

OUROBOROS

— AGE OF DROWNING —



— QUICKSTART —

by
ASHIRION
GAMES



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CREDITS

Ouroboros: Age of Drowning began as a personal project and slowly grew into a world of mysteries, shared discoveries, and surreal-fiction.

This work has been assembled over many years through research, revision, and generous playtesting. My gratitude goes to everyone who lent their time, curiosity, and criticism throughout its making.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book introduces the world and game system of Ouroboros: Age of Drowning, teaching its setting and core mechanics while providing everything needed to play a complete introductory adventure.

Throughout the book, **Bold Capitalized Terms** mark important concepts, organizations, places, and rules explained later or in the Appendix: Glossary.

The chapters are designed to be read in order. You will first learn about the world and its history, then the League and its members, followed by the core rules. The book concludes with a complete adventure introducing investigation, Dream horror, surreal fiction, and the supernatural mysteries at the heart of Ouroboros: Age of Drowning.

The pregenerated characters demonstrate the game's core mechanics in play. Their Traits, Specializations, Focuses, Abilities, Motivations, Darkness, and other elements are already defined. Character creation and advancement are not covered in this Quickstart.

After the adventure, additional story hooks let you continue the League's story or explore Secrets revealed during play. The Appendix provides tools for creating your own missions, including adversaries, weather and Aetherika tables, equipment, and a glossary of key terms.

By the end, you should understand the world, the rules, and the style of stories Ouroboros: Age of Drowning is designed to tell.

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Three for Twenty

Astra leaned against the gondola's rail, the wind carrying up the smell of wet earth and woodsmoke as the airship banked south over the last stretch of open marsh. Below her, the canals of the Shallows unrolled in every state of disrepair. Here was a rare find: a sluice gate holding steady water level, with rice paddies catching the morning light; a mile on, the same network lost to silt where nobody had touched the valves in years.

"Keshin Hollow can afford maintenance," Artefis said, pointing down at the working paddies. "Ezkam, further east, can't. You'll see the difference from up here, half their fields flood every spring because the gears haven't been replaced since before the Drowning."

"And Harper Hydraulics won't send more than three surveyors for the whole Kommonwealth," Torrenti said. "Three, for twenty city-states."

"Three, because that's what the Magistrate pays for. The tribute goes north. What comes back in the south is the leftovers." Artefis said, biting her lip.

They followed the air currents and changed course to the north. The shade of the gondola's balloon gave them cover from the ruthless sun. By afternoon, Aldorf came into view, a manor on a low rise where forest thinned into marsh, its stone walls patched with metal fencing, windmill sails broken and still over fallow fields. The road leading to it ran straight and empty; no caravan moved on it. The scrub country to the north belonged to bandits now — nobody had driven them off it, and they were slowly moving into the settlement like parasites.

"It's not a fortunate place," Astra said.

"Few in the Kommonwealth are," Artefis said. "House

Dorfas has held it three generations without a single new ally worthy of naming. Trade routes that used to run through here go around it now."

The gondola climbed to two thousand feet as the marsh ended beneath them, the wetland's brown and green giving way to solid rocky mountains. Night took them and they started doing shifts in order to keep the airship operating and also get some rest.

Astra noticed faint streaks of light moving against the wind. The compass needle started spinning wildly. Then stars wheeled overhead. Torrenti loosened his grip on the helm and let the airship ride the Aether Surge. Astra spoke but no voice came out. Her lips formed a single word: "Aetherika". Torrenti only nodded, his eyes never left the chronometer. Ten seconds. Thirty. A minute. By one minute and twenty seconds, the eastern horizon had begun to brighten and sound returned as the surge passed them.

Once they regained their cool, they saw they were already north of the Kavestos riverbanks. The surge had carried them farther than any favorable wind could have managed. Here the land rose clean out of the Shallows, and the railway line appeared first — a straight black scar cutting toward the horizon, embankments packed high enough that no flood the Shallows ever saw would trouble it. Artefis emerged from below, rubbing sleep from her eyes. She had slept through the surge, as most people did. The others didn't bother explaining to her.

"Kavesta by evening, I missed them Clockworks gear-butts," Artefis said, watching the domes ahead catch the light like giant fishbowls rising from the Vantage.

"One minute for one night," Astra murmured.

Torrenti slipped the chronometer back into his pocket and smiled.

"A better rate than three for twenty."



“From the Aether skies above, the Heavens fall, crushing on the land.
The primal waters rising up, as by a cursed hand.
The skies revolt, the earth bellows & mankind holds its breath.

—Fire Omens, the Crooked Path

Introduction

What is Ouroboros: Age of Drowning?

Ouroboros: Age of Drowning is a narrative-driven TTRPG set in a fictional world with mystical, steampunk, and surreal themes.

You play members of Leagues who investigate mysteries, recover forbidden knowledge, navigate dangerous places, and uncover truths that the status quo would rather remain buried.

WHAT IS A TABLETOP ROLEPLAYING GAME?

In a tabletop roleplaying game (TTRPG), you and your friends tell a story together. One person—the Game Master (GM)—describes the world, plays supporting characters, and presents challenges. Everyone else plays a character in that world, making decisions and rolling dice

to determine outcomes. There's no winning or losing, just the story you create together and the choices that shape it.

NARRATIVE DRIVEN

A Narrative-driven game puts story and characters at the center of play. The Game Master frames scenes, sets stakes, and responds to player choices with consequences that matter. Players can pursue their characters' goals, make meaningful decisions, and shape where the story goes.

The GM is a storyteller and a guide, not an adversary. Dice resolve moments of tension and uncertainty — investigations, confrontations and other dangerous undertakings. When the outcome is uncertain and the stakes are high, roll the dice. When the story needs room to breathe, characters to talk, decisions to be made, the table takes over.

WHAT DEFINES OUROBOROS?

Set in a fictional dystopian world after a climatic catastrophe caused by the **MeteorFall**, Ouroboros explores mystery, forbidden Alchemy, and horror through investigation. Secrecy and intrigue subvert the strict rules of the technocratic **Clockwork Faction** that was formed by the former rulers who wanted to maintain the **New Order**.

What is this world?

“The MeteorFall fractured reality. The decades that followed brought apocalyptic storms and rising seas known as the Drowning. The West sank beneath the tides and all mankind clings to high ground: the wealthy protected inside Domed Cities, while everyone else is sprawled in the Shallows”

— Astra Clover, *Society of the Compass*

THE DROWNING

A century ago, the MeteorFall fractured reality. Earthquakes, tornadoes, storms, and continuous rain caused the water levels to rise. The two continents, **Mazhadara** to the west and **Kaldren** to the east, were devastated. The rains did not stop. The western continent eventually sank, leaving behind a ravaged archipelago with scarce resources. Those who survived fled east, carrying grief, debt, and memories of their former lives.

What followed became collectively known as the **Drowning**: a century of worsening storms, rising seas, and an unstable climate filled with bizarre phenomena that made life unpredictable. The remaining civilization organized itself around survival and power, forming the New Order, a political structure that divided the remaining dry lands according to aristocracy and resources.

THE MAGISTRATE

The Vantage, known as “The High Valleys” of Kaldren, is a continental high ground that serves as the home of the **Magistrate**. This aristocratic assembly comprises of noble families with deep roots in the **Divine Kingdom of Nibu**, along with smaller houses of courtiers, servants, and artisans. The population is diverse, primarily consisting of Nibu and **Agolian** people, with minorities of **Nebrongas** and **Igun**.

The Magistrate is led by seven Grand Magisters, who include the Nibu **Apostates**, the Nebrongan Matriarch, and the Agolian Governor, Erkaag. Together with the Dragon Empire of the **Gorthai**, the Magistrate provides funding for the Clockwork Faction, the foremost group promoting industrial progress and technological advancement. The Clockwork Faction is actively working on the construction of Domed Cities, aiming to protect humanity from the Drowning and to create secure, self-sufficient havens that

are safe from environmental threats.

THE DOMED CITIES

When the Drowning would not stop, the Clockwork Faction built the O.R.B.S. (Order Restored by Sovereigns) across the Vantage: Domed Cities of glass, steel, and brass sheltering the **Gentry** like Arks. The Gentry are the Magistrate’s privileged citizens: nobility, clergy, descendants of knightly houses, wealthy bourgeoisie, and budding industrialists. Within the Gentry, class and status operate with mechanical precision.

The Clockwork Faction presents itself as civilization’s last defense: rational, ordered, and technological. The Domed Cities gleam with that promise. Those desperate for the safety of the Domes look away from the harsh reality beyond them, preserving their virtue by remaining oblivious to the harder life outside.

KOMMONWEALTH

Beyond the Domes lies the **Kommonwealth**, an alliance of remaining city-states scattered throughout the Shallows. Together with the Magistrate and the Clockwork Faction, it forms what has come to be called the New Order—the political structure that has governed since the early days of the Drowning. In exchange for protection, technology, and limited support from the Clockwork Faction, each Kommonwealth city-state pays tribute to sustain the order it belongs to.

Yet life in the Shallows bears little resemblance to that within the Domes. **Dispossessed** immigrants, struggling peasants, and lesser noble houses with their cohorts endure flooding, failing infrastructure, banditry, slavery, and violent storms. People disappear with unsettling regularity, breeding resentment as much as superstition.

Old rites persist, and the arrival of dispossessed immigrants has only hardened them, making old families cling to their ways and keep outsiders at a distance. Folklore is treated as fact because it gives people something to believe in and something against which to guard themselves. The alternative is to abandon these rites, turn to science and technology, and accept the Clockwork Faction’s propaganda: that the world simply came apart, and that **Alchemy** alone doomed humanity in the Age of Drowning.

WATER IS DANGER

The eastern continent of Kaldren suffered fewer losses than the western continent of Mazhadara that sank, since the Drowning began. Most of the Old Kingdoms of Kaldren have turned into wetlands, the Shallows. Among its native inhabitants who have remained the Nibu, the Gorthai, and other lowland tribes, there are collective folklore stories about the dangers in the water; spirits that pull the unwary under, creatures in riverbeds, swamps that swallow anything that enters in a trove of submerged mess.

Since the Drowning pushed western survivors into the already-flooded eastern lands, new bodies joined old lands and a hysteria of superstition flared up. The oldest local folklore and magical thinking hold to be most accurate in the Shallows. The wetlands have been dangerous for far too long; weird happenings, such as weather phenomena or shifting landscapes, hinder the plans of the Faction for expansion in the Shallows and their ambitions to overcome the Drowning.

VICTORIAN HORROR

The Clockwork Faction blamed Alchemy as the cause for the MeteorFall and branded it the Taboo Art. This divide of polar opposites, caused by the Clockwork propaganda, has made Alchemy go quiet and even hide in plain sight.

The Clockwork Faction proclaims a New Order built on reason, industry, and measurable truth. Publicly, the Gentry embrace that ideal, denouncing Alchemy and the occult as relics of a catastrophic darker age. Privately, many cannot resist what they condemn. Nobles gather behind closed doors for séances, hoping a Medium might summon an ancestor to settle disputes of heraldry, inheritance, or bloodline. The ladies of respectable society consult fortune-tellers and horoscope matchmakers, while fashionable Mentalists hypnotize their patrons to recover forgotten dreams, expose hidden memories, or bend their will into curious performances.

The upper class fears the metaphysical as much as it adores it. Such indulgences remain acceptable only while they remain secrets. Once exposed, fascination becomes scandalous, which leads to disrepute or even exile. Those who can no longer maintain the appearances of rational virtues find themselves cast from respectable society to the fringes, where superstition is out in the open and one's mental integrity is disputed.

The horror in Ouroboros grows from within civilization:

carried in old rites, half-believed superstitions, and the traditions people trust more than the Faction's official word. Beneath the surface of daily life, those marks and divides remain.

THE OLD WAYS

Before the Drowning, alchemical traditions existed that understood the world in its totality. They did not separate the physical from the spiritual or the living from the dead. The Drowning shattered these mystical institutions. Survival required allegiance to the Clockwork Faction and most traditions fractured under that pressure. Practitioners went underground. Knowledge was hidden in coded texts, in craft disguised as mundane work, in folklore preserving the shape of traditions in symbolic myths with fragments of Truth without naming it directly.

Pre-Drowning texts and relics are now among the most sought after things in the known world. The Clockwork Faction wants them suppressed, the scattered Mystical Orders want them recovered, and Leagues like yours seek them because old knowledge fills the gaps left by the official history.

REALITY IS A LIE

Leagues recover forgotten journals, symbols, and relics from before the Drowning. Piece by piece, they uncover fragments of an older understanding of the world; one that contradicts the Clockwork Manifesto. What those traditions preserved is unsettling: Reality itself is neither fixed nor entirely true.

In remote places, at the edges of sleep and reason, the world reveals itself differently than the Faction's textbooks describe. Dreamscapes exist, spaces where collective fear and trauma become physically manifest. Spirits cross over. Folklore creatures carry truths older than science.

The uncanny is the signature of this bleeding through from some other place beyond reality; something familiar that has shifted just enough to feel somewhat surreal or alien. **Surreality** accumulates into peculiar circumstances and into unfathomable terrain but in subtle ways that might not be noticed by those who are not curious enough. A dream visitor appears in reality, or a doorway to a basement leads you to a vision about tomorrow.

Such phenomena are called **Aetherika** and may range from personal experiences to climate disturbances, or the very way the known laws of reality work. The more your League

investigates, the more it understands that reality is subjective and fragile.

AETHER & THE OTHERWORLD

Aether is the element that moves through everything, the current that carries Reality and this other place, the Otherworld, against one another, thinning and thickening the boundary between them without ever fully dissolving it. Most people never notice it. Those trained in meditation, old ritual, or Alchemy learn to sense it directly: as an aura clinging to a person, as ectoplasm gathering in a room, as a pressure in the air before something shifts. The Clockwork Faction calls this superstition, while ancient traditions call it universal awareness.

Where Aether runs thick, the Otherworld presses closest, and Reality starts to give. These are zones of Surreality, places where the fixed rules of the physical world go soft: a room larger inside than out, a path through the woods that changes with your mood, silver that burns in thin air as if touching something intangible.

At its strongest, Surreality opens into a Dreamscape, a space thick enough with the Otherworld's presence that it becomes almost a place in its own right. Here, spirits and old fears take on shape and weight, and the line between what's real and what's only believed doesn't matter anymore. To enter a Dreamscape is to stand where Reality and the Otherworld overlap most completely, making you vulnerable to the supernatural threats.

