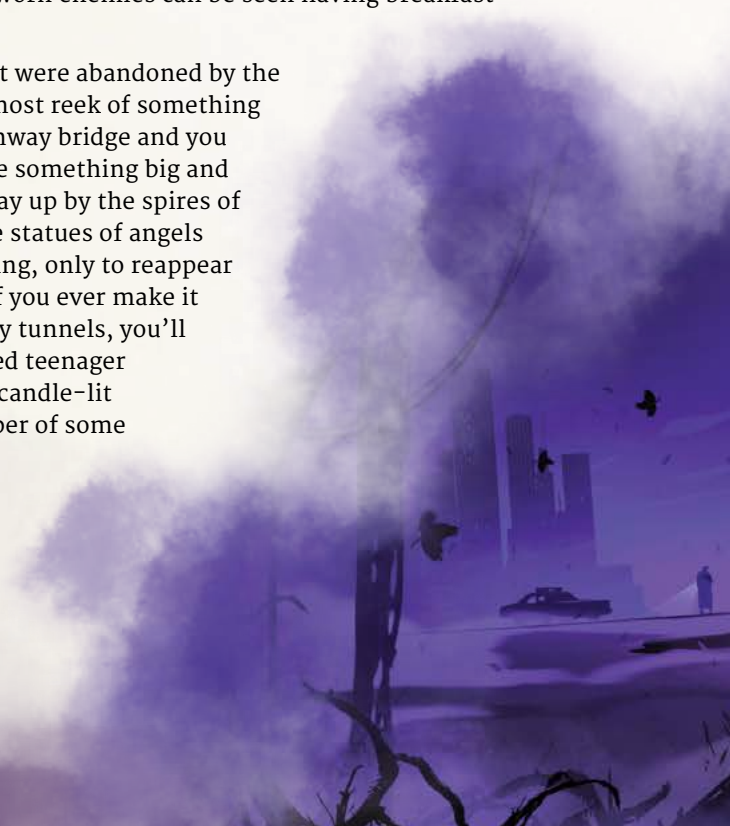
THE CITY

The City is a burgeoning metropolis, home to millions of people. Everything you have learned to expect of a modern city can be found here: economy and business, culture and recreation, society and art, education and technology, law and crime.

But there's something more. Every part of the City hides a story: not just dry historical facts but something alive, something that's struggling to exist—not unlike what is growing in you. It's in the people but it's also in everything they do and make: the buildings, the establishments, the trends.

It's the old opera house on the waterfront that echoes faintly with organ music late at night, or the landmark corporate skyscraper that you always see on the skyline but whose actual entrance you can't ever seem to find. It's a new fad of dolls for little girls that seem to devilishly smile at you or a rock star who sends uncontrolled waves of ecstasy through listeners. Or maybe it's that crummy diner at the corner of the street, giving off such tantalizing smells of fresh coffee and pastries that even sworn enemies can be seen having breakfast together there.

The parts of the City that were abandoned by the mainstream, however, most reek of something eldritch. Go under a highway bridge and you might find a hovel where something big and roughly human lived. Way up by the spires of a forsaken church, stone statues of angels that weigh tons go missing, only to reappear after a day or two. And if you ever make it to the abandoned subway tunnels, you'll see the occasional hooded teenager slinking furtively into a candle-lit cistern, perhaps a member of some unknown cult.



IS THE CITY OF MIST BASED ON AN ACTUAL CITY?

You can place the City of Mist anywhere in the world or leave it as its own context. You can give it a name, real or fictional; fashion it based on an existing city or make it up entirely from scratch. You can have a map of the City or just reference different locations as you go. It's all good, because the City is only the backdrop for your story. What really matters is who's in the story and what's going to happen to them on the streets when the cameras of the mind's eye start rolling.

Residents of the City simply call it 'the City', and refer to anything outside of it as 'out of town' ("Oh, Johnny? Johnny's out of town. But he'll be back..."; "This stuff is weird, definitely came from out of town."). Their worldview is so centered on the City that they don't really bother thinking about what's outside. Is that because of the Mist or is it just everyday absent-mindedness? You'll be the judge of that.



LOCATIONS IN THE CITY

DOWNTOWN

If you're not careful, the bright city lights will blind you. By day, the crowded plazas and broad streets are home to flashy superstores and tourist attractions. When the sun sets, the real illumination reveals itself: from neon signs to jumbo screens, passers-by are bombarded with fluorescent light and mesmerizing commercial messages. The smokey side streets are laden with theaters, clubs, and bars, their signs flashing in the dark. Downtown never really takes a break, so it often seems to blur into a high-exposure time-lapse of days and nights.

What really happens in the shadow of the neon signs? From mad preachers raising support for their cause to pushers selling designer drugs with a mysterious logo, Gateways with big aspirations often operate here. If you're a legend trying to get to the masses, Downtown is your place.

But there's a deeper side to that. There is something in this dark marketplace, in the subliminal urges pumped into unaware minds. All these people so frantically seeking relief generate a lot of angst. Who's profiting from it? Is there someone behind all the reckless hedonism and blind consumerism, painting the night in colorful strokes of 'want' and 'have'?

THE BLUE-COLLAR SLUM

Life doesn't always go the way you plan it. This slum is full of people who thought they'll get rich, find love, and live happily ever after—and then life punched them right in the face. People who live here work hard all their lives; by now, they've either given up on their dreams or are still looking for a golden opportunity, both equally dangerous. This neighborhood breeds most petty criminals in the City and a pretty good share of its organized crime too. It's a warren of derelict apartment blocks dotted with local businesses and venues: a dusty pawn shop, an old church, a cinema in ruins.

Hope—even false hope—is a good place for a legend to strike roots. Maybe it's the kid who sees dead people or the lady whose apartment feels like an icy cool lake, even in the summer. It could be the aspiring

local politician who is always carrying a flute around and is followed by a crowd of reporters, or the car mechanic who you once saw pick up four wheels like they were pizza trays. This neighborhood is made of the little stories, each capable of becoming much more... for better or for worse.

But why is it so tough to break out of the cycle of poverty and debt around here? Is it that the jobs pay less and the rents are high? Are mobsters and loan sharks thriving on protection money and high interest paid by individuals with no other choice? Or are there some other, greater forces at play—ones that wish to perpetuate stories of tough luck and perseverance?

THE INDUSTRIAL ZONE

The noise of heavy machinery and the wafts of chemical fumes welcome you to this district of workshops and light industry. Here you'll find small factories, warehouses, and ample empty derelict buildings with office space to rent, views to the junkyard and all. Forlorn diners and labourers' pubs stand empty most of the time, except for a precious few hours before and after work and during breaks. The nights are silent and tense, and underneath the sullen backstreets all manners of illegal entertainment can be found.

Sometimes, you can hear unusual grating and screeching coming from the machinery, as if the engines were speaking to each other, or far away laughter in another factory; but then you think it's probably just the wind caught in the empty silos. Or your eyes follow a wolfish silhouette running on the rooftops only to see a drunk fellow stepping out from behind the dumpster where the beast landed just a moment ago.

The authorities almost never bother themselves with this district, since it has almost no formal residents (i.e., voters), so Gateways treat this place as a free-for-all zone, especially at night. Entire blocks are claimed by one legend or another, transformed into whatever most pleases them, be it the dank dwelling of the Spider Queen or the luscious hallucination of the Endless Green Meadow. Any Sleeper who accidentally stumbles across them may never see the light of day again.

THE GENTRIFIED OLD QUARTER

With paved streets and wrought-iron lampposts, the old quarter sometimes feels like a place out of time. The aged stone houses seem to be piled up one on top of the other, forming a labyrinth of back alleys and passageways in which one could easily become lost under the watchful eye of black ravens. A bohemian hodgepodge of artists, writers, musicians, and New Age practitioners have set up their galleries, museums, and posh recording studios here, alongside funky bistros and nightclubs. But it's the indigenous inhabitants of this quarter that you need to watch out for.

A place as old as this holds a wealth of opportunities for Gateways. From stories of archaeological treasures containing caches of gold and cursed relics to local superstitions and legends of black magic, the Mist does not seem as thick in this place. A souvenir shop may only be the facade for a room draped in velvet where a fortune-teller will read your future, for a price. A beautiful old house could be boarded up and sealed as a crime scene after yet another potential buyer was brutally murdered there, and the word on the street is the devil in the attic got him, too.

Whatever it may be about this place, there is no denying that some of the oldest and greatest Gateways operating in the City reside here or at least take interest in the quarter. Buried deep within it (or underneath it) there may be the answers that everyone wants and yet no one is able to find.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The locations in City of Mist are based around tropes designed to inspire your story rather than strictly define the setting. You can decide which of them to use and whether to plot them on a map or simply reference them as you tell your story.

The full version of City of Mist will include many more locations, both district-sized such as the Docks, the University, the Hi-Tech Hub, the Park, and Suburbia, and specific locations such as the Night Club, the Abandoned Fairground, the Metalworks Factory, the Secret Lab, the Cheap Motel, and many more, each with suggestions for local legends and Cases for your crew to investigate.



THE GATEWAYS

This Starter Set includes seven pre-generated Gateways. In the following descriptions, **bold words** indicate themes (explained below, in *The Cinematics* chapter). For more information on each character's specific abilities, see the character playbooks.



SALAMANDER

An all around good guy and serious **Heartthrob**, Salamander was just a **City Water Worker** before he started having dreams about a burning lizard-like creature made of a substance which was both fire and water at the same time. He became capable of producing this substance as a **Nimbus of Primordial Plasma** and, having realized its potential, started his activity as an **Up-and-Coming Crime Fighter**.

EXCALIBUR

Contrary to what many may think, there's more to Excalibur than just a **Rich Old Dame**. True, she was born to a **Wealthy and Dysfunctional Family** if there ever was one. But as a secret **Activist for Social Change**, she has her own plans for the City, plans that became possible when she found a silver bracelet which turned out to be **the Ultimate Weapon** in disguise.



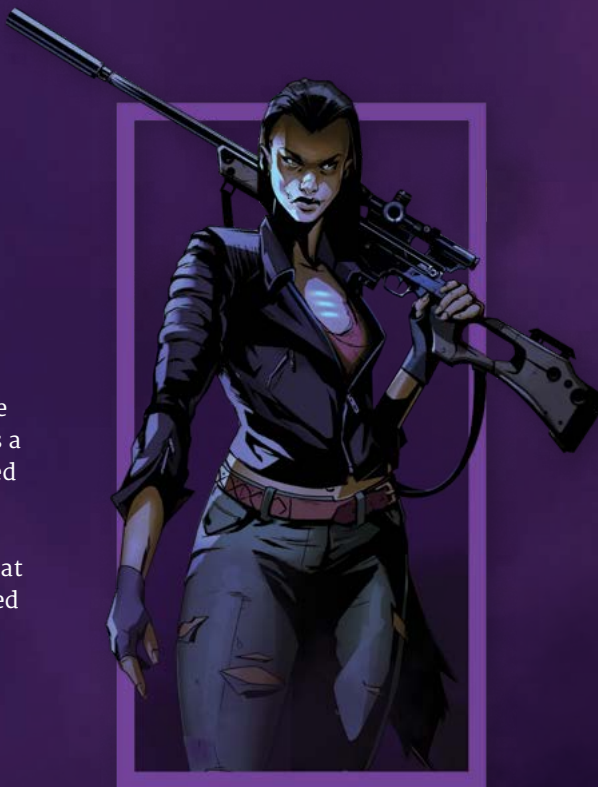


MITOSIS

An **Ex-Boxer**, Mitosis' glamorous career and celebrity life came to a grinding halt when he became involved in a **Biochemical Accident**; driving while intoxicated, he hit a truck carrying vats of biohazardous substances. Mit's body went into a rampage of **Rapid Cell Growth**, transforming him into a monster while increasing his **Survivability** in all conditions.

POST-MORTEM

Post-Mortem doesn't know who she was before she died. She woke up as a **Walking Dead** body in an abandoned Helix Labs facility, animated by an unknown force. With the help of special **Helix Labs Gadgets** found at the lab and her newly (re?)discovered training as an **Assassin**, she began hunting those who operate in the shadows as the City's **Angel of Vengeance**.



