



Morra Universal Cinematic Game System

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Chapter One: Introduction	5
What's in a Name?	5
What is Morra?	5
Why Do Stories Matter?	6
Audience.....	6
What is a Genre?	6
Genres in the Core Book	7
Creating a Character.....	7
What is the role of the Director?.....	8
What is the Writers Room?	8
Morra Code of Conduct	8
Chapter Two: Defining a Genre	10
The Writer's Room.....	11
Genre Roadmap	12
Step One: Define the Target Audience.....	12
Step Two: Define the Rating and Content Descriptors of the Series	12
Step Four: Write a Movie Trailer/ Elevator Pitch for the Series	14
Step Five: Budget	15
Step Six: Create the Genre Archetypes	16
Step Seven: Skill Adjustments	19
Step Eight: New Genre and Archetypes Qualities	20
Step Nine: The Story Bible	20
Step Ten: Crossovers	21
Step Eleven: Reference Material.....	22
Step Twelve: Plot Threads	22
Chapter Three: Character Creation	24
Step One: The Writers' Room.....	24
Step Two: Selecting the Archetype	26
Step Three: What's Your Motivation?.....	27
Step Four: Assign Points to Attributes	37
Attribute Ratings.....	37
Attribute Specializations.....	37
Assigning Starting Attribute Points.....	38
Attribute Descriptions	38

<i>Heart</i>	39
<i>Mind</i>	41
<i>Soul</i>	42
Step Five: Assign Points to Skills	43
Skill Ratings	43
Genre Skill Adjustments.....	43
Skill Competency	44
Professional Specializations	44
Untrained Skill Penalty	44
Assigning Starting Skill Points.....	44
Skill Descriptions.....	45
Art.....	45
Bushcraft.....	45
Convince.....	45
Crime.....	46
Fighting	46
Firearms	46
Fix	46
Knowledge	47
Notice	47
Medicine	47
Subterfuge.....	48
Science.....	48
Stunts	48
Technology	49
Transport.....	49
Wildcard	49
Step Six: Assign Points to Qualities.....	50
Assigning Starting Quality Points	50
Step Seven: Select Flaws	51
Chapter Four: Core Rules	52
Cast of Characters.....	52
Dramatic Moment.....	53
Step One: Detail the Dramatic Moment	54
Step Two: Identify the Action Pool.....	54
Step Three: Determine the Difficulty Rating	54

Step Four: Rolling the Bones!	56
Dramatic Moment – Cast Complications.....	56
Call Sheet: Order of Initiative	56
A Friend in Need	57
Script Armor.....	57
Taking Hits and Receiving Consequences	58
Reducing Incoming Complications.....	58
One Story/Many Acts	59
One Act/Three Scene Structure	59
Scene I: The Setup	59
Scene II: Reveal the Conflict.....	60
Scene III: Resolution	61
Contract Negotiation.....	64
Step One: The Pitch	64
Step Two: Writer’s Room Discussion	65
Step Three: Director’s Incentive	66
Step Four: Bargaining Power	66
Step Five: A New Direction	66
Consequences	66
Attribute Type	67
Mechanical Penalty	68
Condition	68
Fulfillment: Removing Consequences Through Story.....	68
Consequences: Knocked Out of the Story	69
Turning Your Consequences into a Flaw	70
Consequences: Collateral Damage.....	70
Consequences: Final Death.....	71
Equipment	71
MacGuffins	71
Experience	74
Experience Points and Qualities	74
Extended Core Systems – Immersive Entertainment.....	75
The Ad-Hoc Writer’s Room: Immersive Calibration Techniques.....	75
Story Calibration Techniques.....	76
What’s My Motivation/Line?	76
Remember When?	77

Where Do We Stand?.....	77
Optional Story Calibration Technique: Cue Cards	78
Safety Calibration Techniques	78
The Clapper.....	78
Safety Calibration Techniques: Verbalizations.....	79
Dramatic Moments Resolution Methods for Immersive Events.....	80
Black Box Theater – Dramatic Moment Resolution Method.....	80
Parlor Theater – Dramatic Moment Resolution Method	81
Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities	82
Quality Limitations	82
General Qualities.....	83
Independent Movie/Web Series Qualities	83
Movie of the Week/Syndication Qualities.....	103
Major Motion Picture/Prime Time Qualities	121
Blockbuster / Major Cable Qualities.....	135
Creating New Qualities Guidelines.....	136
Creating New Archetypes Qualities	137
Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Magic.....	137
Step One: Mastery of Magic.....	138
Step Two: Determine the Origin of Magic.....	138
Step Three: Magic Ecosystem: Base Difficulty Rating.....	138
Step Four: Determine the Genre’s Laws of Magic	139
Step Five: Select the Available Schools of Magic.....	142
Casting Magic	155
Step One: Intent.....	156
Step Two: Preparation	156
Step Three: Scope	157
Step Four: Laws of Magic	157
Step Five: Calculate the Difficulty Rating	158
Theory and Practice of Technology.....	158
Historical Technology Levels	159
Technological Categories	160
Communication.....	160
Travel and Transport	163
Medicine and Healthcare	165
Computing and Robotics.....	168

Agriculture and Ecology	169
Military and Weaponry	171
Construction and Engineering	174

Chapter One: Introduction

"No, no! The adventures first, explanations take such a dreadful time."

— Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*

There's an apocryphal story told in the halls of academia about Joseph Campbell during his research for *The Power of Myth* and *The Hero of a Thousand Faces*. Most often, people told the tale during a lecture on Jungian archetypes. Campbell ventured forth to edges of the world to look for people that never experienced the modern world. Then, he showed them a curated selection of popular movies and television. To his surprise, these new movie-goers understood the general plot points and character types without knowing the language and having no familiarity with the specific genre. They identified the archetypes: protector/hero, the wise mentor, the sidekick, and the villain that must be stopped.

This tale inspired the concept behind the Morra Cinematic Universal Game System. The real universal language in this time, in this place, is cinema, television, and theatre. Who knows how long we've told and acted out these stories, the ones that really matter to each other?

What's in a Name?

Morra is the modern name for one of the oldest hand games in the world, played in a similar manner to rock, paper, scissors. Friends played to settle arguments. Prophets leveraged Morra, as a form of cleromancy, to predict the future. Gamblers used it to take money from suckers. It came to be known as casting of the lots and some also apocryphally believed it the very game Roman soldiers played under the cross while they crucified Jesus of Nazareth.

The use of the term apocryphal is intentional. Stories grow in the telling and sometimes it's difficult to distinguish a tantalizing truth from a dazzling lie.

What is Morra?

Morra is a cinematic universal game system designed with easy-to-use rules to simulate the experience of watching your favorite movie or television

series. This is not a tactical simulationist engine for accurately modelling the unreal physical laws of a fantasy world. Morra is a story-based roleplaying game borrowing from the language and flow of cinema and theatre to provide context to rules and mechanics. If you peer closely into the system, you can see into the code of the Matrix itself and discover a well-balanced game designed so the correct story choice is always the best mechanical option. Morra provides options for a traditional table-top game with only a few players around the kitchen table to two-hundred players united at an interactive, immersive event.

Why Do Stories Matter?

When people truly communicate, they rarely just exchange pleasantries, facts, and information. They tell each other stories, and place higher value on that conversation as the stories become more personal and detailed. These origin stories are the sacred tales we share with others when we want them to know us, on a first date with the blush of potential true love, or to truly understand us.

The Greeks connected theater with worship. The release of pathos is the ultimate act of devotion. Expression of the human condition is good for our mental health, and may be as close to divinity as we can manage.

Audience

Mighty Narwhal Productions is dedicated to producing games which both promote diversity and celebrate coming together as a group. We seek to provide a fun and safe environment for everyone. Morra contains a large umbrella we hope will appeal to old-school gamers, cosplayers, theater folks, video gamers, board gamers, and everyone who wants to exercise their imagination with some friends, new and old.

Representation matters. Every player should be able to see themselves in every Archetype and every Genre, and feel comfortable in the roles they want to inhabit and stories they want to tell. If imagination is infinite and boundless, then there's more than enough room for all of us to be heroes, villains, and everything in-between.

What is a Genre?

Genre is a term telling the audience what sort of story they will experience. For example, the word Western stirs images of lonely gunslingers, villains in black hats, and the majestic nostalgia of the Old West. A Genre is a game universe applied to the Morra Cinematic Universal Game System that creates a sandbox for the players and Director for exploration and telling new stories. This game universe introduces character archetypes, story mythology and tropes, and internal logic providing the foundation of basic

system mechanics. A Morra Genre can be set in any time (historical or far future), any place (real or imagined), or in any scenario that reveals something about the human condition.

Genres in the Core Book

Morra Cinematic Universal Game System comes with four Genres, referenced below:

- REDACTED
- Mystical Rome – Beware the Ides of March! Julius Caesar failed to take heed of the Soothsayers warning, but faithful Marc Antony did not and paid the ultimate price for his loyalty, forever altering the destiny of the Eternal City. Twenty years after the Soothsayers whispered their dire warning, magic and myth run rampant and Caesar still reigns over the unified Roman Empire. The oracles who saved him now operate a notorious academy, where they instruct the sons and daughters of elite families in the eldritch arts. The only obstacles preventing Rome's domination of the entire world are the barbarous Caledonians and the seemingly invincible Parthian Empire.
- Punching Nazis – Panzers crawl across Europe as bombers drop their deadly payloads. Nazi werewolves prey on innocent civilians, and the Thule Society conducts unholy rituals, drawing on malevolent energies to further the aims of the Third Reich. The world trembles at their growing power. However, hope is not yet lost. Brilliant scientists engineer super-soldier serum, magicians and witches gather into covens dedicated to opposing the Thule Society, and even a plucky spy might steal a magical artifact right out from under Hitler's nose. In this Quentin-Tarantino-meets-four-color-fantasy alternate history of World War II, anything and everything is possible.
- Ravenswood Academy – REDACTED

Creating a Character

Imagine you're in a dark theater about to watch your favorite movie. Every actor on screen is playing a character reacting to the scenario. In Morra, a character is a persona created for the metaphoric movie (the game) using the Writer's Room Technique with your fellow cast and the Director, the rules found in **Chapter Three: Character Creation** (page xx), and the specific Genre of your game. This character is your main instrument in shaping the story using Morra as a narrative structure.

What is the role of the Director?

The Director is the manager of the movie production where the cast experiences the story. She ensures the cast works together, while guiding them through a narrative consistent with the Genre and leveraging the Morra Cinematic Universal Game System to manage and curate the experience. She determines the pacing of the story, controls and portrays all of the supporting cast and stock characters, and generates and moderates the conclusion of the scenes in an Act. Everything you need to learn to be a Director can be found in **Chapter Six: The Director's Primer**, page xx.

What is the Writers Room?

The Writer's Room is a meta game—a narrative about the structure of the game itself—outside of the confines of the specific Genre being played. You, and the rest of the cast, take on the roles of writers who work on a television series about your Genre. The writers discuss the plots involving their characters, pitch new plotlines, and help shape the experience of the game. The Director takes on the role of the overall producer to encourage creativity and keep the show running. This adds a layer of emotional distance between the game itself and the very real people playing it by discussing it in terms of a theoretical, movie production. For more information, read **Chapter Two: Creating a Genre** (page xx) and **Chapter Three: Character Creation** (page xx).

Morra Code of Conduct

We enforce the following Code of Conduct at all Mighty Narwhal Productions powered by Morra. We remove participants who violate these tenants from our events without exception. We included this Code of Conduct as a set of recommended guidelines for Directors and players to leverage whether they run a tabletop game with friends around the kitchen table or a two-hundred-person immersive event.

- People are always more important than stories and rules. Mighty Narwhal Productions does not tolerate hate in any form. Our events are a safe space for everyone. The prime directive as participants in this venue (which include cast and crew) is to be polite, honest, and safe with each other. If you violate this rule, you will be told to leave the event.
- No sexism, racism, bigotry, homophobia, body-shaming, bullying, or hate speech is tolerated.
- To keep everyone safe at our events, everyone is required to follow the Mighty Narwhal Calibration Techniques (see Core Rules: Calibration Techniques, page xx). If you want to move a scene beyond

the rating of PG-13, then you must discuss, communicate, and negotiate with all cast and crew involved to set boundaries, guidelines, and limits. Before play each session, there are workshops reviewing the material.

- If you are feeling emotional because of Bleed (crossover heated emotions between what you feel and what your character is feeling), that's OK and natural. If you need some time to breathe, ask for it. We're all in this experience together.
- Do your best to follow both the spirit and letter of the Code of Conduct and the game rules of the event. If there is a question about either, please communicate with the crew. Questions and communications are always welcomed and better than the lack of communication causing issues during the event.
- Local laws and ordinances must always be followed and enforced. This includes the possession or consumption of alcohol or cannabis products by those under the age of 21.

Chapter Two: Defining a Genre

"I would travel down to Hell and wrestle a film away from the devil if it was necessary."

— Werner Herzog

Our imagination is as limitless as our stories, both spanning a spectrum as vast as the universe. From the mundane to the fantastic, from the intensely personal to universal Jungian experiences, people use stories to understand what it means to be human. Over the last one hundred years, movies and television attempted to capture this unique and sacred experience by translating it to the screen, both silver and small.

Genre is a word used to classify a style or brand of entertainment that comes with an expected set of tropes, conceits, and stylistic choices. Great films and television use viewer expectations to create twists and turn in old stories, surprising and delighting their audiences.

Umbrella genres include a smorgasbord of stories united by a common set of themes and aesthetics. Take the Western genre as an example. We expect certain tropes to appear in a Western film, such as a 19th century frontier setting, desolate and remote locales, and cowboys on horses. Yet many radically different films can be classified as Westerns, such as the comedy *Blazing Saddles* (dir. Mel Brooks), the grim and gritty *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (dir. Sergio Leone), or even the earnest singing cowboy movie *The Old Barn Dance* (dir. Joseph Kane). As different as they are, all these films are undisputedly Westerns, and considered classics of their umbrella genre.

The *Morra Cinematic Universal Game System* compiles the language, techniques, experiences, and even limitations of film and television into a creative toolbox, designed to help you build a universe and run a game that can simulate any story from any genre.

Morra defines the term *Genre* as a creative cookbook targeted to a specific audience with an approved list of ingredients (archetypes, tropes, and concepts) appropriate to the story. Genre defines the story mythology and internal logic that gives meaning to the mechanics. It also serves as the

mythic background giving context to the rules (including any special Genre-specific rules), and places the Director and players on the same page about creating a fun and unique shared experience.

For example: At character creation, Joshua wants to purchase the Quality: Enhanced (see **Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities**, page xx) to increase his character, Ezekiel Sharp's, Attribute to become a better gunslinger. He reviews his Genre: Weird Western Tales and notes the Budget is Major Motion Picture / Prime Time (see page xx). He is not at the maximum number of qualities for that budget, so if he has the experience points to purchase the Quality, he can. Next, he notes this Quality, which breaks human limitations, is listed as heroic and legendary in Genre: Weird Western Tales. He confers with his Director regarding the Quality, who confirms it is appropriate and can be purchased.

For other Genres with a lower budget or a different flavor, such a Quality might not be allowed. For Weird Western Tales, the source of the Quality could indicate that Ezekiel Sharp was an alien, mutant, blessed by the gods, or cursed by Hell.

While this book comes with several Genres ready to be modified or played straight from the box, this chapter is a roadmap for players and Directors to build their own Genre together.

The Writer's Room

The Writer's Room is a meta-technique designed to help Directors and players create a Genre suited to their shared vision. Imagine for a moment that you are writers working together to create a pitch for movie or television show good enough to be put into production. The Director (or Game Master) moderates the conversation, guides everyone through the process, and then later calibrates the Genre to suit the changing needs of the story and the enjoyment of the players. Players become the writers of the project. They help define the Genre via a series of brainstorming and discussions outlined in this chapter. The end goal is to express their needs as individual players, while also building a cohesive and inclusive whole before the first scene is shot. Before each session, the cast and Director can calibrate expectations and needs for each game session while further mapping out the world, creating new plots, and anything else that might be required for generating serialized content.

Later, writers pitch their characters in the Writer's Room (see **Chapter Three: Character Creation: Writer's Room**, page xx) and the Director adjusts the series as needed by returning to this method to modify the Genre (see **Chapter Six: Director's Primer: Writer's Room**, page xx).

Genre Roadmap

Building a *Morra* Genre, or even a *Morra* Umbrella Genre, requires the participants to answer a series of questions and make a number of choices describing the fictional setting the Director and players create. Each step helps the Writer's Room set expectations and build a common language to talk about the project. While building a Genre, it is recommended that everyone attempt to use the language of cinema as much as possible, in order to capture the complete experience.

Step One: Define the Target Audience

The *target audience* technique defines the exact experience the Directors and players want from playing. Hollywood studios spent decades and millions of dollars studying audiences and dividing them into market segments. This research is used to predict which groups of people will enjoy certain elements in their entertainment.

Writers imagine what the audience of their Genre looks like, as it will help them make appropriate choices later. This technique encourages writers to express their creative desires and negotiate limits. A Genre catering to a family-friendly audience wants to ensure the Rating and Content Descriptors (see page xx) are age-appropriate to avoid uncomfortable situations. The writers might define the Archetypes in such a way that characters are younger, or in ways that otherwise fit the needs of their audience. For example, it is inappropriate to play a brutal serial killer Archetype (see page xx) in a family-friendly audience, but would be spot on for an audience of horror movie fans.

Step Two: Define the Rating and Content Descriptors of the Series

Now that you have an idea of your audience, it's time to define your show's rating. Review and consider what rating makes the most sense for your audience and the stories you want to tell.

Morra recommends the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) film rating system as detailed below:

- **Rated G: General Audiences.** The movie or television show is appropriate for all viewers. Some examples of this rating are *WALL-E* (dir. Andrew Stanton), *Mary Poppins* (dir. Robert Stevenson), and *The Emperor's New Groove* (dir. Mark Dindal).

- Rated PG: Parental guidance is suggested for children in the audience. Some examples of this rating are *Frozen* (dirs. Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee), *Night at the Museum* (dir. Shawn Levy), and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (dir. Steven Spielberg).
- Rated PG-13: Parents are strongly cautioned regarding this movie or television show. The material shown may be inappropriate for children under the age of 13. Some examples of this rating are *Black Panther* (dir. Ryan Coogler), *Hunger Games* (dir. Gary Ross), and *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (dir. Gareth Edwards).
- Rated R: The audience for this movie is restricted. No one under the age of 17 can be admitted without a parent or guardian. Some examples of this rating are *300* (dir. Zack Snyder), *Get Out* (dir. Jordan Peele), and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (dir. George Miller).
- Rated NC-17: Due to strong violence or sexual content, no one under the age of 17 is permitted to view this movie in the theater. Some examples of this rating are *Blue is the Warmest Color* (dir. Abdellatif Kechiche), *The Dreamers* (dir. Bernardo Bertolucci), and *Showgirls* (dir. Paul Verhoeven).

Content descriptors indicate which story elements triggered a particular rating, and can be of interest or concern to some participants. You still need to detail content descriptors, even if you already have a rating in place, as this calibrates the experience to everyone's comfort level.

For example, Nordic LARP designer Karin Edman created a technique for designers called the Ingredients List, where she lists the expected experiences a player can have in her game. Much the same way restaurant menus list common allergens for the safety and comfort of their patrons, *Morra's* rating system functions to identify potentially upsetting material.

Content descriptors explain exactly why a Genre received its rating, and call out anything potentially problematic or dangerous. Someone expecting to experience *Lassie Come Home* (dir. Fred M. Wilcox) might be quite horrified to discover they are playing *Cujo* (dir. Lewis Teague), and feel disappointed or even betrayed. Some players actively seek out games with mature themes, while others prefer to avoid them. Accurately defining your game's content descriptors ensures you'll be found by the people who want to find you.

Review the MPAA rating card for films in the same genre you're creating to get ideas of content descriptors. Here are some common content descriptors:

- Rated G: No content that would offend a parent or child.
- Rated PG: This can contain comedic action or mild action which parents should review to determine if it is appropriate for a child.
- Rated PG-13: This can contain material which is not appropriate for a child under the age of 13. This includes, but is not limited to war violence, some images of carnage, brief strong language, some sexual content, brief drug material, drinking, and blood and gore.
- Rated R: This contains content that needs strong parental guidance. This includes, but is not limited to graphic violence, brief nudity, strong sexual content, and strong language throughout. Including nudity in your content descriptor is not an indication that players can disrobe, but that narrative nudity can be present at this level.
- Rated NC-17: This contains content appropriate only for adults. This includes, but is not limited to sexual situations, violence, drug use, and other elements inappropriate for minors.

Step Three: Determine the Media Length

The next decision determines a good deal about your characters, story beats, and the style of play for your game. Determine the media length of your specific Genre:

- Movie: Single session, one-shot game.
- Mini-Series: 3 to 6 games, with a definite arc and ending.
- Serial: A potentially endless series, possibly divided by seasons.

Step Four: Write a Movie Trailer/ Elevator Pitch for the Series

Writing a movie trailer or elevator pitch for your project is next step in creating a Genre. Pretend you're creating a sizzle reel or trailer that is shown to distribution executives and audiences to get them excited about your project. The premise doesn't have to be long (500 words or less), but imagine yourself speaking in the bombastic Mr. Voice style when you sum the story up with a tagline, "In a world..."

The premise needs to be the hook for your game. It shouldn't give out too many details, just enough to attract your audience. A good movie trailer showcases the sorts of characters folks can play, and what sort of adventures they might have. This section needs to be exciting and reveal what your project brings to the genre.

Step Five: Budget

The Budget describes your project's starting character points and the maximum level of Qualities allowed. Your Budget defines the power scale of your Genre. If you change your Budget during game play — after all, your show might be a sleeper hit — players are refunded any difference between the original starting Attributes and new starting Attributes.