ALCHEMY & THE WORK

Alchemy is the hidden grammar of the world, a forbidden practice present in every experiment that went too far, in every tradition the New Order buried, in every truth that survived the Drowning in code and symbol.

The Alchemists called their pursuit the Great Work — the Magnum Opus. Seven operations transforming matter and practitioner alike. Each stage is irreversible. To practice Alchemy is to change what you are in the process of changing what you work with.

They draw power from the Aether, the force connecting physical, mental, and spiritual existence, manipulating it through ritual practice to achieve that which is beyond real.

To do so, they need to step away from their identity and become a conduit for channeling Aether. The practitioners

need to embrace the darkness of the unconscious and lean into it, silencing their minds. In the process something comes along that did not exist before. This unconscious part is called **Shadow** and enough accumulation of it can corrupt the practitioner.

What they bring forth this way has taken many forms across the Magnum Opus's history. Alchemical myths and wonders include: longevity elixirs, transmuted gold, grafted beings, immortality, artificial life and mind over matter.



THE TABOO ART

Alchemy is branded the Taboo Art because it is believed that Alchemists worked with otherworldly entities beyond the horizon to accelerate the Natural Opus—until greed corrupted their practice. The release of the **Emerald Tablet**'s energies summoned something celestial. A decade later, the Meteor came.

Thus Alchemy is outlawed because it destabilizes reality's boundaries, invites Otherworld intrusion, and corrupts practitioners through Shadow accumulation. The Clockwork Faction suppresses it to maintain order and economic control. But the Taboo Art survives in secret societies, disguised as everyday craft, communicated through coded symbols. To practice Alchemy is to bear the Shadow of your tradition and your predecessors—to transform matter, nature, and self simultaneously.

Who are you playing?

"To cling to any form of Reality is Insanity"
-Shirad, Igun Survivor of the MeteorFall

ADVENTURES AND CHARACTERS

You play members of a League — bound by contract, oath, or necessity, sent where others won't go. Your work takes you through investigating mysteries, navigating political intrigue, exploring hazardous places with steampunk apparatuses, and dreamwalking into immersive Dreamscapes.

Leagues formed to survive the ongoing Drowning and pursue what others cannot acknowledge. You investigate strange phenomena, abandoned places, disappearances no one can explain, secrets hidden by those in power. Your benefactor funds these expeditions and expects results: artifacts recovered, intelligence gathered, truths brought to light.

Every truth you uncover changes you, and every League decides for itself what is the worth of this truth. Will you serve the Clockwork Faction's regimen, the Mystical Orders' old knowledge, or only your League's goals and interests?

LEAGUES AND AMBITION

There are many leagues after the Drowning that have succeeded in establishing themselves as part of the New Order. Through affiliations with institutions and the pioneering companies of this alternative industrial era, many Leagues claim to have eyes all over the world, or simply put, their fingers in many pies.

Their benefactors aim to secure resources to further their research and goals, all while making the right strategic maneuvers to stay relevant within the troubled political landscape of the Age of Drowning. Your League should be careful about how to handle missions and their backlash in the long run in order to fulfil your ambitions.

Notable Leagues include Brass Fathom, the Society of the Compass, the Salt Accord, and the Club Crescent. Some Leagues choose to operate only within the Vantage while others are bold enough to explore the Shallows and beyond into the pre-Drowning, submerged parts of the world.

INFLUENCE AND PULLING STRINGS

A League's influence determines the resources it can secure and the missions it can undertake. Getting the right people and equipment for the job is often as important as having the right skills.

A benefactor provides the social and economic support needed to keep the League operating, while individual members bring their own connections and favors. This is why Leagues recruit people from different backgrounds: every member brings something useful to the table.

Sometimes a benefactor takes someone under their wing for reasons that are not immediately clear. Such protection may prove valuable—or create expectations later, when the League is asked to cross the boundaries of law, tradition, or morality.

TRANSGRESSION AND TEAMWORK

You play specialists bound by shared purpose, operating where the Clockwork Faction's authority grows thin. You pursue what the official version leaves unacknowledged, go where none dare to go and read between the lines.

This requires transgression. Going beyond what is permitted. Every character carries a Darkness, a specific pull toward the choices that cost the most. The world opens itself to those willing to look deeply within themselves.

It also requires teamwork. Each character brings to the table something different. The League succeeds as a unit, sharing the weight of what they find and using it toward their shared purpose. Knowledge, influence, survival, the truth about Alchemy. By taking risks together, the League shapes what it becomes and what its members are willing to sacrifice.



“Grandfields of yore, left not a spore
still fields blossom anew,
but no light’s grace upon the leaves
on every morning’s dew

—Circadia Gone, *Celestial Agriculture*

League of Dorfas

YOUR LEAGUE

You are the League of House Dorfas, sponsored by a noble house on the brink of ruin in the remote settlement of Aldorf. Your ties run deeper than contract: oaths sworn, debts owed, loyalties earned.

Lord Dorfas expects results, expertise and discretion. Some tasks are straightforward: escort a dignitary, deliver correspondence. Others are about gathering intelligence, obtaining curios, recovering knowledge from pre-Drowning texts while searching for allies in neighbouring lands. Aldorf is isolated, threatened by slavers and bandits, and far from the Clockwork Faction’s protection. The League’s fate and your patron’s survival are bound together.

Not every task is so straightforward. Lord Dorfas may need a frightened defector walked safely through bandit-held roads, or to send the League into a Dreamscape to pull back something or someone. Some jobs he’ll never put in writing at all, such as a secret he needs buried.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Etwin, the Hunter — Lord Dorfas’s cousin was caught scouting roads for bandit threats and has not reported back in several days. Change his fate before it is decided by honorless men.

The Hunted Guest — A woman arrives at Aldorf after dark claiming she served in a rival house until recently, but now the Clockworks are after her as a practitioner of Alchemy. Use your influence to get her to safety.

Mysterious Disappearances — Three trappers vanished from the road beyond Aldorf’s woods in as many weeks, and the last one left his gear neatly folded by the roadside, like he meant to come back for it.

The Bookbinder’s Debt — An old associate of Lord Dorfas’s owes him a favor, and repays him with knowledge of pre-Drowning texts at a location owned by a rival House.

Artefis Waylan

The Mad Scientist

AGE: 28 RACE: DREADSKULL

ARCHETYPE

You push boundaries others fear to approach. Conventional wisdom says “impossible.” Authorities say “forbidden.” This does not stop you. Your workshop is your sanctuary, your experiments your obsession, and the failures that would break others are merely data. You graft, modify, enhance, and transform—both matter and yourself—driven by the certainty that progress requires transgression, going beyond safe controls and ethical claims. What you may create today will be called genius tomorrow, even if they call it madness now.



Artefis Waylan was born and raised aboard the corvettes of the Dreadskul navy, where she was trained in ship maintenance, pump systems, and pressure control from a young age. Life at sea forged her into a resourceful technician, but it all changed when a violent storm took her left arm. Forced to leave naval service, she traveled with her father to the mainland, briefly staying in the Kommonwealth before settling in the Domed City Kavesta.

Harper Hydraulics offered a prosthetic arm sponsored through one of their charities. While being prepared for the graft procedure in their laboratory, she stole an experimental prosthetic, not ready for human use. She fled Kavesta and grafted the arm herself in a desperate attempt, using makeshift medical tools in a rented room. Harper Hydraulics placed a bounty on her, and she was later caught in the Kommonwealth. Instead of locking her up, they offered her an opportunity to work for them and pay off the enormous debt that she had accumulated and eventually earn her freedom.

She became acquainted with House Dorf as and the other members of the League and when Lord Dorf as learned about her situation he wanted to sway a Harper Hydraulic in his favor and offered to pay off part of her debt.

Since then she has joined the League of Dorf as and modified the arm with her unconventional methods. She also “improved” the arm’s pressure-assisted mechanisms pushing it beyond original specs, achieving an Iron Grip. The arm jams under strain and requires constant maintenance, but it’s more capable than anything Harpers would have originally given her. She also has invented tools like, Mrs. Pry (retractable pry blades and cutters adorned with a lady figurine) and a brass ball of wonders that splits in two and can be used for her transgressions, as an auto-lockpick, or an alarm, or a smoke screen.

PERSONALITY

She is narrow-minded and foul-mouthed from her years at sea, making it hard to win allies. Her passion for inventions aids both her construction work and her skulduggery. She makes up for her foul manners with her bravery from a hardened life at sea.

Motivation: Novelty — You are drawn to everything new that hasn’t been discovered.

Darkness: Obsession — The work consumes you. You do not notice what you will destroy to feed it.

Bartolomeus Deschmet

The Fixer

AGE: 48 RACE: NIBU

ARCHETYPE

You make things happen. Where others see obstacles, you see leverage—connections to exploit, deals to broker, problems that dissolve when the right pressure is applied. You operate in gray spaces between legal and illegal, official and unofficial, doing what needs doing without asking permission. Whether through charm, coin, or carefully applied threats, you get results. Your network spans classes and factions because you've learned that everyone needs something, and everyone can be useful. Morality is negotiable. Survival isn't.

BACKSTORY

Bartholomeus is a merchant who grew up in Aldorf. In his early travels he saw the ruin that the rest of the Commonwealth was in and decided to undertake riskier travels to the east to aid the Gorthai with provisions in their military expeditions against the Unkerö barbarians of the east.

His involvement in war, strife, and distress was rewarded by profit, treasure and relics, which in turn made him to make more journeys to the east.

During one of such journey, he happened upon a raid by former deserters who became bandits. He spotted a lone warrior defending a desperate woman and a child, a war orphan. His rifle shots scared the brigands, assisting the warrior, and together they saved the woman and the child. The woman's name was Yuno, who became his wife and they adopted the war orphan and named her Yvette as their stepdaughter.

He became acquainted with Hakiro, the warrior who fought to protect them, and arranged a court meeting with Lord Dorfas for him, as he needed men with knowledge of warfare to protect his land.

Even though he appreciates the luxury of a comfortable home, he is a seasoned traveler, unbothered by harsh weather and the trials of travel. In his journeys he has taken interest in ancient medicine, such as a secret formula of an obscure Tonic of youth that keeps his looks youthful. It

uses Taboo components known only to himself and Lord Dorfas. He collects gentry accoutrements, gadgets and toys for his daughter whom he spoils.

PERSONALITY

His experience on the road and trade has made him be able to work around people's expectations, finding the angle where everyone thinks they've won. As a seasoned smuggler he is used to the coldness and cruelty of the world. Still he is warm when he wants to show affection and thinks highly of those who provide him comfort and luxury.

Motivation: Redemption — You have done wrong, preyed on the lives of others. Is there still time to follow a righteous path?

Darkness: Greed — You want nobility, wealth, and status. You will reach for them regardless of the cost.



Hakiro Amasu

The Vigil

AGE: 38 RACE: GORTHAI

ARCHETYPE

You protect. You are the vigil, the constant watch that never wavers. Whether bound by sacred oath, solemn contract, or unbreakable duty, you ensure those under your watch survive another day. Your body stands between danger and those too valuable, too fragile, or too important to lose.

You know violence intimately; it is your tool, deployed with precision when words and presence fail. Some stay vigilant through honor, while others through grim necessity. Loyalty defines you. Failure haunts you. And you will bear any cost to ensure those you guard do not fall.

BACKSTORY

Hakiro, is a metallurgist, born of Gorthai blood, he has a deep seated feeling of duty. He applied himself in the service of the Gorthai army for many years. Eventually when the military decided to reduce funding on troop support, in order to sustain the Domed cities, he deserted and searched for a new purpose or "Lord" as he puts it.

He joined the brigands that left the army, searching for shelter and steady income, but he could not stand to keep harming the women and children that were left behind. During one incident on their travels he could not stand it any more, he stood his ground to protect a woman (Yuno) and a war orphan (Yvette) against a score of bandits barricaded inside a wooden hut. The end was near until Bartholomeus happened upon them and started blasting the brigands from behind with his firearm.

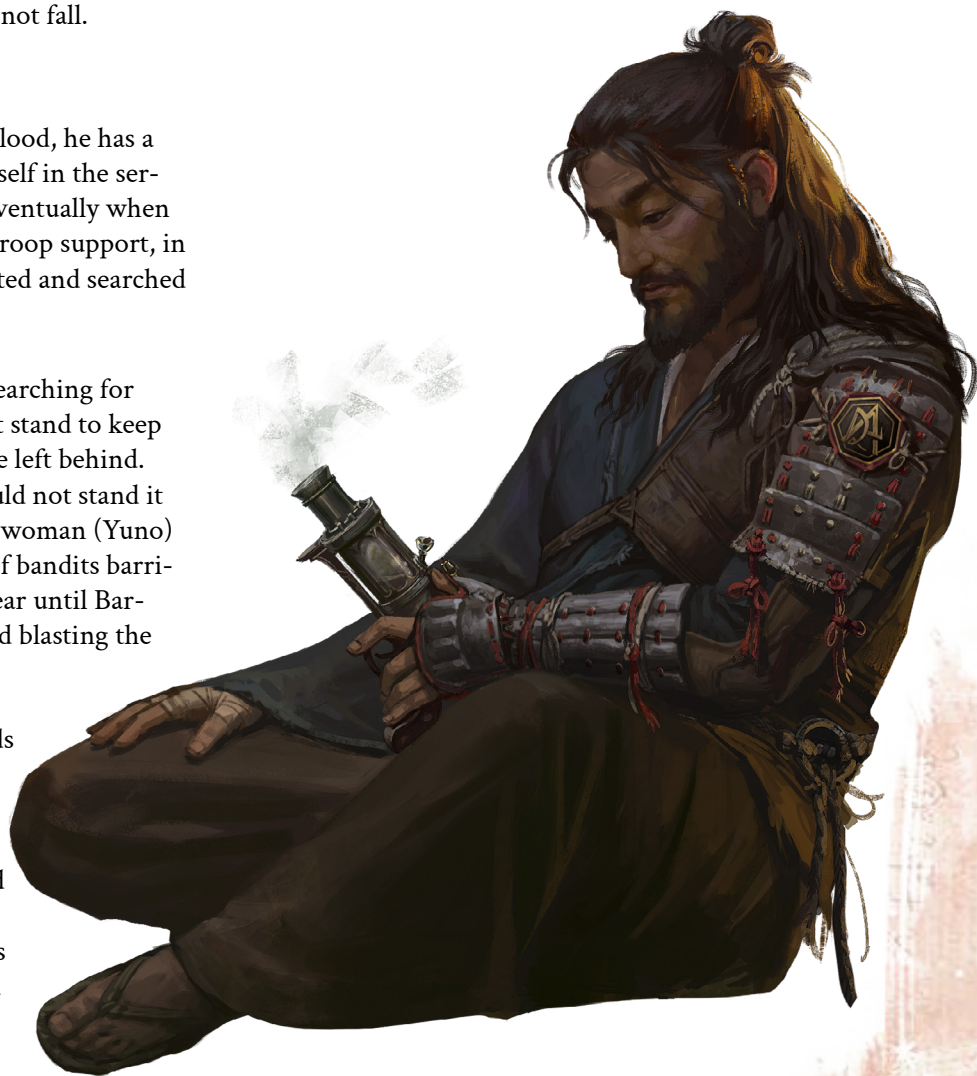
Somehow they all survived and the brigands fled. In search of a master, Bartholomeus insisted that he join him on the road to Aldorf. Soon his skill in metal repairs as well as his ability to use the sword appealed to the lord of the place. Lord Dorfas asked him to stay and take care of the estate as his personal guard and swordsman who would teach his young son the way of the sword.