DECLAN L'ESTRANGE

L'Estrange, a **Dubious Antiques Dealer** and **Gunslinger**, has **Been Around** long enough to know his way through the world. Always searching for the truth behind the veil, he is convinced the ancients knew something. When he finally found the key, an artifact that was later stolen from him, he began **Living in a Dream**, sensing limitless possibilities that sometimes manifest through him, though he hasn't quite been able to control it.



FLICKER

All her life, Flicker was engrossed in her **Hipster** lifestyle and her **Mad Hacker Skills**: who to be, what music to listen to, how to crack the digital world. It wasn't until she literally stumbled into a vision of the horrible future of the City, while walking down the street, that she realized she is part of something greater. She doesn't know where her **Expanding Senses** and **Space-Time Warping** abilities will take her next, but she intends to follow.



KITSUNE

Dressed as something between a high school student and a **Ninja**, **After A Fashion**, Kitsune seems to most people as a teenager going through a phase. That works fine for Kitsune, who is really a **Trickster Fox Spirit** sent by the gods as a **Messenger of Good Fortune** to help mankind. There's only one thing in the mortal world that Kitsune cares about as much as their mission: a boy named **Kaito**.



FLESHING OUT YOUR PRE-GEN CHARACTER

The pre-generated characters leave a lot of details unexplained. You can add background details to your character as you please, starting with her or his real name. Other open questions such as "What was the artifact L'Estrange found?", "Who was in the car with Mitosis when he crashed it?" and "What did Flicker see in her life-altering vision?" are up to you and the MC to decide.



BASIC RULES
THE CINEMATICS

ANATOMY OF A GATEWAY

Player characters (PCs) in *City of Mist* are made of four **themes**, each representing one of the character's major aspects. The themes are divided between **Mythos** and **Logos**, with Mythos themes representing mythical and supernatural aspects and Logos themes representing ordinary life—what your character knows, values, and loves. The number of Mythos vs. the number of Logos themes that your character has say a lot about her; they determine her relationship with the legendary and the ordinary.

Every Mythos theme has a **Mystery** in the form of a question, an **Attention** track with three boxes, and a **Fade** track with three boxes. The Mystery defines what your character wishes to discover about her Mythos. The Attention track shows her growing familiarity with her Mythos and how much her connection with it is evolving. When you mark Attention three times on a Mythos theme, you choose an improvement for that theme. Finally, when your character's Mystery calls to her, but she ignores it, you mark Fade. If your character continues to ignore her Mythos and marks the third Fade box, you lose the theme and must choose a new Logos theme instead.

Similarly, every Logos theme has an **Identity** in the form of a statement, an **Attention** track with three boxes, and a **Crack** track with three boxes. An Identity is something your character believes about herself. The Attention track shows how much your character invests in developing this aspect of her. When you mark Attention three times on a Logos theme, you choose an improvement for that theme. You mark Crack when your character's Identity demands something of her, but she fails to deliver. If your character continues to ignore her Identity and marks the third Crack box, you lose the theme and must choose a new Mythos theme instead.

Finally, all themes have **power tags**. These tags both describe your character and power the actions your character takes. They can describe qualities, abilities, gear, allies, or assets. Each theme also has one or more **weakness tags**, which impede your actions but also give you a chance to mark Attention. During the game you may receive additional **temporary tags** which can be used as either power or weakness tags, or **statuses**, which represent conditions that affect your ability to act.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN CHARACTER

You can create your own character in a few minutes by simply putting together a few ideas and jotting down a few words on a page.

A character in City of Mist has:

- 4 themes, divided between Mythos and Logos (at least 1 of each)
- A Mystery for each Mythos theme
- An Identity for each Logos theme
- 3 Power Tags in each theme
- 1 Weakness Tag in each theme
- Optionally, in one theme, one additional Power Tag and one additional Weakness Tag

Make sure your tags aren't too broad or narrow; create a good mix of both.

The full version of City of Mist will feature **Themebooks**, which will guide you through the creation of your character's themes and include additional features such as special Themebook moves. You pick four Themebooks for your character, one for each theme, and follow the instructions to create awesome themes.

Here are the theme types you can use when creating your character:

MYTHOS

Expression

How your Mythos makes an impact on the world, e.g., projecting freezing cold or mind control.

Bastion

How your Mythos protects itself, e.g., invulnerability or etherealness.

Adaptation

How your Mythos adjusts to changes around it, e.g., mimicking powers or unexplained luck.

Mobility

How your Mythos spreads itself, e.g., a winged motorcycle or the power to turn doors into portals.

Divination

How your Mythos gathers information about the world, e.g., hearing all cries of distress or absorbing data from computers.

Subversion

How your Mythos hides its presence and activity, e.g., jamming electronic surveillance or shifting light away from you.

Relic

What objects are tied with your Mythos, e.g., an old jacket that shapeshifts the wearer or a pendant that puts others to sleep.

LOGOS

Occupation

What you spend your time doing, e.g., private investigator, crimelord, or full-time dad/mom.

Personality

Your disposition, style, and inclinations, e.g. a "lone wolf" type or an irresistible charmer.

Defining relationship

Those who are important to you, e.g., the love of your life, a trusted sidekick, or the wise janitor in your building.

Defining event

An event that shaped you, e.g., the death of your family or a spiritual mountaintop experience.

Mission

A goal you have set for yourself, e.g., cleaning up the neighborhood or achieving a scientific breakthrough in your field.

Training

Things you've learned, e.g., martial arts learned in a Shaolin temple or expertise in criminal profiling.

Gear

The tools you use, e.g., a souped-up car or a secret storage full of medieval weaponry.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

TELLING THE STORY TOGETHER

City of Mist is a cinematic role-playing game that is played as a conversation between the host, or MC, and the players, who take the role of the protagonists. The conversation starts with the MC setting the first scene (time and place), describing what happens around your characters. You and the other players respond by (a) saying what your characters do, (b) saying what your characters say, and (c) asking for more details about the scene. Sometimes you roll dice and use the rules to determine the outcome of your actions. The MC follows up by saying how the other characters respond and what else happens in the scene, to which you respond again and so on until the scene is concluded and the next scene begins.

(Note that the MC doesn't always know everything—some things about your characters and the City you can decide together.)

Furthermore, there is no defined order to the conversation. As the host and director of the game, the MC makes sure everyone gets to talk and take actions as their characters. Think of it as moving the camera between the protagonists to make sure all of them get some screen time in the story. The MC can even cut between different scenes or action shots to add more suspense by switching between the players, just like in a TV show.

WHAT, NO INITIATIVE ROLL?!

That's right. Like most games *Powered by the Apocalypse*, City of Mist is played as a flowing conversation between the MC and the players. The MC as the host governs which character acts next by giving the stage to one of the players. However, if a player wants their character to take action before something else happens, the MC can ask them to make a move (see below) to see if they got the drop on the competition.

TAKING ACTIONS

As the drama and mystery in your story unfold, you'll want your character to take actions and influence the story in various ways.

Moves determine the outcome of your actions. All moves start with the words "When you..." followed by a condition. Whenever your character takes an action in the story that matches the condition of a move, the move is triggered and you need to roll for the move and follow its description to determine the outcome. That's called "making a move". Whenever you want to make a specific move, your character must take an action in the story that matches the condition of the move.

To make a move:

1. **Think about what your character is about to do.** You can get some ideas from your tags (what your character is good at) or you can simply think of what is the most suitable or exciting thing for your character to do at this point in the story.
2. **Choose a move** or ask the MC which move is most suitable to represent your action. There are eight core moves in the game, covering most actions. When you, as your character, are using your abilities:
 - to seek answers to burning questions or gain information, you **Investigate**.
 - to talk, threaten, or seduce someone into doing something, you **Convince**.
 - to avoid a hit, endure harm, or resist an influence, you **Face Danger**.
 - to take a clear shot at someone at full power, you **Hit With All You've Got**.
 - to overcome someone or something in a struggle for control, you **Go Toe to Toe**.
 - to give you or your allies an advantage, you **Change the Game**.
 - to do something discreetly or deceptively, you **Sneak Around**.
 - to perform a feat of daring, you **Take a Risk**.

Each move is explained in further detail below, starting at page 38.

- 3. Pick relevant tags to determine the Power of your action.** Scan your character playbook for tags relevant to this action (see text box). Count the number of **power tags** that help you carry out the action. Subtract the number of **weakness tags** that impede this action, if any (the MC can also choose to activate one or more of your weakness tags this way). The result is the **Power** of your action.
- 4. Factor in enhancing or impeding statuses:** If you have any relevant status spectrum cards, add the tier of the highest enhancing status to your Power and subtract the tier of the highest impeding status from your Power.
- 5. Roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and add your Power to the result.** This is called **roll+power**. Compare the total to the move as explained in the moves sheet to determine the outcome.

Different moves have different outcomes, such as inflicting statuses on others, forcing them to cooperate, discovering clues, or even allowing you to temporarily create new tags. However, all moves follow the same pattern: scoring **10 or more** (10+) is a great success and scoring **7-9** is a mild success, or a success mixed with a complication. Both 10+ and 7-9 are considered a **hit**.

When your total roll+power is **6 or less**, it's a **miss**. It implies something disadvantageous happened instead of what you tried to do or that things got a lot more complicated. This is when the MC will make one of her moves, usually against you. For example, the MC could tell you that your character got into trouble or tell you to mark a status on your status spectrum cards.

BURNING A TAG

When your character performs a dramatic action that really matters to you, you have the option to **burn a tag**. Choose one tag relevant to the action you are taking and scratch it out (or mark the Burn icon next to it ). You cannot use it again until you recover it using the **Photomontage (Downtime)** move (page 47). Instead of roll+power for this move, treat the move as though the final result of the roll (including the Power) was 10 with a Power of 3. No power or weakness tags can be applied to these numbers, but any status spectrum cards you have may increase or decrease them, as in Step 4 above. Then, follow the move description as usual.

HOW TO DECIDE IF A TAG IS RELEVANT

City of Mist is based on narrative interpretation: whenever you take an action, you need to decide which tags support or impede your action. For example, when you punch someone, being *Strong* usually helps but being *Blue* doesn't. However, when you punch someone who is susceptible to blue objects, the tag *Blue* becomes relevant and is counted toward the Power of the action.

You could stretch the interpretation of a tag to make it relevant, which could lead you to add lots of tags to each roll, but the game is more enjoyable when you stick to simple interpretations. For example, when you roll for **Hit With All You've Got** to hit an opponent with a punch, you could argue that being *Intelligent* helps you punch better because you can analyze your opponent's fighting style, so this tag should add to your Power. However, many intelligent people can't punch to save their lives!

One way to avoid packing lots of loosely related tags into one action is splitting tags into separate moves. If being *Intelligent* helps you get an advantage in combat, you should count it towards a **Change the Game** move that represents your analysis before the punch. If successful, this will boost your following **Hit With All You've Got** move.

Don't worry if you don't get tag interpretation right away. It plays differently than most games where everything is defined by strict rules and numbers. You'll find it allows you to play a more flexible game where the story, not the nitpicking, takes center stage. And whenever there's doubt about the inclusion of a specific tag, the MC as the referee has the final call.

If you still find you need more structure, The MC can introduce the following optional rule: a maximum of 3 power tags can be added to each roll.

More tips and pointers on how to play with tags are included in the full version of the game.

STATUSES

Statuses reflect temporary conditions that affect your character such as *Chained-2*, *Sick-1*, or *Hypnotized-5*. Each status is composed of a **tag** and a **tier**: the tag defines the nature of the status, while the tier defines how limiting and debilitating (or how enhancing) the status is.

At **tier-5**, the status is so damaging or intense that your character is **out**—you can't even attempt to take any actions affected by this status. If a status reaches **tier-6**, marked as **MC**, the character may die, enter a coma, permanently add or lose tags or even themes, etc. The MC will decide what happens to your character and it won't be good.

The tag of a status should more or less match its tier and represent how debilitating or enhancing this status is: there cannot be *Dead-1* or *Scratched-5* statuses, unless in a bizarre situation where being dead is a very mild nuisance and being scratched is incapacitating. When the tier of a status changes (e.g. if lessened or worsened), change the tag accordingly to match the new tier.