The standard *Morra* Budgets for starting characters are the following:

Independent Movie / Web Series

Whether a passion project or your first foray into introducing your artistic vision to the world, this budget applies to films made outside the reach of the big studios. While your funds are small, your imagination has the freedom (and lack of executive influence) to run wild.

Lead characters are presumed to be at the beginning of their careers. Their starting points are distributed as follows:

- Attributes: 6 points (to spread across all four Attributes).
- Skills: 8 points (to spread across all your Skills).
- Qualities: 5 points to spend on any Quality, up to the Budget's ceiling.

Movie of the Week / Syndication

You made it past the days where you had to fund everything yourself, and you saw modest ratings success. The bigwigs aren't knocking on your door, but you're pretty sure they at least noticed you.

Lead characters are presumed to be up-and-comers, with a bit of experience under their belts. Their starting points are as follows:

- Attributes: 8 points (to spread across all four Attributes).
- Skills: 10 points (to spread across all your Skills).
- Qualities: 8 points to spend on any Quality, up to the Budget's ceiling.

Major Motion Picture / Prime Time

People watch you and throw tons of cash your way. You were once the little guy trying to make your way in the world, but now you reap the benefits of prime-time popularity.

Lead characters are presumed to be well-known in their genres, with years of experience and a modest fan following. Their starting points are as follows:

- Attributes: 10 points (to spread across all four Attributes).
- Skills: 12 points (to spread across all your Skills).
- Qualities: 10 points to spend on any Quality, up to the Budget's ceiling.

Blockbuster / Major Cable Qualities

You're at the top. You possess the budget to make nearly any dream a reality, and a horde of adoring fans (and more than a few critics).

Lead characters are presumed to be movie stars and household names. Their starting points are as follows:

- Attributes: 12 points (to spread across all four Attributes).
- Skills: 15 points (to spread across all your Skills).
- Qualities: 13 points to spend on any Quality, up to the Budget's ceiling.

Step Six: Create the Genre Archetypes

Archetypes are the high-level tropes we see in almost every story. Over time, we came up with various ways to describe these tropes, and find them appearing in television and movie characters. These archetypes resonate with us because we understand their innate desires and goals. We value these archetypes for their insight into our own minds and hearts.

In *Morra*, Archetypes are essentially the classes of characters that can be played within a given Genre. Archetypes can be generated from ideas in the Character Creation chapter (see **Chapter Three: Character Creation**, page xx); Directors and players can also come up with their own Archetypes suitable for the Genre. Directors and players are encouraged to brainstorm the common character tropes and conceits found in the umbrella genre.

Directors and players have several ways to create an Archetype in *Morra*. This list is not all-inclusive. If your group finds another way to define Archetypes, document that in your Genre sheet. Your group then chooses or creates at least five Archetypes appropriate for your Genre.

Archetype Template

Develop your Archetypes with the following process:

Name

Name the Archetype. This name is something symbolic, that best sums up its unique facets. For example, someone who constantly strives for the perfect romantic relationship, whether by focusing on one person or constantly changing partners, might be called "The Lover."

Motto

Give your Archetype a motto. This motto is a short sentence that best describes its focus. For example, with The Lover, you could write, "Always moving on, afraid if they stop, they might miss out on a better relationship."

Symbol

Give your Archetype a visual representation, such as a scepter for royalty or a rose for The Lover. This helps create a visual impression of the trope which is useful when building props and costumes.

Description

Write around 250 words describing the Archetype, breaking down what it symbolizes and how the Archetype interacts with your Genre. Even non-players should be able to read the Archetype description and understand its narrative function.

Attribute Bonus

All Archetype gains a 2-point bonus to their Attributes on top of the points gained from the Genre's Budget that must be spent a certain way. You assign these bonuses to Body, Heart, Mind, or Soul. For example, you can assign The Lover a +1 bonus to Body to represent physical prowess and a +1 Bonus to Heart to represent advanced social skills. You can give the entire bonus to one Attribute, but it cannot exceed 2 points.

Special Qualities

Directors can approve Qualities given for this Archetype as a special bonus. The Director limits these Qualities, but with their approval, these Qualities can come from higher Budgets and/or cost fewer points. Your Director determines the number of additional special Qualities available for each Archetype. Alternatively, Directors can help you can create your own custom Qualities (**Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities: Create Your Own**, page xx).

Jungian Archetypes

Carl Jung defined the twelve most common archetypes found in stories. Jungian archetypes work best when the Director and players are looking for a broad archetype system for a Genre.

Example: *A fairy-tale genre about adventure and redemption can use the Sage for an all-knowing*

mystical healer, the Hero for an all brawn and no brains fighter, the Rebel for a sullen and sneaky rogue, and the Lover for a Bard who sings her way into everyone's heart.

Social Archetypes

This archetype system works best when everyone is in the same group, such as high school students, doctors, or police officers, or they operate in the same area, such as rival space mining companies.

Example: *A teenage comedy can modify Jungian archetypes into Nerd, Athlete, Basket Case, Princess, and Criminal—we all saw John Hughes' Breakfast Club by now, right?*

Story Archetypes

Story archetypes are based on the role each character takes in the story. This is often best when the mythology of the story is vital to the genre.

Example: *In a supernatural thriller genre, archetypes can be modified to reflect that the characters are Vampires, Werewolves, Faeries, or Ghosts.*

Professional Archetypes

You are what you do, and what you do has meaning to the story. This works when the story elements rely upon what someone does.

Example *In a police procedural genre, you can adapt the Archetypes to be Detective, Coroner, Psychologist, and Forensic Expert.*

Step Seven: Skill Adjustments

At this step of Genre creation, the Director and players add details about important skills. Some skills can be limited, and include a description on how those limitations work. Everyone in the Writer's Room can list skills and specializations which are helpful to the actors.

Some skills are more or less useful depending on the Genre. A player can still freely choose less useful skills — such as Japanese Bladesmithing in a Procedural Drama Genre — to help

round out her character. However, having a list of pertinent skills helps further define Genre expectations, and determines if the Wildcard Skill needs to be used.

Step Eight: New Genre and Archetypes Qualities

Every Genre needs to outline the following regarding Qualities:

- Explain how in the Genre, if at all, a Quality can enhance a character beyond human limits. In “Punching Nazis” (**Chapter Seven: Punching Nazis**, page xx), the Genre explains that the characters are humans seeking adventure and fighting injustice. These enhancements become the characters’ Qualities. In another Genre, exceptional Qualities can be derived from super science, mutations, genetic enhancements, powerful rituals, supernatural bargains, or anything your Writer’s Room devises.
- Define new Genre Qualities and Archetype Qualities included in the Genre. The rules for creating custom Qualities can be found in **Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities: New Qualities**, page xx.

Step Nine: The Story Bible

Once you complete the other steps, you now create a Story Bible. A Story Bible has several components which flesh out the internal logic of your setting. Keep a written record of your Story Bible where all players can read it and adjust it as your *Morra* production evolves.

Elements

- *Outline of major events*
 - Notate the world-shaping events players are aware of, and determine who (if anyone) knows the whole story (and relevant rumors).
 - Notate which of these events characters participated in.
 - Notate the greater historical context of the Genre.
 - Notate prevalent religions, including schisms or heresies.
- *Culture*
 - Notate prevalent cultural traditions.
 - Notate common norms and values.
 - Notate languages spoken.

- Notate type(s) of government, and the general impression of current leaders.
- *People*
 - Notate powerful and important people, and indicate whom players may know personally.
 - Notate styles of dress, or etiquette expectations based on social/political rank.
- *Places*
 - Notate places of importance.
 - Notate places that have a reputation, either good or bad.
 - Notate places that have a history.
- *Premise*
 - Notate the commonly believed creation myth(s) or if your Genre believes in particular scientific theories.
 - Notate stories about the world before the start of the production.
 - Notate the premise of the characters coming together.

The Story Bible should be between five to ten thousand words, and details the important world and story aspects you will use in play. Some Genres can require longer Story Bibles, or additional information from other *Morra* source books. In addition, the list above is not all-inclusive. Describe additional elements as needed, such as how magic works or how technology integrates into your world.

Step Ten: Crossovers

Do you like elements of other Genres? Do you want to take any Quality or Archetype? You are always free to utilize Attributes, Skills, Qualities, or Consequences from other Genres.

You can do this in two ways. Either define that you are using those items in the appropriate Genre section. Alternatively, you can create a new Genre Sheet defining the crossover between two separate Genres.

Step Eleven: Reference Material

Method actors gather reference material to understand how their characters relate to their world. This section is a way for the Director and players in the Writer's Room to gather and share this sort of information about the world, which may only be tangentially related to the story. It can also help players put together information for their characters.

The first place to check for useful reference material is a *Morra* source book. These source books are written to provide guides and references related to a specific Genre. Apart from source books, check your local library, book store, or online distributor for specific historical or cultural information related to your Genre.

The following Reference Materials guidelines need to be referenced, edited, and modified as needed:

- Theory and Practice of Magic (see the template in **Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities: Theory and Practice of Magic**, page xx).
- Theory and Practice of Technology (see the template in **Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities: Theory and Practice of Technology**, page xx).
- Genre Bestiary (see the template in **Chapter X: NPC and Monster Creation and Bestiary**, page xx).

Step Twelve: Plot Threads

A great Genre has a series of obvious plot threads touching upon the main conflicts of the story to chase when the game begins. Directors provide players with a chance to review these threads before making characters, so they can better prepare for the upcoming experience and calibrate expectations. We recommend the Directors and players maintain this list as the story progresses, so that everyone can keep track. For information on creating and outlining long-term narrative block, see **Chapter Six: Director's Primer: Tips and Tricks for Outlining Seasons**, page xx.

Here are some examples of plot threads that might be suitable for a plot threads list:

- Fight the Enemy
 - Describe the fight

- Break it down into offenses and types of missions
 - What does it mean to win?
- Get Rich or Die Trying
 - What does get rich mean?
 - What does social success mean?
- The Quest
 - What knowledge is there to learn?
 - What mysteries are there to solve?
 - What knowledge is forbidden?
 - What change can your characters bring society?
- Exploration
 - What is there to discover?
 - What new technology or innovation has changed society?
 - What does the world lack or need?

Chapter Three: Character Creation

"Matching character and actor is what a good director does."

— Bruno Dumont

Terror. Exultation. Desire. Anguish. Fury. Do you remember the first time you watched a movie and felt deep empathy with the characters? That moment when you let all their emotions overwhelm you, as you lived through their tragedies, laughed along beside them, and screamed for them to run the other way? How did you feel when you saw your favorite movie for the first time? How many people did you tell about the best scene, the intricate character development, or the little moments others might have missed? When did you know this film would stick with you for the rest of your life?

The silver screen captures our attention as children, and never releases its grip on our imaginations. In our youth, we pretend to be a brave warrior or the frightening velociraptor we saw in a movie. Even as we grow into adults, those movies still capture our imaginations, and we wonder how it might feel to be the powerful femme fatale who takes no prisoners, or what we'd do as the hard-boiled detective resisting her charms. Movies and television inspire and shape us for the entirety of our lives.

The Morra Cinematic Universal Game System is a dramatic gaming system that lets you, as the player, act out the stories of characters like the ones you see on television and movies. In order to do this, you must first create a character. Creating a character for *Morra* is a simple process; however, it does require a certain amount of working together with your fellow players and your Director. Just like in films or television, every moment captured on celluloid is the result of collaboration between writers, actors, editors, producers, and other crew members behind the scenes.

Step One: The Writers' Room

The first step in any character creation process is the Writers' Room. In the Writers' Room, players and Directors pitch characters for the upcoming movie or series. Directors can start this process by presenting a pre-built Genre from a *Morra* supplement, or creating a new Genre using the rules found in **Chapter Two: Defining a Genre**, page XX. Others will want to world-build with the players from the beginning, to ensure everyone is invested in the story and has the chance to be part of the creative process.

Once the Director presents a proposed Genre, each player creates the motivation, background, and abilities for her character in tandem with the other players. This is a good way to ensure that all characters are enjoyable, have time in the story spotlight, and fit within the tone of the Genre.

For example, if Lisa presents a comedic side-kick character for an upcoming game using the Genre: **Punching Nazis** (see page xx), then the players and the Director know the sorts of stories and plots she is interested in exploring. Conversely, Jeff might want to play the murderous, backstabbing villain, and that too signals his intentions and preferred style of play. The Director can approve or deny either concept, pulling the players in a specific direction without locking them down into an uncomfortable role. Often the best approach is from the **Yes and...** school of improv, where each actor suggests alternative add-ons to the pitches, feeding off each other's ideas until everyone is generally happy, even if the end result is not exactly what they imagined.

The Writers' Room is a good time for serious discussions about the concepts and artistic direction everyone wants to explore. Some Genres may need more discussion in order to ensure everyone agrees. Some mash-ups, like a Space Cowboy Genre, might need further discussion about which aspect is more important, the space or the cowboy.

Remember that Genre defines the following aspects of character creation:

- Available Archetypes
- Budget, which determines:
 - The starting points for your character's Attributes, Skills, and Qualities
 - The ceiling for the highest level of Qualities (sorted according to Budget levels) that your character can purchase.

Sample Genre: Punching Nazis

Punching Nazis is the example Genre used for this chapter, but players need to look at the exact Genre they will play. Punching Nazis is a mash-up of noir adventure and war movies.

Target Audience: Really, anyone who wants to punch a Nazi. The Genre's narrow focus on World War II allows the Director to be quite flexible in building a game which appeals to her individual troupe. That being said, the emphasis in Punching Nazis is on heroic adventure: this Genre is meant to appeal to those who enjoy stories full of action and high-stakes missions rather than personal, parlor-style stories.

Rating and Descriptors: PG-13, R

Elevator Pitch: War movies are a staple of American cinema, with World War II being a favorite topic. It's easy to understand why: the lines between bad and good were sharply drawn: between fascism, genocide, and those who opposed it. Directors have taken a variety

of approaches to the topic, from serious to more fantastic. Even the same director can have wildly different takes: Steven Spielberg made both the dramatic epic *Schindler's List* and the more fantastic adventure *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Punching Nazis takes a more *Raiders of the Lost Ark* perspective. The Genre has room for magic, super-science, and alternate history. The themes inherent in a story about World War II are dark and expose the worst about human nature. While players shouldn't shy away from confronting these themes, injecting a little levity into the Genre means players can enjoy punching Nazis. What's more, loosening the demands for strict historical accuracy allows for wish fulfillment by the players: they can imagine themselves as a crack squad of commandos able to end the war early by killing Hitler (*Inglourious Basterds*, dir. Quentin Tarantino), super-soldiers who can singlehandedly bring an end to the fighting (*Captain America: The First Avenger*, dir. Joe Johnston), or witches-in-training using their powers to send Nazis packing (*Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, dir. Robert Stevenson).

Budget: Blockbuster (see **Chapter Two: Budget. Page xx**)

Characters start with a modest budget for character creation and a good power level for Qualities.

- Starting Attributes points: 12
- Starting Skills points: 15
- Starting Quality points: 13
- Quality Ceiling: Blockbuster

Step Two: Selecting the Archetype

Carl Jung speculated there were 12 basic character archetypes for every story ever told. Every Genre has a set of specific Archetypes unique to it. What would the Western Genre be without the shifty gambler or the tough-as-nails gunslinger? In *Morra*, every Genre has at least five special Archetypes available to players. A character's Archetype defines her starting Attribute bonuses, available Archetype Qualities, and general flavor of what players might experience during play.

Selecting an Archetype is the first step in character creation. If a player wants to try something outside of the box, but that still fits the Genre, she should speak with her Director about creating a wholly new Archetype (using the rules in **Chapter Two: Defining a Genre: Archetype Creation**, page xx) or using an appropriate Archetype from another Genre.

Sample Genre: *Punching Nazis*: Archetypes

The Archetypes for the *Punching Nazis* (see *Chapter Seven: Punching Nazis*, page xx) include the following:

- Commanding Officer

- Intelligence Agent
- Medic
- Pilot
- Resistance Fighter
- Soldier
- Well-placed Civilian

Example: *Charlie is excited to play Punching Nazis, and it's time to choose an archetype for his character. He considers Commanding Officer, and knows he could do the role justice. However, he'd rather allow one of the newer players to take on the challenge, avoid the responsibility of herding the other characters, and spend more time punching the actual Nazis. While he loves the spymaster trope, Charlie wants to be brassy and bold, and that just doesn't match his view of what an intelligence officer is. That sparks an image of a character wearing a leather bomber jacket and a scarf. He then decides on the Pilot Archetype.*

Step Three: What's Your Motivation?

Players select their characters' motivations and backgrounds before building the mechanical details of the sheet, as this helps ensure character sheet choices are founded on concepts central to the character. *Morra* takes inspiration in this section from a series of acting techniques known as Method Acting. Marlon Brando's memorable performance in *The Godfather* (dir. Francis Ford Coppola) popularized this performance style. Brando's work elevated acting as a whole, as his critical and technical successes encouraged many other actors to push their own performances to the edge.

In *Morra*, the player is part of creating the overall world, both as a co-writer and the actor of a specific character within it. A character without motivation is limp and lifeless, with a game session's plot being something that happens to the character rather than a natural progression of the story.

Every player needs to answer three important questions before creating her character sheet:

- How would your character fit into another work of the same genre?
- What makes your character unique and fun to play?
- How does your character both support and subvert the stereotypes of the genre?

This section has a number of techniques designed to guide players as they discover their characters' motivations, imagine the characters as three-dimensional beings, and finally play their characters' choices as a natural outcome of who the characters are. Some of the options listed here might

not work within a given Genre, while new Genres can use unique techniques to make the setting exciting and fresh. In addition, sometimes combining motivation techniques can provide the player with a fresh take on otherwise old tropes.

As always, the Director is the final arbiter of what will work for the Genre.

1. Call to Adventure

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell posited the concept of the monomyth, a subconscious mythology template which defined all heroic stories. The Call to Adventure is the primary motivation that sets the hero on her journey. Some of these options might seem similar to the player's Archetype, so players need to take care that their characters' motivations add depth and richness to the story.

Choose a motivation from the list below, or create your own with Director approval:

- **Ambition:** Something burns inside of you, driving you to achieve something great and lasting, to be remembered by future generations, to see your name in lights, and to prove Monica Jones from 8th grade gym class totally, totally wrong about you.
- **The Big Payback:** You've been done wrong and suffered for it. You were framed for a crime you didn't commit, snitched on for one you did, or you're just plain ticked about being conned out of your money. You know who did you wrong, or at least you think you do, and now it's time for the Big Payback.
- **Chosen:** You alone were chosen to fight the oncoming storm. This threat might be mystical, prophetic, or detected by some social-scientific logarithm. You may face a horde of vampires, a galactic empire, or the power of robot funded by Huey Lewis. Now, you must master the knowledge and skills required to defeat your enemy before all is lost.
- **Defender:** Your strong moral or religious code requires that you to place your life on the line. You believe in protecting others – be it from oppression, crime, or horrific poverty – and you'll do whatever it takes to make sure everyone stays safe.

- **Deception:** Everything about you is a lie. You are caught between a rock and a hard place, and if anyone discovers the truth, you risk losing everything you love. With your stolen identity and fabricated credentials, you do your job while also keeping anyone from discovering the truth about you.
- **Escapism:** Your life sucks. Anything that lets you escape your dreary existence, for even an instant, is to be chased and cherished. You'll do whatever you can to forget your daily life and replace it with something better, even temporarily.
- **Escape the Labyrinth:** You're trapped in a strange and unfamiliar situation — a prison, an alternate dimension, or a strange fairy hill. You must puzzle/fight/talk your way back to your normal life.
- **Envy:** Someone near you has everything you ever wanted, deservedly or not, and it kills you. Everyone else got theirs, why can't it be your turn? They got to ride to the top in the elevator, and not a damn one of them sent it back down.
- **Explore the Unknown:** There's so much out there to see and do. You want to go beyond, to explore and find adventure in ways no one else has. Whether it's being the first to see alien worlds, fly across the ocean, or discover a lost continent, you'll risk life, limb, and even your sanity to discover it.
- **Fear:** Everything you do is motivated by a deep-seated fear. Your fear might take the form of the loss of your loved ones, financial failure, or knowledge of eldritch horrors. You'll do anything to avoid your fear, including lying, cheating, or going against your friends and family.
- **Happily, Ever After:** You have one last job, a final case, or lasting mystery before you retire for good. You can't have your happy ending until this final deed is done and you can quit looking over your shoulder.
- **Love:** C.S. Lewis posited in his novel *Till We Have Faces* that there are four types of love: *Storge* (general empathy and kindness towards others), *Philia* (platonic love), *Eros* (erotic or romantic love), and *Agape* (unconditional spiritual love). Some might call you a hopeless romantic or

a true friend, but none can say you won't give every relationship, or every form of love, your all.

- **Overcome Chains of the Past:** You might be from the wrong side of town or maybe your family has a bad reputation. You'll show everyone that you are just as good as anyone else, if not better. You'll surpass that which your parents failed to achieve.
- **Race Against the Clock:** You must achieve a specific goal under a harsh deadline, or all you hold dear will perish.
- **Redemption:** You did wrong and now it's time to make things right.
- **Revenge:** You killed my < Relative, Friend, or Mentor >, prepare to die!
- **Save the < Name, Role, or Title >, Save the World:** You were, selected, or decided to go on a quest to save one person against impossible odds.
- **Win the Object of Your Affection:** Be it a boy, girl, non-binary person, or even a special machine, you're willing to play any part to gain their attention or be the person of their dreams.
- **Wrath:** You're driven by a seething fury that's impossible for you to contain, but sometimes, just sometimes, you can direct it toward your enemies.