PERSONALITY

Like any sword, a man's character is tempered between heat and cold. The sword is the medium to train one's mind, one's character and one's body. To push the beast of battle and the atrocious violence and nightmares of war at bay, he tempers himself and wills to transform from a soldier of the Gorthai Dragon Army, to a teacher of a young Nibu lord. Off duty, he softens more through pipe-smoke and drink than he'd ever admit to, letting the numbness ease his the terrors of his war past.

Motivation: Honor — Loyalty and the strength of your vows shape your purpose and meaning.

Darkness: Violence — The smell of blood and war never left you. It is still in your hands.



Yvette Deschmet

The Medium

AGE: 21 RACE: GORTHAI

ARCHETYPE

You stand between worlds. While others see only material reality, you perceive what lies beyond—spirits that linger, dreams that manifest, the Otherworld bleeding through. This gift isolates you. People fear what you see, doubt what you know, and resent truths you reveal. But the lingering spirits speak to you, the Dreamscape opens before you, and phenomena that terrify others become navigable territory. You translate the incomprehensible, commune with the unreachable, and walk paths where the living were never meant to tread.

BACKSTORY

Yvette Deschmet is a war orphan adopted by the merchant Bartholomeus Deschmet and his wife Yuno after they were rescued from bandits during one of Bartholomeus's eastern travels. Though she has no memory of her birth parents or early childhood before the raid, she grew up in the comfort of the merchant life travelling between Aldorf and Soventh, doted upon by her adoptive father who showered her with exotic trinkets and clockwork toys from his journeys.

Despite her privileged upbringing, Yvette carries an unspoken awareness of her origins, she is a child of war given a second chance. This has made her both grateful and restless. She is acquainted with Lady Niere since they were both children and spends most of her free-time with the young Lady, assisting her in any way possible.

Unlike the sheltered Lady Niere, Yvette occasionally accompanied her parents on their travels, developing a collector's curiosity for the exotic and esoteric: feathered hats from the Domed Cities, tarot cards for fortune-telling, recipes for essential oils, meditation texts, and other curiosities that pique her interest.

Through Yuno's connection to Hakiro—the Gorthai warrior who helped save them that fateful day—Yvette often visits his smithy, asking questions about the Gorthai Empire and its mysteries. She sees Hakiro as a living link to the world she might have come from, asking him questions about the Gorthai empire and their obscure culture.

PERSONALITY

Curious and stylish, Yvette delights in fashions and adornment, combining found pieces into distinctive looks. She is open-minded about the occult: she experiments with incense, tarot, herbal recipes, and mind-altering substances as a way to learn and to shape her inner life. Gentle and adventurous, she is warmly devoted to her family and proud to travel with her father, though her curiosity sometimes leads her into danger.

Motivation: Curiosity — Every door that shouldn't be opened, you open it.

Darkness: Addiction — You peek in the dreams of others without consent. It is an escape. It is intoxicating.





“ Old towers fall in Harrow’s fold
with rumbling wails—decay.
A mimicry of the Meteorfall
the ravens plead to pay.

-The Harrower’s toll, The Steelgods Gospel

Basic Rules

Core Mechanics

TRAITS

Ouroboros uses a collection of 10 Traits to describe each character’s abilities, skills and talents, with Specialization types for each allowing for further depth and customization. These Traits represent the kind of actions the characters can perform in a narrative-driven format. Unlike other systems, Traits do not represent abstract core attributes like Strength, Agility or Intelligence, but rather the ability of the character to perform a specific action. Combined with the Specializations and the Focuses on each Trait, a player can flesh out their character in a distinct way.

DICE POOLS

When your character attempts something challenging, you roll a dice pool—a collection of dice determined by your relevant Trait level. Every die that comes up as a 6 or better

counts as one success. Higher Trait levels add more dice and progress to larger die types, making success more likely and exceptional results more achievable.

TRAIT LEVEL	DICE POOL
1 - weak	1d6
2	2d6
3	2d6 + 1d8
4	2d6 + 2d8
5	2d6 + 2d8 + 1d10
6	2d6 + 2d8 + 2d10
7	2d6 + 2d8 + 2d10 + 1d12

DIFFICULTY

If there's nothing at stake or the result is reasonably easy to achieve, no roll is needed. On most occasions, a single success is enough to do the thing. If the GM deems the task to be exceptionally difficult, or if the degrees of success are important in the context of what's attempted, more than one success might be required based on the following chart:

DIFFICULTY CHART	
DIFFICULTY STEP	NUMBER OF SUCCESSES
Easy	No roll needed
Normal	1 Success
Hard	2 Successes
Formidable	3 Successes
Heroic	4 Successes

ROLLING DICE

- Step 1: Determine which Trait applies and assemble your dice pool.
- Step 2: Apply any modifiers (bonuses or penalties) before rolling.
- Step 3: Roll all dice. Any die showing 6 or higher counts as 1 success.
- Step 4: Apply Boon dice rerolls if active
- Step 5: Apply Natural 1s—each natural 1 cancels 1 success. Remove both. If natural 1s outnumber your successes, none remain and you have Fumbled.
- Step 6: Apply Flaw effect if active
- Step 7: Check your result against the four outcomes
- Step 8: For an Undertaking, add applicable Impact after all rolls are completed.

OUTCOMES

SUCCESS: Your remaining Successes are equal to or greater than the Difficulty Step (Normal, Hard, etc.). You achieve your goal. Multiple successes on non-combat actions provide additional benefits—deeper investigation insights, higher quality crafted items, or faster progress on undertakings.

EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS: Your net successes exceed the Difficulty by 2 or more. You achieve your goal with exceptional results. In combat, your weapon's special effect triggers alongside normal damage.

FAILURE: No successes remain after your natural 1s cancel them out. You fail, but not irreparably. You may attempt a **Pushed Action** to try again at the risk of increasing **Strain** by 1.

FUMBLE: At least one natural 1 remains with no success left to cancel. You fail badly and cannot attempt to Push. Increase Strain by 1 (GM determines type: Stress, Harm, or Surreality).

SPECIALIZATION

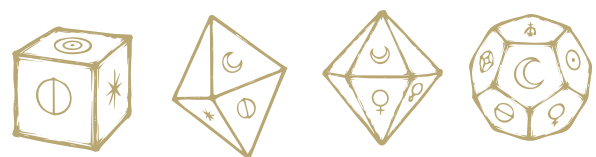
Each Trait has three specializations you can choose from. When acting within your specialization:

- **Ignore all natural 1s**—they no longer count for determining Fumble.
- **You can still Fumble** if you use a Pushed action that fails (see Pushed Actions).
- Represents true expertise protecting against bad outcomes.

FLAWS

Characters can start with Flaws that hinder their ability to perform actions within a Specialization of a Trait. A Flaw provides both narrative depth and shows a character's weakness.

- **All Failure Outcomes** become Fumbles. A dangerous condition representing extreme disadvantage.
- A Flaw applies **only to a Specialization** not the whole Trait.



TRAITS & SPECIALIZATIONS

TRAIT	SPECIALIZATIONS
Creation - Making and building items, structures, and devices.	• Arts: Creating fine arts, jewelry, musical compositions and poetry. • Crafts: Practicing trades like apothecary, blacksmith, couturier, leather-worker, mason, and woodworker. • Devices: Building automata, engineering, and firearms.
Environment - Navigating and surviving in outdoor and wilderness settings.	• Navigation: Using vehicles, reading star charts & maps, and predicting weather. • Senses: Perceiving through sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. • Survival: Experience with animals, first aid, foraging, hunting, and making camp.
Social - Maneuvering through interpersonal relationships and society.	• Authority: Using station, etiquette, and heraldry to push things your way. • Intimacy: Appealing, carousing, empathy, and seducing others. • Intrigue: Court politics, deception, and manipulation.
Information - Learning, researching, and investigating knowledge.	• Knowledge: Education in sciences and academics, book smarts. • Research: Analyzing evidence, studying clues, and conducting lab work. • Whispers: Rumors, word on the street, clandestine secrets
Combat - Fighting with weapons and physical force.	• Melee: Using weaponry, techniques, and combat maneuvers. • Close Quarters: Fighting at close range, grappling, small weapons, un-armed • Marksmanship: Using firearms, archery, and thrown weapons.
Physical - Using bodily capabilities and physical prowess.	• Athletics: Climbing, lifting, moving, running, and swimming. • Resilience: Resisting sickness, poison, cold, and heat. • Subtlety: Guileful movement, agility, and manual dexterity.
Channeling - Harnessing supernatural Aether energy.	• Awareness: Sensing Aether and Aetherika phenomena. • Control: Shaping, condensing, or dispersing Aether. • Force: Manipulating Aether with intensity and violence.
Dreaming - Navigating and manipulating dream-states and dreamscapes.	• Chimaera: Creating temporary dream-entities by combining elements of dreamscapes. • Lucidity: Resisting Surreality effects and maintaining dreamscape connection. • Reverie: Navigating and manipulating dreamscape environments.
Resolve - Mental fortitude and psychological resistance	• Courage: Resisting fear and horror effects. • Conviction: Resisting social manipulation and mental coercion. • Identity: Resisting Shadow corruption and maintaining sense of self.
Occult - Understanding esoteric knowledge and supernatural practices.	• Folklore: Knowing myths, fey lore, weaknesses, and supernatural quirks. • Symbols: Using magic circles, symbols, places, and times of power. • Transmutation: Transforming matter, soul, and spirit through alchemical practice.

FOCUS

While a Specialization determines what you excel at, a Focus represents how deeply you have invested in that Trait overall. Every Focus grants two benefits.

Boon: After making a Trait roll, you may reroll a number of dice up to your Focus score, keeping the new results. Natural 1s may also be rerolled.

Abilities: The abilities you gain can be either a permanent Passive bonus, Once per Scene, Once per Session, or Once per Story.

The Quickstart's Premade Characters already have their Focuses and Abilities selected.

MODIFIERS

Circumstance Bonus:

Minor (+1B): Add 1 die to your Trait level

Major (+2B): Add 2 dice to your Trait level

Circumstance Penalty:

Minor (-1P): Remove 1 die from your Trait level

Major (-2P): Remove 2 dice from your Trait level

IMPROVISED

When you attempt an action without the appropriate tool or equipment, the GM may treat it as Improvised, applying a **-1 Minor Penalty** to the roll.

IMPACT

Some tools and special Focus abilities provide Impact. Impact applies only to Undertakings and is added to the total Successes after all rolls for the Undertaking are completed. Impact can raise a Success Outcome to an Exceptional Success Outcome. Gear without an Impact value provides no Impact.

Strain and Status

Every character has five tracks, divided into two categories. Both use the same Breaking Point system.

Strain: Harm, Stress, and Surreality which measures damage to the body, mind, and perception.

Status: Credit and Shadow measure your standing in the world and your relationship with yourself.

BREAKING POINT

When a resource fills completely due to consequence or damage, you've reached its Breaking Point: the character has a lasting mark, and the resource's maximum capacity is permanently reduced by one box (black out the first available box). Reaching a Strain Breaking Point gives you Trauma; reaching a Status Breaking Point gives you a Complication. A character who gains three Trauma or three Complications is removed from play: they die, retire, or become unplayable.

STRAIN

Characters track three types of Strain across ten boxes each:

Stress: Mental and emotional damage from fear, anger, and social pressure.

Harm: Physical fatigue, sickness or wounds from violence, accidents, and environmental hazards.

Surreality: Exposure to Aether, Dreamscapes, and other-worldly phenomena that slowly distort one's perception of Reality

STRAIN DAMAGE

STRAIN TOTAL	EFFECT
1-6	No Penalty
7-8	Strained: -1 Minor Penalty to all actions
9	Strained: -2 Major Penalty to all actions
10+	Gain a Trauma, black out the first box. It becomes permanent in that Strain type.

TRAUMA

When a Strain reaches its Breaking Point, add a Trauma to one of your three Trauma boxes and reduce that Strain's maximum capacity by 1 (black out the first available box, see Breaking Point). Each additional Trauma further reduces maximum capacity, making you increasingly fragile.

Treating Trauma requires time and specific conditions: Harm Trauma may require medical care and tools; Stress Trauma may require rest, therapy, or hypnosis; Surreality Trauma may require specific treatment, rituals, or other means appropriate to the condition.

CREDIT AND SHADOW

Characters also track two Status resources representing how they exist within society and within themselves: Credit and Shadow. Unlike Strain, the maximum capacity of these tracks depends on Social Class. Higher social classes begin with more Credit but less Shadow, while lower social classes start with less Credit but more Shadow. For example: High Social Class has 18 Credit and 6 Shadow, while Lower Social Class has 6 Credit and 18 Shadow.

Credit: It represents wealth, influence and reputation, determines your access to institutions, expensive services, privileged circles and material resources. When you spend social capital, call in favors, or rely upon your position in society, increase your Credit. Reaching higher Credit thresholds represents increasing social debt and obligation, eventually creating a Status Breaking Point.

