

## ROLLING THE DICE

To know how well you perform an action, roll:

- ♦ One die if the task is **within human capabilities**.
- ♦ One die if it is within your **area of expertise**.
- ♦ One die if you achieved the rank of Journeyman, two if you achieved Master.
- ♦ Your Trauma die, if **you will risk your mental well being to succeed**.
- ♦ Your Harm die, if **you will risk your physical well being to succeed**.

If your Trauma die is higher than your current Trauma, increase Trauma by one.

If your Harm die is lower than or equal to your current Harm, increase Harm by one.

Your highest die shows how well you do. On a 1, you barely succeed. On a 6, you do brilliantly. If you're investigating something, your highest die tells you how much information you get, from 1 (*the bare minimum*) to 6 (*you find everything humanly possible*).

## REROLLING

If you are unhappy with your roll's result, you may reroll your dice, but you must risk either physical or mental well being (and roll Harm or Trauma as appropriate).

## FAILURE

If anyone thinks it would be more interesting if you failed, they describe how you might fail and roll a die. If they roll higher than you, you fail. If you roll higher, you succeed. If you tie, you succeed but with a complication, cost or compromise.

## CO-OPERATING

To work together: everyone who is cooperating rolls their dice. The highest die, rolled by anyone, determines the outcome.

## COMPETING

To oppose someone: everyone who is competing rolls their dice. The highest die, rolled by anyone, determines the outcome. If it's a tie, no one gets what they want.

THE THIRD AGE <b>GHST LINES DARK</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	homeland	
<b>EXPERTISE</b>	rank	
ROOK, SPIDER, OWL, ANCHOR	YOU START AS AN APPRENTICE	
<b>homeland</b>	<b>FAVORS</b>	<b>WHO I OWE:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>SKOVLAN</b> You do not start play with a scar.</li> <li>♦ <b>AKOROS</b> You do not pay a coin to create a stash in a new city. You start with one favor owed to you.</li> <li>♦ <b>SEVOROS</b> When you have downtime, choose up to two options.</li> <li>♦ <b>IRUVIA</b> You start with expertise in two different roles.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div>
<b>GEAR:</b> Heavy gloves, encounter suit, cloak, breather-mask, air-tank, goggles, cable and clamps, lightning-hook, magnetic boots, spirit-flare, lightning-oil canister (4 uses), and choose one loadout, at right:	<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy lightning hook <input type="checkbox"/> Lightning-web thrower, bandolier of spirit bottles (4). <input type="checkbox"/> Spirit-goggles. Spare lightning-oil canister (4 uses). <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy encounter-suit.	
<b>LIGHTNING-OIL:</b> ○ ○ ○ ○	When you spend lightning oil to power your equipment, roll a bonus die.	
<b>LEVEL 1: APPRENTICE</b>	<b>LINES WORKED</b>	<b>ROLES</b> <b>GHOSTS SILENCED</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear 10 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work 3 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work 2 roles	<input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Upper (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Lower (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Duskwall (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Heights (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Bayside (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Pass (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Islands (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Cloudspire (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Lakewood (I)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rook      □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Spider    □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Owl        □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor    □□□□□□
<b>LEVEL 2: JOURNEYMAN</b>		<b>GHOSTS CLEARED</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear 20 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence a ghost <input type="checkbox"/> Work 6 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work every role		□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□
<b>LEVEL 3: MASTER</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear 40 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence 10 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work all 12 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Train a new bull	<input type="checkbox"/> Sevoros: Highland (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Sevoros: Plains (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Sevoros: Coast (III)	

<b>HARM</b>	<b>TRAUMA</b>

**PHYSICAL SCARS**

EACH PHYSICAL SCAR DECREASES YOUR MAXIMUM HARM LEVEL BY 1.

**MENTAL SCARS**

EACH MENTAL SCAR DECREASES YOUR MAXIMUM TRAUMA LEVEL BY 1.

**COINS**

Coins on you may be lost, stolen or squandered. While on downtime, you may pay one coin create a stash in your current city. Note where it is hidden. Whenever you are in that city, you may hide some or all your coins in the stash.

**stash**



## CHARACTER CREATION

Choose a badge and name (below). Choose a homeland and expertise. Add a scar (physical or mental) to your character. Harm and Trauma start at 1. Write a fact on the map. You start owing one favor to someone. Who is it?