2. Quirks

A character's quirks make her unique, even among similar types of characters. For example, a plethora of detective characters loom large in crime fiction, comic books, and countless other stories. The best of these characters possesses unique personalities which set them apart, creating types that include everyone from Sam Spade to Hercule Poirot to Shaft to Sherlock Homes.

Choose a quirk from the list below, or create your own with Director approval:

- **Big Talker:** You like to dream and talk big, but can you deliver on all your huge promises? Or are you just full of hot air?

- **By the Book:** Rules are rules for a reason. You always follow the letter of the law, even if it hurts you or yours.
- **Collector:** You like having things or people or a certain type, whether it's a set of the coolest friends or every music box with a monkey on it. Sometimes, your desires can take a darker bent...
- **Cocky:** You're more than a little arrogant and reckless, and thus more willing to take chances others shy away from.
- **Compliant:** You're not a leader. In fact, you almost always give into others. Perhaps it's the way you like it, or maybe you work to overcome something from your past.
- **Crude:** There are times and places for finesse, but you're not sure you've ever encountered either. You may have never learned social niceties, or maybe you did and no longer care, which is why you're always making polite society clutch their pearls.
- **God Complex:** You cannot compare yourself to other humans, because there is no comparison of a god to riffraff. You know you are a superior being, and care little for the conventions holding humans in place.
- **Free Spirit:** You don't have a care in the world, and nothing ties you down. You live a free-wheeling lifestyle full of parties, people, and places, and none of them stay in your life long enough to bring you pain.
- **Heart of Gold:** You have a soft spot and a good intention for everyone. There isn't a mean bone in your body, and while some people try to take advantage of that, you can't help but find a way to show them how to be better people themselves.
- **Hedonist:** You dedicated your life to exploring and giving in to all the pleasures the world has to offer. There is no pain, no pleasure, and no level of intoxication too intense for you, and you seek to experience it all.
- **Infant Terrible:** Some say you have no respect for the skills that go into your art, but you know that you are a genius. You find convention tedious, and you're always willing to go out of your way to shock others in order to expand their consciousness.

- **Know-It-All:** You know everything about anything, and you aren't afraid to inform everyone else. Others sometimes tell you that you're overbearing, but you think their judgment is the price to pay for being so damned knowledgeable about the world.
- **Live by a Code:** Your personal code drives you. Whether you refuse to take assignments dealing with women or children, or you won't kill in order to get your way, an internal moral logic drives your every action.
- **Loser:** You never seem to win. Everyone else is smarter, cooler, or more attractive than you, and you always seem to sink to the bottom of the heap. You'd say it makes you scrappy, but then you'd have to admit you might have a positive attribute.
- **Obsessive:** You are extreme in a belief, desire, or quest in some way others find disturbing. Yours is a singular focus, and nothing can stand in your way.
- **Polite:** You are unerringly appropriate with people, even when they go out of their way to offend you. You think the world could stand to learn a few manners.
- **Silent as the Grave:** Your reticence to speak is more than a little unnerving to others, but it's easier for you than blabbing on all the time. Still waters run deep, or at least that's what you believe, and you see little reason to change now.
- **Smooth:** Even when you screw up, you find a way to make it look good. Others may find this attractive, or they may let some small slights go, as you give everything you do a certain style.
- **Steady:** You possess nerves of steel and can remain calm no matter the chaos. You almost always have a solution, even when everything is falling apart around you.
- **Spoiled:** You've never really known what it's like to not get what you want, and you are more than a little temperamental when you don't get your way.
- **Tough:** You can survive anything. You know this because you come out the other side of situations others find impossible to bear.

3. Background Tropes

When a player knows the background of her character, that knowledge helps form a foundation for who her character is. A character's past is the springboard to her present, and can be used to determine the choices she'll make going forward. Was she born to wealth and privilege or on the wrong side of the tracks? Whatever the answer, it shapes her interactions and priorities as the story unfolds.

If using Background Tropes, the player chooses a history from the list below, or creates her own with Director approval.

- **Big City, Bright Lights:** You were born for the city — for the excitement and hubbub of a million people crashing in around you. You know your way around the city and feel at home when navigating the masses.
- **Born for Greatness:** You were told all your life there was something different about you, and you are better than others. You might have alien DNA, or you might have been lied to, but you were raised to change the world.
- **Child Prodigy:** From your earliest memory, you always shocked or impressed the adults around you. You excelled — whether through great intelligence, musical talent, or physical prowess — and don't know what failure feels like. Yet.
- **Company Man:** You spent most of your life working for one place, and it's seeded a deep feeling of loyalty to the company. You may have covered up a few secrets along the way, but nothing can impugn the reputation of a place you love so much.
- **Corn Fed, Small Town:** You're from a small town where everyone knew everyone else's business. You spent your childhood going to church picnics, riding around with your friends, and having Sunday dinners. City folk might think you uncultured, but you understand your past gave you a set of unshakable values.
- **Criminal Past:** You did something wrong and it follows you. If caught, you may be trying to make amends with friends, family, or even the world. If you weren't, you may be on the run or trying to cover up what happened. No matter what though your crime screwed up your life.

- **Difficult Childhood:** You don't like remembering your childhood. Maybe your parents had problems they took out on you, or you had a personal bully who made your life a living hell. Your past left wounds and scars you're still trying to deal with today.
- **Family Secret:** Your family has a secret. It might be about a strange uncle who disappeared into the night, or the mysterious fire that killed your mother. You could be complicit in covering it up, making sure no one finds out, or maybe you're trying a little too hard to figure out what happened.
- **Given a Purpose:** Your entire life has meaning. You were raised from an early age to complete a goal that can change the lives of others forever. Whether you're a sleeper assassin or possess a secret key to another world, you're destined to fulfill a greater goal.
- **Hidden Gifts:** You know you have a spark of something within you, but for reasons known only to you, you always kept it hidden away from others. You may be afraid of your power. You may have a parent who thought you would be taken away if others knew. Maybe you didn't realize it was within you. Now, though, is the time to shine.
- **Haunted:** Something sticks with you, causing you a mental, spiritual, or physical anguish that cannot be lessened. It may be a past mistake that follows you, or perhaps an entity you crossed paths with a long time ago that hunts you even now. You just know even if you're not moving, you're always on the run.
- **Huge Disappointment:** Everyone expected you do something incredible with your life. Maybe you were going to go pro with basketball or create the next cure for cancer, but something got in your way and now you're dealing with the fallout of being unable to fulfill others' expectations.
- **Lifer:** You follow in the family tradition. You come from a long line of people who all did the same thing, and you grew up knowing it would be your life too. Maybe you like what you're doing, or maybe it's time to break free.
- **Middle Class Suburban Mediocrity:** Everything around you is banal. You grew up in a neighborhood just far enough from the city to be safe, but not far enough out for

you to run wild. You've only known a life in cookie cutter houses where all the people looked the same. Something more may be in your cards, if you can get over your fear of change.

- **Out of the Military:** You joined the military as soon as you could and made a life out of it. Combat is your entire life. But now you've either been kicked out or left, and you need to adjust to a life outside of the only place that ever felt like home.
- **Rags to Riches:** You were born dirt poor. Your early years were marked by the struggle to survive and fighting for every little thing you had. Now, you have an abundance of things you once begged for, and it's changing you little-by-little into someone you don't quite recognize.
- **Rebel, Rebel:** Everyone around you had a plan for your life, and you've decided to give them all a giant middle finger. You're breaking free from the expectations others had for you, and plan on shocking them even more with your decisions. It's time to live life on your terms.
- **Riches to Rags:** You had a lot of money as a child, but something changed. Whether it resulted from something out of your control — like Grandmother leaving the family fortune to charity — or as a result of your own actions, you're now learning about the struggle of the common people, and you're not sure how much you like it.
- **Silver Spoon:** You were born into the lap of luxury. You always had the best things in life and don't know what it's like to live in financial hardship. You expect that with enough money, getting what you want will always be easy.
- **Social Mountaineer:** You saw how the other side lives, and it's more than just money. You spent your entire life climbing from a position you consider humble into the glittering social circles you envied as a child.
- **Wrong Side of the Tracks:** You're never on the right side of popularity. You are part of the wrong neighborhood, the wrong family, or the wrong social class, and people look down on you for it.
- **Ugly Duckling:** When you were younger, people shunned you. They might not have thought you were pretty or smart enough for them to pay attention to you. Now,

however, you've come into your own and you're the talk of the town.

4. Whose Side Are You On?

All Genres have different takes on the story's central conflict, and characters can fall along disparate lines of thought, and end up in many different types of conflict. In any group, there are numerous ways to develop these conflicts, and it's always important for the writers to know where their characters stand.

Some examples of conflicts are listed below. This list is not all-inclusive. Genres will each have their own set of conflicts specific to the themes of that story. Players and Directors work together to determine the dramatic conflicts they want to explore.

- Reason vs Emotion
- Family vs Family
- Good vs Evil
- Heroes vs Villains
- The Youth vs the Establishment
- Criminals vs the Law
- Nature vs Machine

Sample Genre: Punching Nazis: Factions

The Templates for the Punching Nazis (see Chapter Seven: Punching Nazis, page xx) are:

- American Armed Forces
- English Armed Forces
- Russian Armed Forces
- French Resistance
- Polish Resistance
- Jewish Resistance
- Civilians, Spies, and Saboteurs

Example: *Charlie has a vague sketch for his pilot named Jack Carver, but he needs to shade in a few details to give the concept depth. He runs through the What's My Motivation series of questions:*

Call to Adventure: Ambition: *To Best the Best. Charlie decides that Jack Carver is the son of a WWI Ace.*

Quirk: Big Talker: Jack likes to brag about his skills, and likely got into the habit from listening to his father. He writes very expensive checks that his hands and skills need to pay off.

Background Troupe: Corn Fed, Small Town: Jack grew up in Nebraska, running through the corn fields, and imagining shooting down Fokker M-5s.

Whose Side Are You On? It makes the most sense for Jack to be part of the American Armed Forces. Jack wants to stop fascism in Europe and to protect America.

Step Four: Assign Points to Attributes

Attributes define a character's quantifiable natural talents, and are divided into four categories: Body, Heart, Mind, and Soul.

Attribute Ratings

A typical human character has 2 points in each Attribute. The usual maximum for a human character is 5, depending upon the nature and internal reality of the Genre. All characters start with 1 point in all Attribute categories. If a character ever acquires a score of 0 or below in an Attribute, that character is considered Knocked Out of the Story (For more information, see **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Knocked Out of the Story**, page xx.)

Some Genres can change this overall baseline and ceiling due to supernatural or superhuman elements of the Genre's setting be it magic, super-science, or anything else the Writers' Room devises.

Cinematic Qualities can increase a character's natural Attribute beyond a normal limit. The Budget of the Genre scales the power levels, simulating street-level characters (like a certain dark, caped vigilante known for his gadgets) and cosmic-level characters (like a certain pseudo-sun god character inspired by Moses, immigrant stories, and the American Dream) while still keeping what's unique and special about each character without ruining the other.

Attribute Specializations

For every two points of a specific Attribute a character possesses, she gains an Attribute Specialization. Attribute Specializations can be expended during a game to remove a single level of Consequence for any failed resolution, if the Director and players agree such an action is dramatically appropriate for the story and Genre. Once expended, Attribute Specializations are spent for the remainder of the game session.

For more information on this process, **see Chapter Four: Core Rules**, page XX.

Players can select specializations from those listed, or create new ones with Director approval.

Assigning Starting Attribute Points

Every Attribute starts with one point already, and players then spend points as they wish to increase each one. The number of points to assign is determined by the Genre's Budget. These points are not spent like Experience Points (as in **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Experience Points**, page xx.), but are assigned one-for-one.

Genre Example from Punching Nazis

Budget Level: Blockbuster

The players get 12 points to distribute among the four attributes.

Example: *Charlie wants his pilot to be the best of the best, a dashing and legendary hero with nerves of steel. All Attributes for Morra characters start with a base level of 1. He initially decides to evenly spread the 12 points among the four Attributes. Later, he decides to raise his Mind to 3 and then raise his Body to 4 to show that Jack is an average Joe with some amazing skills. Afterward, he selects Attribute Specializations that meet the needs of the character's archetype.*

Body: 4

Attribute Specializations: Quick, Steady

Heart: 4

Attribute Specializations: Charming

Mind: 3

Attribute Specializations: Witty

Soul: 3

Attribute Specializations: Cool

Attribute Descriptions

Body

Body describes a character's pure, on-screen physicality: her hand-eye coordination, agility, speed, raw strength, and stamina. Mechanically, this Attribute determines how well she is likely to perform physical tasks and stunts, while specializations represent the manner in which she accomplishes these feats. For example, a character with a high Body and the specializations of Agile, Nimble, and Quick might be a runner, a dancer, or a quick-draw

gunslinger. Characters with a high Body tend to work with their hands and enjoy physical exertion, such as athletes, manual laborers, or soldiers.

Specializations: Agile, Beefy, Graceful, Hearty, Lifting, Nimble, Precise, Quick, Supple, Tough

Here are a few varied examples of famous actors known for roles that demonstrate a high Body:

- Jackie Chan: The raw energy of his physicality is like a poem. Some of his best performances are *Legend of the Drunken Master* (dir. Yuen Woo-Ping), *Heart of the Dragon* (dir. Sammo Hung), and *Rush Hour* (dir. Brett Ratner).
- Michelle Rodriguez: The dynamic athleticism she brings to every role invites the audience to experience the story through her eyes. Some of her best movies are *The Fast and The Furious* (dir. Rob Cohen), *Blue Crush* (dir. John Stockwell), and *Machete* (dir. Robert Rodriguez).
- Arnold Schwarzenegger: The sheer colossal physique he carefully sculpted is worth millions of dollars in special effects. Some of his best performances are *Conan the Barbarian* (dir. John Milius), *The Terminator* (dir. James Cameron), and *Predator* (dir. John McTiernan).
- Michelle Yeoh: The speed, agility, and grace inherent in her scenes are almost so unbelievably impossible that her movements trigger the audience's uncanny valley response. Some of her best performances are *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (dir. Ang Lee), *Magnificent Warriors* (dir. David Chung), and *True Legend* (dir. Yuen Woo-Ping).

Heart

Heart reflects a character's screen presence: her suave demeanor, a dramatic speaking voice, or even the glamorous beauty of a true movie star. Mechanically, this Attribute determines how well a character can emote, manipulate and inspire others, and how society responds to her actions; specializations represent the exact flavors of how Heart manifests. For example, a character with a

high Heart and specializations in Amiable, Empathetic, and Relatable might be involved in the arts, politics, counseling, or any field requiring intense interaction with others. Characters with a high Heart tend to be extroverts who work well with others. They frequently can be found as diplomats, salespeople, or as the emotional core of an ensemble cast.

Specializations: Alluring, Amiable, Attractive, Charismatic, Earnest, Empathetic, Exuberant, Intimidating, Relatable, Sincere

Here are a few examples of various actors who excel in roles which possess a high Heart:

- Angela Bassett: Powerful, unrelenting, and impossible to look away from. Some of her best performances are in *Strange Days* (dir. Kathryn Bigelow), *What's Love Got to Do With It* (dir. Brian Gibson), and *The Score* (dir. Frank Oz).
- Jennifer Connelly: Like a dream, she morphs into whatever role the script demands, and magnetically draws the attention of the audience. Some of her best performances are in *Labyrinth* (dir. Jim Henson), *Requiem for a Dream* (dir. Darren Aronofsky), and *Waking the Dead* (dir. Keith Gordon).
- Idris Elba: The commanding presence of his sonorous voice, calm demeanor, and sheer charisma makes any character he plays compelling. Some of his best performances are in *Luther* (created by Neil Cross), *The Dark Tower* (dir. Nikolaj Arcel) and *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (dir. Justin Chadwick).
- Jack Nicholson: The lothario charm, insane rants, and manic shit-eating-grin of his loveable loser roles forces the audience to empathize with bad or troubled characters. Some of his best performances are in *The Shining* (dir. Stanley Kubrick), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (dir. Miloš Forman), and *Easy Rider* (dir. Dennis Hopper).

Mind

The Mind Attribute defines a character's intellectual capabilities; it describes her ability to learn new information, correlate different points of data, and use reason and logic to arrive at a correct conclusion. Mechanically, Mind determines how quickly a character thinks and the strength of her focus and concentration, while the specializations represent the exact flavors of Mind. For example, a character with a high Mind and Specializations in Calculating, Disciplined, and Intelligent might be involved with computers, science, or academia. Characters with a high Mind attribute tend to be introverts, working better with abstract concepts than other people, appearing as scientists, technicians, or mechanics.

Specializations: Astute, Calculating, Canny, Disciplined, Experienced, Intelligent, Perceptive, Total Memory, Visionary, Wise

Here are a few examples of famous actors known for roles demonstrating a high Mind:

- Benedict Cumberbatch: His sonorous verbal intonations and piercing eyes reflect an arrogant brilliance that broadcasts a vast, believable intellect. Some of his best performances are in *Doctor Strange* (dir. Scott Derrickson), *The Imitation Game* (dir. Morten Tydum), and *Sherlock* (created by Mark Gatiss & Steven Moffat).
- Viola Davis: Her watchful expression, calculating eyes that measure everything, and stoic demeanor frequently showcase characters who are three steps ahead of everyone else. Some of her best performances are in *Suicide Squad* (dir. David Ayer), *How to Get Away with Murder* (created by Peter Nowalk), and *Widows* (dir. Steve McQueen).
- Jodie Foster: The sharp intensity of how she experiences a scene and listens to other actors immerses the audience into the film, helping them follow otherwise unfilmable inner thoughts. Some of her best performances are in *The Hotel New Hampshire* (dir. Tony Richardson), *Silence of the Lambs* (dir. Jonathan Demme), *Contact* (dir. Robert Zemeckis), and *The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane* (dir. Nicolas Gessner).

- Jeff Goldblum: His reflective mannerisms and verbosity makes his characters' genius seem both possible and yet relatable. Some of his best performances are in *Independence Day* (dir. Roland Emmerich), *Jurassic Park* (dir. Steven Spielberg), and *The Fly* (dir. David Cronenberg).

Soul

The Soul attribute is a character's *je ne sais quoi*: a unique zen coolness that elevates her beyond an ordinary person. Bushido refers to this attribute as a battle aura, a halo of calm and mastery that empowers its wielder to remove fear and doubt from her heart. Mechanically, Soul determines how calmly a character reacts in a crisis, resists fear and mental attacks, and wields the power of the cosmos. The specializations represent the many ways in which Soul can manifest in a character. For example, a character with a high Soul and Specializations in Cool, Control, and Zen might be religious, magically intuitive, lucky, or empowered with mystical insight. Characters with a high Soul tend to be philosophers and preachers, content to work alone or with others, appearing as prophets, magicians, or even that really cool guy who always seems in tune with the universe.

Specializations: Beacon, Control, Cool, Disciplined, Insightful, Lucky, Magic, Medium, Supernatural, Zen

Here are a few examples of famous actors known for roles that demonstrate a high Soul:

- Catherine Deneuve: Eternally a lost soul, forever haunted by what she can't have, her performances exemplify this pain: the existential weight of existence and the strength of resolve to fight both it and madness within. Some of her best performances are in *Belle de Jour* (dir. Luis Buñuel), *The Hunger* (dir. Tony Scott), and *Repulsion* (dir. Roman Polanski).
- Chow Yun Fat: Wisdom hard earned from a rough life is etched in every line on his face; by expressing this wisdom through humor, he invites the audience to share in his connection to the universe. Some of his best performances are in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (dir. Ang Lee), *God of Gamblers* (dir. Wong Jing), and *Bulletproof Monk* (dir. Paul Hunter).

- Keanu Reeves: His eternal, unflappable demeanor reveals a rich inner life, and becomes a calmness which spills over into his performances. Some of his best performances are in *The Matrix* (dirs. the Wachowski sisters), *John Wick* (dirs. Chad Stahelski and David Leitch), and *Constantine* (dir. Francis Lawrence).
- Tilda Swinton: Her eyes are portals to another world, forever distant and impossible for a human to fully comprehend. Some of her best performances are in *Orlando* (dir. Sally Potter), *Only Lovers Left Alive* (dir. Jim Jarmusch), *Suspiria* (dir. Luca Guadagnino), and *Broken Flowers* (dir. Jim Jarmusch).

Step Five: Assign Points to Skills

Skills are a character's quantifiable, learned abilities reflected on the screen.

The following Skills are the baseline skills, available to every Genre. Some Genres may have Genre-Specialized skills that are thematically different. For example, in a Fighting Mecha Genre, the Director might decide that Mecha Piloting is separate from the Transport Skill, because maneuvering a giant combat robot takes highly specialized training. Therefore, she creates the Genre-Specialized Skill – Fighting Mecha.

Skill Ratings

A typical human character has 2 dots in a Skill, unless she is a talented professional or exceptionally trained. The typical maximum for a human character is 5, depending upon the nature and reality of the Genre. Some Genres may change this overall baseline and maximum due to the Genre's setting, be it magic, super-science, or anything else the Writer's Room devises.

Cinematic Qualities can increase a character's natural Skill beyond this limit. The Budget of the Genre scales the power levels, simulating street-level to cosmic-level characters while keeping what's unique and special about each of them. Equipment bonuses also give Wildcard bonuses to Skills.

Genre Skill Adjustments

Some skills can appear differently in various Genres, either due to a disparity in technology or a scarcity of resources. Any deviation from the standard Skills must be detailed in the Skill Adjustments section for the Genre (see **Chapter Two: Defining a Genre: Skill Adjustments**, page xx).