Note that some statuses are **temporary**: they affect only the next relevant action and then they are removed. Other statuses, however, are **ongoing**. They can be removed during scenes using the **Change the Game** move (if one has the relevant tags to get rid of the status) or during downtime using the **Photomontage (Downtime)** move (see below).

TAKING STATUSES

When your character is about to take a status, if she can somehow avoid it or protect herself from it, you can use the **Face Danger** move to reduce the tier of the status or completely ignore it. Otherwise, or if you fail to **Face Danger**, you take the full tier of the status. Take a status spectrum card, write down the tag, and mark the tier.

TAKING STATUSES ON THE SAME SPECTRUM

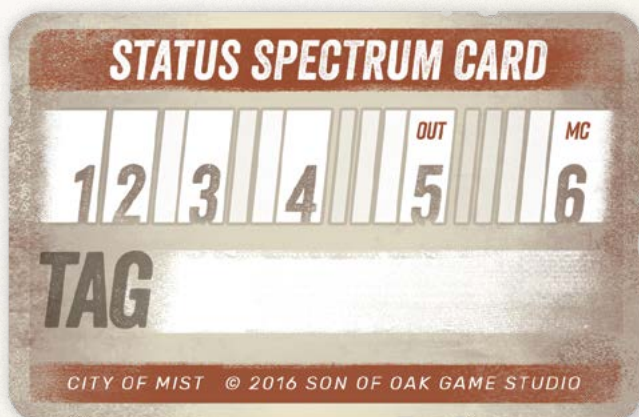
Statuses that have similar effects —or in other words, are on the same spectrum— stack together. If you take a status and you already have a similar status spectrum card, you don't take another card. Instead,

... **a higher tier supersedes the existing tier.** If the tier of the new status is higher than what's on your card, mark the tier of the new status. For example, *Drowsy-3* replaces *Tired-1*.

... **an equal tier bumps up the existing tier by 1.** If the tier of the new status is equal to what's on your card, mark the next tier on the card. So *Shamed-2* bumps up *Shamed-2* to *Humiliated-3*.

... **a lower tier gradually builds up the existing tier.** If the tier of the new status is lower than what's on your card, mark a number of boxes equal to the new tier, starting from the box right of the current tier and going up the spectrum (right). If there are already boxes marked, start from the box right of the last marked box. If marking additional boxes eventually leads you to mark the next tier, the next tier then becomes the new tier of the status. For example, if you were already *Shocked-4*:

- Taking a status *Zapped-1*, you would mark one box on the right side of tier-4. The tier of this status spectrum would still be 4.
- Taking a status *Zapped-2*, you would mark two boxes on the right side of tier-4. The tier of this status spectrum would still be 4.
- Taking four *Zapped-1* statuses, one after the other, you would first mark the box on the right side of tier-4, then the next box up, and then the one after that. This still does not affect the tier. However, when you do so the fourth time, you mark the fourth box right of tier-4, which is the box for tier-5. From this point on, the status has upgraded to tier-5. The tag changes accordingly, presumably to *Electrocuted-5*.



THE CORE MOVES

All game moves are also available in a summarized sheet for easier use during play, available at cityofmist.co/download.

INVESTIGATE

When you use your abilities to **seek answers to burning questions**, roll+power. On a hit, you uncover as many Clues as your Power. Spend your Clues 1-to-1 to ask the MC a question about the subject of your investigation or ask another player a relevant question about their character. They must give you either a straight answer or a solid lead. On a 7-9, they can also choose 1:

- Your investigation exposes you to danger.
- The Clues you get are fuzzy, incomplete, or part-true part-false
- Whoever or whatever you are asking the question(s) can ask you one question as well. You answer on the same terms.

ACTIONS

SEARCH USING YOUR SENSES • ASK QUESTIONS IN A CONVERSATION •
INSPECT AN OBJECT OR A SCENE • LOOK UP OR DECYPHER INFORMATION •
MAKE CALLS TO CONTACTS • EVALUATE A PERSON OR A SITUATION • ETC.

The **Investigate** move is used whenever a character is using her abilities to garner more information or when a player asks for more details that are not readily available to the character. **Investigate** also applies to longer actions, such as spending a day snooping around an important location or hitting the streets and asking questions.

Note that not every question from the player to the MC constitutes Investigating; simply using the character's normal senses to observe the perceivable surrounding does not usually require rolling. However, if you want to find that which is hidden, as things often are in City of Mist, you need to **Investigate**.

Examples: Declan L'Estrange is reading an ancient manuscript to find the location of a lost temple; Post-Mortem evaluates her surroundings to find out where her target is hiding; Flicker is looking into the past to discover the identity of a killer; Salamander flirts with a news reporter to get a lead on a corrupt media magnate.

THE RULE OF MINIMUM ONE

Whenever your Power determines how much benefit (Clues, tier, or Juice) you get from a move, you always get at least 1 benefit, even if you rolled with a Power of zero or less. This ensures every hit has an impact on the game.

CONVINCE

When you use your abilities **to talk, threaten, or seduce** someone into doing something, roll+power. On a hit, they choose either to take a relevant status of your choice with tier=power or:

- On a 7-9, to give in a little, but protect their own agenda.
- On a 10+, to update their agenda to include yours, at least for the time being.

ACTIONS

BRIBE AN OFFICIAL • CLOSE A DEAL • FLIRT TO GET WHAT YOU WANT •
THREATEN WITH VIOLENCE OR A PROMISE OF FUTURE SUFFERING •
BLACKMAIL SOMEONE • ETC.

The **Convince** move applies when your character openly tries to influence another character to do something she wouldn't normally do. The only exception here is when a character tries to use these methods to get information from someone, in which case, use **Investigate**. When a character tries to influence someone deceptively, she may be **Sneaking Around**.

If you have some kind of extra leverage on the person you are trying to convince, the MC may grant you a temporary status to reflect that. This could apply, for example, when you have an artifact they really want or you discovered a dirty secret they want to keep quiet. The tier of the status depends on how much they want what you have and how much they trust you to give it to them if they do as you want.

Examples: *Mitosis uses his deformed appearance to scare away some hooligans; Excalibur tries to charm a high-ranking official into signing papers; Kitsune rallies abducted high school students to help them break out of captivity.*

FACE DANGER

When you use your abilities to **to avoid an incoming hit, endure harm, resist a malign influence, or hold it together**, the MC will name a status with its tag and tier. Roll+power. On a 10+, you fend off the effect and take no status at all. On a 7-9, you take the status, but with -1 tier. On a miss, you take the full status.

ACTIONS

TAKE A HIT • DODGE A HIT • BLOCK A HIT • WITHSTAND HARSH CONDITIONS • PROJECT A PROTECTIVE BARRIER • FEND OFF ENEMIES • ENDURE THE EFFECTS OF A TOXIN OR DISEASE • OVERCOME FEAR • ETC.

Face Danger kicks in whenever any kind of harm or negative effect is about to influence a player character who has a chance of avoiding it. The MC names the worst effect the incoming influence can inflict in the form of a status (tag and tier), and the player makes the move to see how well their character defended herself from that influence.

This move is often activated passively, which means the MC will tell you to make it when you are about to take a status.

Note that not every status can be avoided. As an MC move, the MC can apply a status the character cannot avoid, e.g., she can be suddenly surrounded by enemies, not realizing it before it's too late (*cornered*-3). In such cases, the character does not get a chance to **Face Danger**.

Examples: *Salamander forms a barrier with his nimbus to block an explosion; Declan L'Estrange uses sheer willpower to resist a poltergeist trying to possess him; Kitsune tries to dodge the slashing swords of a ninja assassin; Mitosis musters all available resolve to overcome his rage.*

ROLL WITH NO POWER

Your character can try any action a normal person can take, even if she doesn't have any relevant power tags. In most cases, simply being a human being means she can jump out of harm's way, talk sense into someone, or try to avoid being seen. When you take an action for which you have no power tags, simply roll with a Power of 0. Weakness tags and statuses still apply.

HIT WITH ALL YOU'VE GOT

When you have a **clear shot** and you use your abilities to **hit someone or something with all you've got**, roll+power. On a hit, you hit, inflicting a status upon your target with tier=power and a tag relevant to the abilities you used. On a 7-9, choose 1, on a 10+, choose 2:

- You take cover or secure a superior position so that they can't hit you back.
- You get them good or get many of them (+1 tier).
- There's no collateral damage, or there's loads of collateral damage.
- You hold the target's attention, if possible.

On a +10, you can also choose from the following options:

- If it's in your ability to move them, they are out of the way.
- You gain an advantage on the battlefield. You get 1 Juice (see **Change the Game** move).

ACTIONS

THROW A PUNCH AT SOMEONE • THROW A CAR AT SOMEONE • FIRE AT SOMEONE • USE A SUPERNATURAL ABILITY ON SOMEONE AT FULL POWER • SPRAY-FIRE INTO AN AREA • ETC.

Hit With All You've Got covers moments when your character has the chance to really thump the living daylights out of a foe or blast them to smithereens. It requires having a clear shot or an opportunity; if you're in close-quarters combat or exchanging fire with fortified targets, you should use **Go Toe to Toe**.

On a hit, you inflict a status with a tier equal to the Power of your action. You then choose from the options presented in the move. The options you don't choose in this move are just as important as the ones you do: if you don't take cover, the MC can throw a status at you; if you don't control the collateral damage or the target's attention, the MC does; etc.

Fighting groups in City of Mist is identical to fighting individuals. Foes that are represented as a collective simply inflict statuses with higher tiers and can take higher-tier statuses before they are defeated. Hence, the option of raising the tier by 1 can also be interpreted as hitting more members of a collective.

Finally, if you roll 10+, you get two additional options to choose from (you still only choose two options). If you choose to gain an advantage, you receive 1 Juice that you can immediately use to add or remove statuses and tags, just like in the **Change the Game** move (page 43).

Examples: *Mitosis throws a car at a flying surveillance drone; Salamander focuses his nimbus on an armored door; Declan L'Estrange tries to block a swarm of hypnotized commuters by firing a hail of adhesive slugs at them.*

GO TOE TO TOE

When you use your abilities to **overcome someone or something in a struggle for control**, state what your goal is. Your opponent can describe how they respond, at their option. Roll+power.

On a 7-9, choose 1, on a 10+, choose 2:

- You manage to reach your goal, e.g., take something they hold
- You get them good, inflicting a status with tier=power
- You block, dodge, or counter their best attempts. If you don't choose this, they can inflict a status on you. If they are a PC, its tier=their power (based on their relevant tags and statuses, as usual).

ACTIONS

ENGAGE IN MARTIAL-ARTS OR CLOSE-QUARTERS COMBAT • FIGHT SOMEONE FOR CONTROL OF A POSITION OR OBJECT • OUTSHINE OTHERS AT A SOCIAL GATHERING • TRY TO OUTFRAN PURSUERS • GAIN THE UPPER HAND IN A GAME • ENGAGE IN A BATTLE OF WITS • ETC.

Go Toe to Toe is a catch-all move for situations where your character is trying to achieve a goal, such as grabbing an object or securing a position, but in doing so faces opposition. It represents any kind of challenge or competition between your character and anything else. Depending on the situation, your character could be going toe to toe with an opponent, a predicament, a mystical force, or even the circumstances themselves. The options in this move are simple: get what you want, hurt the competition, and avoid being hurt yourself. Here, too, it's the options you don't choose that you need to worry about.