Shadow: It represents the suppressed, denied, or undeveloped aspects of the human psyche. Cruel decisions, forbidden desires, hidden guilt, moral compromise. As Shadow rises, darker aspects of the character begin to surface, eventually threatening their identity and relationships.

PULLING STRINGS & ATTACHMENTS

Social Class also determines how many Pulling Strings and Attachments a character possesses. High Social Class has more Pulling Strings and less Attachments and vice versa for Lower Social Class. For the purposes of this quickstart, the Premade Characters already have some Pulling String and Attachments. These will be expanded upon in the Core Rulebook.

Pulling Strings: People and favors you can call upon when in a pinch.

Attachments: People, places, beliefs, or relationships that anchor your character to reality and can help resist or mitigate the effects of Shadow and corruption.

COMPLICATIONS

When a character's Credit or Shadow exceeds their final tier (6, 12, 18), they reach a Breaking point: reduce their maximum capacity by 1 (black out the first available Credit or Shadow box in the lowest available tier) and gain a Complication.

Some ideas for Complications include:

- A Secret is revealed.
- An Attachment is lost.
- A Pulling String is compromised.
- Character gains a new Flaw.
- Darkness takes over the character.
- Their Motivation can be fulfilled only by betraying the League.

The GM narrates the nature of the Complication based on what triggered it and the story's context: a social scandal, a debt, an immoral act, lapsing into a fugue state, or a story hook that needs to be resolved. Players can play additional stories as character Side Quests and resolve a complication of an affected character.

The character can accumulate further Complications over time anew. A character with three Complications retires due to unrecoverable social disaster, loss of self or other unresolvable issues. Some Premade Characters start the game with pre-existing Complications.

Actions

Typically in a Scene or whenever the GM calls for a roll you act using one of the Action Types below. Outside of combat you will usually only need a Simple Action to resolve what you are attempting — Pushed Actions, Contests, Teamwork, and Undertakings cover the less common cases.

ROUTINE

Many actions a character takes within a story or during downtime activity are considered daily routines. These actions do not require a roll and can be easily resolved by discussing it openly at the table. If doubt or tension arises, the GM may call for a roll.

HIGH STAKES

The GM usually will say before a roll that a situation is high stakes. A player who fails an action in a High Stakes situation may attempt to Push with a Pushed Action. The High Stakes situations should be meaningful and used sparingly to create a thrilling pace in your stories.

Sometimes players may ask for it too — by telling the table why this moment matters to their character specifically, and why they'd risk the Strain to succeed. Naming out loud at the table their reasoning for their action earns them the Push.

DARK THOUGHTS

Your character can draw on Dark Thoughts tied to their Darkness, their past, or their Secret. These include desires and impulses unacceptable to society, or memories the conscious mind has rejected because they don't fit who the character believes themselves to be.

Describe a glimpse of these Dark Thoughts to the table to gain a **+1 Minor Circumstance Bonus** on your next roll, but increase your **Shadow** by 1.

When Shadow crosses into a new tier, the character's Secret is revealed: f.e. Violent Mentor, naming something true about them the table can now act on. You can pursue this Secret to create a new Story Hook for the table.

ACTION TYPES

SIMPLE ACTION: Decide which character Trait is applicable in the situation and find its score/rating. Add relevant modifiers (bonuses or penalties) to build the dice pool. Roll, including any re-rolls due to Boons. Note the outcome.

PUSHED ACTION: After a Failure Outcome on a High Stakes situation, you may Push—attempt the action again at risk of increasing Strain by 1 (Stress, Harm, or Surreality as GM decides). Roll again as per the Simple Action rules. If it is not a Success or Exceptional Success Outcome it automatically is considered a Fumble. Cannot Push after a Fumble.

CONTEST: Both sides roll as per Simple Action. Most successes wins. Ties are resolved by trying again.

HELP: Spend your action to grant an ally +1 Minor Circumstance bonus die on their next action. Describe how you're helping them.

UNDERTAKING: Long actions requiring multiple rolls over time. The GM sets the time needed (e.g. 5 minutes or 8 hours), the number of rolls, the Difficulty (Normal, Hard, Formidable, or Heroic), which sets the minimum number of Successes needed to avoid failing the Undertaking, and the total number of Successes required to complete it. Once all rolls are made, apply any relevant Impact to the total Successes. If the final total meets the Successes required, the Undertaking succeeds; if it falls below the Difficulty threshold, the Undertaking fails and must start over. Exceeding the required Successes by 2 or more is an Exceptional Success. For complex tasks, the GM might require more Successes than proposed in the Difficulty Chart or call for additional Undertakings if the task is not completed. A very complex Undertaking can also be broken into smaller ones.

EXAMPLES OF PLAY

EXAMPLE SIMPLE ACTION: Hakiro attempts to slip past a patrol unnoticed using Physical (Subtlety). Hakiro has Physical 3 (2d6 + 1d8). The GM sets Normal Difficulty (1 Success needed). He rolls 6, 3, 8. The 6 and 8 both count as successes (6+) , giving him 2 Successes. That's more Successes than the 1 required: a Success Outcome. Hakiro silently passes the patrol, and with a spare Success left over, the GM rules he also finds a better position to observe them unnoticed.

EXAMPLE PUSHED ACTION: The same patrol begins searching the area, making Hakiro's approach more dangerous. The GM sets Hard Difficulty (2 Successes needed). Hakiro rolls Physical (Subtlety) 3 (2d6 + 1d8) and gets 6, 1, 3. The 6 is cancelled by the Natural 1 and they are both removed. Zero successes and no natural 1s remaining, not close to the 2 required. That's a Failure. The GM informs him this is a High Stakes situation and he decides to Push, risking increased Strain. He rolls a fresh pool: 4, 2, 8. The 8 is a success; still short of the 2 required. Since this is a Pushed Action and the result is still a Failure, it becomes automatically a Fumble. The GM increases his Stress by 1 as the patrol spots him moving underneath the catwalk.

EXAMPLE CONTEST: Artefis and a guard grapple for a dropped weapon. Both roll Combat (Close Quarters) as a Contest. Artefis doesn't have Close Quarters specialization so rolls: Combat 2 (2d6), rolls 6, 4, one success. The guard does not have specialization either: Combat 3 (2d6 + 1d8), rolls 7, 6, 1; the natural 1 cancels one success, resulting in total successes of one. They have a tie and must repeat the Contest. The winner comes with the weapon in hand.

EXAMPLE HELP: Artefis is trying to force open a valve door before the rest of the guards catch up to them. Barto spends his action to help her and grant her a Bonus by bracing the handle and throwing his weight against it, giving her a +1 Minor Circumstance Bonus, adding 1 die at her Trait level to her pool for this attempt. Now she will roll Physical 4 (dice pool 2d6 + 2d8).

EXAMPLE DARK THOUGHTS: Hakiro is buying time for the League's escape by intimidating the captain of the guard. His player reveals a glimpse of Hakiro's buried war-time brutality, letting it surface in his voice and posture. He gains a +1 Minor Circumstance Bonus on the roll, but increases his Shadow by 1. Because he used Dark Thoughts a lot in this playthrough, he reaches a Breaking Point and his Shadow crosses into its next tier: The GM decides that he gains a Complication based on his Secret, Military Deserter that the GM will bring back into play later.

EXAMPLE BOON: Artefis has the Abomination Focus, which applies to all Physical actions. She is climbing a collapsing scaffold before it gives way beneath her. She rolls Physical (Athletics). Artefis has Physical 3 (2d6 + 1d8) and Abomination Focus 2. The GM sets Hard Difficulty (2 Successes needed). She rolls 6, 4, 1, one success. Because her Focus is 2, she may use her Boon to reroll up to two dice. She chooses the 4 and 1, rerolling them into 8 and 5. The 8 becomes a second success, meeting the required two successes and Artefis pulls herself to safety.

EXAMPLE UNDERTAKING: After escaping from a heist with an ancient water-damaged pre-Drowning text, the League decides to translate it before the Clockwork investigators find them and confiscate it. The GM sets the Undertaking: 3 days, 1 roll per day, Normal Difficulty (1 Success), 4 total Successes required. The players decide which League members will make the rolls. Over the three days, the League accumulates 3, then 2, then 1 Successes: 6 total, 2 more than the 4 required. That's an Exceptional Success on the Undertaking: the translation is finished earlier than expected, allowing them time to escape the chase or prepare for when the Clockwork investigators find them.

EXAMPLE UNDERTAKING WITH BOON & IMPACT: After escaping from a Clockwork patrol, the League discovers that the ancient pre-Drowning mechanism they stole is still partly functional. To access its sealed recordings, Artefis attempts to repair the device before the pursuing investigators arrive. The GM sets the Undertaking: 3 hours, 1 roll per hour, Normal Difficulty (1 Success), 4 total Successes required. Artefis rolls Creation (Devices) 4 (2d6 + 2d8) using her Inventor Focus 1 and Mechanical Tools (Impact 1). During one of the rolls she gets 6, 3, 2, 1—one Success. She uses her Boon to reroll the 1, obtaining 8 on the reroll, increasing the roll to two Successes which are added to the Undertaking total. Across the three rolls Artefis accumulates 3, 2, and 2 Successes, for a total of 7 Successes. Once all rolls are made, her Mechanical Tools add 1 Impact, bringing the final total to 8 Successes. This exceeds the required 4 Successes by 4, resulting in an Exceptional Success. The device is restored ahead of schedule, allowing the League to uncover its recordings before the Clockwork investigators catch up.

Combat

HOW COMBAT WORKS

Combat in Ouroboros is dangerous and decisive. Characters act in Initiative order, choosing actions that reflect the chaos of real violence. There are no guaranteed outcomes—even experienced fighters can fumble at critical moments. Combat is considered a High Stakes situation.

Combatants take turns each combat round based on their initiative order. The Action economy of Combat is as follows: On their turn they can move up to Close Distance and take an action (Simple Action) and a Pushed Action after it. The Pushed Action can be used to Push a failed action, avoid danger, or combine both actions into a longer maneuver. Longer maneuvers are riskier and increase Strain on a Failure Outcome. There are certain actions like Dodge (See Combat Actions) that uses only a Pushed Action. Combat is risky and deadly.

AMBUSH

Occurs before Initiative is rolled. Catches opponents unprepared. You make a Simple Action before combat starts when your opponents are still unprepared. Then roll initiative.

INITIATIVE

When combat begins, all participants make a Physical roll and add all dice results together (not just successes). Highest total acts first. This represents pure instinct and reaction speed in the opening moments of violence.

COMBAT ACTIONS

ATTACK (Simple or Pushed Action): Make a Combat roll. Damage equals successes + Weapon Rating. A Pushed Attack risks +1 Strain for another attempt.

DEFEND (Simple Action): Take a defensive posture, deflecting and parrying incoming attacks. Attackers suffer -1 Minor Penalty against you until your next turn.

DODGE (Pushed Action): Make a Physical roll. Each success reduces 1 Harm from an incoming attack. Requires spending your Pushed Action.

AIM (Simple + Pushed Action): Strike a specific body part with +1 Minor Bonus. Costs both your Simple and Pushed Actions.

CHARGE (Simple + Pushed Action): Move from a Short

Distance in a straight line and immediately Attack with +1 Minor Bonus. Costs both Actions.

MOVE (Simple or Pushed Action): Move up to Short Distance. No roll needed.

RUN (Simple + Pushed Action): Cover Medium Distance in 1 round or Long Distance in 4 rounds. No roll needed.

HELP (Simple Action): Grant an ally +1 Minor Bonus on their next action this round. Describe how you assist.

USE OBJECT (Simple Action): Use an item, sabotage, lift or push something.

RELOAD FIREARM (Simple and/or Pushed Action): Most firearms require 2 Actions to reload.

COMBAT RANGES

Range	Distance in meters	Scene Setup
Close	0-2	Brawl, melee, grappling
Short	3-10	Dueling, indoor skirmish
Medium	11-30	Outdoor skirmish, large structures
Long	31-150	Extreme indoor, sky or naval combat
Extreme	150+	Battles, fleet combat

COMBAT ROUTINES

Moving to a Close Distance of unimpeded space, opening a door, picking up an item are combat routines that you can do automatically without roll or spending an action. You can combine one of these routines with your normal action in GM's discretion.

COMBAT STUNTS

Beyond normal methods of attacking, combatants may find ways to exploit their opponents weaknesses by attempting advanced contests (See Contests) against one another, like disarming, sundering weapons, tripping, grappling into submission. Give Circumstance Bonuses or Penalties depending on the situation (up to GM's discretion)

WEAPONRY

There are many kinds of weapons both modern and medieval in the Age of Drowning. They all have their own pros and cons, ease of maintenance, and upkeep. All weapons have a Weapon Rating, which determines the additional Harm they inflict on a successful attack.

MELEE WEAPONS

Most melee weapons retain the principles of balance and weight from ancient pre-Drowning times, but since the Clockwork Faction's expansion on many easy to manufacture weapons like Batons, Knives, fireman's Axes have gotten some more industrialized designs.

Nobles of long heraldic lines may have a sword adorned to their waist which is mostly ceremonial and rarely practical. Raiders and bandits in the Shallows, fashion crude weapons such as wooden clubs and makeshift spears.

MELEE WEAPONS

Name	Rating	Properties
Baton / Stick	1	Ruin, Frail
Spear	1	Bleed, Reach, Thrown
Knife	1	Bleed, Hidden, Thrown
Axe / Hammer	2	Ruin
Sword	2	Bleed

MELEE WEAPON PROPERTIES

The properties could define different ways of usage, such as Thrown or Hidden, or an additional effect that activates on an Exceptional Success.

Bleed: On an Exceptional Success you cause a living target to Bleed. Bleeding causes instantly 1 additional Harm Strain. It causes another 1 Harm at the end of Combat and

another 1 Harm at the end of the day. Bleeding can be treated to stop on-going Harm increases.

Frail: On an Exceptional Success this weapon reduces its own Weapon Rating by 1. If it reaches 0 it is broken.

Hidden: This property means that the weapon can be concealed in clothing or accoutrements on your person. It gives a +1 Minor Circumstance Bonus on Ambush attempts.

Reach: You can keep your distance while fighting opponents. Opponents attacking you suffer a -1 Minor Circumstance Penalty with Melee weapons that do not have the Reach property.

Ruin: On an Exceptional Success, reduce the Armor rating of your target. When targeting a weapon you reduce the Weapon rating of the weapon instead.