Skill Competency

If your character has 2 or more points in a Skill, it is presumed the character has both the tools required to use the Skill, and also knows how to perform basic maintenance relevant to the Skill. For example, a character who has Firearms at 2 points is presumed to have a few basic weapons, and to know how to clean and maintain her guns in typical circumstances.

Professional Specializations

Your character gains a Professional Specialization when purchasing the third point in a Skill, and for every point thereafter. If your character has Knowledge 5, she can have 3 Professional Specializations. Professional Specializations can be expended, if the Director thinks it is dramatically appropriate, during a game to remove a single level of Consequence for any failed resolution. Once expended, Professional Specializations remain spent for the rest of the game session (for more information, **see Chapter Four: Core Rules**, page XX). The Specializations listed in each section are suggestions. Directors and players are free to choose new ones if appropriate.

Untrained Skill Penalty

Your character can attempt to do anything within the boundaries of the Genre, but if she has no idea what she's doing, such as having no points in an appropriate Skill, she has a -5 untrained penalty to any resolution technique.

Assigning Starting Skill Points

The number of points assigned to Skills is determined by the Genre's Budget. These points are not spent like Experience Points (as in **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Experience Points**, page xx), but assigned to the skills as desired. Unlike Attributes, Skills start with no points pre-assigned at character creation.

Genre Example from Punching Nazis

Budget Level: Blockbuster

All players get 15 points to distribute among their skills.

Example: *Charlie reads through the Skills list and selects the ones that most represent the Archetype. He then distributes the starting points. Afterward, he selects Attribute Specializations that meet the needs of the character's archetype.*

Transport: 4

Professional Specializations: North American -51D-20-NA Mustang, Douglas C-47 Skytrain

Technology: 3

Professional Specializations: Radios

Fix: 3

Professional Specializations: Planes

Notice: 1

Fighting: 1

Firearms: 2

Convince: 1

Skill Descriptions

Art

The expression or application of talent and imagination to produce something, such as a statue, painting, poem, or song, that stimulates an emotional and intellectual response. You were blessed by the Muses, or otherwise gifted with some form of artistic ability. This Skill covers fine arts (such as painting, music or sculpture), performing arts (singing, dancing or acting), and even more technical arts (such as writing, architecture or design). Directors use the Attribute best suited for the application of the Skill during resolutions.

Professional Specializations: Dancing, Drawing, Origami, Painting, Performing, Photography, Playing an Instrument, Sculpture, Singing, Writing

Bushcraft

Major Leslie James Hiddins coined the term 'bushcraft' to describe those with the ability to tame the wilderness and live by Mother Nature's laws. It's an art often lost to those born in the city, and a valuable Skill to have when lost and alone with only your wits. The Great Outdoors is your domain. No matter the terrain, you're a master at surviving, and even thriving, in the wild. If given the time and resources, you can even build a new home and start cultivating crops and raising livestock.

Professional Specializations: Cowboy, Farming, Fishing, Green Thumb, Guide, Hunter, Ranger, Rural, Survivalist

Convince

The Irish might say that you've the gift of gab, as though you've kissed the blessed Blarney Stone itself. You can convince others to do what you want, whether through lying, threats, or simple charm. While your talent might be brilliant, you can't convince

someone to do something completely against her nature, or which seems blatantly suicidal, no matter how charming you are.

Professional Specializations: Charm, Flattery, Hypnosis, Leadership, Negotiation, Oration, Sales Pitch, Silver Tongue, Threats

Crime

If folks knew how well Crime really paid, there'd be riots and all the police would be ridden out of town on a rail. You went to the school of hard knocks and learned to pick pockets, rob, steal, forge documents, and break into a building and escape with everything not nailed down. Anything you imagine organized crime does, or how a con artist might make a shady living, is covered by this Skill. Crime doesn't cover conning others or hacking computers, as those are Convince and Technology respectively.

Professional Specializations: Arson, Blackmail, Burglary, Car Theft, Forgery, Hired Muscle, Identity Theft, Petty Crime, Robbery, White Collar

Fighting

You know various methods of inflicting grievous bodily harm to your enemies, whether with a knife, a sword, or even your bare hands. You fight both brutally and tactically. You can plan ambushes, violently escape sticky situations, and fight against multiple opponents by using their numbers against them.

Professional Specializations: Boxing, Brawling, Fencing, Improvised Weapons, Kickboxing, Knife Fighting, Kung Fu, Maces, Sword Fighting, Wrestling

Firearms

With the right firearm in your hand, you are deadly to anyone or anything within line of sight. You received training and practiced with the common ranged weapons of your Genre, be it the Colt .45, the M-15 rifle, the Plasma BFG, or even crossbows and long bows. If you need additional guidance, look to the Skill Adjustments for your Genre.

Professional Specializations: Crossbows, Laser Weapons, Long Bows, Machine Guns, Mortars, Pistols, Plasma Weapons, Rifles, Sniper, Thrown

Fix

Fixing broken things just comes naturally to you. If given enough time and resources, you can repair just about anything. This Skill

represents mastery of technical and mechanical repair, carpentry, and anything else that helps you make something work again. Genres with a vastly different technology level will contain a section explaining the details of Fix within said Genre. A Genre with the technology level of ancient Rome isn't going to have computers or guns, but a blacksmith with Fix knows how to repair a busted wagon or damaged grain mill.

Professional Specializations: Carpentry, Electrician, Goldsmith, Gunsmith, Handy Person, Jeweler, Locksmith, Mechanic, Smith, Tinkerer

Knowledge

Some might say the difference between intelligence and wisdom is education and experience. All non-scientific fields of study are covered by this Skill, from history to the occult. This skill represents your character's ability to know obscure facts, research clues, hidden information, or translating languages. At four points, you are considered highly educated, but that doesn't necessarily mean you have a post as a teacher or professor.

Professional Specializations: Anthropology, History, Languages, Literature, Local Lore, Mathematics, Occult, Philosophy, Psychology, Religion

Notice

You have the knack for noticing clues, uncovering secrets, or just picking up on weird things that others ignore. You're the character who can locate a secret door, notice when someone seems to be lying, catch someone ambushing you before she attacks, or even find spent shell casings in tall grass. Some cultures might believe that you have your third eye open. If supernatural or paranormal elements are present in your Genre, you somehow sense when magic is being used around you, or when you come into contact with supernatural creatures.

Professional Specializations: Awareness, Examine, Explore, Interrogate, Investigate, Notice, Question, Scout, Search, Sense

Medicine

You have the healing touch, the ability to leverage your Genre's accepted medical practices to heal wounds, mend bones, and cure diseases. At four points, you are acknowledged as a doctor, physician, or surgeon in your society, but that doesn't necessarily mean you have a good bedside manner. Genres with a vastly different technology level will contain a section detailing what's possible with Medicine within said Genre.

Professional Specializations: Dentist, Emergency Medicine, General Practitioner, Nurse, Pharmacist, Psychiatrist, Specialist, Surgeon, Therapist, Veterinarian

Subterfuge

You are quite the slippery devil; deceit, lies, and trickery are your weapons to subtly wield. You mastered the art of silence, knowing when to blend in and trick others into ignoring your presence, or you can attempt to befuddle, confuse, and misdirect others. Some might find you a shady character for using such trickery, but the wise say that bullshit makes the world go around, so why not make it spin a little faster?

Professional Specializations: Ambush, Bluff, Camouflage, Cheating, Crocodile Tears, Deception, Excuses, Fraud, Hiding, Tall Tales, Traps

Science

You believe in the scientific method and learning about the universe via observation, measurement, and experimentation. Little makes you happier than modifying an old hypothesis because of new data. Science is theoretical, while Fix and Technology apply knowledge in practical ways. While the umbrella of Science covers of vast host of different subjects, individual topics of study can be selected through the Professional Specializations. At four points in Science, you are considered knowledgeable enough to teach at a university, even if you lack a formal degree. Genres with a vastly different technology level will contain a section detailing what's possible with Science within said Genre.

Professional Specializations: Astronomy, Biology, Botany, Ecology, Chemistry, Genetics, Geology, Meteorology, Paleontology, Physics

Stunts

The perfect movie stunt can elevate a common movie to a classic. Some things simply can't be faked with special effects and computer-generated imagery, and that's where you come in. In the end, the believability of a shot requires an actor achieving the nearly impossible. You trained your body to push beyond its natural limitations and fears to achieve spectacular athletic feats. A Stunt might be scaling the side of an airplane as it's taking off, jumping from roof to roof to chase the robber, or skateboarding against traffic to escape angry drug dealers.

Professional Specializations: Acrobatics, Climbing, Contortion, Evasion, Grapple, Gymnastics, Parkour, Running, Swimming, Throwing

Technology

Science covers the theoretical knowledge about how things work in the universe, but Technology is the application of that knowledge, such as building a robot, writing a computer program, or designing a bridge. While the umbrella of Technology covers many different pursuits, individual subjects can be selected through Professional Specializations. At four points in Technology, you are considered knowledgeable enough to teach at a university, even if you lack a degree. Genres with a vastly different technology level will contain a section detailing what's possible with Technology within said Genre.

Professional Specializations: Alternative Energy, Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, Engineering, Genetic Engineering, Hacking, Nanotechnology, Particle Science, Programming, Robotics

Transport

The history of the world was often shaped by how populations transported people and goods from one place to another. This Skill covers the common ways and means of transport for your Genre, be it airplanes that buzz through the skies, hovercrafts that jet over the oceans, or fast cars that roam the desert wastelands. You know how to push your transports to their limit and perform feats and stunts others would blanch to contemplate. Some vehicles or transports might require special training or strange circumstances. For example, in a Genre with giant fighting robots, a Director might require a Transport: Mecha Skill, and allow the standard Skill cover motorcycles, hovercrafts, and starships.

Professional Specializations: Airplanes, Big Rigs, Boats, Cars, Fighter Pilots, Helicopters, Horses, Motorcycles, Ships, Spacecraft

Wildcard

You have specialized expertise in an area of knowledge not covered by the core *Morra* Skills — the ultimate iron chef, a long-term financial planner in the banking industry, or a custom-built cyborg. Some Genres have specialized Skills which require special circumstances—such as purchasing a Quality-- or are common for that universe, but different enough from the core

skills that it needs special definition, such as Magic, Transport-Mecha, or Astral Navigation. Each Wildcard Skill presented in a Genre has a corresponding set of Professional Specializations associated with the Skill.

Step Six: Assign Points to Qualities

A cinematic *Quality* is a special trait that makes a character stand out in the story. The character can have magical powers, cool biomechanical toys, or just plain luck. Available Qualities are outlined in the Genre, Genre Umbrella, Genre Factions, Archetype, or Budget. The Director is always the final arbiter of what Quality can be purchased.

Qualities for Punching Nazis can be found in **Chapter Seven: Punching Nazis: Qualities, page XX.**

General Qualities can be found in **Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities, page XX.**

Assigning Starting Quality Points

The number of points assigned to this category is determined by the Genre's Budget, which also determines the Quality ceiling. Qualities are purchased at a one-to-one ratio at character creation. For example, if a player wanted to purchase Cantrips (4-point Quality), she needs to spend 4 of her starting points, and her Genre's Budget must at least be Syndication.

Genre Example from Punching Nazis

Budget Level: Blockbuster

The players get 13 points to distribute among Qualities:

Example: *Charlie reads through the Qualities list and realizes that many of the higher cost qualities wouldn't fit with the average man on the ground / God of the Skies concept. He decides to pick up his Archetype Qualities and then pick a sprinkle of others that will help solidify his concept as the guy with a smart mouth that gets his team in and out of trouble.*

- **Pet Bird (1-point Quality)**
- **Brave (2-point Quality)**
- **Internal Radar (3-point Quality)**
- **Calling Card: (2-point Quality)**
- **Catchphrase (5-point Quality)**

Step Seven: Select Flaws

Some folks just love a challenge. or they simply need more points to spend. A new character can start with up to 5 points of flaws, spread out among the Attributes as she likes. She gains 2 XP for every point she accepts in flaws. While a character can't be Knocked Out of Story by a flaw, she always has the Mechanical Penalty and the Condition of the Flaw without a Fulfillment to cancel it.

For more information, see **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Flaws**, page xx.

Chapter Four: Core Rules

"There are no rules in filmmaking. Only sins. And the cardinal sin is dullness."

— Frank Capra

The best cinematic experiences are a form of hypnosis: they seduce the audience into loving the lead characters, believing in their story, and embracing the emotional catharsis at the end. During this magical time, audiences don't care about the movie's budget, the special effects, or how the director managed to capture that perfect shot. Their faith in the story, and how it makes them feel, are the only things that matter.

The Morra Cinematic Universal Roleplaying Game System is designed to mimic this experience, with quick rules resolution centered around exciting story beats and dramatic moments. Who could forget the thrilling sword duels in the incomparable *Captain Blood*, directed by Michael Curtiz? Only the most pedantic of viewers count the number of sword thrusts, parries, and faceless villains Errol Flynn slaughters, but everyone remembers his panache and the action of the moment.

Rather than existing as a complex simulationist exercise, detailing the blow-by-blow of a scene and weighing the results, *Morra* distills the statistics of your character sheet, and, more importantly, your character choices into a simple equation. This formula then judges the difficulty of the action, and determines the risks and potential consequences. You either succeed in climbing the mountain, speaking before the jury, or fighting the endless horde of zombies, then move onto the next story beat, or you fail and deal with the consequences.

The rules are simple by design. The best story choice is almost always the best mechanical choice. A player can enjoy this game without needing a deep mastery of the rules.

Cast of Characters

In *Morra*, the cast is a collection of characters important to the story. Here are the types of characters you might find in a cast:

- Stock Characters — Background characters who are important for a specific scenario within an Act, but are not important to the overall story. These characters lack the Cinematic Qualities necessary to distinguish themselves from anyone else on screen, but still have a name, some sort of relationship to the lead characters, and a simple personality. An example of a Stock Character can be a beat cop closing off a crime scene, a random zombie prowling a post-apocalyptic landscape, an innocent bystander, a beloved pet, or any character who

briefly appears onscreen to further the scenario without a long-term dramatic purpose to the overall story. These characters don't have a character sheet, but can increase the Difficulty Rating for a Dramatic Moment.

- Supporting Characters — Characters created and played by the Director, who serve a purpose in the larger narrative, sometimes as antagonists across one or more Acts. These characters are most often foils of the Lead Characters in some fashion. Examples of a supporting character are a troubled sidekick to the hero, a rival ship captain seeking the same treasure, a lawyer trying the other side of the case, or a land developer wanting to scare folks away from the museum. Directors create Supporting Characters with the same rules as Lead Characters, using **Chapter Three: Character Creation**, page xx. The Director then gives them bonus XP as needed. Below is a set of guidelines for creating challenging Support Characters.

Challenge Level of Support Character	Bonus XP	Example
Easy	Character Creation + 25 XP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random Encounter • Trivial Antagonist
Standard	Character Creation + 50 XP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor Antagonist • Monster of the Week
Challenging to Heroic	Character Creation + 100 to 150 XP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Monster or Creature • Mini-boss Antagonist
Epic	Character Creation + 200 XP or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monster of Myth • Boss Legend • Series Antagonist

- Lead Characters — Archetypal characters of the Genre, created and portrayed by players using the process as outlined in **Chapter Three: Character Creation**, page xx.

Dramatic Moment

A Dramatic Moment is any action a character takes where she steps into the narrative spotlight, be it with an impressive stunt, expressive monologue, or just a cool character moment. The mechanical foundation of *Morra* lies in the following ancient dramatic conceits:

- Conflict reveals character. There exists a vast spectrum of methods for applying conflict to a character, each of them with distinct advantages and disadvantages. For more information, see **Chapter Six: Director's Primer**, page xx.
- For a dramatic moment to be real, there must exist some element of risk. For there to be a triumph, there must always be the potential for a fall, known in *Morra*, as a Consequence.

A Dramatic Moment breaks down into four steps, but experienced Directors can be creative in the exact manner of their execution.

Step One: Detail the Dramatic Moment

The player describes the Dramatic Moment in detail to the Director.

Directors listen carefully to players as they describe exactly what they want their characters to accomplish. Everyone tries to consider everything that a cinematographer might prepare for when framing a shot: the position of the characters and their enemies, environmental factors (like innocents in the line of fire, vehicles or buildings blocking the characters' paths, or even the weather), and the physics of the stunt (is such a thing even possible in this genre? How can it look cooler?).

Don't be afraid of brainstorming the sequence. This isn't an adversarial situation, but rather a collaborative effort between the Director and the players to create the coolest possible outcome. It's akin to a film director, the actors, and the stunt coordinators all working together to show brilliance on the screen.

Step Two: Identify the Action Pool

All Action Pools are determined by the following simple formula:

Attribute + Skill + Wild Card + 2d6 = Action Pool

Step Three: Determine the Difficulty Rating

The Director consults the Difficulty Rating chart below, and then chooses the appropriate Difficulty Rating for the Dramatic Moment.

Director's Note: Doing Too Much in a Single Moment

If a character attempts to do multiple things in a single Dramatic Moment, the Director chooses the Attribute and Skill most important for player's part in the shot. For example, if Vinnie the Mooch wants to shoot the tires out of

a rival car while driving in heavy traffic during a blizzard, the Director selects the Firearms Skill and increases the Difficulty Rating of the shot.

Difficulty Level	Difficulty Rating	Example
Easy	6-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parallel parking a car • Playing a familiar piece of music • Performing routine repairs on a piece of gear • Climbing a ladder
Standard	10-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sinking a free throw in basketball • Getting to work on time during rush hour • Applying basic First Aid • Climbing a rope
Challenging	15-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translating an unfamiliar language • Talking your way out of a speeding ticket • Sinking a 3-point shot in basketball • Performing CPR
Heroic	20-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evading a police chase • Deciphering a lost language • Talking your way out of a misdemeanor charge • Making a half-court shot in basketball
Epic	26-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking your way out of a felony • Performing complex surgery

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flying an unfamiliar aircraft
Impossible	31+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking your way out of a felony with witnesses • Winning a dogfight in an unfamiliar aircraft • Performing complex surgery with improper tools

Step Four: Rolling the Bones!

The player rolls two six-sided dice and adds the result to her Attribute, Skill, and any relevant Wild Card to determine her Action Pool.

- If her total Action Pool is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Rating, she succeeds in her character's Dramatic Moment.
- If her total Action Pool is lower than the Difficulty Rating, she fails and earns one point of Consequence, applied in the category the Director feels most dramatically appropriate.
- If she rolls snake-eyes (double ones), she spectacularly fails, adding additional complications to the scenario and earning 2 points of Consequences, applied in the category the Director feels is most dramatically appropriate.
- If she rolls boxcars (double sixes), she can roll again, adding the sum of the additional roll to her Action Pool. If she rolls boxcars in successive rolls, she continues to add to her Action Pool.

Dramatic Moment – Cast Complications

The Dramatic Moment is the foundation of *Morra*. This section details mechanics that apply when the cast is competing for the spotlight.

Call Sheet: Order of Initiative

A call sheet is the schedule written by a film director, informing the cast and crew of the day's shooting schedule. If *Morra* cast members (including Supporting Characters) work at cross-

purposes during a scene, then Directors leverage the Call Sheet rule when timing is important.

Before anyone rolls dice, the Director outlines a Call Sheet, featuring every member of the cast ranked by her pending Action Pool. The character with the highest Action Pool resolves her Dramatic Moment first, and then the spotlight moves to each member of the cast in sequence, until everyone resolves their Dramatic Moment.

The sequence then begins anew so long as members of the cast can and wish to continue the scene. Cast members can go later in the order if it suits their needs, but once they lower their Call Sheet order in the initiative, it remains there until the Dramatic Moment ends.

Note: Stock characters do not appear on call sheets as their interaction within Morra is factored into the Difficulty Rating.

A Friend in Need

Sometimes, it's in the best interest of cast members to cooperate to achieve a specific goal rather than take separate Dramatic Moments. If the Director agrees this is possible, then the supported character can add +1 to her Action Pool for every 5 points the lender has in their Action Pool.

Shotgun Sally plans to pop a cap in the ass of her no-good brother, Kyle. Her Action Pool for the Dramatic Moment is Attribute (Body 4) + Skill (Firearm x 3) + Wildcard (Shotgun: Firearms +2) for a total of 9. This tickles Jeff's fancy, so he decides to aid Shotgun Sally by laying down suppression fire to help. His Action Pool for the Dramatic Moment is Attribute (Body 3) + Skill (Firearm x 3) + Wildcard (Green Glock: Firearms +2) for a total of 8, which means that he can lend Sally +1 to her Action Pool.

Script Armor

A Stock Character or simple environmental scenario, in most cases, is overcome in a single Dramatic Moment. The cast, both Lead and Support Characters, have thicker script armor because they are special and the center of this cinematic universe. They add 2D6 to their Action Pool when defending.

The Difficulty Rating of any Dramatic Moment against a Cast Member is her Attribute x3 + Attribute Specializations. The Attribute is always the same as the Attribute in the Action Pool of the Dramatic Moment.

Shotgun Sally plans to pop a cap in the ass of her no-good brother, Kyle. Her Action Pool for the Dramatic Moment is Attribute (Body 4) + Skill (Firearm x 3) + Wildcard (Shotgun: Firearms +2), for a total of 9. The difficulty rating is Kyle's Attribute (Body 3) x 3 plus his two Attribute Specializations: Agile and Tough, to equal 11.

Taking Hits and Receiving Consequences

Cast members are resilient, but can take hits during Dramatic Moments.

Should a Dramatic Moment target and then successfully strike a cast member, she takes one point of Consequences to her relevant Attribute. For every five points above the Difficulty Rating scored on the Action Pool, the target gains an additional point of Consequence.