Examples: *Flicker tries to stop an escaping crook on a motorcycle by placing obstacles in front of him, but he dodges; Declan L'Estrange tries to focus his premonitions on a group of hostages but a dark force is obscuring his view; Kitsune battles a ninja assassin in a close-quarters martial arts clash; Mitosis confronts a virus on the genetic level to remove it from a victim's body.*

CHANGE THE GAME

When you use your abilities **to give you or your allies an advantage**, roll+power. On a hit, you get Juice=power. Spend your Juice, 1 for 1, to gain the following effects, but they must be related to the tags you used:

- Inflict a status with tier-1 (can be chosen multiple times, the tier increases by 1 each time)
- Create/summon new objects or beings with 1 tag of your choice
- Add a new temporary tag to one character, object, or location
- Remove 1-tier from a status
- Scratch out a player's power tag (as if it was burnt)

By default, your effect is topical (affects one target), temporary (only affects the next relevant action), and discernible. On a 10+, you get a minimum of Juice-2, and you can also use your Juice to choose:

- Scale up the effect (greater area or more targets)
- Prolong the effect (make the statuses and tags you create ongoing)
- Hide the effect
- Any other improvement you and the MC agree on

ACTIONS

HEAL, RESTORE, OR FIX • GET OUT OF A TOUGH SPOT • GAIN OR GIVE A TACTICAL ADVANTAGE • SET UP A DEFENSE • CREATE OR ACQUIRE A USEFUL OBJECT • WEAKEN THE OPPOSITION • ETC.

Changing the Game is the most versatile of the core moves. It applies whenever a character is trying to gain advantage for herself or for her allies by improving their abilities, changing the situation to their benefit, helping herself or her allies shake off negative effects, inflicting a disadvantageous condition on their foes, or creating useful objects, beings, or conditions.

An important caveat is that the effects created using this move must match the narrative description (and therefore tags) that the player used. For example, a player cannot invoke tags related to healing and use their Juice to inflict a harmful status on someone.

Note that there are two ways to defend using this move: one is to add a status or a tag that would improve your **Face Danger** move against

threats, and the other is to save Juice and use it to remove tiers from statuses that get past your **Face Danger** moves. However, when using **Change the Game** to set up such a defense, the MC may rule that the same tags cannot be used again to make the **Face Danger** move against the same attack. For example, if Salamander uses his *Plasma Barrier* to set up a defensive barrier using **Change the Game**, and later tries to block an incoming explosion, the MC may rule that since the barrier is already in place, the player should use Juice as a defence and cannot add the tag to the **Face Danger** move.

Examples: *Salamander engulfs himself with his nimbus to incinerate incoming bullets (remove 1-tier from upcoming bullet attacks for every Juice spent); Kitsune parkours around the alleyway trying to avoid being hit by gunfire (adds temporary tag Dodging); Post-Mortem towers over a secretive city official to loosen him up a bit (inflict status Cooperative-1); Mitosis puffs out a cloud of spores to put a few military guards to sleep (inflict status Sleepy-2, scale up the effect to a small group).*

SNEAK AROUND

When you use your abilities **to do something secretly or deceptively**, roll+power. On a 10+, everyone that should fall for it falls for it. On a 7-9, the MC chooses one:

- Someone unimportant noticed you, but that just made them important, right?
- You are perceived only by a secondary sense (someone picks up your scent while you're sneaking; you're seen whispering a message but the message is not heard).
- You're stuck in an uneasy and stressful position in the middle of your action. To finish it secretly or get out of there without being seen, you must **Take the Risk** or **Face Danger**, MC's call.

ACTIONS

LIE OR DECEIVE • IMPERSONATE • PICK POCKET • MOVE UNDETECTED • EAVESDROP • ETC.

Sneak Around covers any and all actions characters attempt to carry out secretly or discreetly.

This move can be played in conjunction with another move. For example, if you hide in the shadows and pounce on an unsuspecting

victim, the MC may rule that your **Sneak Around** roll will determine whether you take them by surprise: a success would mean getting a clear shot that can be followed with a **Hit With All You've Got** move, while a failure could spell a messy struggle with **Go Toe to Toe**.

However, not every action that follows **Sneak Around** needs its own move. If the focus of the action is its secrecy, just roll **Sneak Around**. For example, if you're spying on someone and succeed in **Sneaking Around**, you don't have to **Investigate** to simply see what they are doing (unless you want to garner special information).

Examples: *Kitsune sneaks up on the nightmarish monstrosity that is attacking the city center; Salamander pretends to be an unassuming window-cleaner when inspected by security guards; Declan L'Estrange tries to cut his bonds without alerting his mercenary captors.*

TAKE THE RISK

When you use your abilities **to perform a daring, risky, dangerous, or outright stupid feat**, roll+power. On a 10+, you do it, somehow. On a 7-9, things get messy. The MC will offer you a hard bargain or an ugly choice.

ACTIONS

CLIMB A SLIPPERY LEDGE • DEFUSE A BOMB • DRIVE THROUGH A MARKET-PLACE • CROSS A SECURITY LASER GRID • SLIDE UNDER A CLOSING GATE • STEP UP TO AN ARMED GANG OF MOBSTERS AND START TALKING • ETC.

Take the Risk applies when your character attempts a feat of daring. The possible outcomes are obvious: it can go smoothly, it can go horribly belly-up, but usually it falls somewhere in between and gets messy, so that you have to sacrifice something just to get out by the skin of your teeth. Unlike **Go Toe to Toe**, **Take the Risk** applies to situations with no clear opposition, and unlike **Face Danger**, your character is not yet faced with a status to resist (although, like in other moves, she might suffer a status if she fails the roll).

On a 7-9, the MC will describe a complication and offer you a choice between two evils. For example, you may succeed in your feat but you must choose between dropping something important you are carrying or taking a status. What your ugly choice may be is open to the MC's interpretation.

If you take a status as a result of this move, the MC rules whether you can use **Face Danger** to avoid it. She can also rule that tags used for **Take the Risk** cannot be used again in a subsequent **Face Danger** move. For example, if you used *Agile* trying to cross a busy highway without being hit and you failed, you may not be able to use *Agile* again to **Face Danger** when a car hits you, but you may use *Tough*.

Examples: *Post-Mortem* climbs a crane to get into a better sniping position; *Mitosis* runs into a building on fire to try to save a kid caught inside; *Flicker* tries to teleport a high-speed bullet out of its course before it hits *L'Estrange*; *Salamander* calmly walks up to a drug lord heavily guarded by armed henchmen.



DOWNTIME

Like in any story, the scenes in your game follow one another in succession, mixing action, drama, and investigation. Sometimes, however, a long period of time passes between two scenes, during which your character could be doing other activities, e.g. working on a project or spending time with loved ones.

In City of Mist, the time characters spend doing their own things has consequences, as reflected in the **Photomontage (Downtime)** move. When you have some downtime in the story, go around the table with each player taking their pick of how their character spends her downtime.

PHOTOMONTAGE [DOWNTIME]

Whenever you have some downtime, choose one way to spend it:

- **Give attention** to one of your Logos themes. Tell everyone at the table how you do it and mark Attention on that theme.
- **Investigate a case.** Tell everyone at the table how you do it. You gain three Clues to use as in the **Investigate** move, based on your investigation.
- **Explore your Mythos.** Tell everyone at the table which Mystery you explore and how you do it. You gain one Clue to use as in the **Investigate** move, based on your investigation. Mark Attention on that Mystery's theme.
- **Prepare for your next activity.** Tell everyone at the table how you prepare and choose one: recover all your burnt tags OR gain 3 Juice to use as in the **Change the Game** move (you can choose from all options).
- **Recover from your last activity.** For each ongoing status still affecting you, the MC will tell you if and how it can be removed during your downtime. The MC can also rule that you partially recover from a status or allow you to reduce it by 1 tier for each relevant tag you have.

The MC can cue into any of the photomontage events and continue them as scenes.

THE CREW

Your character and the other player characters form a **crew**. Perhaps your personal missions overlap, or you find each other's skills useful; maybe you are interested in the same things or share the same questions; or you just seem to constantly bump into each other, mysteriously, and decide to figure out why. Whatever it is, you start the game already knowing each other and having something in common.

You can start using the crew rules from the first session or add them later when you feel comfortable with the basics. When you're ready, choose together what your crew is about from the options in the first chapter (see page 14) or make up your own operation.

THE CREW THEME

Your crew starts with one Logos theme (and therefore, Logos 1) that defines why the characters are working together. Like the characters' Logos themes, the crew theme has an Identity, an Attention track, power tags, and weakness tags.

CREW IDENTITY

The crew Identity is the glue that binds your group. When you act against it, you trigger the **Go Your Own Way** move and weaken your crew.

GO YOUR OWN WAY

When you **act against the Identity of your crew**, the MC will scratch out a crew power tag or, if none remain, remove one crew Attention.

Once you break the influence of the crew Identity, you remain free from it until the end of the scene or until you attempt to break it again in a manner that has greater implications.

CREW POWER AND WEAKNESS TAGS

Any crew member can use the crew's **power tags** to power their moves when the tag directly helps their action. If you do so, scratch that tag

out. A used tag cannot be used again until it is recovered at the end of the session (see below).

Anyone, including the MC, can apply the **weakness tags** to a move made by a crew member, when the tag directly impedes the action. Mark one Attention on the crew theme for each crew weakness tag activated.

CREW ATTENTION

Finally, Attention represents your crew's growing understanding of each other and how to best work together. Your crew receives Attention at the end of each session or when crew weakness tags are used. When your crew theme reaches 3 Attention, choose together an improvement for your crew theme and reset Attention to zero:

- Choose a new power tag
- Remove a weakness tag
- Choose a new Identity for the crew
- Mark crew Evolution. When you reach 5 Evolution, add a new Logos theme for your crew with one power tag and one weakness tag. This represents a brand new aspect of your operation such as a new duty or turf, a hideout or base of operations, a vehicle, etc.

At the end of every session, every crew member can choose one: recover one crew power tag or mark one crew Attention on a crew theme.

SAMPLE CREW THEME

This Starter Set includes four sample crew themes. You can download them at cityofmist.co/download. More crew themes will be included in the full version of the game.

CREW RELATIONSHIPS: ALLY OR THREAT?

The full version of City of Mist will include the **Ally-Threat** rules (originally published in the Alpha ruleset) that bring the relationships between crew members into the limelight. With these rules, each crew member can be either an Ally or a Threat to each one of your themes, creating often conflicting attitudes towards fellow Gateways.



CHARACTER EVOLUTION
MYTHOS & LOGOS

Your character has the seed of a legend inside her, her Mythos. At the same time, she is a person with quirks, desires, and inhibitions reflected in her life choices and situation. This is called her Logos¹.

In City of Mist, the number of Mythos and Logos themes your character has shows the balance of the legendary and the ordinary within her:

- A Gateway with 1 Mythos and 3 Logos is **Touched**. She is closer to the mundane world and that keeps her grounded, but she's always at risk of losing touch with her Mythos.
- A Gateway with 2 Mythos and 2 Logos is a **Borderliner**. She is walking the line between becoming a glorious exemplar of her legend and keeping her ordinary identity.
- A Gateway with 3 Mythos and 1 Logos is a **Legend**. She has almost entirely submitted to the Mythos in her, becoming more powerful but nevertheless still dependent on the one last thing that keeps her human.

MYTHOS IS...

The unknown: questions, doubts, dark places, subconscious, void, a search for a higher or deeper truth, intuition, clues, visions, symbolism, loss of touch with daily life, and specifically the **Mystery** in your character's existence:

- questions your character has about herself and her place in the world
- things your character senses or feels but are inconcrete
- symbolism that fascinates her
- a wish to be more than what she is
- what attracts your character to the edge

LOGOS IS...

The known: answers, convictions, decisions, definitions, values, attachments, habits, clarity, safety, stability, and specifically your character's **Identity**:

- what your character knows about herself
- how your character defines herself
- what's important to your character
- what your character appreciates, values, or loves
- what makes your character feel safe in an unpredictable world

1. Logos as in Jungian psychology, not theology.

MYTHOS MOVES

Being in touch with a Mythos grants you not only miraculous powers but also a glimpse into hidden truths. In a moment of connection, you can learn things from your Mythos that cannot be perceived or known otherwise, not even by using the powers it bestowed upon you. Similarly, by opening your inner gateway as wide as you possibly can, you can unleash your Mythos into the world, but with a price. These Mythos abilities are represented by Mythos moves.

When you are asked to roll+mythos or roll+logos, roll two six-sided dice as in the core moves but add the number of Mythos or Logos themes your character has (instead of your Power). Power tags, weakness tags, and statuses do not apply to Mythos moves.

LOOK BEYOND THE MIST

When you **reach inside to get in touch with your Mythos**, you can feel the truth behind things without even knowing how. Play it out like the **Investigate** move, but roll+mythos instead. On a hit, you get Clues=mythos.