RANGED WEAPONS

Firearms have revolutionized warfare and its stakes. The eastern Gorthai have long been fascinated with gunpowder, developing explosives, fireworks, and theatrical effects, but became renowned for blunderbuses and carbines. Practical Northerners favored efficient rifles, while the "Free Sailors" who pirate the waterfronts favored pistols and cannons to threaten their prey. Some still use archaic weapons such as slings, longbows, and crossbows for their versatility and stealth.

RANGED WEAPON RATING

Every ranged weapon has set optimal ranges and an associated Weapon Rating for each, indicating where it is most effective. These correspond to the Combat Ranges on page 23.

Ranged weapons can be used at any distance. Using one outside its listed optimal ranges incurs a Circumstance Penalty based on the difference between actual and optimal range. For example, using a Pistol at Extreme Range incurs a -2 Major Circumstance Penalty, while using a ranged weapon at Close Range incurs a -1 Minor Circumstance Penalty.

FIREARMS

Ammo / Reload: How much ammunition a weapon stores and how many actions reloading requires. A character can use both their Simple and Pushed Actions to reload a weapon requiring two Actions in one turn.

Guns and Blasts: Gunshots and explosives will likely attract unwanted attention within earshot. Most firearm sounds travel up to Long Range unless mitigated.

RANGED WEAPONS

Name	Rating	Ammo / Reload
Crossbow	1S 1M	1 / 1 Action
Longbow	2M 2L	1 / No Reload
Musket	2M 1L	1 / 2 Actions
Pistol	2S 1M	1 / 2 Actions
Rifle, Hunting	3M 2L	1 / 2 Actions

BOMBS

Bombs are thrown at a location rather than a specific target and do not require an attack roll. Each bomb has an **Area of Effect** (f.e. 1m-radius) and a Difficulty to resist its effect (usually Normal Difficulty). Characters within the Area of Effect can attempt to avoid it before making the resistance roll. Those who remain exposed must make the appropriate resistance roll against the listed Difficulty.

ARMOR

Armor represents protection against physical injury. Armor Rating may come from worn armor, reinforced prosthetics, unusual bloodlines, or physical transmutations caused by the forbidden practices of the Taboo Art of Alchemy. Different sources of protection can provide different Armor Ratings.

Protection ranges from reinforced padding sewn into clothes and tunics, to gambesons favored by fencers and patchwork armor assembled from salvaged materials. Brigandine combines overlapping plates into flexible protection, commonly worn by veteran warriors and bandit warlords. In the Shallows, armor is often repaired, reinforced, and adapted from whatever can be recovered. At the other extreme stands Seberus Armor, the articulated, slick black, lightweight ceramic armor, issued to Clockwork Assault Troops and Forces.

ARMOR

Name	Rating	Properties
Padding	1	Frail
Gambeson	1	
Seberus	2	Durable
Brigandine	3	Durable, Noisy

WOUNDS IN COMBAT

When an Attack lands, the target takes Harm Strain equal to the attacker's total successes plus their Weapon Rating. Armor reduces this on a 1-to-1 ratio: subtract the defender's Armor Rating from the total before applying it to their Harm track. If Armor Rating meets or exceeds the incoming total, no Harm is taken.

Between fights, a character can treat Harm with an Environment (Survival) roll — but only with the right supplies on hand: bandages, antitoxins, needle and thread for stitches. Without them, treatment can still be attempted improvised, at a -1 Minor Circumstance Penalty.

MORALE IN COMBAT

Suffering extreme losses or fighting a superior opponent can cause dread and demoralize the combatants.

Whenever a combatant faces something that should shake their nerve — overwhelming odds, a gruesome loss, something that defies Reality itself — make a Resolve (Courage) roll to see if the character is demoralized, failure increases Stress Strain by 1.



“ No mortal eye, nor heart so wise,
can know the face of fey.
They smile and speak as kindly folk,
then lead you far astray.

-Woes of the Fey, Troubadours of Soventh

The Towerling

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure introduces the core experience of Ouroboros: Age of Drowning: investigation, dangerous discoveries, personal Complications, and the gradual intrusion of the Otherworld into Reality.

Keep the Mystery: Describe what the characters perceive, not what it means. Let players interpret clues, form theories, and discover answers through play.

Build Momentum: A failed roll should rarely stop the investigation. Instead, introduce a complication, cost, danger, or incomplete information that gives the League something new to pursue.

Call for Rolls When They Matter: Ask for a roll when failure has meaningful consequences. If an action is straightforward and failure adds nothing, let it succeed. Failed Undertakings should change the situation rather than simply close a path.

Remember the Complications: Bring each character's Complication into play when it creates pressure or a mean-

ingful choice. Use them to reveal character and drive the story, not simply to punish players.

Secrets and Dark Thoughts: When a Secret is revealed, expose a fragment of the truth through the fiction rather than explaining it outright. Use the prompts to deepen the mystery and give the players new questions to pursue. This may inspire players to when describing their Dark Thoughts to incorporate their Secret.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The League of House Dorf as has secured the Magistrate's response to a proposal to extend the Hydraulics & Iron Roadworks Magistral railway south to Aldorf. What should be a routine journey turns disastrous when an unnatural storm drives the League into the marshlands. There they discover an abandoned meteorological tower where Reality has ruptured, revealing something waiting between worlds.

Scene 1: The marshes

For the GM: Read aloud to all players at the table

"You are fresh on your journey, travelling south toward Aldorf. The Old Kingdom Road stretches ahead, its once-bright stone now cracked, buried beneath dirt, and broken by a century of neglect. Beyond it lie scrubland and open plains beneath an overcast sky."

By midday the wind begins to change. Dark clouds gather unnaturally fast, swallowing the horizon. Lightning flashes within them, though no thunder follows. Before long, six armed figures emerge through the gloom ahead, weapons drawn.

Between the approaching storm and the bandits, the road is no longer safe."

The League leaves the road for the marshes. With a map and compass they can navigate the wetlands, while the bandits refuse to follow into the thick fog. Once the League enters the marshes, you may use the following prompts to ask each player how their character reacts to the unfamiliar wetlands:

- Yvette or Hakiro remember Gorthai stories of spirits that lure travellers beneath the water.
- Artefis is reminded of years spent at sea, where no wind and calm water was often seen as bad omen.
- Bartolomeus recalls his smuggling years through the wars trying to escape danger with risky decisions.

NAVIGATING THE MARSHES

Make a Navigation roll (Normal Difficulty). This may also be resolved as an Undertaking Action.

Success / Exceptional Success: Clean navigation. Storm is further away. The League reaches the hillside farms.

Failure: Slower progress, disorienting fog. Evening approaches with weather still threatening.

Fumble: As Failure but they also increase Stress Strain by 1.

Scene 2: Hillside farms

The homesteads sit on raised ground—weathered but sturdy. The farmhouse windows are dark except one, where a lamp still burns. The clink of metal on metal is heard as the carriage comes close from a small smithy across. Smoke rises thin and steady from its chimney — someone is still working. A farming couple offers shelter: barn space for the wagon and horses, simple food, a dry roof for the night.

THE HILLSIDE FARMS NPCS

Bertold: Gertrude's husband, woodsman, forager

Gertrude: Bertold's wife, housekeeping, tending the garden, and cattle

Billien (missing): Their child, loved drawing, played with critters

Hismet: Old blacksmith, supports the others in everyday metalworks

GM Note: Gertrude and Bertold will raise the topic of Billien's disappearance as soon as the League arrives.

TOPIC: THE MISSING CHILD

The parents are desperate. Three days ago, their son Billien went missing. The mother shows charcoal drawings he made before disappearing: thin black trees, and the tower with dark growth spreading from its top like twisted branches.

"We don't know what it means, but... could you check the tower? Make sure there's nothing dangerous out there? Maybe... maybe he's still alive."

The father's voice cracks with desperate hope he doesn't quite believe.





TOPIC: THE TOWER

"There's an old tower out there," the mother says, nodding east. "Meteoravian Company built it years back. Measuring weather, they said. Then they abandoned it—left sick, stayed here a few days recovering in the barn before moving on. Ever since, that tower attracts lightning and thunder. Dead animals in the marshes. Strange lights in the fog."

GM Note: Black stains remain in the barn where the sick Meteoravian crew stayed. Billien played there often. He also received charcoal from Hismet to use for drawing. The weird drawings started after that.

TOPIC: SULFUR PRIMER-VULCAN TREATISE

Hismet looted the ground floor of the Meteoravian tower for iron scraps and found a scientific book. He went through it but says it is not important for blacksmithing so he gives it to the players if they want to check it.

The book contains information on vulcanization techniques and how to create insulating materials like latex and rubber, it describes different techniques, some of which would require specialized facilities to produce.

Going through the book, terms like "skyfire" and herbal grafts that produce latex are mentioned, an extended description of the "pyriscus graft" is mentioned and how it has reached a hybrid state to produce more sap than usual.

The process of creating the seed is explained as well as the plant strains used and failed experiments, but also the sulfur used for vulcanization techniques is mentioned in a pe-

culiar, arbitrary way. At some point the language changes.

The measurements and botanical diagrams give way to something older — sulfur referred to not as a chemical compound but as a principle, a living quality in matter. Brimstone. Philosophical sulfur. The symbols that follow are not scientific notation: a symbol of a black pool with a white seed resembling an egg with a zygote, and an infinity loop with a peculiar cross rising from its center.



GM Note: Whoever reads the Treatise recognizes the shift in its language partway through. The technical content gives way to something older — sulfur referenced as a living principle rather than a compound, symbols that have no place in Meteoravian notation, a handwriting that changes as if a different mind continued the work.

TOPIC: FOLKLORE - THE TOWERLING

Hismet tells of the old tales he heard and how they remind him of the tower:

"The old folk said that there are giant beings hiding behind the storms, going unnoticed. Beyond the horizon, ominous trees grew from the sky to the earth as ladders so that the giants could climb down and walk onto the land. Each time the giants would move above the clouds, thunder was heard and whenever their weapons struck, lightning fell upon the earth. When giants reach the earth they leave flowery patterns on the ground. The curious youth find these markings and are never quite the same again, having their curiosity taken from them. Some say that the trees struck by lightning are the trees planted by the giants' flowers."

PLAYER CHARACTER HOOKS

Bartholomeus — The Fixer: A child is missing and everyone else is afraid to look in the tower. You have spent enough of your life turning a blind eye and walking past trouble for profit. Your guilt and regret makes you want to take action.

Hakiro — The Vigil: Hismet's iron is unlike anything you have handled before. Stained black, naturally slick, differently than any metal you know. It came from the Meteoravian tower and whatever was done in it. You want to know what else is in there.

Artefis — The Mad Scientist: The Meteoravian Company worked and ran experiments inside that tower, and left in a hurry. Their equipment is still there and possibly parts of their research like the Sulfur Primer.

Yvette — The Medium: The Towerling myth is a fascinating story. Giants that climb down from storm clouds on sky-trees, leaving flowery patterns where they touch the earth — the child's drawings of black cloud trees, something in that tower happened and something answered from the beyond.



THE SPIRIT



THE BODY



THE SOUL



THE DROWNING

- THE CARDINAL FOUR

*The Meteoravian tower,
a threshold from reality into the dreamscape*

Scene 3: The Meteoravian Tower

The tower rises four stories: stone foundation, wooden first floor, a metal second floor and an upper structure with an observatory dome. A black vine plant seems to climb along the tower to the top floor dome. The ground floor door is half-smashed but wired shut. A sweet-rot smell reaches the party before they touch the door.

WHAT HAPPENED HERE (FOR GM)

Years ago, Meteoravian scientists experimented with the Pyriscus Graft, a lightning-fed plant engineered to produce insulating sap. They powered it using captured lightning. The plant evolved beyond control:

- Fed directly on electricity
- Released toxic black pollen
- Warped the atmosphere around it

The tower was sealed and abandoned. The Meteoravians evacuated, staying at the hillside farms recovering, then reported to Clockwork Command. The Clockwork Faction never sent an expedition to reclaim it (too remote, not a priority). The plant continued growing, feeding on ambient lightning. This blackgrowth filled the dome and

then grew beyond its original design, out of the tower, and spread down into the marshes.

Eventually, the black growth, toxic atmosphere, and ominous storms created the conditions for a nightmarish Dreamscape to form. What emerged within it, and whether it was awakened or merely given a path into Reality, remains unknown.

Only later was the tower's ground floor breached and used by the desperate blacksmith Hismet, who wanted to scavenge metals.

GROUND FLOOR

Destroyed furniture, wooden planks as makeshift beds, moldering blankets, dirty buckets, ceramic bowls filled with dirt. A small fireplace covered in ash. The stone staircase spirals upward.

Opportunity: Beneath the rotten planks, a basket contains tins of sulfur powder, rubber samples and an adjustable wrench.

FIRST FLOOR

The sweet-rot smell is stronger here. Wooden beds with black stained mattresses. Rusted cooking utensils. A wardrobe containing two intact waterproof cerulean mantles

bearing the Meteoravian Company insignia and some black rubber boots and gloves. This is where the smell comes from.

Opportunity: Beneath a pillow are some technical notes mentioning grafting a plant to produce latex more efficiently.

SECOND FLOOR: RELAY CHAMBER

Entirely metal—steel plates riveted into a sealed chamber. A glass case contains scientific instruments: barometers, thermometers, pressure gauges. Cables run from the case into the ceiling. No windows. A sealed hatch in the ceiling. A steel ladder extends downward. Beside it, a winch mechanism to retract the ladder back on the ceiling below the hatch.

Opportunity: Upon investigation, the characters find that the meteorological instruments record atmospheric pressure, temperature, wind speed, storms, and lightning strikes. The mechanism stopped recording three days ago—the same time little Billien disappeared.

INVESTIGATION

Many skills as are appropriate to find clues and deduce what happened. There is no single Investigation skill. Usually Environment (Senses) is used for just looking around but it is not uncommon to use Information (Knowledge), Creation (Devices) to figure out how a mechanism works, Occult (Symbols) to notice any symbols or strange arrangement and geometry, Channeling (Awareness) to discern aether patterns and ectoplasmic presence. These are some examples; there can be many more Specializations that can be used depending on the circumstance.

Characters may investigate individually as **Simple Actions**, or use the **Help Action** to assist one investigator, granting a +1 Circumstance Bonus (stacking to +2). If the players wish to spend significant time investigating, resolve it as an **Undertaking** (see the Basic Rules).