Shotgun Sally plans to pop a cap in the ass of her no-good brother, Kyle. Her Action Pool for the Dramatic Moment is Attribute (Body 4) + Skill (Firearm x 3) + Wildcard (Shotgun: Firearms +2), for a total of 9. The difficulty rating is Kyle's Attribute (Body 3) x 3 plus his two attribute specializations: Agile and Tough, to equal 11. Sally rolls a 12, making her total Action Pool 20. Kyle rolls a 2 making his defending pool 13. The 7-point difference between Kyle's Difficulty Rating and Sally's Action Pool creates an additional point of Consequence, and the Dramatic Moment causes Kyle 2 points of Body Consequences. If Sally somehow gained 3 more points on her Action Pool, she would have inflicted a total of 3 points of Body Consequences.

Reducing Incoming Complications

Each character who receives points of Consequences from a Dramatic Moment can expend one or more of her Attribute or Skill (from the used Action Pool) specializations to lower the level of Consequences applied to the character for any reason. Remember that specializations refresh at the beginning of every game session. Once expended, you lose access to them.

Kyle takes 2 points of Body Consequences because Shotgun Sally shot him. He has 2 Body specializations. He previously took damage as a result of a fist fight and already has 2 points of Body consequences. If he takes more than 3 points of Body Consequences, he will be Knocked Out of the Story (page xx), so he decides to expend his Body Specialization: Tough to lower that to 1 point of Body Consequences.

If a character receives more Consequences than she has slots available in that Attribute, then one or more of several things can happen:

- The character is Knocked Out of the Story for a time, but can re-enter later by transforming a Consequence into a Flaw (see **Consequences: Knocked Out of the Story**, page xx).
- Another Lead Character could agree to take the excess Consequences (see **Consequences: Collateral Damage**, page xx).
- If this end scenario works as a death scene for the character, and the player decides it's time for a change, then the Director works with the player to complete the character's arc (see **Consequences: Final Death**, page xx.).

One Story/Many Acts

A single session of a game is called a *story*, and modeled after a movie or a television series. Published materials used during a story are called *scripts*. Each new story refreshes expended (Attribute or Professional) Specializations, and potentially removes any outstanding Consequences if enough in-universe time passes. Flaws, of course, follow characters from story to story.

Each story is made up of story beats, called *acts*, where characters engage with and resolve scenarios. Skillful Directors map out their stories by planning out their acts to reach a meaningful climax.

One Act/Three Scene Structure

Movies and television screenplays evolved from the literary traditions of a stage play, dividing beats of a longer narrative into acts and scenes. *Morra* mimics this structure to provide shape and form to its resolution system. This method begins the story *en media res* (in the middle), utilizing the resolution structure of setting up the scenario; introducing the conflict, its stakes, and consequences; and then resolving the conflict.

Here's how to arrange a scenario in the One Act/Three Scene Structure method.

Scene I: The Setup

To capture the audience's attention, the Director must first set the stage. They describe the location by defining the

background, and then establish the status of the main characters.

Space is cold, but stars light your way. Hyperspace is just black, nothing. An old merchant cargo vessel named The Phoenix, surplus from the Sundering Wars, silently runs her plotted hyperspatial trajectory while her crew sleeps... until gravity suddenly, and violently, swirls in an eddy, pulling the ship into real space and sounding the klaxon alarm.

If this were a television series, the Setup might be referred to as the establishing shot. The screenplay would read something like this:

EXTERIOR: The Phoenix

INTERIOR: Crew quarters, low lights set towards a rest period.

The crew of The Phoenix sleeps in their bunks. Only the pilot Wang is missing, having drawn the short straw and been tasked with the night watch. Everyone is suddenly roused from their slumber by shaking and a loud alarm.

Scene II: Reveal the Conflict

Once the shot is properly established and the players are familiar enough to comfortably interact with the environment, the Director describes the conflict. Directors set the stage by describing the background, the general situation of the scenario, and the status of the main characters. This is a chance for the characters to banter, bond, and assess the situation.

The crew wakes, frantic. Naturally, the pilot Wang turns to his instruments. Wells, the captain, and her mechanic, Mouse, check the ship for any damage. The Director reveals the ship has no visible damage and everything seems to be in working order. Sensors show some sort of artificial gravity sucked the ship into normal space, which means a gravity well projector. Only planetary navies or really powerful pirates have that sort of equipment. Stars fade into view as the Phoenix enters real space just outside of firing range of a frigate marked with the skull-and-crossbones. Pirates!

The Director can opt to make any of these characters perform a Dramatic Moment (**page xx**) to learn the vital information, but it

fails to meet the basic requirements of the One Act / Three Scenes structure. The crew is trained and good at their jobs. Simple tasks the cast are able to do in their sleep without some sort of external pressure should simply be handwaved. The cast might be worried, and justifiably so as revealed in scene three, but until they know and understand the proper stakes, the Director progresses through the scene. When the moment is ripe, begin **Scene III: Resolution.**

Director's Tip: Dramatic Moments

A Dramatic Moment is when a character attempts an action outside of a resolution phase, often for roleplaying purposes or to prepare for a resolution. Don't panic! Select the resolution technique that best resolves the Dramatic Moment, and press onward. If the character wants to transform the moment into an entire resolution scene, the transition is seamless to the audience. This structure helps Directors organize their stories. To paraphrase the great Bruce Lee, keep what's useful and discard the rest.

Scene III: Resolution

Once tension is built, it's time for the conclusion. Directors can utilize any rule from the following sections to create dazzling resolutions:

- Dramatic Moment (page xx)
- Dramatic Moment – Cast Complications (page xx)
- Dramatic Moment – Director's Flare (page xx)

The following resolution is an example of how a Director might design a resolution.

Step One: Dramatic Moments

Each cast member works out her own Dramatic Moment (page xx) with the Director. These Dramatic Moments must somehow aid the cast in pushing forward towards victory.

The Phoenix has entered real space, caught at the edge of an artificial gravity well generated by a frigate bearing the markings of pirates, The Kalashnikov Collective. Captain Sergio found them!

*Their enemy's booming voice echoes over the comm.
"Wells! I'm gonna to blast you out of the sky and sell your ship for scrap!"*

Captain Wells remembers from her training in the Imperial Navy that gravity projectors are located at the back of the ship. If her crew can get The Phoenix past the frigate, they might be able to escape before being boarded. Wells decides to contact the pirates over comm channels to stall them, while Wang and Mouse navigate The Phoenix to a bypass course, and blast their engines.

Wells attempts to delay the pirates using Heart + Convince as her Action pool, total 9.

Wang wants to out-maneuver the pirates with his flying, using Body + Transport + Wildcard: Phoenix, as his Action Pool, total 13.

Mouse will aid Wang using her mechanical abilities (Mind + Tech), total 10 (for a total of +2 bonus to Wang).

Step Two: Call Sheet/Order of Initiative

All characters go on their Call Sheet order, determined by their Action Pools, from highest score to lowest score.

Stock Characters in an Action Shot do not receive a Call Sheet order, as their interaction with this calculation is already factored into the Difficulty Rating of the Action Shot.

For the example of The Phoenix Crew Action Shot, the Call Sheet Order is:

- 1. Wang (Action Pool 15, aided by Mouse's +2 Supporting an Ally action)*
- 2. Captain Sergio (Action Pool 11)*
 - 1. Wells (Action Pool 9)*

Holding Your Call Order

If the cast has a plan that requires characters to act out of order, a player can voluntarily hold her action until the timing is right. In this example, Wang waits until Wells contacts the pirates to engage his plan. Although Sergio technically goes before Wells, the Director decides that Sergio would enjoy hearing Wells beg for her life.

Step Three: Rolling the Dice

Each player rolls two six-sided dice and adds the total to her Action Pool.

- If a character's total Action Pool is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Rating, she succeeds at her character's Dramatic Moment.
- If her total Action Pool is lower than the Difficulty Rating, then she fails and earns one point of Consequence, applied in the category the Director feels is most dramatically appropriate.
- If she rolls snake-eyes (double ones), she spectacularly fails. She receives additional complications to the scenario and earns 2 points of Consequences, applied in the category the Director feels is most dramatically appropriate.

Wells attempts to delay the pirates with her banter. Sergio is a member of cast, even if he is a Supporting Character. His difficulty rating is (Heart 3) x 3 plus his two Attribute Specializations: Intimidating and Tough, equaling 11. He then adds 2D6 and adds that to his difficulty rating. Wells rolls double ones, and inadvertently insults and infuriates Captain Sergio. She earns 2 points of Consequences.

Alternatively, Wang seeks to outmaneuver the entire pirate crew. The Director decides she's going to make it a Heroic Difficulty (20) to represent such an impressive task. Wang's player rolls a 5 and a 6, for a total of 11. He adds 11 to his Action Pool of 15 (which includes the bonus from Mouse) and gets a total of 26. The Phoenix escapes!

Step Four: Applying the Consequences

Wells accrued 2 points of Consequences. She has the option of Reducing Complications via burning her Specializations, but it's early in the story and her player figures that she will have plenty of other opportunities to insult others before the night's over. The Director considers the matter, consults the chart, and awards her **Provoked (2-point Heart Consequence)**, making it almost certain that the pirates will return later in this story.

Step Six: Repeat as Needed

If the cast fails to resolve the scene in their first run through the Call Sheet, continue as needed until the act concludes.

Contract Negotiation

Contract Negotiation is a mediation technique which completely replaces and supplants the traditional Dramatic Moment and One Act/Three Scenes rules. It can be used at any time, by any member of the Cast or the Director.

This technique is used in the following circumstances:

- A member of the cast is not comfortable with the content of an unfolding scenario. She signals her discomfort by saying, "*That's not in my contract.*"
- A member of the cast or the Director has an idea they wish to present and discuss. This is signified by the line, "*Cut! I have notes.*"

In Hollywood, this sort of scenario often occurs behind the scenes when directors, actors, writers, and the studio executives encounter creative differences. The documentary about the first season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, titled *Chaos on the Bridge* (dir. William Shatner), reveals the inside world of a production house that's often at odds internally over creative direction, budget, and scripts.

Be Kind; Be Aware: "That's Not in my Contract!"

This is a warning flag that a scene asks a cast member to engage in something she's not comfortable with. This meta technique is a great way to maneuver past awkward situations, without requiring discussion of individual tastes or personal history.

Step One: The Pitch

The cast member or Director calling for negotiations makes a short elevator pitch, defining exactly what the negotiator hopes to accomplish. Phrase things in a positive, encouraging manner, and avoid completely shooting down ideas if possible. This is a scenario where the *Yes, and...* improvisational comedy rule can help generate interesting scenarios. Here are examples of pitches that might occur:

- Alter the nature of a scene because it contains material outside of what the cast is comfortable with, even if such a scene is within the Rating and Descriptors of the Genre. Why a scene is uncomfortable isn't as important as what can be changed to make every invested party happy with playing it out. For example, a player with an intense phobia of spiders might not want to imagine her character being thrown into a nest of them. This doesn't mean the character escapes a dastardly fate, merely that the details change. Often, it helps

to talk about the scene in third person to avoid any potential embarrassment or discomfort. Ex: "Rather than set his trap with a thousand spiders, what if Doctor Funktastic has an army of trained Dalmatians attack me? What's more disco than that?"

- Change the setting of the Genre. This might include:
 - Retool the premise of the series. *What if instead of monster hunters, the cast became monster lawyers?*
 - Change the basis of the central Genre:
 - Increase or decrease the Budget: *This is season two, shouldn't we have better sets?*
 - Alter the Rating: *The audience seems to want more violence. Think we can jump to PG-13?*
 - Add New Archetypes: *I know this is a Western, but what if we added Ninjas?*
 - Propose an end-date for the series: *What if this Arc introduced the series finale?*
- Retool a character from the cast
 - Alter the personality or quirks of a character in the cast: *What if the experience of war turned my character bitter and mean?*
 - Change the background of a character: *What if I was secretly the murderer all along?*
 - Retire a character from the cast: *What if I offer to retire my character in a blaze of glory to help the others escape?*
 - Upgrade an existing Support Character to a Lead Character: *My character is Knocked Out, and I've always enjoyed the dogged sheriff chasing us down. What if I take over that role, and she is forced through circumstances to join the cast as an outlaw?*
- Reboot the series with mostly new characters, because the players love the Genre but some of them might want to try different characters or a slightly different premise.

Step Two: Writer's Room Discussion

Once the Director or players make a proposal, it's time to return to the Writer's Room, with the Director leading the discussion. Some topics to discuss:

- How will the proposed change affect the Genre?
- How will the proposed change increase the enjoyment factor of the Genre?

- Is there anything that could be done to modify the pitch to make it a better fit for everyone's needs?

Step Three: Director's Incentive

If the Director believes the proposal is a good idea, and would help the overall enjoyment of the Genre, she has the power and authority to offer incentives in the form of a story's worth of XP, removing Consequences, and allowing the opportunity to remove a flaw or purchase an unusual Quality.

Step Four: Bargaining Power

Each member of the Writer's Room can make a counter-pitch. They might have an alternative idea, or want more of a payout from the Director. This is an opportunity to play through an intense negotiation at the meta level and there might be several iterations of proposals and compromises made before the final decision is done.

Step Five: A New Direction

Once a proposal is agreed to by all parties, then it's time for the Director and cast to narrate through the results. Just because the results are decided doesn't mean the trip to get there can't be fun and exciting. Narrate the scene full-tilt and enjoy the moment.

Consequences

Character growth through conflict is one of the oldest tropes of drama, dating back to the Greeks. We experience catharsis, the moment of emotional release, through witnessing the characters in a story suffer and overcome obstacles. In a video game, this is often measured mechanically by having numbers or pictographs indicating wounds or hit points lost. In the movies and television, this suffering is signposted through visual and dramatic clues.

Numbers alone distance the players from an immersive roleplaying experience. In the Morra Cinematic Game System, a *Cinematic Consequence* is a mechanical disadvantage merged with an improvisational challenge for the player. A Consequence can be the result of a failure during a Dramatic Moment, using a Quality, or being attacked somehow by another character.

A good Consequence raises the stakes of the scenario. A brilliant Consequence ensures the next series of scenarios escalate to a thrilling conclusion.

After the resolution of a Dramatic Moment, the Director assigns points of Consequences of a specific type based on the outcome of the roll (see

Taking Hits and Receiving Complications, page xx). These Consequences apply to the character until they're removed, either by converting them to Flaws of equal point value (page xx), or by meeting a Fulfillment (story condition) the Director deems appropriate.

A Consequence breaks down into the following parts:

- **Attribute:** The type of Consequence the Mechanical Penalty affects (page xx). This is determined based on the Attribute used in the failed action or attack.
- **Mechanical Penalty:** The numeric penalty assigned to the Consequence (page xx) as a result of a Dramatic Moment (see Scene Four: Applying the Consequences, page xx).
- **Condition:** The improvisational challenge the character must endure until the Fulfillment is met (page xx).
- **Fulfillment:** The manner in which a Consequence is resolved through story conditions. (page xx).

Attribute Type

There are four general types of Consequences, each associated with a specific Attribute.

Body Consequences

Body Consequences are tolls taken upon the body due to strenuous activity. They represent fatigue and injury suffered from exertion and combat. Those who suffer Body Consequences must cope with their body shutting down as bones break and organs fail.

Heart Consequences

Heart Consequences represent damage to a character's Heart, whether it's perceived, actual, or internalized. Characters who accumulate Heart Consequences find themselves ignored, isolated, punished by society, or embarrassed, and often feel the need to socially withdraw.

Mind Consequences

Consequences of the Mind represent frustration and mental fatigue. Those afflicted by these Consequences find it difficult to process thoughts or articulate them clearly, eventually suffering severe impairments to their cognitive ability.

Soul Consequences

Soul Consequences represent wounds to the psyche suffered through traumatic events. As Consequences accumulate, characters find their ability to empathize, as well as their capacity for creative expression, diminished.

Mechanical Penalty

A Consequence penalizes all Action Pools of its Attribute, until the Fulfillment conditions are met.

Example: *Lisa's character Mia Wells was shot in a Dramatic Moment. She earns 2 points of Body Consequences. Lisa and the Director come up with the following: A two-point Body Consequence (Condition: Wound, Fulfillment: Medical Attention) subtracts 2 points from every relevant Body Action Pool until it is resolved.*

Condition

A Consequence Condition is the improvisational effect the character must roleplay through while she is under the effects of the Consequence. Here is where the Director and Cast are encouraged to be creative and personalize the mechanics. It's difficult to internalize a base number penalty, but it's far easier to imagine yourself blinded, ashamed, confused, or emotionally drained. Try to imagine how a character might demonstrate her suffering or consequence on screen.

Example: *Lisa's character Mia Wells was utterly defeated in a Dramatic Moment by her rival Dokktor Funktastic. She earns 3 points of Heart Consequences and her and the Director come up with the following: A three-point Heart Consequence (Condition: Embarrassed, Fulfillment: Score a Victory to Restore Confidence) subtracts 3 points from every relevant Heart Action Pool until it is resolved.*

Fulfillment: Removing Consequences Through Story

Fulfillment is the story condition that must be met to overcome a Consequence. The audience gains a feeling of catharsis while watching the character overcome their Consequences. Players are encouraged to fully embrace Consequences and the required Fulfillment—they are not a punishment, but rather a unique facet of the system that allows for a more cinematic and dramatic experience.

- Body Consequences can be fulfilled with First Aid or medical treatment, depending on the severity of the injury and the story setting.
- Heart Consequences can be fulfilled with demonstrations of remorse, resolve, or release.
- Mind Consequences can be fulfilled through relaxation or introspection, such as meditation, cognitive therapy, or medical treatment.
- Soul Consequences can be fulfilled by emotional connection and support, such as counseling, psychotherapy, or time spent with loved ones.

Example: *After Lisa's character Mia Wells was utterly defeated by Dokktor Funktastic, she is left with a three-point Heart Consequence (Condition: Embarrassed, Fulfillment: Score a Victory to Restore Confidence) which subtracts 3 points from every relevant Heart Action Pool until it is resolved. In order to restore her confidence, Wells needs to score some sort of victory. Despite her embarrassment, Mia works with other characters to devise a plan to bring Dokktor Funktastic to heel. When the plan successfully stops Funktastic's Super Laser DeathRay from incinerating Detroit, Mia is elated at her success, and the Consequence is removed.*

Consequences: Knocked Out of the Story

If a character earns more Consequence penalties than points in her relevant Attribute category, the character is Knocked Out of the Story. The exact narrative method by which this happens depends entirely upon a discussion between the Director and the player. Some narrative examples might include:

- An explosion knocks her backwards out of sight, and she is presumed to be dead. No one could survive that. (Body)
- The horrors of war, with shells exploding all around her and chaos everywhere she turned, terrified her. She flees from the battle. (Heart)
- The eldritch terror of the creature drives her mad, leaving her trapped in a fugue state. (Mind)
- The demon sapped her strength, feeding upon her soul, leaving her a mere shell of her former self. (Soul)

The player of a character Knocked Out of the Story can still offer vital assistance to the game. Such players can become

assistants to the Director, play Supporting Characters, or organize the Writer's Room.

Turning Your Consequences into a Flaw

A Flaw is a permanent Consequence that can't be removed without a specific storyline and Director approval. The player must then expend the appropriate amount of XP (see Experience Points, page xx).

A player can review her Consequences before taking the Knocked Out of the Story option and decide to accept one of the Consequences as a Flaw. This reduces the points she has in said Consequence category. Some examples might include:

- Flaw: Wound. She's injured her eye, and suffers a -2 Wild Card penalty to any resolution that deals with sight or the Firearms Skill. (Body)
- Flaw: Known Coward. The horrors of the war, shells exploding all around her, terrified her. She flees from the battle, or suffers a -2 penalty to all Heart rolls, and is now known far and wide as a coward. (Heart)
- Flaw: Fear of Elder Gods. The eldritch terror of the creature drives her mad, forcing a -4 penalty to her Mind rolls when confronted with evidence of the dark lord and his presence on this world. (Mind)
- Flaw: Soul Damage. The demon sapped her strength, feeding upon her soul, leaving her a mere shell of her former self, forcing a -2 penalty on all Soul rolls. (Soul)

Character Creation and Flaws

A new character can start with up to 5 points of flaws, spread out among the Attributes as she likes. These flaws are created and subtracted from attribute categories in the same way as Flaws gained in story are. The character gains 2 XP for every point she accepts in flaws. While a character can't be Knocked Out of Story by a flaw, she always has the Mechanical Penalty and the Condition of the Flaw without a Fulfillment to cancel it. Flaws gained as a result of a Consequence becoming permanent do not grant the character XP.

Consequences: Collateral Damage

Before Consequences are applied, a player who failed the resolution to the point of being Knocked Out can ask the cast to shoulder some of the burden. Each Lead Cast member can

accept one or more of her Consequences. Tactically, this is especially wise if the character is vital to the resolution, or the cast doesn't want to lose a member too early in the story.

Consequences: Final Death

Sometimes, failure and death are a brilliant way to end a story for a character. If a character is Knocked Out of the Story, the player should consider if that's a proper ending for the character. She and the Director discuss the scenario and possibly edit the scene to ensure her character's death has the maximum emotional impact.

A good death scenario where the players express pathos and good spirits should be rewarded with half of the character's XP onto the player's next character. This ensures that she still feels like part of the story and doesn't have to start from ground zero.

Equipment

Equipment and weapons are created via a simple formula. Characters can automatically have anything that matches the feel of the Genre and fits within its Tech Level limitations. A detective with modern a Tech Level is expected to have a fast car and a .38 special, whereas a laptop or laser blaster is clearly out of bounds.

Each item naturally contains 2 points that can be applied to any appropriate Skill as a Wild Card bonus. Advanced equipment that grants additional Skill bonuses or special Qualities requires the purchase of one of the MacGuffin qualities. You can only apply the bonuses from a single common equipment or weapon item to an Action Pool for a Dramatic Moment at a time, even if you have more than one that would give you a bonus to the current task.