## NAMES

Your badge has a name on it, chosen from the registry of the Purified, as tradition demands:

*Brogan, Tyrconnell, Dunvoil, Comber, Millar, Slane, Strangford, Nevis, Dalmore, Edrad, Lomond, Clelland, Arran, Scapa, Kinclaith, Coleburn, Penalten, Strathmill, Haig, Morriston, Penderyn, Danfield, Hellyers, Wasmund, Templeton, Michter, Bowman, Prichard, McKeel, Wathen, Clermont, Rowan, Booker*

You also have a personal name:

*Caul, Adric, Amison, Andrel, Milos, Stev, Laudius, Phin, Wester, Bragon, Vond, Mardus, Brance, Canter, Carro, Morlan, Timothy, Arvus, Clard, Kristov, Wonck, Orlence, Astin, Boury, Hance, Kale, Lanvell, Larn Lenia, Tesslyn, Veretta, Sethla, Vey, Polonia, Bry, Talitha, Arden, Candra, Cavelle, Brena, Vauri, Emeline, Volette, Lyntbia, Cyrene, Arcy, Quess, Roethe, Kamelin, Lauria, Lizete, Corille, Daphnia, Carissa, Odrienne, Casslyn, Arilyn, Naria, Vestine*



## AGAINST THE SUPERNATURAL

*When the bulls go up against a ghost*, the GM will ask each player a question, such as:

- ♦ What is disturbing or otherworldly about the ghost?
- ♦ What aspect of the ghost is still surprisingly human?
- ♦ Which of the bulls is most vulnerable to this ghost? Why?
- ♦ What supernatural effects appear around the ghost?
- ♦ Why does it make you tremble in fear?
- ♦ What does it remember of its former life?
- ♦ How does it injure the living?
- ♦ What unearthly disease does the plague ghost spread?
- ♦ Why do you recognize them?
- ♦ Why do they call your name?
- ♦ Why does it keep coming back?
- ♦ Why is it so hard to get at this ghost?

*Ghost oppose rolls against them*, rolling dice equal to the Line's rating. Major ghosts roll an extra die. To clear a ghost from the line, the bulls need approximately as many successful rolls as there are players, plus the Line's rating. For major ghosts, double that.

*The bull who leads the team decides who moves first* against the ghost(s):

- ♦ ANCHOR: Secure the ghost's attention and draw it into contact with you.
- ♦ SPIDER: Use a lightning-web to tether the ghost to a spirit-bottle.
- ♦ ROOK: Use a lightning hook to tear the ghost loose from the train and/or weaken it.
- ♦ OWL: Study the ghost and situation with your spirit-goggles to determine the best gambit.

## COIN, STASH, FAVORS

When you work a line, you get paid in COIN.

- ♦ Line rating x Level = Coin earned.

You also get +Level hazard pay for being the Anchor, and +1 coin for each ghost cleared.

Your STASH is the loot you've hidden away for your retirement. The bigger your stash, the better off you'll be. Your stash is like your score in the game.

- ♦ Stash 0: Lost soul. You die alone in the gutter.
- ♦ Stash 1-5: Desperate beggar. You die on the street, cold and forgotten.
- ♦ Stash 6-10: Poor soul. You die in a reeking flophouse, awash in booze and misery.
- ♦ Stash 11-15: Meager. You die in a tiny (but warm) hovel that you can call your own.
- ♦ Stash 16-20: Modest. You die in a simple home or apartment, with some small comforts.
- ♦ Stash 21+: Fine. You die in a well-appointed home or apartment, claiming a few luxuries.

FAVORS can be earned by working a side job, or making a bargain with another character. You can call in favors to get extra credit for work, ask for different work, request equipment, choose different line assignment, request specialty gear, get secret information, make a powerful contact, or make a major request.

## ITEMS

Ghost-clearing gear runs on leviathan oil (aka "lightning-oil"). The GM may charge further oil uses depending on circumstances and the outcome of rolls.

SPECIALTY GEAR:

- ♦ LIGHTNING CAGE: A set of portable rods, cables, and generator that can produce an electrical barrier that spirits cannot pass.
- ♦ ELECTROPLASM: The energetic residue that remains when a ghost is destroyed. Handle with extreme caution. Highly prized by devotees of Natural Philosophy.
- ♦ HEAVY LIGHTNING HOOK: You can spend multiple uses of lightning oil to gain multiple dice on a die roll.
- ♦ SPIRIT GOGGLES: Use lightning oil to ask the GM any leading question you like about ghosts.
- ♦ HEAVY ENCOUNTER SUIT: Spend lightning oil to reduce a ghost's dice when attacking you.