OPENING THE UPPER HATCH

By turning the valve, the hatch bursts open with violent force. Sweet-rot smell floods down. Strange black flakes drift through like slow-falling ash.

Effect: Anyone entering the Observatory increases their Surreality by 1.

METEORAVIAN JOURNAL

The Meteoravians were studying weather phenomena—specifically lightning patterns and atmospheric conditions. The tower collected data and captured lightning using galvanic batteries.

They also used the tower as a test site for the Pyriscus Graft. The grafted plant produced insulating sap that crews applied to gloves and boots for protection. This graft had been discovered during studies of the Aetherika, phenomena bordering the fringes of reality. So this was the perfect location for the Meteoravians to experiment with it: feeding the plant lightning energy through the batteries to observe mutations and growth acceleration.

The experiment succeeded—too well. The plant grew aggressively, punctured the battery casings, and began feeding directly on the stored electrical charge. Its growth accelerated beyond control. It began producing toxic black pollen that made the crew sick. After weeks of deteriorating health conditions, the crew evacuated and sealed the observatory level five years ago.

The researchers believed the Aetherika phenomena were merely natural anomalies at the fringes of Reality. They did not understand that their experiments were making the boundary thinner

THIRD FLOOR: THE OBSERVATORY DOME

The ruined observatory is strewn with shattered glassware and punctured galvanic batteries. A heavy cable runs from the batteries to the base of a retractable lightning antenna housed in the dome.

Rampant black vines fill the chamber—gnarled like charred wood and oozing inky sap. Beneath their fractured bark, a black membrane pulses with organic life, as though breathing.

Once the characters have taken in the room, draw their attention upward:

“The black vine shape circles and nests in the dome’s crown like an inverse serpent, coiling inward. In the center of the nest’s folds, cradled in a pool of black film-like tar, lies a child—pale, sleeping, the white in this crowning blackness.”

Near the damaged batteries a shattered plant glasshouse sloughs the same black sap and thick stalks. Black flakes drift through the air like slow pollen staining like ash those that come in contact with it. Smaller tendrils spread across walls and ceiling trapping a telescope and a small desk with a notebook.

On the wall there is a dirty brass sign with instructions: *“Retract antenna after lightning collection to prevent discharge through lower floors.”*

GM Note: Among the sprawling roots and vines the characters may find some alchemical jars of: Calcined Ash, Aqua Fortis, Purified Mercury, Purified Sulfur. They can be used by **Apothecaries** and **Taboo Enthusiasts** as resources for their abilities.

GM Note: If the party has read the Vulcan Treatise they have a basic understanding for what this plant is. It is the Pyriscus, but larger and more toxic than what is described in the book.

THE CHILD

Eight or nine years old. Features obscured by black sap-like slime. Alive, breathing shallowly, eyes unfocused. When approached, the child stirs. Eyes focus slowly. Tries to speak—words garbled, wet, strange.

“Help. Don’t know... how here. Want home. Want... farm.”

It cannot provide clear descriptions and gestures vaguely southward. The characters might recognize this as matching the hillside farms. The child is clearly afraid, shivering, reaching toward the party with slime-covered hands. It might panic or cooperate depending on character behavior.

The Child’s Nature: Billien is a real child whose psyche became enmeshed with the Dreamscape through prolonged exposure to the black pollen, which acts as a bridge between physical and Otherworldly states. The child in the observatory is real, what returns from the Dreamscape if the child is lost is not. It is a Changeling”

THE PHENOMENA BEGIN

As the party prepares to leave or becomes violent with the child, lightning strikes. The vine-tree trembles. Branches move with intention. Black sap-like slime drips faster from the ceiling.

Lightning Strike (Reality Thins): The lightning strike hits without warning. For a single breath, everything inverts. The black vine becomes white like bone, a white so wrong. The walls become pitch black. The pollen becomes white like snow drifting slowly in the room. Your own hands are shadows. The plant moves, swaying, reaching, stretching beyond the dome like something waking, remembering its arms. Then it’s gone. Normal colors, the plant is still. The pollen is black and ashen-like.

Second lightning strike (ruptures Reality). Once the characters have investigated the observatory and interacted with the child, the next major lightning strike tears open the Dreamscape. The characters and child are pulled across together.

Lightning Effect: Anyone touching metal connected to the antenna takes 4 Harm and is knocked prone. Anyone wearing rubber boots takes no harm. Make a Resilience roll to reduce Harm by 1 for each success.

Slime Effect: Contact with slime causes 1 Stress as it seems to crawl on the skin. Partial cover available beneath intact ceiling sections.

GM Note: Use the winch to disconnect the antenna and stop lightning damage.

The air thickens. Distances become wrong. Sounds echo incorrectly. Shadows move independently. They stand at a Dreamscape threshold—reality ruptured by the tower’s isolation, charged atmosphere, and whatever the child truly is.

Scene 4: Dreamscape Eruption

The walls cease to exist. Space expands into a landscape of ruins—broken foundations, collapsed structures held together by overgrown black vines. The steel antenna rises into the sky, balanced by the vine-tree which becomes vast, branches merging with black storm clouds. From those clouds falls black rain—thick, viscous, unnaturally slow. To the south, the landscape dissolves into swirling prismatic void.

The child is running towards it.

DREAMING RULES

Dreams are not safe places. They are where the Otherworld presses through and reality shifts into Surreality. Within Dreamscapes, characters can interact with them in three ways, or with any Dreamscape powers they possess.

Lucidity is your grip on reality. When the scene demands it, roll Lucidity to make a Reality Check. Failure lets the dream seep inside—increasing **Surreality Strain** by 1.

Reverie is dream-logic movement. Where waking bodies are blocked by dream-objects such as ruins or vines, dreaming minds find impossible paths. **Roll Reverie** to bypass obstacles without interference.

Chimaera is dream-logic manipulation. Reshape, redirect, or conjure the dream itself. **Roll Chimaera** to alter what the dream presents: reshape a vine barrier, conjure a handhold, or redirect falling debris. Major changes draw the dream's attention and may make the environment more hazardous.

Dreamwalk is Yvette's gift. She instinctively perceives a Dreamscape's boundaries and anchors—where it is rooted and how it can be exited. She can guide others to a safe exit.

BEFORE THE CHASE

Set the Child's Starting Distance

- Child was calm in the observatory: Medium Distance
- Child was agitated: Long Distance.

Tell the Players: Yvette instinctively recognizes that the vine-tree at the center of the Dreamscape is rooted in Reality. It forms a bridge between worlds, and the only safe way out is through its folds. She can guide the League to safety—but only once they have the child with them. The others know only that the child is fleeing toward the southern edge. If it reaches the edge, it is lost.

The Child's Perception: Terrified, the child sees the League as shadowy figures with grasping hands, just as it did during the lightning strike. To the child, they are nightmare pursuers who dragged it from safety. Its fear shapes the Dreamscape around it as it runs, crying, "No! Stay away!"

Darken the Game, Reveal a Secret (Optional): If a character has accumulated enough Shadow to cross the first Shadow Tier threshold, reveal that character's Secret through the child's perception of the Dreamscape. If multiple characters qualify, reveal the Secret of the character with the highest Shadow.

SECRETS REVEALED!

Artefis Secret (Stolen Prototype): Stolen Prototype of a mysterious device.

Why did she steal it? What does she fear it can do?

Hakiro's Secret (Military Diserter): Deserted the Military after killing his comrades. Why did he kill them? Does he regret it?

Yvette's Secret (Dream-Predator): A Dream-Predator follows her.

Why does it follow her? What does it want?

Barto's Secret (Boogie-man): He is the Boogie-man of Hollow's Crossing responsible for many missing children.

What happened to the children? Why did he take them?

THE CHASE

Each round, players act first. Then:

- The dreamscape worsens. (see The Rounds below)
- The child moves one Short Distance toward the southern edge.

Closing the Distance: Roll Athletics or Reverie (Dream-walker only).

- **Success:** Gain one Short Distance closer to it.
- **Exceptional Success:** Gain one Medium Distance on it
- **Failure:** Lose one Short Distance.

The child can be caught once a character reaches Close Range.

Calming the Child: Once the child is reached, one character must speak, gesture, or act in a way that convinces the child they are trying to take it home.

Round 1: Black rain begins. Anyone standing in the open is coated in slime (1 Stress). The scattered ruins offer partial shelter—but the child continues south.

Round 2: Distances become unreliable. Near seems far; far seems near. All movement rolls except Reverie are one step harder this round.

Round 3: Lightning strikes nearby. Black vine-trees erupt where it lands—gnarled and forked, like the child's charcoal drawings of black lightning. They block paths. Moving through one requires a roll. Failure prevents advancement this round.

Round 4: Reality tears. Gravity loosens. Ruins drift upward toward the great vine-tree as the prismatic southern edge churns and expands. If the child reaches it this round, it is lost.

Round 5: If the child has not been caught, it disappears into the void. The dreamscape collapses. See Ending B.

Round 6: If the child is caught, the characters return to the vine-tree, the safest way back to reality. A small shadowy child-like figure climbs down the vine-tree from the black clouds.

Round 7: The figure is the Towerling of the old myth. Black lightning strikes it and it begins to grow. The characters must defeat it before it becomes a giant.

COMBAT WITH THE TOWERLING

While protecting the child (**the Dreamscape anchor**), all characters gain **+1 Circumstance Bonus** against the Towerling.

Rounds 8–10 (Combat): Each round, lightning feeds the Towerling, increasing its size.

Round 11 (Fight ends): If the Towerling has been defeated, the characters escape through the folds in the vine-tree's trunk. See **Ending A**. Otherwise, the Towerling becomes a giant, seizes the child, and devours it. See **Ending B**.

THE TOWERLING

Stats

Move: 3

Slam: 4 | +1 Harm

Base: 2 (all other rolls)

Strain cap: 8

Growth: Each lightning strike increases its Strain capacity by 2 and Harm by +1.

Black slime: Each target it touches increases their Stress by 1.

Endings

The party lands back in reality gasping. Read aloud:
"The storm has broken. Pale sunlight filters through the dome's cracked glass. Black flakes drift down and settle like ash on everything."

All characters make a Lucidity roll on failure increase Sur-reality by 1. Then look to the vine-growth and tell players one of these truths:

Child rescued: The vines are withering. Blackened tendrils hang limp, crumbling where you touch them. Whatever held this place open is closing.

Child Lost: The vines still pulse faintly, slick and alive. The breach is dormant — but not sealed.

The child lies unconscious at the center of the room, covered in dried black latex-like residue. After a few minutes it

stirs, eyes opening slowly: “Want... home. Mama. Papa.” It cannot explain how it arrived at the tower. When asked about the farms it gestures southward, uncertain, like someone remembering a dream.

ENDING A — CHILD RESCUED

The moment the characters pass through the vine-tree with the child, reality snaps back. They awaken in the observatory, gasping and covered in black latex slime, the child in someone’s arms. Around them, the vine-growth withers, blackens, and crumbles to ash. The breach is sealed. The child is rescued.

ENDING B — CHILD LOST

If the child reaches the edge—or is devoured by the Towerling—the dreamscape fractures. Reality snaps the party back into the observatory. They land hard, gasping... then hear a soft sound.

The child falls from the vine’s folds like ripe fruit, covered in black slime and trembling. If the child was not rescued and escorted safely out, it remains lost in the Dreamscape forever. What returns is an identical changeling. It looks exactly like Billien. It is not Billien.

THE JOURNEY BACK

By evening the League reaches the red-doored farmhouse. Billien breaks into a run. The parents embrace their child without asking a single question. Now the characters may end their dealings with the Hillside NPCs and prepare to return to Aldorf. Before they leave read aloud the following:

“When the reunion settles and the League prepares to leave, Billien stands in the doorway watching them. Warm lamplight spills through the windows. Voices drift from inside as a family slowly becomes itself again. The father quietly presses payment into one of your hands while the mother is already preparing supper. They thank the League, and Billien waves as you leave.”

Then add conditionally:

Child rescued (Real Billien) - *“The smile is tired and genuine.”*

Child escaped / eaten (the changeling) - *“The smile is almost right.”*

CLUE PATH (FOR GM)

The adventure does not require the characters to discover every clue. The important discoveries form a chain:

The Hillside Farms: Billien disappeared three days ago, and his drawings depict the tower, black trees, and lightning.

The Treatise: The Meteoravians experimented with the Pyriscus Graft, using lightning to accelerate its growth and produce insulating sap.

The Tower: The experiment continued beyond the researchers’ departure. The black growth is larger and more dangerous than the original Pyriscus described in the Treatise.

The Relay Chamber: The instruments stopped recording three days ago—the same day Billien disappeared.

The Observatory: The growth has become something beyond a normal plant, and Billien is found within it.

The Lightning Strike: Reality briefly inverts around the characters, revealing that the tower has become a threshold to something beyond Reality.

The Dreamscape: The vine-tree is the anchor connecting the Dreamscape to Reality, while the Towerling embodies the old stories surrounding the phenomenon.

If the players miss a particular clue, do not block their progress. Reveal the next useful piece through another appropriate investigation, conversation, or observation.

Appendix

Glossary

Aether: That which shines and burns. The hidden element connecting physical, mental, and spiritual existence. Described in Alchemical scriptures it was rediscovered by the Clockwork Faction after the Meteor Fall.

Aetherika: Phenomena produced by Aether anomalies — celestial phenomena, spirits, folklore creatures, and Dreamscapes that cross from the Otherworld into reality.

Age of Drowning: A century ago in the year 1660 of the Nibu Crowning (N.C.), the Meteor Fall fractured reality.

Alchemy: The secret art of using the natural processes to refine matter and the self. Outlawed by the Clockwork Faction and branded the Taboo Art.

Apostates: Nibu Lords who fled their homeland to the Vantage highlands, where they united with other sovereigns to form the Magistrate and fund the Clockwork Faction.

Clockwork Faction: The technocratic authority that emerged from the catastrophe. Governs what counts as knowledge, superstition, and danger. Builders of the Domed Cities and enforcers of the New Order.

Dispossessed: Those left outside the Domed Cities — immigrants, refugees, and followers of the Old Ways who make their home in the Shallows without Clockwork protection or resources.

Divine Kingdom: The ancient Kingdom of Nibu, once the dominant power of the eastern continent Kaldren. Its collapse following the Meteor Fall set the conditions for the New Order.