Your character can use her connection with her Mythos to uncannily sense things and receive inexplicable intuitions. When you use this move to investigate, you can get clues that are closer to the true essence of things and less obscured by the mundane appearances of the Mist. However, since these clues are coming from the perspective of your Mythos, they may be difficult to interpret (e.g., visions, gut feelings, sensations) or skewed by your Mythos' relation to the object of your investigation (e.g., attraction, indifference, clash, etc.). They also rarely constitute valid evidence that can be shared with others.

Examples: *Mitosis literally gets a feeling in his gut about the presence of an aggressive micro-organism in the air; Post-Mortem has a dream flashbacking to Helix Labs, where she sees a familiar face; Salamander experiences a strange sensation in his palms when he touches a pool of blood at a crime scene.*

STOP. HOLDING. BACK

When you **use your abilities in a way or scale you've never attempted before**, the MC will choose one stake and write it on a piece of paper, out of sight:

- **You're resisting.**

What you are trying to do comes into conflict with your Identity/Mystery _____. Mark Crack/Fade on its theme.

- **It will burn you out.**

If you do it, mark the burn icon next to all the tags in the theme _____. They're burnt.

- **It will leave a mark.**

If you do it, take a status _____. You cannot avoid it with **Face Danger**.

- **It will change you forever.**

If you do it, you will lose your theme _____.

Then, roll+logos. On a 7-9, you do it and pay the price. On a 10+, you can take a look at the stakes the MC wrote and then choose—do it and pay the price or hold back. On a miss, you lose control over your powers—the MC will say how.

Stop. Holding. Back covers situations where you want to use your character's abilities in some extreme way or in a way that isn't specifically represented by your tags but is generally related to your ability set. This naturally applies to your character's Mythos powers but can also apply in certain cases to mundane abilities taken to the limit.

The move is played like a bet, with the MC setting the stakes. If your character is grounded enough, i.e., has a strong Logos and rolls +10, she can figure out the stakes before choosing whether to open the gateway within. Otherwise, it's a blind decision to go for it and pay the price. Can you bear the cost of unleashing all your power? And what will happen if you lose control?

Example: *Post-Mortem* wants to discharge an Ion-9 blast sphere around her to knock out an army of automatons; *Flicker* wants to go back in time; *Kitsune* wants to mask an entire building with their illusions; *Excalibur* attempts to use her family's fortune to overturn the economical status-quo in the City.

YOUR GATEWAY'S PERSONAL STORY

ATTENTION

Attention represents how much of your character's time, energy, and awareness is invested in a theme. As you play your character in the game, different situations will allow you to mark Attention on your themes:

- You mark Attention on a theme whenever you use one of its weakness tags in a move. This represents what you've learned about this theme by coping with its difficulties, flaws, and setbacks.
- You can mark Attention on a theme during downtime, using the **Photomontage (Downtime)** move (see above).
- You mark Attention on a theme when you choose it over another theme, as shown below under **Make a Hard Choice**.

Once you mark three Attention on a theme, reset it to zero and choose one improvement for that theme:

- Choose a new power tag
- Remove a weakness tag
- Remove one Crack or Fade
- Rephrase the theme's Identity or Mystery (within the theme)

Note that removing a weakness tag makes your character more reliable, but slows her growth as you gain less Attention. If you have a theme with no weakness tags, you can choose to add one weakness tag of your choice at any time.

FUTURE EVOLUTION

In the full version of *City of Mist*, the list of improvements will be expanded to add two more significant options. First, you'll be able to choose special moves from your Themebooks as an improvement. Second, you'll be able to build up Evolution points to instigate a more dramatic change in your character such as switching a theme between Mythos and Logos, enhancing the core moves, or removing a Nemesis (see below).

MAKING HARD CHOICES

As mentioned, your character must explore her **Mysteries** to keep her Mythos themes and maintain her **Identities** to keep her Logos themes. But to be a Gateway through the Mist is to be in constant inner struggle. It is the very nature of the Mist to distract you with the things you care about you when you are about to see the truth. Conversely, your Mythos will appear to you at the most fragile personal moments, trying to shatter the Identities that keep it from emerging into the world. Even when Mythos and Logos are not pitched against each other, events in the story will challenge you to risk and sacrifice your Identities and Mysteries.

MAKE A HARD CHOICE

When you **act against one of your Identities or Mysteries**, mark Crack/Fade on its theme. If you acted for the sake of one of your other Identities/Mysteries, mark Attention on its theme.

This move can be invoked either by you or the MC, when your character attempts to take action that clearly goes against one of her Identities or Mysteries. Going against an Identity could mean your character is acting in a way that conflicts with it or puts at risk something dear to her. Going against a Mystery could mean walking away from an opportunity to discover more about it, such as ignoring a lead, a vision, or an offer.

Merely trying to go against a Mystery/Identity indicates your character is foregoing a part of herself: your Identity cracks or the call of your Mystery fades. You mark Crack/Fade on the relevant theme.

Sometimes, you will face a hard choice between two of your themes' Identities/Mysteries. When you choose one over the other, you mark Crack/Fade on the one you didn't choose. However, you get to mark Attention on the theme you favored.

LOSING A THEME

When you mark the third Crack or Fade box on a theme, you lose it along with all its tags. It could mean your character has actually lost her abilities, that she's unwilling to use them, forgot how to use them, can't access them, etc. However, this loss has freed up some space in your character's life, a space for something new to appear.

When you lose a Mythos theme, you gain a Logos theme instead, and vice versa. Choose a Mystery/Identity, one power tag, and one weakness tag for your new theme. (In the full version of *City of Mist*, you choose a new Themebook).

BECOMING AN AVATAR

If you ever lose your last Logos theme, you do not get a Mythos theme to replace it. Instead, your character becomes an **avatar** of your Mythos, glowing with nothing but its pure legendary power. When you burn tags as an avatar, you don't scratch them out or mark the burn icon (yes, you can burn tags for each and every action you take). This state ends when you choose to end it, when someone reminds your character of the Identity of her last Logos theme in a way that makes you choose it over your Mythos, or any other narrative solution the MC deems appropriate, e.g. your character's comrades find an ancient mystical ritual to banish her.

Your character's avatarhood can end with you either transcending her humanity or being cast down back into the ordinary life. When it ends, you can choose one: your character ascends into her Mythos and is never seen again OR she returns, now or later, as a new Touched character (1 Mythos and 3 Logos themes).

NEMESSES

Lost themes don't just quietly dissipate into the ether. When you lose a theme, it becomes a Nemesis: the shadow of what once was now haunts you. It could be a person or group that holds a grudge against you, a difficult situation that emerged in the aftermath of your theme's collapse, or a crippling feeling you just can't shake off. This Nemesis will continue to plague you until you figure it out and find a way to stop it.

The full version of *City of Mist* will include a section about Nemeses, how they are born, when they appear in the story, and how they can be overcome.

DENYING THE BEYOND

If you ever lose your last Mythos theme, you do not get a Logos theme to replace it. Instead, your character is **denying the beyond**, repressing the mythical so aggressively that no-one can use any Mythos powers in her vicinity or on people and things related to her life. Choose whether your character remembers the world beyond the Mist but pushes it out or is completely unaware and enshrouded in Mist. This state ends when you choose to end it, when someone reminds your character of the Mystery of her last Mythos theme in a way that makes you choose it over your Logos, or any other narrative solution the MC deems appropriate, e.g. your character's comrades finally agree to let her live your life peacefully and forgetfully or your character leaves the City forever.

Denying the beyond can end with your character either living in obliviousness or rediscovering her Mythos in all its glory. When it ends, you can choose one: your character continues her life in mundanity to her last day, OR she returns, now or later, as a Legend character (3 Mythos and 1 Logos).





MASTER OF CEREMONIES RULES
BEYOND THE MIST
When in the role of the Master of Ceremonies, or MC, you are the host, referee, and narrator of the game as well as one of the storytellers.

As a **host**, you prepare the story elements which will be used to create the story, namely **Cases** made of characters, motives, locations, clues, and hazards. During the game, you manage the conversation, allowing different players to take actions with their characters.

As a **referee**, you ensure everyone understands the rules of the game and make some of the final calls about how to use the game system, like tag interpretations.

As a **narrator**, you introduce the elements you prepared as well as improvise new elements to create scenarios that engage the player characters, allowing the story to take place. This does not mean you are the sole storyteller, as you'll soon see.

YOUR AGENDA

City of Mist follows a style of play similar to its spiritual parent, Apocalypse World. Here is a paraphrase of the MC's agenda as described there and what you should keep in mind as overarching principles:

- Make City of Mist feel real and unreal at the same time
- Make the player characters' lives interesting
- Be the player characters' biggest fan
- Play to find out: Be open to discovering what will happen next in the game story, agree to let the players' actions drive the story, and be willing to be surprised by the outcome.

CASES

Cases are the stories of City of Mist. The players' crew is always some kind of an investigative entity; they have questions, as individuals and as a group, so they look for answers. You, as one of the writers of the game story, create the details of the Cases the player characters work on.

Cases in City of Mist mostly start from the mundane and dig into the mythic to some extent, because the mundane in City of Mist is just a cover for what the mythic is really up to. A Case in City of Mist always revolves around a Gateway and a problem that they have or that they cause. Furthermore, this problem is often tied to another, greater Gateway, with a bigger agenda, and so forth.

During the game, the investigation starts from what seems like normal people's problems: someone is missing, a crime has taken place, etc. As the player characters dig into the Case they begin little by little to unravel the threads, first hitting up a relatively weak Gateway or Gateways and gradually working their way up the spider web to the greater legends and their massive secret operations, which usually influence or abuse many Sleepers and/or Gateways. Solving a Case involving a single Gateway could be the subject of a session or two, while exposing the work of an ancient, Avatar-level Gateway could be the theme of an entire story arc or campaign.

Building a Case, therefore, is like a trip down from the mythical to the mundane and then back up:

On the way down, you create the background story that the characters will uncover.

- As a first step, decide what is the **legendary aspect** of the Case. What kind of Mythos is involved and what is its high-level agenda? Perhaps there is more than one Mythos involved.
- Then, choose the **Gateways** of the Mythoi involved. Who are they? How do they promote the agenda of their Mythos, if at all? What are their practical and personal goals?
- Finally, describe **what happened on the streets**: who was murdered, who disappeared, who was paid off, who was put under a spell, and who found out. Now you have a story.

On the way up, you create the trail of breadcrumbs the characters will follow and the obstacles they might face.

- **Write down the clues.** For each step in the Case, write down a few leads that can take the characters there. Write down the locations and/or people who make up the lead. For each of them, write down some actual clues that, if uncovered, will point in the right direction.
- **Write down the Dangers.** Dangers are challenges that the characters face during their investigation. Some of the parties involved may try to interfere with the characters' investigation, subtly or directly, or there could be other hazards the characters must overcome to crack the Case such as a dangerous location, third-party Gateways, etc.

SAMPLE CASES

This Starter Set includes a sample first Case “V is for Viral” and a second, more advanced Case, “Demons in Cross End”. You can download them at cityofmist.co/download.



DANGERS

Dangers in *City of Mist* include any threat to the characters or their investigation. Beyond its narrative aspects of background and motives, a Danger has game elements that define how challenging it is for the characters: **spectrums** and **Danger moves**.

SPECTRUMS

Spectrums represent possible ways to overcome a Danger and how much effort it takes to do so. Most Dangers have one or more ways in which they can be overcome (otherwise it's not much of a game!). For example, a poltergeist could be banished or appeased, so it can have these two spectrums. However, unlike PCs' status spectrums, not all Danger spectrums have six tiers; instead, the number of tiers in a given Danger's spectrum indicates how easy it is to overcome this Danger in this way. For example, a lost and confused poltergeist could require *Banish-3* or *Appease-2* to overcome while an angry poltergeist could require *Banish-4* or *Appease-5* to get rid of.