## ON THE GHOST LINES

It is the year 891 of the Imperium that united the shattered isles of the cataclysm under one rule—all glory to his majesty the Immortal Emperor.

You work the ghost lines—the electro-railroad that passes through the ink-dark deadlands between cities. Spirits of the dead, drawn to the vital essence of the living, often get entangled in the powerful electrical field generated by the trains. Line bulls like you walk the length of the cars, magnetized boots clanking and breather-mask hissing, to clear the offending spirits with your lightning-hooks before they do too much damage.

Each city of the Imperium is encircled by crackling lightning-towers to create an electrical shell that spirits cannot penetrate. By law, all corpses are incinerated with lightning-oil (to destroy the spirit essence within) but sometimes, wealthy citizens, heretics of the spirit cults, or the criminal element arrange for a ghost to escape destruction at the crematorium.

So called “rogue spirits” are also dealt with by bulls like you. For a fee, of course.

When the frontier scouts of the Imperium (the HOUNDS) find a spirit-well in the deathlands, they sometimes call in an experienced gang of bulls to help clear it out. This is the most dangerous work—far from the relative safety of the electro-rail and the possibility of a quick escape on the line. But the pay is substantial, and a bull that clears a spirit-well and survives might just scrape together enough of a stash to retire in style someday.

## EVENTS ON THE LINE

- The train has to stop.** Need repairs, damaged track, loss of power, demands of an important passenger (a natural philosopher, noble), imperial orders, spirit-well spotted, weather.
- The train can't stop.** Engineer incapacitated, throttle damaged, demands of an important passenger, imperial orders, impending weather.
- Supernatural event.** Time slows/speeds up, landscape shifts, mass delusions/hysteria, amnesia, strange weather (fire rain, black wind).
- Ghost.**
- Ghosts, several.**
- Ghost, major.** Not necessarily a human spirit. Worth 5-clears.

## SPECTROLOGY

- ✦ **SOUL:** A living body with its own spirit.
- ✦ **POSSESSED:** A living body w/ 2 or more spirits.
- ✦ **HOLLOW:** A living body without a spirit.
- ✦ **UNDEAD:** A dead body with a spirit.
- ✦ **GHOST:** A spirit without a body.
- ✦ **RETURNED:** A hollow possessed by a ghost.
- ✦ **SPIRIT-WELL:** A rift in reality where ghosts and other supernatural beings congregate to draw energy.
- ✦ **WITCH:** A person who is sensitive to spirits. May be able to summon and communicate with spirits, but most people don't believe in such powers.
- ✦ **ELEMENTAL:** A spirit that is not a deceased human. Elementals are animal spirits or the spirits of natural features like lakes or fire, etc.

## SIDE JOBS

*When you work a side job, make a roll as normal. Add a die if you're working a job in your homeland.*

If your highest die is a 1, there's a complication. You don't get your reward. The GM will say how you make an enemy, get put in a bad spot, or are on the hook for a favor.

If your highest die is 2 or above, you get your reward. If you were working for coins, you earn one coin.

If your highest die is a 4, you work the job and also hear a rumor about ghosts. The GM will say what it is.

If your highest die is a 5, you work the job, you earn 2 coins and you get a solid lead on ghost work (GM will say what).

If your highest die is a 6, you work the job, you earn 4 coins and also choose: +1 favor, or get offered a job doing ghost work by someone who can pay well (GM will give you the details).

GM: When they work a side job, give their employer a name, homeland, and distinguishing feature. Keep track of these NPCs and use them to fill out the world around the PCs.

## RANK

When you achieve each task on your sheet, check its box. If you check all the boxes at your current level, you advance from apprentice to Journeyman or from Journeyman to Master. When you advance, choose another job in which you have expertise. Add a new rumor or fact to the map or modify an old one.

## DYING

Your maximum Harm starts at six. Each physical scar you have lowers this value by one. When your Harm equals your maximum rating, you die. This is a special moment: everyone focuses on your character's last moments alive. Afterwards, make a new character, although the new character keeps half your Stash hidden in a city of your choice.

## GOING INSANE

Your maximum Trauma starts at six. Each mental scar you have lowers this value by one. When your Trauma equals your maximum rating, you go insane. This is a special moment: everyone focuses on your character as their mind breaks. Afterwards, make a new character, although the new character keeps your current Coin on hand.