Dreamscape: A collective dream made physically real, anchored to a location or a shared fear. Can be entered in sleep or encountered awake in places where reality grows thin.

Drowning (The): The century of catastrophic flooding that followed the Meteor Fall. Rising seas swallowed the western continent of Mazadhara and reshaped the world. Also called the Days of Rain.

Emerald Tablet: A mythic stone said to contain the teachings for reshaping the world.

Gentry: The privileged ruling class of the New Order —

nobles, bourgeoisie, and technocrats who secured their place in the Domed Cities by aligning with the Clockwork Faction.

Kaldren: The eastern continent of the Old Kingdoms, divided between the Vantage highlands and the flooded lowlands known as the Shallows.

Kommonwealth: The loose network of city states operating under Clockwork Faction influence in the Shallows, using silver as currency and sheltering the dispossessed and immigrant populations.

League: A company of specialists bound by shared purpose and funded by a benefactor to investigate alchemical secrets.

Magistrate: The council of sovereigns who gathered in the Vantage after the Drowning to establish the New Order and fund the Clockwork Faction.

Mazadhara: The western continent, almost entirely swallowed by the Drowning. Its survivors fled east to Kaldren becoming the dispossessed, bringing their cultures, folklore, and madness with them.

Meteor Fall: The catastrophic impact of a celestial body on earth that fractured reality and triggered the Age of Drowning.

New Order: The political stance of the Magistrate — preserving the status quo of the Gentry ruling classes through technocratic governance and the suppression of the Old Ways.

Old Ways: The practices of old, bordering hedge wisdom, folklore superstition, and ancient rituals.

Otherworld: The abstract realm of concepts, archetypes and spirits, invisible to normal perception and reason. The source of Aether anomalies and Dreamscapes.

Shallows: The flooded lowlands of Kaldren where the dispossessed, immigrants, and followers of the Old Ways make their home.

Spirits: Otherworldly entities that cross into reality through Dreamscapes and Aether anomalies. Often take the form of folklore creatures carrying symbolic truths.

Surreality: The disorienting influence of the Otherworld bleeding into reality. Manifests as wrongness, the uncanny, and the blurring of sensation and meaning.

Taboo Art: See Alchemy.

Vantage: The Highlands of Kaldren the Eastern continent

Adversaries

BANDIT

Stats

Move: 3

Melee: 3 | +1 Harm

Ranged: 3 | +1 Harm

Base roll: 2

Strain: 4

Crude Equipment: They use knives, clubs, or rusted blades, crossbows or crude muskets. Their equipment can easily break.

CLOCKWORK SOLDIER

Stats

Melee: 3 | +0 Harm

Ranged: 3 | +3 Harm

Base dice pool: 2

Strain: 6 | Armor 2

Advanced Military Gear: They use Clockwork rifles that can shoot 4 times before reload, officers use six-shooter revolvers. Wear Slick black Seberus Armor beneath.

WOLF

Stats

Move: 4

Bite: 5 | +1 Harm

Smell: 5

Strain: 4

Keen smell: Wolves can detect presence within 5 miles.

Pack: Wolves usually hunt in groups and do the Help action for one another.

BEAR

Stats

Move: 4

Claw: 6 | +2 Harm

Smell: 5

Strain: 8 | Armor 1

Climb: Bears can climb surfaces by using their claws and their insane strength.

Natural Armor: Body Fat protects the vital areas and are harder to kill by superficial blows.

HORSE, RIDING

Stats

Charge: 5

Hooves: 3 | +1 Harm

Stamina: 4

Strain: 6

Travels & Combat: Use Stamina for travels and Charge for combat.

Rider: The Rider gets +1 Circumstance Bonus when in Combat.

HORSE, DRAFT

Stats

Charge: 4

Hooves: 3 | +2 Harm

Stamina: 5

Strain: 8

Travels & Combat: Use Stamina for travels and Charge for combat.

Pulling Strength: Each Horse used give a +1 Circumstance Bonus for Travel checks.

Gear and Equipment

GEAR AND EQUIPMENT

NAME	DESCRIPTION
Anesthetic	• +2 Impact to put someone to sleep after digestion or injection.
Artisan's tools	• +1 Impact to practice your profession as an artisan. Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Chemlight	• A stick with a retractable glass tube that faintly glows once it is exposed.
Climbing Kit	• +2 Impact when climbing, rappelling, crossing obstacles, or securing ropes.
Field Glasses	• +1 Impact to observe and reading outdoors.
First Aid Kit (+1B)	• +1 Minor Bonus to recover Harm (stabilize bleeding, treat poison etc). Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Forgery Kit	• +1 Impact to create, alter, or falsify fake documents, seals, and signatures. Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Hurricane lamp	• An oil lamp that stays lit even in harsh weather due to its iron casket protecting it.
Lockpicks	• +1 Impact to quietly open locks or disable simple mechanical locks.
Magnifying Glass	• +1 Impact to examine clues, documents, tracks, residues, or other fine details.
Mechanical tools	• +2 Impact to make repairs or sabotage mechanical equipment. Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Musical Instrument	• +2 Impact on improving others disposition toward you when performing.
Navigation Tools	• +2 Impact to find your way by compass, spyglass, maps
Pocket-watch (+1B)	• +1 Minor Bonus on Urban Social encounters. An accessory that tells the time and can show social status.
Poison	• +2 Impact to cause a temporary Trauma: poisoned that gives a -1 Minor Penalty to the one affected .
Spagyrics Tools (+1B)	• +1 Minor Bonus break down and combine substances into concoctions. Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Stimpack	• A pack of injections with stimulants that remove the Strained Condition (any Strained Penalties Minor or Major) for a Scene .
Tinderbox	• A box with all necessary materials to start a campfire. Without it you have -1 Minor Penalty due to improvised tools.
Traps and snares	• +2 Impact to hunting. It includes bear traps, snares, and nets.

Phenomena Table

WEATHER PHENOMENA

D6	FOLK NAME	DESCRIPTION	EFFECT
1	Ashfall	Rain , mixed with fine grey residue, it is a rare occasion and some consider it an omen and an auspicious time.	The ash that falls slowly turns everything into a colorless setting and causes shortness of breath risking Harm Strain.
2	King's Tide	A single exceptionally high tide arriving with almost no warning	Low ground floods within minutes up many miles from the waterfronts; anyone caught there risks getting stranded and losing supplies.
3	Squall	Sudden violent windstorm at open sea, capable of overturning small boats	Harm risk to anyone on the water; forces an emergency landing and delays the mission
4	Cloudburst	Sudden, intense downpour that turns roads to mud and makes travel risky	Travel time increases sharply; can cause fall, getting stuck.
5	The Grey Hour	At specific latitudes Daylight dims unnaturally, disorienting anyone outdoors	Navigation checks get harder; sense of direction and sense of time is distorted
6	The Weeping Glass	Moisture condenses on windows and glass in patterns resembling faces or writing	Studying the pattern risks Surreality Strain. the GM can use the pattern as a clue for a person.

AETHERIKA

D4	FOLK NAME	DESCRIPTION	EFFECT
1	Static Bloom	Electrical storm that arcs strangely toward Aether-marked objects or sites	Lightning strikes to a proximity to Aether sources. Exposure risks a Surreality Strain check.
2	Hollow Wind	Wind carrying faint voices — Dreamscape bleed into the waking world	Listening too long triggers Stress Strain; may pull a character toward an unplanned Dreamscape encounter
3	Rainbow Trail	Prismatic lights show up on the sky, they seem to go on endlessly to the observer.	Following the prismatic trail leads to Aether infused areas. Risk of spirit encounter, or entering a Dreamscape.
4	Spirit Encounter	A presence that animates the environment in a supernatural way. It becomes stronger over time.	Peaceful spirit: risk of Surreality Strain. Hostile spirit: Risk of Harm and Stress Strain.

Trauma Table

When a Strain Track fills, choose a Trauma from the appropriate table: Harm, Stress, or Surreality. Choose one that reflects what the character has endured, or let the player choose.

A Trauma is a lasting change to the character. Use it as a prompt for future play, shaping descriptions, reactions, and situations. It does not impose a fixed mechanical penalty unless the Trauma itself specifies one.

Choose a Trauma that fits the severity of the event. The first 12 entries are less severe; the final 8 are more severe and lasting. You can pick one or roll based on the table.

STRAIN TRAUMAS

D12	HARM	STRESS	SURREALITY
1	Scarred Face	Irritability	Déjà Vu Episodes
2	Limp	Shaken	Aura Sightings
3	Weak Back	Night Terrors	Ectoplasmic Sensitivity
4	Burn Scars	Melancholy	Flickering Reflections
5	Missing Teeth	Uncertainty	Distorted Sense of Time
6	Damaged Knee	Insomnia	Automatic Writing
7	Hearing Loss	Fear of the Dark	Voices from the Otherworld
8	Damaged Jaw	Social Withdrawal	Living Shadows
9	Mangled Nose	Distrust	Phantom Presence
10	Crushed Hand	Obsession	Dream Intrusions
11	Broken Bones	Compulsive Habits	Hallucinations
12	Maimed Limb	Claustrophobia	Premonitions
D8	SEVERE HARM	SEVERE STRESS	SEVERE SURREALITY
13	Cut Tendons	Rage	Delirium
14	Missing Fingers	Hypervigilance	Lost Time
15	Disfigured	Survivor's Guilt	False Memories
16	Missing Eye	Melancholy	Objects Shift When Unwatched
17	Ringling Ears	Agoraphobia	Impossible Architecture
18	Crippled Foot	Apathy	The Other in the Mirror
19	Missing Limb	Paranoia	Unseen Observer
20	Collapsed Lung	Fatalism	Recurring Doppelgänger



AGE OF DROWNING

1 Impact / Damage / Marked / Disabled

STORY POINTS

Scene ☒ Session
 ○ Passive ● Story

[illegible]

"I've got to pry it open and take a look inside"
- **Artefis Wayland**

The Mad Scientist

You stand between worlds. While others see only material reality, you perceive what lies beyond—spirits that linger, dreams that manifest, and the Otherworld bleeding through. This gift isolates you. People fear what you see, doubt what you know, and resent truths you reveal.

But the presence of the Otherworld speaks to you, the Dreamscape opens before you, and phenomena that terrify others become navigable territory. You translate the incomprehensible, commune with what lies beyond, and walk paths where few dare to tread.

Motivation

Novelty — You are drawn to everything new that hasn't been discovered.

Darkness

Obsession — The work consumes you. You do not notice what you will destroy to feed it.

Complication

Overclocked (Prosthetic Arm): When Artefis fails a Pushed action using her prosthetic arm, the arm malfunctions and becomes unusable until repaired. She cannot make actions with both hands. While her prosthetic arm is unusable, Artefis is considered one-armed. All **Creation Actions** are at **Formidable Difficulty (3 Successes)**.

Significant Items

Missus Pry (Gear): A pry tool fashioned in the miniature brass likeness of a lady, mounted on a rod with a hydraulic pressure handle. Its reverse-opening jaws can force open doors and other mechanisms. It can also be used as an improvised weapon.

Damage: +1 Harm, Improvised (-1P)

Impact: +2 on Breaking and Entering Undertakings

Brass Ball of Wonders (Gear): A versatile clockwork device that Artefis made on her own after "obtaining" some of the Clockwork Faction's devices.

Auto-Lockpick: Affixed to a door or other surface, its winding mechanism manipulates the lock through a series of angles and lengths until it opens it. It performs a lockpicking Undertaking with a dice pool of 3 (2d6 + 1d8).

Smoke Bomb: When thrown, it releases a dense cloud of smoke in a 2 m radius. Characters within the area can avoid the effect at Hard Difficulty.

Alarm: Its winding clockwork mechanism can be set to sound an alarm after a specified interval.

Focus Abilities

Prosthetics (Abomination Ability): Passive

When not hiding their physical peculiarities, characters with Abomination abilities have a **Flaw on Social (Intimacy)** rolls. For each point in Prosthetics, mark 1 **Permanent Harm** on the Harm Track and gain 1 **Armor**. Armor can be reduced due to wear or damage, prosthetics require maintenance.

Integrated Extra Tools (Prosthetics Ability): Her mechanical arm incorporates lenses, screwdrivers, tongs, cutters, and other tools. It provides 2 Impact worth of integrated tools, which can be stored within the arm. The tools can be replaced or modified as needed.

Iron Grip (Prosthetics Ability): Pushed beyond normal specifications, the mechanical arm can crush and hold extreme weights. +2 Major Bonus on Grappling and against Disarm.



Missus Pry



The Medium

OUROBOROS

AGE OF DROWNING

NAME	Yvette Deschnet		
AGE	21	GENDER	F
ROLE	Medium	VOCATION	Confidante
MOTIVATION	Curiosity	SOCIAL CLASS	Middle
DARKNESS	Addiction	SECRET	
LEAGUE	Dorfas	MISSION	
GOAL			
Advancement			
EXPERIENCE POINTS			
STORYPOINTS			
1 Rating Number			
7 Checked			
X Disabled			

Traits

SKILLS DICE POOL

Creation

ARTS, CRAFTS, DEVICES

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Environment

N AVIGATION, SENSES, SURVIVAL

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Social

AUTHORITY, INTIMACY, INTRIGUE

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Information

EDUCATION, RESEARCH, WHISPERS

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Combat

CLOSE QUARTERS, MELEE, MARKSMANSHIP

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

AFFINITIES DICE POOL

Physical

ATHLETICS, RESILIENCE, SUBTLETY

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Channeling

AWARENESS, CONTROL, FORCE

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Dreaming

CHIMÆRA, LUCIDITY, REVERE

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Resolve

CONVICTION, COURAGE, IDENTITY

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Occult

FOULDORE, SYMBOLS, TRANSMUTATION

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Focuses

MUNDANE

INNOVATION

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

EXPLORATION

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INFLUENCE

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KNOWLEDGE

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MARTIAL

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MYSTICAL

ABOMINATION

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RESONANCE

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DREAMSCAPES

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FAITH

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RITUAL

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FOCUS ABILITIES

Apothecary

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FOCUS ABILITIES

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Dreamwalk

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Assets

GEAR

(Outfits, Tools, Consumables)

Shattered Obscura, Tome

Puppy's kiss, injection

Tarnal Cards

Spagety's Tools

Simpbuck, injection

Connections

PULLING STRINGS

Local Thinkers

Local Artist Clinques

Status

CREDIT

LOWER

MIDDLE

UPPER

Strain

HARM

ARMOR

STRAINED

Strain

STRESS

ARMOR

STRAINED

Strain

SHADOW

ARMOR

STRAINED

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WEARIED

ARMOR

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FORSAKEN

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COMPLICATIONS

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"Some dreams are worth following..."
- Yvette Deschmet

The Medium

You stand between worlds. While others see only material reality, you perceive what lies beyond—spirits that linger, dreams that manifest, and the Otherworld bleeding through. This gift isolates you. People fear what you see, doubt what you know, and resent truths you reveal.