Dangers take statuses from player characters or other Dangers just like player characters do—they mark them on their relevant spectrums, if any. For example, when a character tries to **Convince** the poltergeist that the crew is not associated with its killer, the MC can rule that the resulting status will be marked on the *Appease* spectrum (the character is trying to reason with the poltergeist, not defeat it). If the angry poltergeist resists the character and therefore takes a status, and if the player chooses to inflict, for example, *Hesitant-3*, this status is added to the *Appease* spectrum, because this hesitation works towards eventually appeasing the poltergeist. The rules given for player characters regarding taking multiple statuses on the same spectrum apply to Dangers as well.

When a Danger's spectrum hits its greatest tier, the Danger is overcome by means of that method. So if the *Appease-5* spectrum of the angry poltergeist hits tier 5, perhaps after much deliberation and telekinetic thrashing, the poltergeist stands down. However, if the characters use mystical means to banish the poltergeist, it would be banished after hitting the 4th tier of the *Banish-4* spectrum.

Note that the difficulty of overcoming a Danger is not just in the number of tiers in a spectrum, but its tag as well. For example, if the characters have no mystical firepower, they would have a hard time banishing even a *Banish-1* poltergeist.

When designing a Danger, choose which ways of overcoming it merit a status spectrum and which are purely narrative. For example, you can decide that banishing the poltergeist requires a spectrum, while appeasing it should be role-played. Spectrums that a Danger doesn't have can indicate immunities or invulnerabilities. For example, the fact the poltergeist doesn't have a *Hurt* spectrum means it's impossible to overcome it by physically hurting it. Remember that you can also add spectrums to Dangers on the fly.

OFF-SPECTRUM STATUSES

A Danger may suffer or gain statuses that do not directly add to any of its original spectrums. For example, the poltergeist can be temporarily *Blinded-2* or *Confused-1*, or it can even be *Enraged-4*. While such statuses do not contribute directly to overcoming the Danger, they can certainly be instrumental in doing so or have a significant impact on the Danger's abilities. Therefore, note down any new statuses the Danger suffers or gains during play.

HOW STATUSES AFFECT DANGERS

Besides determining when a Danger is overcome, statuses can also affect the manner in which a Danger interacts with the player characters or other Dangers. For each status a Danger gains, you can choose one of the following options:

- **This status doesn't affect the Danger's abilities.**
For example, if the crew is fighting a swarm of twenty giant blood-sucking bats and one of the bats gets *Trapped-2*, it may have no effect on the entire swarm's moves.
- **This status helps or impedes others' actions against the Danger.**
You may rule that Danger's status affects player characters' moves against it, instead of the Danger's abilities. For example, if Excalibur managed to inflict *Dazzled-2* on a mobster, you may rule that she can use this status to improve future moves against him. Alternately, if the Legend of the Green Knight (Danger) projects a phantasmal shield and grants himself a status *Shielded-3*, you may

rule that player characters attempting to hit him will treat this as a negative status, weakening their Power for those actions.

- **This status reduces or increases the effectiveness of the Danger's moves.**

For example, if a police officer is *Weakened-1*, it may mean her gunshots will be less accurate and therefore inflict a status of a lower tier than normal. You're free to choose by how much to reduce or increase the effect of a Danger's moves, but as a general rule do not reduce a move's effect by more than the tier of the status and do not increase a move's effect to more than it would be increased if both effect and status were put on the same spectrum, e.g., a status with tier-3 would increase a tier-3 effect to tier-4, not tier-6 (see status spectrums, page 36).

DANGER MOVES

Danger moves represent actions that Dangers can take in the story. Some Danger moves only describe what the Danger might do, without any game effect, while others may have one or more of the following effects:

- Inflict a status (positive or negative, on itself or on others)
- Remove a status (from itself or others)
- Prevent an incoming status (from itself or others)
- Create a new entity with its own spectrum (e.g., as a protective buffer)
- Add a temporary tag
- Scartch out a PC power tags, as if it was burnt
- Custom move

When a Danger move inflicts a status, **the tier represents the worst narrative outcome** of such a move, not the severity of the attack. E.g., if a group of thugs can “Fire their SMGs, spray-and-pray style (*injured-2*)”, the tier-2 of the move does not reflect the damage of a SMG shot; instead, it represents what the thugs can normally achieve firing that weapon the way they do. In the hands of a trained operative, the tier would be higher.

The danger in Danger moves is not just from how high or low their tier is, but also from the narrative implications of their description. A move such as “Fire a homing teleporting armor-piercing arrow (*cut-2*)” can

do a lot of damage because most characters have no tags that can be added to a **Face Danger** move against such an attack.

Custom moves are more specialized moves that can be added to certain Dangers. See the sample Dangers *Proximo* and *Aware Private Investigator* for examples. The full game includes more information on custom moves and how to create them. For now, you can refer to the custom moves chapter in the *Apocalypse World* book.

COLLECTIVES

Dangers that are groups of individual threats are still represented as a single Danger. To reflect the increased firepower and durability of such collectives, simply design them with greater status spectrums and give them stronger Danger moves.

For example, a team of trained field operatives could have moves such as:

- Concentrate fire on a single spot (*Destroyed-4*)
- Tackle multiple individual targets (*Neutralized-2* each)
- Cover each other (remove 2 tiers of harmful tactical statuses)
- Sacrifice an operative to protect the others (remove 2 tiers from incoming attack but take a status *Dwindled-1*)

SAMPLE DANGERS

PROXIMO

Proximo was an expert army demolition man when strange things started happening to him: people would see him several feet away from where he was, sometimes having an entire conversation with him without noticing he wasn't really there. In time, Proximo discovered he could use this ability to displace light to lead people to where he wanted them, often somewhere he had boobytrapped with his custom-made mines. This got him into trouble and he was eventually dishonorably discharged from service. Now he works as a mercenary, fooling the enemies of the highest bidder.

Mythos: Will-O'-The-Wisp

Spectrums: Hurt or restrain 4 , Threaten 2

Moves:

- Project a mirage of himself, using portable speakers to displace sound
- **Misguide (custom move):**
When you try to discover where Proximo is with the **Investigate** move, you cannot use your Clues to ask direct questions such as “Where is he?” or “Is this vision of Proximo really him?”. You must discover where he is using only indirect questions about the scene.
- **Boobytrap (custom move):**
When you try to hit Proximo without having first discovered his real location, you miss and he hits you with a mine of his choice, if he wants.
- Concussive mine (*Disoriented-3*)
- Sleeping gas mine (*Sleepy-4*)
- Adhesive gel mine (*Glued-down-2*)
- Sneak around
- Move athletically around obstacles
- Use a never-before-seen and possibly experimental mine he recently invented
- Sell off his employer to save his skin

AWARE PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

Spectrums: Expose 4 , Seduce 4 , Restrain or Hurt 2

Moves:

- Use an antique trinket to detect unusual powers around her
- Fire a pistol (*Badly-injured-3*)
- **Fishing for information (Candid-3 + custom move):**
For every tier of Candid you take, answer truthfully one question the MC presents to you. The investigator now knows your answers, whether or not your character actually said it.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE OVERFLOW

Spectrums: Contain or re-divert 5 , Neutralize 2

Moves:

- Slowly but surely advance
- Threaten bystanders and crewmates
- Melt down barriers and obstacles (*Burnt-3*)
- Burst, spraying waste everywhere (*Burnt-3*)
- Burst, starting a wave (create Wave with its own spectrum Contain 3)

RUNNING THE GAME

YOU AS THE NARRATOR

When narrating a game of City of Mist, you will be presenting the players with open-ended scenes that include locations, characters, events, and dangers. Some of the scenes will arise from the Case you are running; others – from the actions and choices of the players' characters. The players will respond by describing their character's actions in the scene and making Moves, to which you will respond by describing the outcome and repercussions of their actions. Scene by scene, your shared story will unfold.

City of Mist focuses on creating an engaging and interesting story. Your role as the MC is to use the details of the Case, such as clues and Dangers, as well as improvised details, in ways that will make the story more challenging, stimulating, and ultimately gratifying for the group. You can introduce these details at certain points in the game using MC moves or other game rules.

NARRATION PRINCIPLES

City of Mist has a certain atmosphere to it; mystery, suspense and drama should all come together to create a gritty story about legends in the real world. Running a game is a form of art, but when you run a game of City of Mist, the following principles can help you set the mood:

- Ask provoking questions
- Always describe the atmosphere (weather, lighting, sounds, textures, smells, etc.)
- Emphasize the feeling that nothing is what it seems
- Candidly give information about the character's gut feeling and intuition
- Hint at the mythical forces at play, but never expose them
- Use dramatic locations
- Ask for details on the characters' mundane lives and build on that

- Provide details about non-player characters' mundane lives
- Keep the suspense and tension high:
 - Cut to another parallel occurrence when the tension is highest
 - Introduce complications or move on when the tension is dropping
 - Unravel the ungraspable truth ever so slowly
- Never talk metaphysics in-play; it will break the illusion. When you play a character, do not mention terms like Mist, Mythoi, Gateway, etc. Instead describe the character's vague feelings and perceptions of such phenomena.

POINTS OF INFLUENCE

There are set moments in the game when you can influence the story:

- **When everybody is looking at you, waiting.**
As the MC, one of your jobs is to control the pace of the story by starting and concluding scenes, introducing new threats and complications, describing how Dangers and the environment respond to the player characters, etc. When a sequence of events concludes and a new one should start, the players will look to you to drive the story forward. You can do so by describing new developments, making an MC move, or asking them "What do you do next?"
- **When a player is counting their tags for a move,** you can invoke their weakness tags, if relevant. They get to mark Attention for each weakness tag you invoke.
- **When a player rolls a miss (6 or less).**
A miss indicates something in the player's move went wrong; as the MC, you decide what exactly went wrong and how by applying one of your MC moves.
- **When a player's move stipulates the MC has a choice.**
Some player moves give you partial control over the outcome. For example, when a player rolls 7-9 on **Investigate**, **Sneak Around**, or **Take the Risk**, you choose the complications that arise (sometimes from a list). If a player is using **Convince** on one of your Dangers, you choose whether to do as they say or take the status.

- **When a player foregoes options in a move.**

When players have to choose options in player moves like **Hit With All You've Got** or **Go Toe to Toe**, they always have to forego some of the options. Every option they forego is a potential point of intervention for you. For example, if they forego the defensive option (e.g., “You take cover or secure a superior position...” in **Hit With All You've Got**), you can choose to inflict a status upon them when describing the move resolution. If they forego “There's no collateral damage...” or “You hold the target's attention, if possible.”, you can complicate things by describing the disadvantageous outcome of not controlling the collateral damage or not keeping the target focused on them.

- **Whenever a custom move is triggered.**

When players take actions that trigger one of your custom moves, such as Proximo's **Boobytrap** move, you can intervene and let them know the effects by reading the move to everyone.

- **In between player moves.**

As the story unravels, you can use the pauses between the players' moves to expand on their outcome and add details or complications, depending on the nature of the scene.



YOUR MOVES

The MC moves are different from the player moves—they represent your narrative tools, the ways in which you can make things more interesting for everyone, usually by making things more difficult for the player characters.

Your moves are:

- Present a new obstacle or complication
- Make them sweat for valuable information
- Take away their chance at getting valuable information (e.g., suspect ran away)
- Force them to **Make a Hard Choice** about their Identities or Mysteries (character or crew)
- Throw a status at them and ask them to **Face Danger**
- Inflict a status they can't defend from (no **Face Danger** allowed)
- Give them what they want unexpectedly but reveal the truth of what really happened later
- Tell them how their move goes wrong
- Make a Danger move (page 64) or a custom move

After every move, ask: “What do you do?”

HARD MOVES

Some moves are considered **hard moves**; they represent a negative effect that significantly hurts the player characters. **You should only make hard moves when a player rolls a miss (6 or less) on one of his or her moves.**

What constitutes a hard move depends largely on the details of the move. “Inflict a status they can't defend from” and “Take away their chance at getting valuable information” are usually quite negative for the player characters and are therefore considered hard moves in most cases. However, depending on how debilitating the status you attach to it or how big the complication, even “Throw a status at them and ask them to **Face Danger**” or “Present a new obstacle or complication” can be considered hard moves. While this is open to interpretation,

remember that in order to keep the balance of the game, harsh effects and developments should be dispensed only when a player fails a roll.