Here are some examples of regular items:

- Broadsword: +2 Fighting
- Student laptop: +1 Knowledge and +1 Technology.
- Switchblade: +1 Fighting, +1 Stealth
- Pickup truck: +2 Transport

MacGuffins

MacGuffins: Advanced Equipment "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

— Arthur C. Clark

In the language of Cinema, a MacGuffin is a unique object: the Maltese Falcon, a special briefcase containing the soul of a wicked man, or a legendary sword. The item itself is usually less important than the plot it drives.

In *Morra*, a MacGuffin is an item, piece of equipment, or weapon that is special beyond the norm. The item could be made with advanced technology or mystical might, or simply be rare and valuable. To possess such an item, Lead Characters must purchase the appropriate Quality (as listed below) before gaining the benefits.

All MacGuffins gain the standard equipment bonuses (see Equipment, page xx) and then Bonus Skill Points to spend as per the guidelines. These Skill Points can be spread across several Skills, though low-level MacGuffins are restricted in how much they can raise any given Attribute. High-level MacGuffins can also grant Qualities to the wielder. Note: MacGuffins cannot grant Qualities that gift the knowledge of magic (such as Magic Dabbler, page xx) or science (such as Super Science, page xx).

Some qualities, such as Calling Card (page xx), can be stacked onto a MacGuffin. In this example, a vigilante detective would have special equipment marked with his sigil, aka his Calling Card.

Here's the chart of available MacGuffin Qualities, and what could be made from them.

Quality	Additional Bonus from Quality	Examples
Trivial MacGuffin – a slightly better than average tool, piece of equipment, or weapon (see page xx).	+1 point to spend on Skill Bonus Points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magnum: +1 Firearms• Getaway Car: +1 Transport• Smart Phone: +1 Tech
Minor MacGuffin – an advanced or expensive tool, piece of equipment, or weapon (see page xx).	+3 points to spend on Skill Bonus Points, but may not raise any single Skill above 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sniper Rifle: +3 Firearms• Modified Pursuit Vehicle: +2 Transport, +1 Stunts

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hacker Rig: +2 Technology, +1 Knowledge
<p>Major MacGuffin – an elite tool, weapon, or item created with cutting-edge technology, or imbued with low levels of magic (see page xx).</p>	<p>+5 points to spend on Skill Bonus Points. May not raise any single Skill above 4. Add 2 Qualities (must be 8 points or lower) to any wielder of the MacGuffin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sword of Truth: +4 Fighting, + 1 Notice, Qualities: Armor (page xx), Major Projectile Blast (Lightning) (page xx) • Battle Armor: + 3 Fighting, +1 Firearms, +1 Transport, Qualities: Hard to Kill (page xx), Indomitable (page xx) • Spectral Goggles: +4 Notice, +1 Fix, Qualities: Clairvoyance (page xx), Eagle Eyed (page xx)
<p>Epic MacGuffin (see page xx).</p>	<p>+8 points to spend on Skill Bonus. May not raise any single Skill above 5. Add up to 4 Qualities (must be 8 points or lower in total) to any wielder of the MacGuffin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band of Justice: +3 Fighting, + 3 Knowledge, + 2 Notice, Qualities: Armor (page xx), Avatar (page xx), Enhanced (page xx), Hard to Kill. • Ring of Power: + 4 Convince, +2 Stealth, +2 Subterfuge, Qualities: Voice of Authority (page xx) (page xx),

		<p>Indomitable (page xx), Hypnosis (page xx), and Camouflage (page xx).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forever Nanites: +4 Technology, +3 Knowledge, +1 Fix, Qualities: Telekinesis Indomitable (page xx), Immortal (page xx), Flight (page xx).
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Experience

Experience points (XP) are earned after the completion of each story. *Morra* recommends awarding one experience point per Budget level per game.

Experience Point Chart

Experience Cost	Item
3x New Level	Attribute
3x New Level	Skill
5 x Quality Point	Quality
2x Flaw Cost	Buying Off Flaws

Experience Points and Qualities

Attributes and Skills are purchased at the current base level. All bonuses from Qualities are applied after this purchase.

*Jack "Mad Dog" Kincaid has a Body of 4 and Fighting of 3. If he wants to increase his Fighting to 4, he pays 12 XP (3 XP per New Level). He can then purchase the Quality **Specialized Training** (1-point Quality), at 5 XP, to increase his Fighting to 5.*

Extended Core Systems – Immersive Entertainment

"The theatre is a spiritual and social X-ray of its time."

— Stella Adler

Morra Cinematic Game System is designed not only for play in the traditional fashion around the "kitchen" table, but also for enjoyment in an immersive entertainment style called LARP, or live action roleplaying. Players dress as their characters and truly inhabit their parts, attempting to balance the mechanical representation of their sheet and a certain *je ne sais quoi* of their actors.

While the core design of Morra remains the same, additional rules, techniques, and methods work better in an immersive environment. The primary difference is the change in perspective of the game itself, akin to the difference between a television series and a movie. Any director worth their weight in celluloid holds unique perspective and vision that translates into magic on the screen when the writers, actors, and crew all unite behind that vision. An immersive event is less about the single vision and the controlling vision of the Director, and more about the coloration of the cast and crew as they weave together the best experience.

The backbone mechanics of Morra Cinematic Game System remain the same. In truth, you can run an interactive event (or LARP) without any changes to the Core Rules as detailed in this chapter, and it would still work. The content in this section adapts proven immersive techniques and a variety of traditions to help you select the ones best suited for your desired experience.

The Ad-Hoc Writer's Room: Immersive Calibration Techniques

The goal of an immersive event is to live inside of the story with as few interruptions and disruptions as possible. Not looking at the man behind the curtain helps to experience the terror of the great and powerful Oz. The Writer's Room technique (see page xx) is a brilliant workshop method for helping create the desired environment. It's easy for a small group of players to switch back and forth before between the two scenarios while trusting the people around the table.

Trust is sometimes difficult to extend beyond a small circle of friends. An immersive event can quickly scale to fifty or a hundred cast members. Larger destination events can grow to as many as two to three hundred cast and crew members. Under these scenarios, the Writer's Room technique works best as a starting group workshop to get all of the cast on the same

page, but on the fly and during scenes, cast members should consider using following calibration techniques.

Calibration techniques are a way for the cast to edit the tone, pacing, and content of the scene with minimal pauses to the scene. It's not a way for the cast to escape the consequences of the scene or win despite the intent of the rules.

Calibration techniques adjust the experience. Think back to Alfred Hitchcock's infamous shower scene in *Psycho*. That scene could have been shot and blocked in many different ways, but Hitchcock chose the clever cut away method leaving most of the violence to the imagination. Imagine a splatterpunk edition of the scene, where Norman is revealed in full-light stabbing into the flesh, something not shown and only implied in the original scene. Calibration techniques help the cast self-direct scenes to give everyone the best experience, one where they are comfortable and feel safe. Immersive events are much more personal and the experiences are intensely internalized.

Morra uses the following types of calibration methods:

- **Story Calibration:** A verbalization technique where cast and members recommend a new direction in the tempo of the scene by asking leading questions.
- **Safety Calibration:** A technique where the cast and crew take a break in the story, pausing the game, to discuss details using a meta technique, pretending they are in the filming process.

Story Calibration Techniques

This technique borrows from Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, who taught his students by asking them questions, demanding more and more answers until they came to a rational answer by logic and critical thinking. This technique features members of the cast asking questions (sometimes even breaking the fourth wall) to suggest a change of direction for the current scene. Asking for additional direction through story calibrations, for any reason, should not be a source of shame, but rather regarded as a tool to ensure everyone is having a good time.

What's My Motivation/Line?

Immersive events are intense. Some members of the cast might need help deciding what to do during a Dramatic Moment. Using Socratic Direction is a quick way to ask for help from your fellow cast members. If a player draws a blank on how to proceed during a given scene, they can ask "What's my motivation?" or "What's my line?" to the other

players present. Asking "What's my motivation?" or "What's my line?" pauses play. The players involved then pitch ideas until everyone finds one that works for them. The process ends by repeating the direction selected. Then, the scene continues as normal.

*Two lovers, Julia and Marcus confront Gemellus forcing him to choose between them. The cast member portraying Gemellus has compelling reasons to choose one, the other, or neither, but can't decide, so they say "**What's my motivation?**"*

The scene pauses, and the cast members in the scene discuss options. The cast member portraying Marcus hopes to get written out of the story soon, so he offers to have Marcus step away so Gemellus and Julia can be happy together. Both Gemellus and Julia agree, and when action resumes, they play out a dramatic argument in which Marcus leaves in a huff to do something reckless in his rage.

Remember When?

Remember When is an exercise of classical Improv Technique, Yes, and.... The idea is to suggest a connection between characters during play and make up the details as you go along, "**Remember when** we fought those velociraptors in Fresno?"

If the other cast member wants the new connection, she adds a new detail, "They spoke French, yes?"

If the other cast member wants to reject the new connection, she can again claim, "It wasn't me" or they can suggest an alternative, "I don't remember that, but I do recall giant apes in Paris."

Where Do We Stand?

This is asked when a member of the cast believes a Dramatic Moment is imminent. This verbalization is asking the other players what style of resolution that they prefer to use.

- Those preferring to use the Black Box Theater Resolution Method (page xx) reply in a manner that suggests quick or simple resolution. Example: "It will be a simple matter to depose of the likes of you!" For this method, a Director is not necessary.
- Those preferring to use the Parlor Theater Resolution Method (page xx) reply in a manner that suggests they want to take time to run through the entire Morra system. Example: "I'm going to enjoy

taking my time with you so that you only know pain." At this time, talk to a Director to resolve the scene.

If there isn't an agreement, the scene resolution defaults to the Parlor Resolution Method.

Optional Story Calibration Technique: Cue Cards

Cue cards are written instructions, lines on a card, or the back of the clapper reminding actors of their lines while shooting. Cue cards in Morra are directive commands or impromptu dramatic moments the cast can resolve without a Director.

A Cue can have a word or two to describe the mood of the scene. It can be anything from joyous, awestruck, or even dread.

Example: *The Director wants to punctuate how alien and horrifying a statue of one of the elder gods is to an ordinary human, but doesn't want to interrupt the scene with Dramatic Moments. She places a Cue Card next to the Prop of the creature that reads: Plot Armor: Soul 8 > Dread. If a character viewing the statue has less than Plot Armor: Soul 8, then the player knows she lost the Dramatic Moment and feels dread. This can be done for any activity that falls under Dramatic Moments (page xx).*

Safety Calibration Techniques

The following techniques are geared toward ensuring players feel safe and comfortable in the roleplay scenarios their characters are in. These tools can be used independently, or in conjunction with the story calibration techniques listed above (for example, "That's not in my contract!" can be used in conjunction with "What's my motivation?").

The Clapper

The clapper is a safety calibration technique named after the clapper slate used when filming. In the days before digital cameras and modern software, directors used the clapper slate, marked with information about the specific scene from the script, to allow editors to physically cut and paste strips of film and organize everything into a cohesive narrative.

Writer's Room: Extra Credit

This technique borrows heavily from the popular OK Check-in technique popularized by designers Johanna Koljonen and Maury Brown. Always remember, people are more important than games. This method isn't designed to allow players to escape natural story consequences, but to ensure players don't endure scenarios that make them uncomfortable.

During a dramatic scene, when the cast is fully immersed and emoting, it can be difficult for an observer to perceive the differences between character and player distress. Drama stems from conflict and character distress, but neither is more important than the feelings of a player.

The clapper can be represented by an actual clapperboard or with the gesture of two hands on top of each other (mimicking a clapper) poised to clap. If anyone in a scene makes this gesture, everyone should pause briefly to assess the state of their emotional well-being, and return one of the following gestures:

- If the players are comfortable with the scene and how it's proceeding, they should signal this by pressing their hands together quietly, indicating there is no need to stop the scene. The initiator retracts the offer of the clapperboard, by softly and quietly closing their hands.
- If any player is unsure of their current emotional state or uncomfortable with the scene, they can take the offered physical clapperboard or mimic the initiator's gesture. If any cast member wants to pause the scene at the time, they simply clap their hands. At the sound of the clap, play in that scene completely stops and then discussion for those in that scene return to the Writer's Group Technique. Alternative, the Director can yell "Cut!" to freeze the scene to adjust elements of it.

Safety Calibration Techniques: Verbalizations

There are a number of short-hand verbalizations used to request changes in the scene:

- **That's Not in My Contract!:** If a player is not comfortable with roleplaying out a situation or having a specific event happen to their character, the player can say "that's not in my contract." This signals to other players in the scene that the current direction is not appropriate and needs to shift immediately. The subject or event that caused the declaration is struck from continuity, no questions asked.
- **Fade to Black:** This request fast forwards the scene using the Fade to Black technique (page xx). If a player requests a Fade to Black, the scene stops immediately and a Director must be brought into the scene and caught up on the events. Avoid asking for details from this player as she might be distressed. This sort of communication is encouraged for a Writer's Room workshop after game. The Director

takes responsibility for the character and narrates the results of the scene, or plays it out as she prefers.

Once the discussion is concluded and both players are comfortable to continue the scene, the initiating player says "Action!" and the scene resumes.

Dramatic Moments Resolution Methods for Immersive Events

The base system of Morra remains the same, but the exact resolution method varies depending on the preference of the Director and Genre.

Writer's Room: Taxonomy of Styles

Morra Cinematic Game System borrows and steals language from the production of television and movies. This is done to effectively communicate to players how Morra works.

Black Box Theater is a term used to describe experimental theater where the actors work together in exercises in trust. We borrow these calibration methods from a number of different traditions. Some of these amazing styles are known as Nordic, American Freeform, Jeep LARPs, and many others. Some traditions capitalize LARP, others prefer to use it as a verb. The use of Black Box Theater as an umbrella term in Morra explains the concept to new players rather than rebranding the wonderful styles of LARP.

Parlor Theater refers to a style of cinema focusing on a single location and the detailed levels of etiquette and protocol. Typically, this is known as Parlor LARP where the event grabs the best elements of theater and gaming.

Black Box Theater – Dramatic Moment Resolution Method

Typically, Dramatic Moments happen less in this style of play because the cast uses the Socratic Direction techniques to manage a scene before the need for the Dramatic Moment can happen.

If a Dramatic Moment is needed under this style, use the following system:

The aggressor decides what it is she is attempting, and then verbalizes it along with the numeric value of her Action Pool.

Example: *Imagine a Genre for The Princess Bride, Inigo Montoya (played by the immortal Mandy Patinkin) cites his famous line, "You killed my father, prepare to die!" Using the Black Box Theater resolution method, he might then add, "I am twenty times, the swordsman you are." This indicates to the scene that his Action Pool for fighting is 20.*

If the other player has a greater Action Pool, she replies in the negative, "I know something you don't. I'm not left-handed."

The difference in Action Pools between opposed characters is the number of Consequences applied to the loser. The winner of the conflict should suggest an appropriate trigger and duration for the Consequence through a verbalization. "You'll not stop my plans for the next hour or you'll suffer the consequences."

The defeated cast member has a chance to negotiate via her own verbalization banter. In the end, she agrees to the result via a final comment intended to fire interactions later.

Verbalization of Mechanics Through Banter

Rules and mechanics are more fun when they work seamlessly in the scene. Verbalization is a way for characters to speak dramatically, implying the mechanics behind the roleplaying. This sort of signposting helps the cast press forward, understanding everything occurring without having to discuss mundane details.

Parlor Theater – Dramatic Moment Resolution Method

The Parlor Theater Resolution Method follows the flow of the basic rules for the Dramatic Moment, with exception of **Step Four: Rolling the Bones** (page xx).

The Parlor Theater Dramatic Moment Resolution Method uses a randomized card system. Each player carries a set of playing cards, of one card suit, with the following cards, Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

When it comes time to "roll the bones":

1. Each player should shuffle their deck.
2. Upon a player's turn in the initiative, she selects a card from her deck and a card from the Director's deck. Each card represents a single die.
3. The results from the pull equate to the results from Step Four: Roll the Bones (page xx). For example, if someone pulled two Aces, then she pulled a snake-eyes and must deal with the result.
4. Remember to return the card and reshuffle after every pull.

Chapter Five: Cinematic Qualities

"Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world."

— Jean-Luc Godard

What makes fictional characters interesting or unique? What do they have that enables them to stand out among a crowd of extras? What's that special *something*?

A *Cinematic Quality* makes a character special or unique when appearing on screen. *The Morra Cinematic Universal Game System* measures these theoretical traits, then weighs them against each other, transforming every element into game statistics. The end result is a simulation of what might be seen on-screen through special effects and camera tricks.

A Cinematic Quality can be a trait of the actor portraying the character, relevant to unique story beats, or something connected to stunts or special effects.

Cinematic Qualities are an opportunity to round out your character, while also helping them fit into the Genre. You can use them to build cyborgs, wizards, intelligent animals, tech geniuses, or anything else you can imagine. The combination of options to make your character a star of the story is virtually endless.

Some Cinematic Qualities are restricted according to your Genre, Genre Umbrella, Genre Factions, Archetype, or Budget. It's also possible for Directors or players to create new Cinematic Qualities that meet your needs. The Director is always the final arbiter of what Cinematic Qualities are appropriate for any given Genre.

Quality Limitations

The following are general limitations on the purchase of Qualities:

- Budget determines the type of Qualities players can select and purchase. Players can purchase Qualities from below their budget, but not from above. If the Budget is set for Syndication, a player can't build a character with Blockbuster Qualities.
- Some Qualities are restricted due to the conventions of your Genre or Genre Umbrella, even if said Quality is otherwise within the Budget. The Director of a gritty, 1940s detective story would be well within her rights to disallow extraordinary Qualities such as Flight (see page xx), because flying detectives don't match the Genre's themes or aesthetic.
- Archetype Qualities allow you to purchase a Quality that is outside your Budget, but at a discount which brings it within range.

- Some Qualities can have a pre-requisite Quality that must be purchased first. For example, the Quality: Psychic (page xx) must be purchased before taking Clairvoyance (page xx). All Magic Qualities must be purchased in sequence.
- A character can only have a single Quality that increases a specific Attribute, but she can have multiple Qualities which increase different Attributes. She can also upgrade her Quality to one of a higher cost (and thereby obtain a more potent bonus).
- A character can't purchase a quality which weakens or completely removes a Flaw until the Flaw has been removed via spending XP (see **Chapter Seven: Core Rules: Experience Points**, page xx).
- If upgrading to a higher-point Quality, the character pays the difference in XP to graduate, presuming that she meets all other requirements.
- If a character somehow loses access to a Quality through story, such as a MacGuffin being stolen or a Sidekick murdered, the XP expended for that Quality is lost forever.

Genre Personalization of Qualities

A quality describes a dramatic effect on screen. The Genre of a Quality changes its context and story. For example, a character might possess the Quality: Enhanced (page xx) because of a host of different reasons that might vary depending upon the nature of the Genre.

A character might possess this quality because they are an alien, angel, cyborg, mutant, demigod, or a tall tale.

General Qualities

General Qualities are designed and calibrated according to current cinema's capabilities. Some of history's greatest movies like *Casablanca* (dir. Michael Curtiz), *Citizen Kane* (dir. Orson Wells), or *Seven Samurai* (dir. Akira Kurosawa) would today be considered Independent Movies due to their budget, technological limitations, and conventions of the era. Though *Citizen Kane* was revolutionary in terms of directing, cinematography, and how far it advanced the art, every trick, camera angle, or special effect can be duplicated today by a modest camera and affordable laptop.

Independent Movie/Web Series Qualities

General Qualities at this Budget are designed to be low-level traits to simulate an average-person, street-level story which uses inexpensive methods to capture the action. These tricks

might be captured via excellent acting, cunning edits, the perfect camera angle, a great Foley (sound effects) artist, or a clever props master.

Some Umbrella Genres that work best at this Budget level include: B-Movies/Exploitation Flicks, Comedy, Film Noir, Melodrama, Drama, Romance, Slasher, and Spaghetti Western.

Alternate Route (1-point Quality)

Once per game, you can ask the Director for a hint regarding an alternate solution or route. If your group has hit a brick wall, you can ask the Director for hint towards the right direction. If someone in your group wants to do things one way, and you're not sure if it's a good idea, you can ask your Director for a bit of guidance.

Alternate Route doesn't mean you can randomly ask, "Is this a good idea?" and get a direct yes-or-no answer. The Director gives you a few good hints, the rest is up to you and the other characters.

Animal Companion (1-point Quality)

You have a trained animal companion, a true friend who would do anything for you. This companion is a Stock Character who knows a few special tricks. This companion could be an obedient dog who answers questions yes or no by barking, or a tarantula who grabs your wallet for you. It could also be a monkey who rides around on your shoulder, or a rodent you carry around in the pouch of your hoodie. This companion can take simple actions on your behalf, but cannot fight your battles, carry you to the hospital, or perform overly complex tasks.

Bread and Fishes (1-point Quality)

You've always been handy in the kitchen. You are one of those folks who can whip up a gourmet meal after shopping at the local Quick Stop. You can open a nearly bare pantry, and feed a large gathering at short notice. You always know what ingredients go together, and can stretch the grocery bill to make something nutritious and tasty. You can't make something out of nothing, though; you need at least the proverbial bread and fishes to feed your guests.

Catnip (1-point Quality)

Something about you (be it your smell, demeanor, or attribute) attracts and appeases a certain type of mundane animal. Said animals follow you around, refuse to hurt you (even if compelled), and may even aid you if they are smart enough to grasp how.