## DOWNTIME

When you have downtime off work, choose one:

- ✦ **Hit the pub.** Spend coins equal to your current Trauma level. You gain a mental scar (alcoholism, depression, paranoia, etc.), then reset to your Trauma to 1.
- ✦ **Visit the physicker.** Spend coins equal to your current Harm level. You gain a physical scar (missing eye, steampunk hand, pegleg, etc.), then reset to your Harm to 1.
- ✦ **Work a side job.** Choose: bouncer, courier, craft, crematorium, crime, distillery, docks, forge, leviathan-hunting, slaughterhouse, stables. **Choose a reward:** Gain some coin, erase a favor you owe or add a favor owed.

## RUMORS / LEADS

SIDE JOB, RESULTS 2-4. ON A 5, FOR A SOLID LEAD, GIVE THEM A NAME AND DETAILS, TOO.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Someone is making hollows to provide cheap labor.	Someone is selling a "cure" for hollows.	Someone is running a gang made up of hollows.	A Bull was hollowed for daring to touch a royal during a job.	Someone saw hollows gather at the old relic in the square.	Someone is offering a bounty on hollows brought in alive.
2	The Church of the Ecstasy of the Flesh will buy inhabited spirit bottles.	Someone is buying and selling inhabited spirit bottles at a bar under the docks.	An explorer claims to have a map showing every spirit-well in the deathlands.	The "abandoned" northern rail line is used to ship spirit bottles... somewhere.	There are secret doors in the city that only witches/ghosts/undead/possessed can see.	There's an ancient ghost in Blackvale tower that's older than the cataclysm.
3	The night market is run by undead.	A highly-placed Imperial official is possessed.	Some wealthy citizens are throwing "possession parties."	Witches have powers because they have a demon bloodline.	Someone is trying to organize a union for line Bulls.	Someone will pay Bulls to smuggle goods on the lines.
4	A non-human spirit has been seen around the docks.	Someone is running a ghost-animal menagerie.	People live on an island off the coast, with no electro-barrier.	An inventor has built a "spirit-locator" and needs testers.	There is a witch who can call ghosts from your bloodline.	There is a wealthy undead who offers strange jobs.
5	Someone at the university will trade for electroplasm.	Someone is refining electroplasm into a drug.	A tattooist has been mixing her ink with electroplasm.	<i>Violet Remedy</i> is made from electroplasm!	A "ghost ship" has been spotted off the coast.	The Emperor is responsible for the broken gates of death.
6	There's a spirit-well somewhere inside the city.	There's a Hound that takes bribes to keep spirits hidden.	Several key Church officials are spirit cultists.	A spirit cult meets in an ancient temple under the city.	Demons from myths are real, and are behind the spirit cults.	Spirit cultists are smuggling ghosts in possessed people.

## FREELANCE PATRONS

SIDE JOB, RESULT 6

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Collector	Banker	Refugee	Hound	Drug Dealer	Noble
2	Natural Philosopher	Explorer	Tradesman	Sailor	Mercenary	Underworld Boss
3	Detective	Official	Scholar	Spy	Courier	Diplomat
4	Guard	Merchant	Judge	Ship Captain	Shopkeeper	Soldier
5	Clerk	Journalist	Smuggler	Revolutionary	Clergy	Demon
6	Assassin	Thief	Witch	Pimp or Madame	Artist	Doctor

## city events

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Plague	Festival	Raids	Revolution	Accident	Disaster
2	Refugees	Political Trouble	Prohibition	Construction	Supernatural Weather	Crime Spree
3	Demolition	Election	Scandal	Martial Law	Conscription	Exodus
4	Shortage	Excess	Discovery	Paranoia	Assassination	Witch Hunt
5	Parade	Celebrity	Holiday	Riots	Lockdown	Hysteria
6	Charity	Strike	Prison Break	Diplomacy	Siege	Spirit Cult Gatherings

## starting with experience

If you don't want to play an Apprentice, try this untested rule. To start as a Journeyman, roll a die. Give that many scars to your character. (This is beyond your starting scar.) These scars can be mental, physical or both. Mark off enough ghosts cleared, lines worked, etc. to qualify as a Journeyman. To start as a Master, roll two dice and take the higher. Add that many scars to your character, and mark off enough ghosts cleared, etc. to qualify as a Master.

## npc features

1. Patient, kind, forgiving, gentle.
2. Wild, uncouth, savage, rough.
3. Suspicious, calculating, sly.
4. Honorable, direct, dependable.
5. Weird, spooky, secretive.
6. Loyal, stalwart, headstrong, uncompromising.

## CREDITS

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