SETTING UP THE CHARACTERS' INNER CONFLICT

Mysteries and Identities lie at the heart of the character evolution system of City of Mist. As a narrator, you should aspire to create situations that challenge the characters by giving them reasons to go against their Mysteries and Identities, thereby triggering the **Make a Hard Choice** move. For this purpose, you can use elements from the Case or introduce elements from a character's personal story. As a general rule, you should aspire to have at least one character make a hard choice in every session.

The best way to get a character to go against one of her Mysteries/Identities is to pitch them one against the other. For example, a crime lord that Post-Mortem has hunted down may offer her information about Helix Labs just as she is about to kill him, thereby creating a conflict between her Assassin Identity "Once I mark a target, there is no turning back" and her Helix Labs Mystery "Who did this to me?". She would be forced to embrace one and go against the other.

If you can't seem to trigger a character's Mystery/Identity, simply ask the player to explain how they understand this facet of their character and what would constitute going against it.

The MC Tracking Sheet summarizes all of the pre-generated characters' Mysteries, Identities, and weakness tags, so it's handy during play. It's available at cityofmist.co/download.

CHOOSING THE STAKES FOR STOP. HOLDING. BACK.

The move **Stop. Holding. Back.** allows players to unleash their character's full power in order to instigate a significant change in the story. As the MC, your role in this move is to set the rights stakes for the change the player wishes to bring about.

As a rule, the stakes you set for the move should directly reflect the depth of change the character is going for. The bigger and more

dramatic the change, the higher the price. The list of stakes to choose from is given in the move (page 53).

- If the character is trying to use her powers creatively, but still within their normal power level, the price should be minimal and temporary, e.g., a low-tier status.
- If the character is trying to alter a significant detail in the story, but only partially or temporarily, the price should be significant but reversible, e.g., a high-tier status, burning all tags in a theme, or marking Crack/Fade.
- If the character is trying to permanently change the story, e.g. killing or disempowering an important villain or dramatically changing the state of affairs in the City, the price should be high and possibly permanent, e.g. the loss of a theme or a status that is deadly or very difficult to remove (e.g. *Frozen-6* or *Cursed-3*).

Each type of stake has a story effect that should also be considered:

- **Burning all tags in a theme** should be used when, following an impressive display of her powers, you wish to see the character dealing with challenges using her other abilities.
- **Marking Crack/Fade** should be used when you wish to highlight the personal choice or sacrifice the character has made in unleashing her powers and how it is eroding one of her core aspects.
- **Taking a status** should be used as a mechanical balance, when the character has made a significant progress using **Stop. Holding. Back** and you now want to make things more challenging for her.
- **Losing a theme** should be used when the unleashing of the character's powers comes at the cost of changing her immediately and forever. For example, if Mitosis successfully removed the virus from Vector (the villain in the sample case "*V is for going Viral*"), the virus could merge with him, eating up his cells so fast that his cell growth rate is effectively slowed. He loses the theme "Rapid Cell Growth" immediately. Alternately, if Excalibur uses the bracelet to kill a legend who is also a city politician during a press conference, she becomes a fugitive and loses her family's support, losing the theme "Wealthy and Dysfunctional Family". Losing a theme can result in gaining a new theme, becoming an avatar, or denying the beyond (see Mythos & Logos chapter, page 50).



SAMPLE PLAYTHROUGH

MC: So, it looks like you have enough information on this fella, Lars Erickson, to assume he is behind the attempt to trick you into stealing that crate. What do you do?

Jake (playing Salamander): I think we will head to the Blue Oyster restaurant, where we know he's been hanging out. It's time to confront him.

Dani (playing Flicker): Right. I look forward to figuring out *what* exactly this guy is.

MC: Super. You two take Salamander's City Waterworks Department van and drive down to the light industry district where the Blue Oyster is situated. It's a drab and rainy afternoon. You drive by factories, warehouses, and red-brick office buildings with soot-covered windows. You eventually spot the big sign of the Blue Oyster tucked in a back alley between two factories. It's noisy outside and steam rolls in front of you on the road as you turn into the alleyway.

Dani: Classy!

MC: The restaurant is on the second floor of a converted office building. You take the elevator, which opens up to a small waiting area with a large open double door. There's a hostess standing there with a tablet device. She spots you as soon as you emerge from the elevator. Wafts of seafood and oyster sauce welcome you to the Blue Oyster. Jazz music is heard from within.

Jake: Salamander is a typical heroic male and he's overprotective of Flicker, so he'll say: "Now, watch your step here. We don't know who this guy is, or what's his story. Let me do the talking."

Dani: Flicker just shrugs and pulls out her phone. I'm gonna hang back while Salamander does his thing and try to hack into the hostess's tablet. I'm looking for the name Lars Erickson.

MC: Because you are seeking answers, that would be an **Investigate** move. Which tags are you going to include?

Dani: I have *Computers*, *Network Communications* and *Data Mining*. Hacking is really Flicker's deal. That's three power tags, so a Power of 3. Are we using any weakness tags?

MC: I won't trigger any weakness tags for this roll. Roll away: 2d6 as always and add your Power.

Dani: I rolled a 7, plus 3. That's a 10, so it's in the category of 10+.

MC: Great! The **Investigate** move gives you three Clues which you can spend as you wish. For each clue, ask me any question you want and I will give you a clue about it. You rolled 10+ so there are no complications this time.

Dani: Awesome. So Flicker is hanging back in the waiting area, chewing on gum, and seems to be playing with her phone. She quickly taps into the hostess's tablet and starts running a search on her data. So for my first Clue, I want to ask, *has Lars Erickson been here?*

MC: Very quickly your search yields a recurring reservation for Lars Erickson, daily, at this time. It's for two persons, at the same table every day. In fact, he should be here right now.

Dani: Perfect. I also want to ask *What does he look like?* and *Who is he with?*

MC: You can get a map of the restaurant and figure out where he's sitting. In fact, you can see him through the double door, at the far end of the restaurant. You see a man in his mid-40s, mostly blond with some gray hair on the sides, wearing a gray suit. There's a hulk of a man standing next to him in a black suit, like a waiter or a bodyguard, you're not sure. And of course, you have no way of knowing if this really is Lars Erickson, but that's his table. Salamander, what do you do?

Jake: Still unaware of everything wonder-hacker here has been up to, Salamander walks up to the hostess and asks: "Good afternoon, I'm here to meet my associate Lars Erickson." I wait to see her response.

MC: She flicks through lists on her tablet for a moment and then responds with a fake smile: "I'm sorry, sir, there is no-one under that name here today."

Jake: Huh? I look back at Flicker, confused.

Dani: I nod my head to indicate she's lying.

Jake: I turn back to the hostess and say, "Look, there must have been a mistake. He's supposed to be here. Do you mind if I just pop in for a minute and see if he's inside?"

MC: She moves uneasily. "I'm sorry, sir, but this is a respectable

establishment. Our customers' privacy is important to us."

Jake: We'll see about that. I'm going to try to charm her into letting me in. I've got the tags *Charming* and *Handsome*, if that works.

MC: That works. That's a **Convince** move. You're rolling with two power tags, so your Power is 2.

Jake: I say: "Just a quick look. You'd be helping me out." and I smile my dashing heartthrob smile. I roll a 5. That's a total of 7, so that goes into 7-9.

MC: For **Convince**, you give her a choice: take a status or do as you say. You rolled 7-9, so she can still protect her agenda if she chooses to do as you say. What status would you give her if she refuses? You rolled with a Power of 2, so the tier of this status would be 2 as well.

Jake: Salamander isn't a bad guy. He doesn't want to make her feel bad but he *is* flirting. Let's say, if she resists, it will only make him more appealing and she will take a status of *Soft-spot*-2. It's her choice now whether to help me or not, right?

MC: Yup. She looks you up and down, trying to weigh whether she should even get into this. Then she looks into the restaurant as if looking for her boss. "All right, make it quick. And if anyone asks, tell them you're here to fix the pipes or something." She motions you to get in.

Jake: "Wouldn't be the first time..." I go in.

Dani: I spring up and walk in right after him, blurting: "I'm with him."

MC: The hostess gives you a confused look, but she stands back.

Dani: I quickly fill in Salamander about Erickson as we walk into the restaurant.

MC: Sure. The restaurant is a wide space divided into semi-circular booths facing each other in different angles. The walls and fixtures are decorated with art-deco designs. There is a loud chatter of people talking as they are having their lunch, almost too loud to hear the jazz band playing on the lefthand side. Far on the right, there is a swinging double door with two circular windows next to a hatch where waiters are queueing to pick up trays with steaming dishes. With a napkin tucked in his collar, the person you identified as Lars Erickson is having his meal on his own in one of the farthest booths, which is

slightly elevated and overlooks the restaurant. As you approach, his manservant, who is standing in front of the booth, says something in a low voice and Lars raises his head to look right at you.

Jake: I walk right up to the table.

MC: The manservant blocks your way. You get a closer look at him—he's a six-foot-four walking mass of muscle, with sallow skin, short cropped dark hair and a Roman nose. "You've got the wrong table. Piss off before you get burned."

Jake: Get burned! I chuckle and say: "We'll see who will get burned."

Dani: While the boys are measuring each other up, Flicker steps up. "Lars Erickson, right? We're the team you sent to steal that crate for you. It wasn't easy to find you, you know? You seem to slip people's minds quite easily. Mind telling us what was so important about that crate? And who the hell are you working for?"

MC: If you want answers, it will be an **Investigate** move.

Dani: Nah. For now, I just wait to see how he reacts to being called out.

MC: Okay. You see it in his eyes, he did not expect you to find him, and that confirms a little bit that he is indeed who you think he is. As he's chewing up a morsel of oyster meat, he sets the shell down on the plate—and flips the table over!

Jake: Son of a....

MC: Salamander, you've got other problems to worry about. The manservant's eyes start welling up with something like burning red lava. As he opens his mouth, fumes start rising from his nostrils and his slightly open maw is illuminated by what seems to be lightning and fire down his throat. And, as if that's not enough, his skin starts going very dark and metallic, like wrought iron.

Jake: "What. The hell. Are you?"

MC: Through the cloud of flashing smoke brewing up around his mouth, he says "Vul-can".

Jake: Okay. I light up my nimbus of primordial plasma. This guy is going down.

MC: Upon seeing the firework display of you two, the people at the restaurant start panicking, screaming, hiding behind tables, or running for the door.

Dani: Where is Erickson?

MC: You lost sight of him for just a second as he overturned the big round table. Now, as the table falls over, he's not there anymore.

Dani: Darn. I want to find him so I'm going to **Investigate**. I'll use my expanding senses this time: I got one power tag, *Perfect spatial sense*, so that's a Power of 1. I will try to sense where he is rather than look at where I expect him to be. I roll a 6, so that's 7-9. For my one clue, I want to ask *Where is he?*.

MC: Great. You see him sprinting towards the swinging door of the kitchen, pushing away waiters and customers in his path. You're not quite sure how he got from behind the table to the floor, but he's there. However, at 7-9, I as the MC get to choose a complication from the list. I choose *Your investigation exposes you to danger*. While you are focusing on your spatial sense, Vulcan starts spewing a jet of burning lava at you two. Salamander, you are standing nearby so this affects you too. You can avoid the jet easily enough but if it even just brushes you, it will give you a status of *Nasty-burn-2*. You both get to roll **Face Danger**.

Dani: Yikes! I'm going to use *Super speed* and *Act just before it happens* to get out of the way. I roll a 6 plus a Power of 2. That's an 8! So at 7-9, I take the status but with one tier down.

MC: Indeed. So it will be tier 1 instead of 2. Grab a status spectrum card and put down *Itchy-burn-1*.

Jake: I'm going to use *Plasma Barrier* and *Dodge*.

MC: I don't see how you can use both. Are you blocking or dodging?

Jake: Good point. Can I say I leap out of the way and use the barrier to deflect any nearby heat?

MC: That sounds feasible, in this case. You got two power tags then.

Jake: Awesome. I rolled an 11! So a total of 13. That's 10+. According to the move, I don't get hit at all and I take no status. I'd say Salamander is used to being around fire so he pivots, using footwork to avoid Vulcan's jet while using his hands to manipulate the plasma to deflect the heat.