But the presence of the Otherworld speaks to you, the Dreamscape opens before you, and phenomena that terrify others become navigable territory. You translate the incomprehensible, commune with what lies beyond, and walk paths where few dare to tread.

Motivation

Curiosity — Every door that shouldn't be opened, you open it.

Darkness

Addiction — You peek in the dreams of others without consent. It is an escape. It is intoxicating.

Complication

Living Dreams (Poppy's Kiss): Miss Deschmet has always dreamed of being a noble lady or princess, escaping into paintings, old stories, and trance-induced dreams where she could live the life she imagined. As a confidante to noble ladies, she often retreats into their dreams, experiencing the anxieties and privileges of aristocratic life. During one such dream journey, she encountered a formless, predatory creature lurking at the edge of her perception. The encounter followed her into waking life, and she became afraid to use the dream-inducing herbs she once relied upon. Though the memory has faded, the fear remains. **Whenever she uses Poppy's Kiss, she increases her Stress by 1.**

Significant Items

Field Syringe (Gear): A specialized syringe used to administer concentrated preparations by injection. Yvette keeps it carefully maintained and carries different preparations for different purposes.

Poppy's Kiss: Applies the concoction. In combat induces sleep (Hard Difficulty) for a scene.

Stimpack: Ignore **Strained** condition for a scene.

Extraction: Extract liquids and gasses and store them in containers.

Spagyrica Obscura (Gear): A collection of obscure alchemical and apothecary knowledge, containing recipes and notes on trance, dreaming, symbols and medicinal preparations.

Focus Abilities

Dreamwalking (Dreamscapes Ability): **Passive**
While sleeping or meditating, you can attempt to enter the Dreamscape. Make a **Dreaming (Reverie)** roll to

enter a Dreamscape. Within a Dream or Dreamscape, you can perceive its boundaries and anchors, and guide others with you on your Reverie rolls to navigate the dream.

Dream Journal (Dreaming Ability): **Once per Session**
By studying your recorded dreams, make a **Dreaming (Lucidity)** Undertaking to recall symbolic memories connected to a mystery you have **previously encountered in Dreamscapes**.

Apothecary (Innovation Ability): **Passive**
You can concoct powerful potions and remedies that offer healing, stamina boosts, or temporary enhancements to abilities. Success increases the potency and effectiveness of the concoction, granting a **Circumstance Bonus** to the intended action. You start with one concoction recipe and learn an additional recipe with each point spent in this Focus.

Poppy's Kiss: This recipe opens the mind to the Dreamscape. It produces a light medicinal oil that can be mixed into food or drink, applied to tobacco, or injected directly.

- **Dreaming: +2 Major Bonus** for a Scene; **increase Surreality by 1.**
- **Syringe:** On a successful attack, the target must resist **Sleep at Hard difficulty** with Resilience roll. Poppy's Kiss deals no Harm. The target also gains the effects of Dreaming above.



Poppy's Kiss

"A sword needs a hand. A man needs a place."

- Hakiro Amasu

The Vigil

You protect. You are the vigil, the constant watch that never wavers. Whether bound by sacred oath, solemn contract, or unbreakable duty, you ensure those under your watch survive another day. Your body stands between danger and those too valuable, too fragile, or too important to lose.

You know violence intimately, it is your tool, deployed with precision when words and presence fail. Some stay vigilant through honor, while others through grim necessity. Loyalty defines you. Failure haunts you. And you will bear any cost to ensure those you guard do not fall.

Motivation

Honor— Loyalty and the strength of your vows shape your

purpose and meaning.

Darkness

Violence— The smell of blood and war never left you. It is still in your hands.

Complication

Temperance: Like a sword, Hakiro's character is tempered between heat and cold. Through the sword he trains his mind, body, and spirit, willing himself to transform from a soldier of the Dragon Army into the teacher of a young lord. Yet the memories of violence remain, and he uses herbs and alcohol to dull their edge and quiet his fears. The sights and sounds of war sometimes return unbidden in the form of horrific flashbacks, giving Hakiro an **Environment (Senses)** Flaw.

Significant Items

Noragata (Weapon): Forged to serve Lord Dorfiar, this sword symbolizes Hakiro's transformation from wandering deserter to sworn retainer. Its name means "stray-no-more."

This weapon is Oathbound granting the following:

+1 **Bonus** when defending Lord Dorfiar's interests,

-1 **Penalty** when fighting for personal gain.

Pot-Puffer (Keepsake): The pot-puffer is a matchlock mechanism that was taken out of a broken pistol and has been fashioned into a tobacco and herb smoking device as a gift from Edric, his half-brother.

- When Hakiro uses it, he ignores his **Environment (Senses)** Flaw for the Scene and increases his **Surreality** by 1. His flashbacks recede, clearing his perception enough to glimpse things that should remain unseen.

Focus Abilities

Counter-Attack, Weapon of Choice
(**Martial Ability**): **Passive**

When an enemy in **Close Range** attacks you and fumbles (critically misses), you may immediately attack

them with your melee Weapon of Choice (Noragata) for free. This does not cost an action.

En Garde (Martial Ability): **Passive**

Spend a Simple Action to enter a defensive stance with a melee weapon. While in this stance, melee attacks against you must succeed at **Formidable Difficulty** (3 **successes**) to hit you. You can make **ATTACK** actions while in stance. The stance ends when you take a **CHARGE**, or **RUN** actions (you can still **MOVE**). **Firearm ATTACKS**, **GRAPPLE**, and **TACKLE** are unaffected by this stance and can hit you normally.

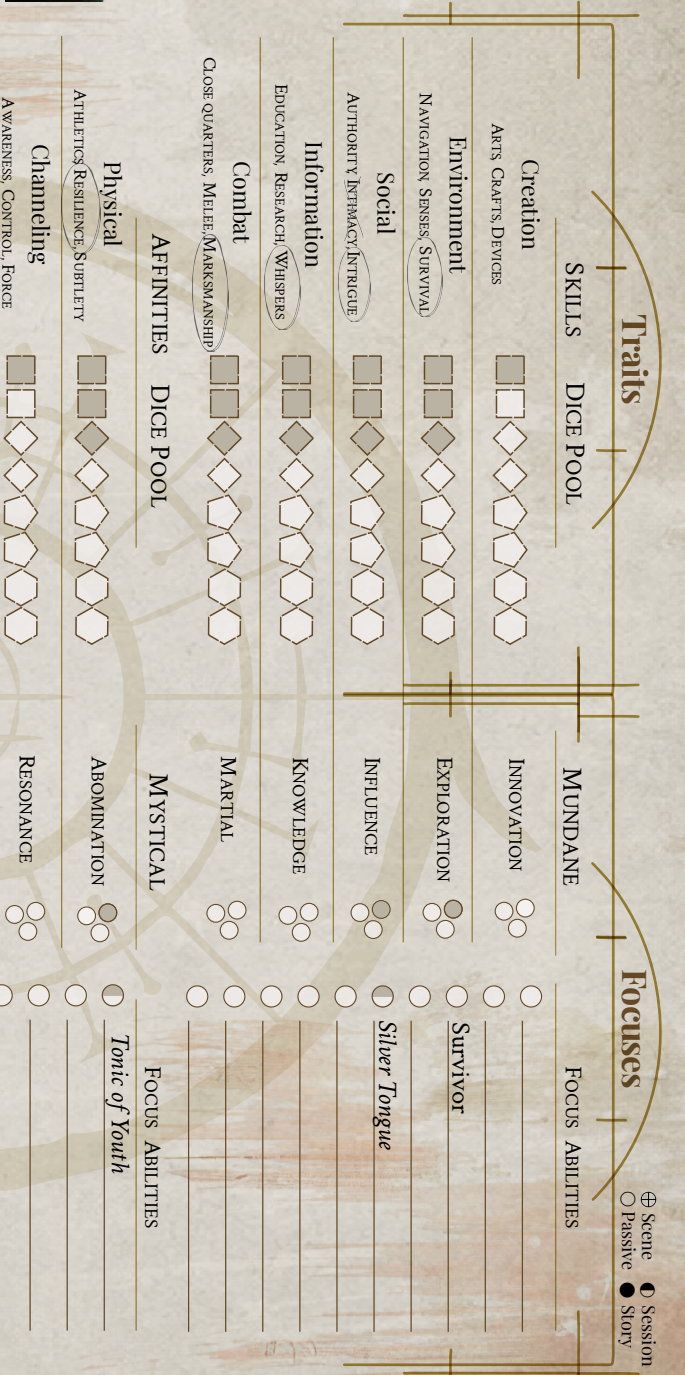
Metallurgist, Master Artisan

(**Innovation Ability**): **Once Per Scene**

Your chosen craft type is: **Metallurgy**. When making a Crafts Undertaking Action to create items of your chosen type, gain +2 **Impact** to determine if the item is of superior quality. Superior quality requires Heroic Difficulty (4 Successes)



Noragata
Noragata



DREAMING		DREAMSCAPES	
CHIMERA, LUCIDITY, REVERIE			
Resolve			
CONVICTION, COURAGE, IDENTITY			
Resolve			
CONVICTION, COURAGE, IDENTITY			
Resolve			
CONVICTION, COURAGE, IDENTITY			
Resolve			
CONVICTION, COURAGE, IDENTITY			

[illegible]

“Nothing is impossible, for the right price
- Bartolomeus “Barto” Deschmet

The Fixer

You make things happen. Where others see obstacles, you see leverage—connections to exploit, deals to broker, problems that dissolve when the right pressure is applied.

You operate in grey spaces between legal and illegal, official and unofficial, doing what needs doing without asking permission. Whether through charm, coin, or applied threats, you get results.

Your network spans classes and factions because you’ve learned that everyone needs something, and everyone can be useful. Morality is negotiable. Survival isn’t.

Motivation

Redemption — You have done wrong, preyed on the lives of others. Is there still time to follow a righteous path?

Darkness

Greed — You want nobility, wealth and status. You will reach for them regardless of the cost.

Complication

Borrowed Time: Bartolomeus depends on the Tonic of Youth to maintain his appearance and suppress the effects of age and old wounds. Whenever he has an opportunity to obtain *Ashes of Youth* to prepare another dose, he must pursue it or **increase Shadow by 1**. Without the Tonic, his age and old wounds become increasingly apparent. His **Abomination Flaw** applies to Social (Intimacy) rolls when these signs cannot be concealed.

Significant Items

Ivory Rifle (Weapon): One of Barto’s prized acquisitions, is a hunting rifle favored by the aristocracy. He acquired it at an auction in the Kommonwealth. This modified rifle allows him to shoot at distances comparable to sharpshooters. Acquiring this rifle brought him closer to the noble Houses that want to see it in action in one of their hunts.

Damage: 3 M, 3 L

Ammo / Reload: 1 / 2 actions

Spider (Headscope): Crafted by Artelis and called “Spider” due to its many goggles, the headscope is used for both scouting and hunting, though most noblemen would consider its use cheating. Bartholomeus treasures it as it allows him to travel safely and spot danger from afar.

Impact: +1 (on Senses rolls)

Modifier: +2 Major Bonus on AIM actions.

Focus Abilities

Survivor (Environment Ability): Passive
When taking strain from Environmental hazards or conditions reduce this strain by half, rounded down.

Silver Tongue (Influence Ability): Once per Session
When an NPC would refuse your request, you may use logical reasoning or emotional appeal to make them reconsider. The NPC instead agrees to negotiate, provide limited assistance, or share information they would otherwise withhold.

Tonic of Youth, Taboo Enthusiast (Abomination Ability): Once per Session
Requires Ashes of Youth Component (Obtain through your Complication at GM’s discretion)

When not hiding their physical peculiarities, characters with Abomination abilities have a **Flaw on Social (Intimacy)** rolls.

You have learned a forbidden formula for extending life using Ashes of Youth. The Tonic preserves a youthful appearance while leaving traces of age, making you unnerving to behold. To prepare it, combine the Ashes with a small amount of your own bodily matter and subject the mixture to an alchemical process that produces the draught.

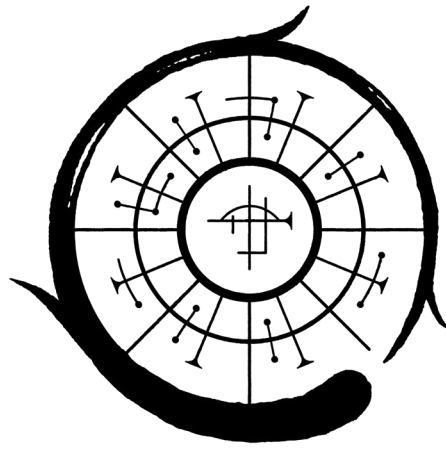
Prepare: Calcine your own matter with the Ashes of Youth to create the draught. **Increase your Shadow by 1.**

Drink: The drinker removes 1 Temporary or Permanent Harm, then increases their Shadow by 1.

Ashes of Youth: A forbidden alchemical substance said to preserve the essence of youth. Its true preparation is known to few practitioners of the Taboo Art: the bones and marrow of children are reduced to ash through a secret alchemical process, destroying the body while preserving what Alchemists call its vital principle.



Spider



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Set in a dystopian world after the Meteor Fall, Ouroboros: Age of Drowning combines mystery, forbidden Alchemy, and surreal horror. The technocratic Clockwork Faction enforces a victorian New Order from its industrious Domed Cities, while rising seas consume the world beyond.

As members of a League, you investigate disappearances, recover lost relics, and uncover political scandals and dark secrets. You also venture into Dreamscapes, where Surreality blurs the line between Reality and the Otherworld, and into the Taboo Art of Alchemy itself, outlawed for reasons the New Order has never fully explained.

This Quickstart includes the core rules, four ready-to-play investigators, and a complete introductory adventure.

OUROBOROS

— AGE OF DROWNING —