Clockwork Mind (1-point Quality)

You have a mind programmed to track the passage of time. If you wake in a completely dark room with no windows, you immediately know the time and how long you've slept. If you concentrate, you can execute complex maneuvers and activities with exacting precision. If familiar with the task at hand, you can accurately predict the length of time to complete it, barring any surprises.

However, there's always a catch. Normal folk can distract themselves to ignore the passing of time, you can't. You are always aware of the clock ticking, and depressing monotony can seriously harm you if you ever become trapped or imprisoned.

Nose for Trouble (1-point Quality)

Trouble manifests as a sweet smell that you can't help but follow, at least until you've resolved whatever nonsense the universe has in store. Karma likes to railroad her favorites, and you seem to have multi-pass to ride eternally. If you randomly pick a bar, it will inevitably be occupied by those who mean you harm. If violent gangsters need to clear out a building in your neighborhood, karma will ensure the property belongs to you or someone important to you. If chaos or evil manifests near you, something will pique your curiosity, driving you mad until you clear out the smell.

Real Friends (1-point Quality)

You know the old adage about real friends moving dead bodies? Some benevolent power blessed you with such friends.: people in your life (created as stock characters) who are closer to family than acquaintances. These friends genuinely care about your well-being, and are willing to do favors and errands to make your life easier. You can ask your friend to aid in your investigations, perform minor research, or occasionally help you skirt the law if the cause is just (or the pay is right). And yes, they'll even help you move a dead body, if it ain't too risky.

Remember that even close friendships can break if you abuse them, or mooch too much without giving back. They won't fight your battles for you, continually pay your way through life, or murder someone for you.

Sixth Sense (1-point Quality)

When danger is near, the hairs on the back of your neck stand up and start tingling. You know the moment before something dangerous or troublesome is about to happen. You don't have enough time to formulate a complex strategic response, but can shout a warning and jump out of the way. You know the intensity of the danger, but not necessarily who or what the cause might be. Once you are already in a fight, this Quality becomes useless, as you already know you are in danger.

Spatial Awareness (1-point Quality)

You have an instinctual understanding of how things fit together. You can 'Tetris' a moving truck blindfolded, you can pack that round vase in that square box just right, and you can stuff those 12 clowns into that mini car. You know which Jenga block to pull to keep the tower standing, or where to set that explosive charge to bring down the whole building. If driving or piloting, you gain a + 5 Wild Card bonus to fit your transport through impossibly tight spaces. You can't break the laws of time and space, but you can sure maneuver your way through some tight spots.

Street Cred (1-point Quality)

You have a reputation in your neighborhood or a chosen area of the city. This Quality allows you to gain access to information, ask for help from your neighbors, or even get out of a potentially sticky situation. If you are caught in someplace you shouldn't be, or accused of a minor crime, you receive one less point of Social Consequence.

Stunt Driver (1-point Quality)

You are amazing behind the wheel of your favorite vehicle, and go as fast as bat out of hell. You are attentive, efficient, and know all the best ways to pull off risky moves. You take one less point of Consequence for failures incurred while behind the stick or wheel.

Working Class (1-point Quality)

You might not be a Rockefeller, but you have a job and an income that makes sure all of your basic needs are covered: rent, groceries, a cell phone, medical insurance, and a little left over for leisure. Your job comes with a flexible schedule, so you can still go on adventures. This doesn't mean you can afford to foot the bill all the time, or continually miss work shifts, but on occasion you can treat your friends or stretch your paycheck to afford a low-level MacGuffin.

Assistant (2-point Quality)

Through employment, adoption, or bounds of honor, you have someone to aid you in your tasks. This person might be your ward, laboratory assistant, or apprentice. Create your assistant as a Supporting Character with half of the initial starting points (rounded up) for your Genre's Budget. The character gains experience as you do. This Assistant is willing to do your scut work, makes sure the lights stay on, and takes care of day-to-day operations while you dodge your responsibilities in favor of adventure and mayhem.

Clown (2-point Quality)

You're the class clown, the one that always cracks an inappropriate joke at just the right time to ease the tension in the room. Leveraging humor in this way helps reduce incoming Heart or Soul Consequences by 1 point for yourself or others within casual speaking distance. It doesn't matter if it's gallows humor or witty repartee, you don't have to succeed in a Dramatic Moment to use this quality, you simply have to make your castmates laugh.

Connected (2-point Quality)

You have a special friend, of any type appropriate to the Genre, who's connected to some shady business. She might have access to weapons, ancient demonic knowledge, black market merchants, slave traders, or drug dealers. Given enough time, you can acquire anything possible in your Genre: faerie dust, illegal automatic weapons, or inside information about the local Mob. Any acquired items or information must match the conventions of the Genre, and, if kept long enough (more than a single story), must be purchased as a Quality or MacGuffin.

Escape Artist (2-point Quality)

Nothing can hold you for long; neither trap, nor prison, nor bondage. Every hour you are locked or tied against your will, you lose either 1 point of Consequences, or a point of Difficulty Rating to escape, until you are no longer bound.

Family Trust (2-point Quality)

You were born into a family of wealth and privilege. Or, you might be the heir to a large corporation or kingdom. You live a life of great luxury, as though you possessed the Wealthy quality (page xx), but it's someone else, a parent, guardian, or attorney trustee that manages the actual wealth and you are obligated to keep them happy lest they cut you off.

Fake It till You Make It (2-point Quality)

You were born with great style. Somehow, you can strut into a Goodwill with ten dollars, and walk out with an ensemble that's the peak of haute couture. You know how to apply cheap dime-store makeup to show off your best features, and how to disguise your appearance, as long as the folks around you aren't paying attention or the room is dark.

If supernatural, alien, or otherwise strange characters appear in your Genre, and if you have had experience with them, you might be able to pass as a member of this group without too much trouble, if you're not questioned too closely.

Genre Savvy (2-point Quality)

You are attuned to the whims of the universe itself, innately understanding the story troupes that govern your genre. Depending upon the tone and nature of the genre, you could be a wise guru that simply understands her place in the world, or you might be the comedic fourth-wall breaking sidekick that no one understands. This quality

allows you to anticipate, prepare, and manipulate the common troupes of the genre to your advantage.

Green Thumb (2-point Quality)

Maybe you were in the Four H Club in school, maybe your parents had a "victory garden" when you were a kid, or maybe you are just blessed. Either way, you have developed a keen understanding of plants and their care. Plants thrive under your supervision; growing more quickly and fully. With time and space, you can grow a garden that can help sustain a community. Moreover, when traveling, you are able to forage plants for food and simple medicinal needs: such as curing stomach aches, managing pain, and disinfecting wounds.

Lucid Dreamer (2-point Quality)

You are a lucid dreamer, one who is able to control their own dreams or enter a state of "wakefulness" without truly waking up. While sleeping you are able to become aware of your surroundings and awaken quickly if need be. In addition, when you dream you are able to fully control the outcomes and environment of your dreams. Due to this control, you can soothe your Soul and reduce your Consequences of that category 1 per hour sleeping.

Memory Palace (2-point Quality)

Either through an accident of birth or through training, you've built a Memory

Palace in your mind. Using visualizations of important spatial memories, you can take a snapshot of what your eyes see, and store the memory in a mental 'file'. You can watch someone enter a password, PIN, account number, or safe combination and store the code perfectly as an image in your memory. You can look at blueprints, read a book, watch a movie, or see a painting, and later recall it exactly. You can't recall something you heard, tasted, smelled, or felt; your memories must be visual.

The Mission (2-point Quality)

Fate, destiny, or a higher power has bestowed upon you a great and terrible mission that weighs upon your soul. You find it difficult to relax, take the necessary downtime to prevent burnout or accept any sort of respite. You gain a +5 wildcard bonus to resist any attempt (mundane, magical, or otherwise) to detour you from this crusade.

Needful Things (2-point Quality)

You know the old saying about trash and treasure? You've inherited, accidentally found, or bought access to some place with tremendous amounts of both. It might be a dusty used bookstore which houses the occasional mystical tome, a storage unit with the notes of your beloved mentor (along with his endless scribbles about Elvis), or a junkyard with thousands of spare parts for your getaway car... and every other car.

This place won't supply you with anything shiny and new, and you can't make money off it without purchasing an appropriate Quality, but your stash can

come in handy when you can't find what you need at the local drug store.

Reformed (2-point Quality)

You were once the big bad of the criminal underworld, a knave of the blackest sort, until you reformed. Now, you are on the side of angels, a champion of the forces of light. but your reputation marks you as a villain of the most dangerous sort. Law enforcement gives you the stink-eye, but criminals and villains give you a pass when you aren't actively crossing their interests. After all, they remember the good old days when you were a proper terror of the night and know it's only a matter of time before you return to your old ways.

Small Business (2-point Quality)

You own a legitimate small business that operates out in the open: a small hole-in-the wall bar, a detective's office above the laundry, or a private security company. It ain't much, but it pays the bills, gives you a place to plan and resupply, and a place for others to find you.

Speak of the Devil (2-point Quality)

You are the living embodiment of Shakespeare's adage, 'Speak of the horns and the devil shall appear. If your name is spoken aloud, you sense it and if the conversation is close, and it makes sense within the context of the story, you can make a dramatic entrance.

Technopath (2-point Quality)

You have a way with machines. Ever since you can remember, you have always been able to just make things

work. No matter how busted up they are. Give an old hunk-o-junk a few "love taps", a little rewiring, tighten a screw or two, and you can get it up and running. At least for a little while. Once per hour, by "givin' `er some love", you can force a mechanical or technological device to function; regardless of how broken it may be. The Director may choose to make an object inoperable after the use of this quality, depending on how damaged the object was prior.

Time Served (2-point Quality)

You were convicted of a felony and served out your sentence. You might not have committed the deed, but you did the time and earn the respect of your fellow prisoner and the screws, earning the reputation of a 'stand-up con.' Now that you're on the outside, you have a network of prisoners and guards that owe you favors that are willing to provide you with information, introduction to gang members on the outside, and make your life overall easier. If you somehow become an outlaw once again, these contacts will attempt to help and hide you.

Trivial MacGuffin (2-point Quality)

You possess an unusual or expensive exceptional item. This single item gives you an additional Wild Card Skill bonus. The Trivial MacGuffin Quality cannot be purchased twice for the same item, but can be purchased separately for different, unique items. In addition, this Quality cannot stack with other MacGuffin Qualities, no matter their rank, but can be added to other Qualities such as Calling Card (page xx). For more

information about MacGuffins, see
**Chapter Four: Core Rules:
Equipment**, page xx.

Voluntold (2-point Quality)

You belong to an organization, such as the military, that exercises a good deal of control over your day-to-day existence. The good news is that you always have a place to live, some spending money to cover bar tabs, and are perfectly equipped for a firefight. Some of the perks of service include local business and public support, local law enforcement occasionally looking the other way over misdemeanors, and freedom to travel places you might not otherwise ever see. The downside is that you have superiors and often they assign you missions, sometimes when it's most inconvenient, and you either complete the mission or risk legal problems.

The Zeppo (2-point Quality)

If there is a guiding force in the universe, she has selected you as her pet and loves to make you the butt of her cosmic jokes. If something can go hilariously wrong, it will happen to you. On the bright side, you amuse the universe enough that events that would normally kill someone turn out to be a hilarious pratfall. When you take Body Consequences, you have the option of transforming it into Heart Consequences, and turning it into some sort of physical comedy. This quality may not be suitable for some Genres and you should discuss it with your Director before purchasing it.

Animal Empathy (3-point Quality)

Some say you have the blood of druids in your veins, others believe you were raised by coyotes, others still claim you have some super science device plugged in your ear. The cause may be uncertain, but you are able to speak to and understand animals. This does not inherently grant the animal you are speaking with human levels of intelligence; they are still animals controlled by primal instincts and wants, who are not automatically friendly towards you, but you may converse and bargain with them like you would a human child.

Band of Brothers (3-point Quality)

You are part of a squad that's more a family than a tactical unit. You bicker and squabble the point of distraction, but when you are together on the field, you feel unstoppable like the warriors of legend. When fighting together (and all of you are present), you gain a +2 wildcard bonus to all of your attacks. In addition, you may automatically accept any incoming consequence for any member of your team (that also possesses this quality).

Base of Operations (3-point Quality)

Your hideout is small (just enough for you and a couple of friends), but you otherwise have a hidden base of operations such as a compound out in the wilderness, an underground bunker in the sewers, or an abandoned warehouse that's well-supplied, out of the way. In addition, for some reason, your enemies can't easily find it.

Calling Card (3-point Quality)

You have a sigil or symbol associated with your name and reputation. Perhaps you leave a white rose at your crime scenes, or your pistols are marked with the Ace of Spades. The sign might be a way for others to communicate with you, such as the illumination of the town's lighthouse or shining a spotlight into the cloudy night. If this calling card is incorporated during a successful physical attack upon a target, you may add an additional point of Social Consequences, in addition to the normal Physical Consequences.

Face-in-the-Crowd (3-point Quality)

You have one of those faces that just blends into the crowd, ignored and unconsidered so long as you don't attempt anything unusual within the conventions of the Genre. If you wear some sort of disguise, even a cap and sunglasses, you enjoy a +5 Wild Card bonus to any Dramatic Moment (page xx) involving escaping notice or identification. This Quality cannot be purchased along with any other Quality which involves an enhanced or unusual appearance, such as Attractive (page xx).

Healer (3-point Quality)

You are a kind and empathetic soul, gifted with the healing touch. You might have learned special lore from a family member, taken nursing classes at the local university, or perhaps simply enjoy the blessing of the gods. No matter how you came by this gift, you know how to heal and bind most common wounds, how to apply poultices to avoid infection,

and how to help others process mental trauma. For every hour spent under your care and ministrations, your patients lose 1 point of either Physical or Soul Consequences (depending on the type of treatment).

Lover in Every Port (3-point Quality)

You've been around the proverbial block more than a few times. No matter where you are in the world, or even galaxy, you can find an old flame to stay with until the streets calm down. Of course, their homes are living spaces, not covert safehouses. You can expect discretion and a place to recuperate but launching capers from your paramours' homes is likely to blow up in someone's face. Don't be the reason for a hit squad storming your lovers' pad.

After at least an hour of quality time, you can leave their home feeling so refreshed, reducing one Attribute of Consequences by 3 points. Your compatriots are, of course, also welcome to stay (ON THE COUCH!), but they only reduce one of their Attribute's Consequence by 1 point.

My So-Called Average Life (3-point Quality)

You have the "average" life of a television character on television: you wear fashionable clothes, own a cool place to live (and perhaps have a mortgage to go along with it), and drive a nice car. Your job pays enough for travel, vacations, and a small amount of savings. Those who still believe in it say you're living the American Dream.

Nick of Time (3-point Quality)

You have brilliant timing, always arriving at the very moment when you are needed the most. This doesn't mean you magically teleport to places, but if you voluntarily accept one point of Mental Consequence, you can propose a future scene to the Director to turn the wheel of destiny in your favor. Alternatively, if you are trying to outrace an explosion, leap onto a moving train, or perform any other stunt which requires precise timing, this Quality allows you to automatically survive. You'll never gain enough Consequences to get Knocked Out of the Story as the remaining Consequence(s) in a category will spill onto another Attribute.

On the List (3-point Quality)

You serve the righteous with your revenge. Or you hold the world's record at holding a grudge. You have a list of those that have foolishly wronged you. To earn a spot on your list, the enemy must be known to you by name (or description ala the Six-Fingered Man) and have personally wounded you. Organizations or creatures can't be added to your list. Each night you must complete your ritualized according of those bastards that have it coming and imagine what you will on day do to them. You gain +3 Wildcard bonus when fighting those enemies on the list. If you have a choice between doing a good deed (like saving a friend) or sending one of those fiends to hell, you must do whatever you can to strike that foe from your list or take 3 points of Mind Consequences.

One Trick Pony (3-point Quality)

You are amongst the best at one thing; it might be fighting, hacking, driving, or any one skill. Anytime you have a dramatic moment with that skill you gain a +5 Wildcard bonus. There is a price for perfection. For all other skills, you have a -3 Wildcard penalty.

Resourceful (3-point Quality)

You might not have been a scout, but you certainly believe in their motto: Be Prepared. You seem to always have the one common item that's needed in any given scenario (suitable within your Genre): a pocket knife, a set of tools, a bandage, or even a banana, if that's what's needed at the moment. This Quality doesn't apply to magical, rare, or expensive items that are difficult to acquire or unusual for you to possess.

Secret Identity (4-point Quality)

You have a secret identity with its own name, history, craft/job and possibly even family. Through guile, contacts, or wealth you've been able to create an entirely different persona than the one you were born with. You may relate to this persona more than your "true" one or it may simply be a matter of convenience, amusement or a source of information. This could be the grand noble who poses as a beggar or street tough, the strait-laced businessman with a criminal empire or the naive seeming student whose really an infamous hacker. While this quality may be put in danger from time to time so long as you make an effort to maintain it or create a plausible cover story, your secret is safe.

Special Attack (3-point Quality)

You have a special fighting maneuver that is simply badass. It might be the dreaded double-axe handle, the devastating one-inch punch, or the infamous shocker. Anytime you succeed on an attack with this maneuver, you inflict one extra point of Body Consequences, which may not be healed until the fight is over.

Specialized Training (3-point Quality)

Sometime in the past, you had special training at an elite academy, or apprenticed under a master. Perhaps you apprenticed under a talented mechanic, took First Aid classes, went to school for Computer Science, or even got a doctorate in psychology. Upon purchasing this Quality, select any single Skill and add two points, even if it brings you above the skill caps for your Genre. This Quality may be purchased multiple times, but must apply to a different Skill each time.

Stone Cold Killer (3-point Quality)

You've become emotionally numb to the evil and pain in the world. You are so detached that you could calmly watch your best friend get mutilated, chat amiably with your enemy while plotting his destruction, or enjoy a tasty sandwich while reviewing gory crime scene photos. This doesn't mean you don't feel anything anymore, but traumatic events just don't affect you as much as they would the average person. This detachment sucks the joy and happiness out of your life, but it has one advantage: you suffer one less point of Soul Consequence when you commit,

witness or experience acts of evil. When suffering magical attacks, you take 2 fewer points of Soul Consequences from horror-based attacks.

Talented (3-point Quality)

You have a special talent with a select Skill, and spent many hours honing this talent. Rather than the standard one Professional Specialization slot, you gain two Professional Specialization slots per Skill point. You can take this Quality multiple times, selecting a different Skill each time.

Toxic (3-point Quality)

There is something tragic about never being able to kiss another human being, at least not without possibly killing them. Whether it be an issue of mutation, curse, or super science, your blood and other bodily fluids carry some form of toxicity or poison. You've struggled with this or maybe embraced it, but either way it has set you apart from others. Anyone who has contact with your bodily fluid must resist against it with a Dramatic Moment. If they fail, the victim of your toxin gains 1-point of Physical Consequences as their body reacts to it in a painful way.

The World is Your Weapon (3-point Quality)

You like to think, and fight, outside of the box. The whole world is your weapon. If you can touch, or control something, you can wield as a weapon using your Fighting skill. This could be anything from a broken bottle, a forklift, or a sack of potatoes. Some items might

not fare well as a weapon, breaking, or even shattering, if the Director believes said item is too fragile.

Movie of the Week/Syndication Qualities

You've made it past the days where you had to fund everything yourself, and you've seen modest success with audiences. The bigwigs have yet to come knocking, but you're pretty sure they've at least noticed you.

General Qualities at this Budget are designed to be of moderate power-level, somewhat beyond the mundane. These are powers that can be simulated with light Computer-Generated Imagery, practical effects, a budget for impressive sets, a higher caliber of actors, or experienced Directors.

Some Umbrella Genres that work best at this Budget include: Action Films, Crime/Gangster Fictions, Costume Dramas, Detective Stories, Psychological Horror Movies, Police Procedurals, and Thrillers.

Attractive (4-point Quality)

You've got the looks, baby. You rarely lack attention from any gender, and live the life of the attractive privileged. You aren't a jet-setting model or famous movie star, but overall you are someone who turns heads when out and about. So long as you are nice about it, others tend to do you favors and seek your attention. You gain a +3 Wildcard bonus to charm, seduce, or beguile others. The downside of being attractive is that monsters, robots, and aliens find your flesh especially tasty, and sometimes they just can't stop at one bite. You are more likely to be targeted when fighting such creatures.

Babylon Tongue (4-point Quality)

The superstitious claim you carry the blood of the angels from before the fall of the Tower of Babel. Others suspect you have some sort of biogenic

retrovirus, or an implant that translates languages. Maybe you are just a quick study. You can speak, understand, and read any language you encounter.

Enhanced Reflexes (4-point Quality)

You possessed enhanced reflexes beyond the norm of humanity. You are skilled with using both hands simultaneously to accomplish tasks. You gain a +2 Wild Card bonus when using both hands is beneficial to a task, or can use two pieces of equipment to affect a Dramatic Moment (page xx). This could represent a Florentine fighting style or Hong Kong style two-gun mojo.

Immutability (4-point Quality)

You are the immovable object. Or damn close to it. At least in regards to a single Attribute. Create a proper genre appropriate reason and then select an Attribute. In future Dramatic Moment, your script armor is increased by +5 for said category.

Jack of All Trades (4-point Quality)

You've learned a little bit about everything. You know how to get by and survive no matter the situation. All your Skills automatically have a phantom point that allows you to always attempt a dramatic moment, even if you haven't spent the points to have even a 1 in the skill. If you later decide to start spending XP in an empty skill, you still have to purchase that first point.

Ninja Reflexes (4-point Quality)

You have perfect balance, as though a gyroscope is part of you. You always land on your feet, and can easily balance

while crossing a slender wooden log over a 50-foot waterfall. You have no problem scaling a fence and walking atop it, or jumping off a garage roof and landing easily on your feet. You gain a +5 Wild Card bonus to any challenge where falling or stumbling is a risk, and it is only negated in extreme conditions such as scaling a sheer cliff or climbing during a monsoon, or when someone is actively trying to hurt you as you climb or balance.