MC: Nice! What do you do next?

Jake: I'm going to destroy this guy. Just as I turn, I fling half a dozen burning whips out of my nimbus right at him and at the same time I

lunge at him, trying to knock him back. That's **Hit With All You've Got**, I presume? I'll put in *Burning whips* and *Brawl* for a Power of 2.

MC: Unfortunately for you, all this fire has dried up the air quite badly. I'm invoking your weakness tag, *Weaker in dry conditions*. This gives you -1 Power but you also get to mark 1 Attention on this theme.

Jake: I guess my nimbus is guttering out in this dryness. So I roll with a Power of 1 then, instead of 2. I roll an 8, for a total of 9. So, I can choose one option out of the list. I choose to *Get him good* and bump up the tier of the status I inflict by 1. The base tier is the same as my Power, which is 1, so I do a tier-2 status, let's say *Disoriented*-2.

The MC looks at the stats for Vulcan. He has a Hurt status spectrum of 4, which means he will go down if he takes a tier 4 status of physical injury. However, he also has a Danger move, Metal skin, allowing him to reduce the tier of incoming statuses of physical harm by 1.

MC: You hit him hard. He keels over and falls on his back, making a loud din like an empty cauldron, but it doesn't have the effect you expected—he seems surprised but not quite disoriented. He takes a *Dizzy*-1 status instead. As he gets up to his feet, you see several burn holes in his suit where your burning whips got him. Underneath, the black metal turned red-hot. Flicker, Lars is putting serious distance between his scorched manservant and himself. He's almost to the door—what do you do?

Dani: I dash after Lars! I want to speed up ahead of him and catch his foot like a baseball using my space-time bending so he trips over. I'll use *Super speed* and *Good catcher* for that, for a Power of 2.

MC: Since this is a competition between you two, you'll be **Going Toe to Toe**. However, you do have an *Itchy-burn*-1 status that is bugging you when you run... That will take its tier off your Power, so that's -1 Power for a total Power of 1.

Dani: Sure. I roll a 6 - so that's a 7. On 7-9, I choose one of three: reach my goal—that's to trip him, I guess—protect myself, or give him a status. I choose the first: Flicker zips up to where he's about to pass through the door and trips him!

MC: Ouch! Mr. Erickson comes crashing through the swinging kitchen door and slips on the greasy floor of the kitchen. He lands flat on his face but he quickly rolls over his back and stares at you with a cold

icy stare. Since you did not choose to protect yourself, he will throw a status at you. He fumbles in his suit jacket and produces a crooked wooden stick and points it at you. For a moment, it looks rather ridiculous and seems to have no effect. But the more you look at it, the more you feel like you're not sure if he's actually Lars Erickson. In fact, you don't know who this man is and what you came here for. You are about to be hit by the status *Forgetful-3*.

Dani: No way! He's a Gatekeeper! Okay, but my character doesn't know this. She's just, like, "Get out of my head!" Can I use my tag *Free thinker* to resist it? I also have a status of *Itchy-burn-1*.

MC: *Free thinker* sounds very appropriate! But I don't think the burn is relevant, so ignore it.

Dani: Okay, I roll **Face Danger** to resist this status with a Power of 1. Oh no! I roll a 3, so that's a 4, which is 6 or less. I take the full status of *Forgetful-3*... Jake, hand me another status spectrum card, please.

MC: That's right. You struggle to remember who this man is and why you are after him, but it's slipping your mind. Any actions trying to catch him from now on will incur -3 to your Power.

Dani: "Salamander! Help!"

MC: He's got his own problems...

Jake: I don't like where this is going. I need to take this Vulcan dude down so I can help Flicker. I want to **Change the Game** so that things are in my favor. There's a sprinkler system in this restaurant, right? I'm going to heat up the sprinklers and turn it on. I use *Burning Whips* again but the conditions are still dry so I will invoke my own weakness tag again and take the Attention. I have a power of zero then. I rolled a 10!

MC: Lucky! At 10+, you get a minimum of 2 Juice. You can spend your Juice on creating tags and conditions or removing them. Normally, it's *temporary* so it works for one action only, but since you rolled 10+ you can spend some Juice to make it *ongoing*.

Jake: That's it—I want to add the tag *Soaked* to the restaurant and make it ongoing. That's my 2 Juice spent.

MC: The screams of panic are muffled by the heavy shower unleashed from the sprinklers, and now everyone who was still hiding heads for the door, leaving the place abandoned. You feel relief as you become

drenched in water. You and Vulcan face each other off in a ring of charred carpet and scorched furniture. He towers over you, and a loud rumble from his belly lets you know he is about to spew hell out. However, the he is not as accustomed to water running down his face as you are, so you have an opening.

Jake: Time to take him out. I concentrate my Burning whips into a single, focused blast. I'm going to **burn a tag** for this. Bye bye, *Burning whips*, I'm scratching you out. So I don't have to roll and I get a Power of 3 and a roll of 10. This is a **Hit With All You've Got** move, of course. At 10+, I get to choose two options. First, I choose to *Get him good*, for +1 tier. I start with the base tier of my Power 3, so that final tier is 4. Let's say *Blasted-to-smithereens-4*. Second, I choose to gain an advantage and get Juice like in **Change the Game**, and I give him a temporary status of *Molten-1*.

MC: Wow! In this case, I will rule that the *Molten-1* status prevents him from reducing your status from 4 to 3. He takes the full power of your concentrated blast and his metal skin turns white-hot and starts dripping off him to the floor. Unable to resist, he gets knocked back into the wall, and drops to the floor unconscious.

The MC reviews Vulcan's stats. He has already taken a tier 1 status on the Hurt 4 status spectrum. Because the new tier 4 status is greater, it will supercede the tier 1 status. At tier 4, this spectrum has maxed out, which means this Danger is vanquished. However, Vulcan has a custom move...

MC: However, this Danger has a custom move, that reads as follows: *When you defeat Vulcan, if you broke his metal skin in any significant way, he erupts like a volcano.*

Jake: Whaaaaaaat?! I'd say I broke it in a significant way all right!

MC: You start hearing a rumble from the limp body of the manservant. Fumes start rising where you broke his metal hide and his normal skin underneath seems translucent, glowing in orange-red as it starts swelling... Flicker, in the kitchen, the sprinklers are on and the neon light is flickering and flashing. Lars Erickson gets up to his feet and looks at you warily to see what you'd do. He's still holding that crooked wooden stick.

Dani: I'm losing touch with what I need from him, so I'm gonna fake it. I'll try to distract him with chit-chat while I grab this stick he's holding. That's another **Go Toe to Toe**, but I'm going to **burn** my

Sarcastic remarks tag. I get a Power of 3 and a total roll of 10. Do my statuses apply here?

MC: They do. I would say both the *Itchy-burn-1* and the *Forgetful-3* will get in the way of you trying to act cool, but only the one with the higher tier applies. You have -3 then, so it's like you rolled 7 with a Power of zero.

Dani: That's cool, so I choose to achieve my goal and snatch his stick. I say: "That mojo you're trying to work on me, old man, that ain't working. I guess your crooked stick is not what it used to be, huh?"

MC: He lowers the stick for a moment, just in time for you to super speed it out of him. However, once again you did not choose to protect yourself. You have the stick, but he was able to wiggle it one more time before you snatched it. Roll **Face Danger** against another *Forgetful-3*.

Dani: Yeah, I figured as much. I use *Free Thinker* again but the existing status is -3, so I have a power of -2. Dang it! I rolled an 8 for a total of 6. I'm in trouble! I take the full status of *Forgetful-3*. That's on the same spectrum as my existing *Forgetful-3*, so I mark 3 more boxes on the Same spectrum card, right? That brings me to tier 4.

MC: So you are now *Oblivious-4*. You have nothing but a vague recollection of why you are chasing this man. If you reach tier 5, you will forget completely.

Dani: Flicker stutters, "Who... who are you?"

MC: "It doesn't matter," says Erickson in a deep calm voice amidst sprinkler rain and flickering neons, "I'm here to tell you about a very serious event in the future of our City. An event that you have seen in your visions. I'm here to tell you about the Riot."

Dani: Oh no! He's activating my **Mystery**! My character wants to know "What is the Riot?"

MC: At this point a massive explosion erupts in the restaurant, knocking all of you off your feet. Flames seem to engulf everything and Flicker, when you regain your bearings you see spatter of lava-like substance dripping on the circular glass windows of the swinging doors, melting the glass as it runs down. In the chaos around you, you see Lars Erickson heading to the back exit. "Let's get out of here and I will tell you what I know about the Riot." While you can't remember who this guy is, you do remember your friend is in that inferno in the

restaurant and may need your help. What do you do?

Dani: That definitely qualifies as a hard choice. What to do? I really want to know what information he has and I don't suspect him much more than the usual because I almost completely forgot why I'm after him. On the other hand, I'm not going to let my buddy die.

Jake: I'm not dead yet!

Dani: Yeah, but Flicker doesn't know it. To hell with it, I'm gonna go against the Mystery and try to save Salamander. That's **Making a Hard Choice**, I guess. She takes a big breath, sighs, and says, "I have to help my friend." She's about to turn her back on Lars and go through the swinging door.

MC: Great. You mark **Fade** to indicate you acted against your Mystery.

Dani: However... before I go, I want to make one final attempt to stop this man. I barely remember who is and why I am doing it, but something deep inside me tells me he is not to be trusted. I guess I can find plastic wrap in the kitchen? I'm going to restrain him with that by wrapping it around him at super speed. **Hit With All You've Got** requires a clear shot – do I have it?

MC: Yes, he seems to think you'll be rushing to help your friend first.

Jake: Oh, really? Why would he think that? Ha ha.

Dani: Shush! I'll get to that, I'm super fast. Great, so I have a Power of 3 from *Super speed*, *Good catcher*, and *Act Just Before it Happens*, but my *Oblivious*-4 status brings it down to -1. Oh no, I rolled a 5. Eek! Six or less.

For all core moves (except Face Danger), on a 6 or less, the MC gets to make his own move. He scans the MC moves list and chooses "Take away their chance at getting valuable information," which seems apt.

MC: You're super fast, but the Mist is faster. By the time you make it to the plastic wrap on the stainless steel worktop, you forget why you even picked it up. A man in a grey suit who you've never seen before stands at the back exit looking rather edgy. He blurts out, "the restaurant is going to collapse, your friend is in trouble!" just before he bolts through the door and disappears.

Dani: Shucks. I'm running to help Salamander.

MC: We're going to cut it here, saying you both narrowly escaped the burning building thanks to Flicker's sacrifice. The fire fighters, police,

and several ambulances arrive at the scene. If you hang around long enough, you'd hear the customers give reports of what happened to cops going around. Some of them mention you, Salamander, as either the person who started the fire or the person who helped put it out by holding a torch burner to the sprinkler system. None of them, however, mention Lars Erickson. If you have no further business here, it's time for your **Photomontage (Downtime)** moves.

Jake: Awesome! I will spend the afternoon swimming in the deep parts of the park lake, where I go to contemplate the Salamander within me. I choose to spend my time *exploring my Mythos*, so I get one more Attention on my nimbus theme. That brings me up to three, so I can buy an improvement! I think the new power tag *Heat resistance* seems very appropriate!

MC: Fantastic. You also get to ask a question about your Mythos as in **Investigate**.

Jake: My **Mystery** is "How can fire and water be one?". I guess Vulcan was fire manifest. Maybe if I find others like him, they can lead me to some answers about the fire aspect of my question. So my question is "Where can I find more people with fire powers?"

MC: That's an interesting direction. I'd say that during your contemplation in the park lake you start feeling traces of intense heat coming from a specific point in town, and when you follow that you reach the metalworks factory. You can investigate that further next time. What about Flicker's downtime?

Dani: Flicker will spend the afternoon at her apartment, on the sofa with a mug of hot chocolate, fiddling with the stick she snatched from Lars. I choose the option *recover from my last activity*. Can I recover from all my statuses?

MC: You sure can.

Dani: Cool, so Flicker treated that burn and that's fine, but as she is sitting on the sofa playing with that—I guess it's a wand?—she suddenly stops and whispers to herself:

"I remember. I remember everything."

MC: To be continued!



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