Minor McGuffin (4-point Quality)

You possess an advanced piece of truly inspiring equipment. This single item gives you three additional Wild Card Skill bonus points, with a cap of 3, to assign to any given Skill. The Quality: Minor MacGuffin cannot be purchased twice for the same item, but it can be purchased separately for different, unique items.

In addition, this Quality does not stack with other MacGuffin Qualities, no matter their rank, but may be added to other Qualities such as Calling Card (page xx). For more about MacGuffins, see **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Equipment**, page xx.

No Fear (4-point Quality)

You either lack the bio-chemical response to fear, or have mastered your body's responses to fear-inducing stimuli. You can easily jump off a dizzyingly tall cliff, lean out the window of a fast-moving vehicle, or otherwise defy mundane death. You aren't immune to supernatural horrors, such as vampires or Baba Yaga (should they exist in your

Genre), but you gain a +3 Wildcard bonus to resist such attacks.

Now It's My Turn (4-point Quality)

That which doesn't kill you, really pisses you off. Powered by grit, spite, and pure orneriness, you always seem to come back stronger than before. If you survive an attack that knocked out half of your Consequences slots in a given category, your counterattack on the character that wounded you deals double its normal consequences.

Open Sesame (4-point Quality)

Ali Baba uses these secret words to open the secret entrance to a cave containing treasure beyond measure. You have his knack, given enough time to study it, for opening any locked door, secret passage, or egress no matter the security system or restrictions placed upon it.

Psychic Bond (4-point Quality)

Some folks are just close: twins, lovers, or best friends who have a low-level psychic bond. You have such a storied connection. You always know their state of mind, such as when she is in deep trouble or suffers a serious injury. You know when something is wrong with them, even if they try to hide it with a smile and say everything is okay.

This Quality does not confer Telepathy (page xx), or allow you to know with GPS precision where your cast mate is, but you always have a sense of each other's wellbeing, even if you're a world apart. All characters who wish to have access to this bond must purchase this Quality. Characters created through the Real

Friends (page xx) are an exception to this rule.

Psychic Training (4-point Quality)

There are weird things out there, and you've trained your mind, heart, and soul to fight their influences. You gain a +3 Wild Card Bonus against any Heart, Mind, or Soul attacks against you.

Sidekick (4-point Quality)

You have a follower, a sidekick, or henchperson. This loyal companion fights for you and your cause so long as you treat her well, furnish her weapons, and continue to train her. You are responsible for this character and on occasion, she will generate dramatic storylines and scenarios.

A Sidekick is created as a full Support Character at the starting points for your Genre's Budget and earns XP at half your rate. If you earn 10 XP during a Story, the Sidekick earns 5 XP. If you are upgrading a character created with Assistant (page xx), then add the difference between the two types of characters.

Trick Shot (4-point Quality)

You can do fancy shots with your weapon, like shoot a gun out of someone's hands, or a hat off someone's head. You can make an impossible shot by having your bullet ricochet three times until it hits your target, or just make an easy shot look fancy with a few flourishes. You can't magically shoot around corners, or have your bullet miss the three people directly between you and your target. You can't shoot faster than is humanly possible, but all

Dramatic Moments involving your use of ranged weapons are decreased by 3 levels. A shot that would normally be Impossible would now only be Challenging. (see Dramatic Moment, page xx)

Tech Cantrips (4-point Quality)

Machines like you so much they work better in your presence. This gift might be magical, cyber-enhancements, or you're so cool that the fundamental laws of the universe don't apply to machines around you. If you focus, even for a moment, you can snap your fingers to turn on a radio or kickstart a motorcycle. You can't activate a complex machine, nor program a computer, with this Quality, but you can ensure that either run efficiently within your presence.

Quick Draw (4-point Quality)

You have extremely fast reflexes. You can draw your weapon quickly, snatch up a falling vase, or dodge the glass being thrown at your head. You can catch a beautiful supermodel falling off a building, or fling that grenade back before it goes off. You can't dodge a speeding bullet or move faster than light, but you gain +5 to your Call Sheet order. Alternatively, if you accept one point of Physical Consequence at the end of the scene, you may automatically go first (if you don't already).

Unnatural Vision (4-point Quality)

You have sight beyond the range of normal human perception. You might see into the infrared spectrum, x-ray vision, sensitivity to ghosts, or see manifestations of mystical energies

and lay lines. Define the nature of your unusual vision and select the Attribute by which you may process and interpret data and information. Using this vision should also accompany with some sort of physical change in the eyes, such as glowing, darkening irises, or bleeding eyes.

Wild Talent (4-point Quality)

You have some sort of enhancement that mimics one of the schools of magic and may perform as feats associated with it. Although this quality might not be mystical in nature, it must still follow the default laws of magic, unless the Genre specifies otherwise. This quality may not be stacked with any quality that grant magical talent, such as Mystical Dabbler (page x).

Animation (5-point Quality)

Like the sorcerer's apprentice, you animate objects and bend them to your will. You can make statues walk, swords refuse to stab you, and doors open with a gesture. These animations serve as Stock Characters (page xx) during Dramatic Moments.

Astral Projection (5-point Quality)

With great effort, and at the cost of 1 point of Physical Consequence, you can separate your soul from your body. While in astral projection, you travel between two separate and distinct realms of reality: the material plane and the spirit world. You can spy upon the material world, travel at the speed of thought,

and explore alternate spiritual or mental realms as defined by the Genre.

While you can always return to the spot your soul split from your body, if your body is moved you are unable to sense its current location. Indeed, unless you are lucky, or have a Quality such as Clairvoyance (see page xx), your soul slowly fades to mist. Every twenty-four hours spent away from your body inflicts one point of Body Consequence. While in Astral Form, you have no form or substance, and lack the ability to affect the Material Realm. However, you can directly challenge other creatures or entities in the spirit realms by replacing your Body Attribute with your Soul Attribute. You can perform magic or other powers granted by Qualities that are powered by non-Body Attributes, but you cannot inflict Body Consequences across realms. You are Knocked Out of the Story as per normal.

Awesomeness by Analysis (5-point Quality)

A moist smear of blue paint; an out of season clump of fur; a vinyl record out of place on a shelf. To the untrained eye, none of these things have any commonalities, but then again - everyone is an untrained eye compared to you. You have the ability to think with a superhuman processing capability, piecing together evidence at an inhumane speed. In addition to finding clues and solving problems easily, you also retain information and images in your mind through your photographic memorization abilities. You are able to connect seemingly unrelated information and think outside the box, creating

solutions quickly when there seem to be none to be found. In addition, you are good at finding clues when the trail seems to have vanished. These abilities lend themselves to prove your genius, time and time again.

Battle Form (5-point Quality)

You can walk the streets as a perfectly average person, but when trouble starts, you morph into a Battle Form with unusual powers and abilities, as defined by your Genre. In your normal form, you are bound by human limits. Your Battle Form is limited, and might involve a vampire flashing fangs and turning into a ghastly beast, a cyborg revealing technological implants, or a superhero donning a uniform that grants special powers.

This transformation only takes a moment or two, but if witnessed leaves little doubt that something's unusual or even unnatural about you. While this form does not change your Budget Ceiling, it does lower the cost of any Quality associated with your Battle Form by 1 point. For example, a demon might have Battle Form (5-point Quality) and then the following associated Qualities which are only active while in Battle Form: Natural Weapon (normally a 4-point Quality, but now costing 3), Enhanced (normally a 4-point Quality, but now costing 3), Horror Factor (normally a 5-point Quality, but now costing 4) and Flight (normally a 5-point Quality, but now costing 4). If a Quality is unrealistic or not possible due to story logic, the Director should disallow it.

Catchphrase (5-point Quality)

Words have power. You've found a catchphrase – a motto that matches your personal outlook on the world, the credo by which you live, or a humorous aside to highlight the absurdity of the universe. Once per story, if you utter these words at an appropriate dramatic moment, you may clear out all of your consequences of a single category.

Empath (5-point Quality)

You are a highly sensitive being, with a keen ability know what others around you are feeling. By touching another character, and allowing yourself to fully experience her pain, you can draw some or all (your choice) of her Heart and/or Soul Consequences into you. These Consequences can lead you to madness, spiritual suffering, or even being blamed for your patient's legal trouble. This effect stays with you until the end of the story. Be careful! If you take on too much, you might get Knocked Out of the Story (page xx).

Environmental Adaptation (5-point Quality)

You can live and breathe anywhere, as your body automatically evolves to survive any hostile environment. You are immune to all poisons, toxins, and radiation. You can survive without water in the desert, the massive pressure from the bottom of the ocean, or the coldness of the vacuum of space.

Fast Healing (5-point Quality)

You heal quickly, and can bounce back from injuries that would kill others. When resting, you heal 1 point of Body Consequence per thirty minutes.

Last of Your Kind (5-point Quality)

You are the last of your kind. You might be an alien, a mythical creature, or a member of an elder race. There is mythical power in being the last of anything as the universe hates to lose anything forever and stories have a way of resurrecting the lost. Once per story, if you call upon the spirit of your fallen people, you can pull back if you are Knocked Out of Story (page xx).

Lucky (5-point Quality)

The stars themselves blessed you, making you really lucky. You often get to the stop right as your bus pulls up, take the last cookie in the cookie jar, find your friend's missing keys, or pick the winning scratch ticket. You might even survive a dive out of moving train by landing on a pile of hay, but you aren't invulnerable. Three times per story, you can choose to roll three six-sided dice instead of two, and keep the best two results.

Natural Weapon (5-point Quality)

You might be a mutant, a bioengineered soldier, or a monster of legend, but you possess a "natural weapon" that's part of your body, such as fangs, claws, or bone spurs. Some Genres, such as Cyberpunk, Science Fiction, War, or Anime, can even consider advanced weaponry as part of the cybernetic conversion process.

This weapon is created just like any other weapon (see Chapter Four: Core Rules: Equipment, page xx). If you wish to improve this natural weapon, you can do so by purchasing a MacGuffin Quality. This weapon cannot be removed without

significant cost, such as horrific surgery or taking a Flaw.

Psychic Vampire (5-point Quality)

There is something off putting about your demeanor. An uncaring darkness hidden just below the surface. People tend to avoid being around you for too long. That is because, you are what happens when an empath stops caring. You are what happens when an empath's light dies. By touching another character, you can heal a level your Heart or Soul

Consequences by forcing it upon another. To do so you must succeed in a Dramatic Moment against your targets Heart or Soul + their Notice specializations. If successful, the target gains consequences as normal, and your consequences are reduced by one.

Sonic Scream (5-point Quality)

Through cybernetic enhancements or arcane chicanery, you possess a horrific scream that can shatter glass, stun your opponents, and scatter beasts to the four-winds. Once per story, you may use this scream to stun any character within a twenty-foot radius. Anyone caught in the blast zone must succeed in a Heroic (Difficulty 20) Body Dramatic Moment or be knocked to the ground and stunned unable to attack anyone, but defend themselves as normal, for five minutes.

Super Science (5-point Quality)

You have advanced skills with science and technology. This Quality allows you invent, design, and build fantastical devices up to two Tech Levels above your Genre's Technology Level. These devices are naturally MacGuffins, and anyone who wishes to benefit from your work (including you) must purchase the appropriate Quality. However, the cost for you to own one of your own MacGuffins is reduced by 2 points.

Voice of Authority (5-point Quality)

You hold a major leadership position in an organization important to the Genre: Space Force, Police Captain, CEO of a large corporation, or something with similar power and authority. The drawback is that you are constantly watched. If you are caught breaking the rules, you earn double the standard Heart Consequences.

Wealthy (5-point Quality)

You live among the top 10% of your society. You live in a giant villa, mansion, or orbital sky-complex, as suits your Genre. You are more concerned with travel, experiences, and your legacy than smaller desires. You are the sort of person who owns skyscrapers, banks, and even entire towns. You may have anything you want. Should you want a MacGuffin, you pay half cost (round up). Thus, a Minor MacGuffin which would normally cost 4 XP, costs you only 2 XP.

Camouflage (6-point Quality)

If you move slowly and avoid making any noise, you have a bio-electric or magical camouflage field (or similar) that renders

you virtually invisible. If you pick up a small item, you may extend your field to cloak said item. You can climb, walk, and move about normally, but you can't run or swim without bringing the camouflage field down. You gain a +5 Wild Card bonus when hiding.

Eagle-Eyed (6-point Quality)

You might be blessed with second sight, possess the latest cybernetic implants, or perhaps are simply an individual acutely aware of her surroundings. You have perfect vision, and when you concentrate (and do nothing else), very little gets past your gaze. You gain a +5 Wild Card bonus to any Dramatic Moment involving seeing through disguises; detecting camouflaged characters, illusions, compartments, or passages; and discovering unusual visual clues. A character with this Quality in a Science Fiction Genre might be able to identify power signatures and metal fractures, whereas another character in a Hunters Genre might see ghosts, signs of demonic possession, or a monster even when not appearing in Battle Form (see page xx).

Enhanced (6-point Quality)

Magic, science, or the blood of the angels enhanced you. Select one Attribute Category and add 2 points, even if doing so breaks the standard human cap. This Quality may only be purchased once per Attribute Category.

Experienced (6-point Quality)

You ain't no snot-nosed recruit fresh from the cradle. You've been around the block more times than you care to admit.

Upon purchasing this Quality, you gain double your Budget's starting Skill points. This does not stack with Training Package. For example, if your Genre's Budget is Major Motion Picture, then you gain 22 additional Skill points.

Extra Limb (6-point Quality)

Through a mutation, eldritch powers, or robotic means, you possess extra limbs. It might be tentacles, extra arms, or a prehensile tail. This reduces your difficulty climbing, running, and performing menial tasks. During combat, these extra limbs add +3 to your Fighting skill.

Fortress (6-point Quality)

You own a small fortress, manned with support staff, security guards, and even a professional chef (all Stock Characters). You and your team can refuel, restock weapons and ammo, and sleep in relative safety.

Illusions (6-point Quality)

Master of subterfuge and distractions, you can conjure illusions (the nature of which depends on your Genre: chimerical, holographic, or mystical befuddlement). Your illusions aren't real, and as soon as someone attempts to touch them, the deception is revealed. You can create illusions as large as a small house, and as small as a ring. You can't create moving illusions unless they are based on you (creating up to a dozen duplicates) or your clothing. Enemies may attempt to pierce through your illusions by winning a Dramatic Moment with their Mental + Notice.

Minor Projectile Weapon (6-point Quality)

Through arcane incantations, a cybernetic blaster, or channeling your inner *chi*, you possess the ability to blast your enemies with a projectile or energy bolt. When purchasing this Quality, select the source of your means to cast the bolt (cybernetic, magical, mystical, technological, spiritual, etc.), the energy type (concussion blast, electrical, fire, ice, laser, necrotic, plasma, etc.), and the category of the Consequence your bolt inflicts. Once selected, these attributes may not be changed.

Thereafter, if you succeed in a Dramatic Moment (page xx) against a target, you inflict 3 points of the selected Consequence.

Mystical Dabbler (6-point Quality)

You've acquired the occult knowledge necessary to twist your divine spark, and can transform that energy into magic. You might have apprenticed under a powerful wizard, gone to magic school, or even taught yourself by painstakingly studying rare tomes. You can learn up to three schools of magic, selected when purchasing this Quality. You can cast any spell so long as the Difficulty Rating is 10 or lower, and doing so does not break any of your Genre's Laws of Magic.

These spells can be hostile towards others, but can't inflict Consequences on your targets. This Quality requires your character possess at least one point of the Wild Card Skill: Magic. Each Genre that allows Mystical Dabbler has a Reference Material section, titled *Theory and Practice of Magic*, that details the origin, unique limits, and range of magic

within the Genre. For more information, see **Chapter Five: Qualities: Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Magic**, page xx.

The Nexus (6-point Quality)

Be it destiny, a grand plan, or sheer chutzpah, the world sometimes twists itself to gordian-sized knots to fit into your designs. Once per story, by pitching a series of 'What Ifs' the Director, you may introduce a new Shyamalan twist into the plot changing everything. Examples might include a former rogue antagonist faction might be convinced to be good guys, the danger described on the other side of a wall is secretly a hoax, or a familial tie suddenly exists between a member of the cast and the supporting cast. The Director should ensure that none of the plot twists endanger the integrity of the Genre or ruin anyone else's story. This quality is meant to add more flavor to the game, rather than ruin it.

Psychic (6-point Quality)

Knowledge of the future is dangerous. It's never exact: just enough to tip the balance and maybe save your life. It might be you have the fabled mystical sight, cybernetic implants that tune your brain into extra-sensory-perception, or maybe your Jungian understanding of the universe has you seeing signs and portents everywhere.

When the Director feels it is dramatically correct to foreshadow the plot, you see glimpses of what's to come, events that might be, and a chance to fight to said that future. In addition, you can add a +5 Wildcard bonus to any dramatic

moment that relies upon chance, randomness, or synchronicity.

Shape Changer (6-point Quality)

You can change your shape into any mundane animal that you've seen, studied, or formed a mystical connection to: amphibians, birds, fish, fowl, mammals, or reptiles. While you assume another form, you keep your Attributes and Skills, which can turn awkward for you when trying to fly as a bird or climb like a monkey if you don't have an appropriate Skill for the Dramatic Challenge. Shape changing is limited to animals no smaller than a mouse or larger than an elephant. You are limited to species that currently exist (no dinosaurs or dodo birds), and somehow your clothing always disappears and reappears when changing form.

Tactical Awareness (6-point Quality)

You see the world as a symphony of possibilities and calculations innately possessing a complete awareness of the tactical situation around you and adjust your behavior to take advantage of the environment. If there is cover from potential snipers, you can't help but walk the long way around. You can't be surprised because you are always expecting ninjas to jump from the shadows, and so are always ready for your dramatic moment in an action scene. You are always first in initiative, unless your opponent also has this quality.

Training Package (6-point Quality)

This ain't your first rodeo. You've been on the job so long that you can't

separate yourself from your work. You have 11 points total to add to your Skills, and can break the standard cap for a Skill.

Major Motion Picture/Prime Time Qualities

You're at the top of the game as a Director, with the budget to make nearly any dream a reality, and hordes of adoring fans (and more than a few critics).

General Qualities at this Budget are designed to be of awesome power-level, beyond what the ordinary person has ever seen or imagined in the mundane realm. These are powers that can only be simulated with high-quality Computer-Generated Imagery, teams of practical effect artists, epic sets and costumes, super-star actors, or top-talent Directors.

Some Umbrella Genres that work well at this Budget include: Animation, Anime, Apocalyptic, Adventure, Action, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Spy Films, Superhero, and War.

Avatar (7-point Quality)

Be it a trained sprite, an advanced AI assistant, or a bound demon, you have an ethereal assistant who is always connected to you. This avatar can perform research, undertake investigations, and even aid in the creation of new spells, programs, or wards. This avatar has a wholly separate personality, but it is merged into your being, perhaps even your soul.

It doesn't have stats of its own, as it can't operate outside of your consciousness. However, it can aid in your defense, granting you a +5 Wild Card bonus against Mental and Soul attacks. While it's possible for an Assistant (page xx) or a Sidekick (see page xx) to be upgraded to an Avatar, it requires a significant story reason.

Armor (7-point Quality)

You have protective armor, naturally hard skin, or mystical shields that keep you functioning. Select one Consequence Category when purchasing this Quality, and thereafter all Consequences received as a result of a lost Dramatic Moment (page xx) are reduced by half (round up). This Quality can only be purchased one per Consequence Category.

Clairvoyance (7-point Quality)

If you concentrate for a moment or two in deep meditation, you can project your consciousness to remotely view anyone you've ever known significantly, such as a friend, enemy, or coworker. You see this target as though looking at them from a wide-angle television shot: you can't perceive details, and see and hear just enough to get the gist of what's happening and overhear casual conversations. This doesn't mean you know where your target is located unless you see an address or know the location personally. Pre-requisite: Quality: Psychic (page xx).

Flight (7-point Quality)

You can do a thing of what the Wright Brothers could only dream: you can fly unaided by machines. You can hover, fly slowly until you clear landlocked obstacles, and then blast away at supersonic speeds. Your body has the endurance to survive such speeds, but alas, unless you've gone through the trouble of acquiring a relevant MacGuffin, your mundane clothing is shredded. Flight does not work in outer space or a vacuum.

Hard to Kill (7-point Quality)

You've gained a toughness throughout your life which makes you less likely to be shot and killed or bludgeoned to death. You know how to survive situations like a house fire, hostage situation, robbery, or collapsing building. You know the safest ways to get out of situations like being trapped under rubble, being close to an explosion, or stopping gas leaks.

You are not impervious to damage, however. You can still be shot, arrested, trapped, or otherwise injured. Once per story, you can ignore the results of gaining Consequences (of any Attribute category) if it would otherwise Knock You Out of the Story (see Chapter Four: Core Rules, page xx).

Horror Factor (7-point Quality)

According to H.P. Lovecraft, the oldest and most potent human emotion is fear. Gazing upon your face and/or your form elicits a primal terror response. To remain in your presence, all targets must succeed in a Dramatic Moment (page xx) . To attack or harangue you, targets must first defeat you in a Dramatic Moment (page xx). You may spare your allies such fear by taking care to hide your true form when interacting with them.

Hypnosis (7-point Quality)

You have the power to command, control, and alter the mind of others: issuing commands, implanting nefarious triggers, or even rewriting memories. You can't force your target to harm themselves or anyone else, or force them

into sexual situations. Engage your target in a Dramatic Moment (page xx). If you win, her will is yours and she must obey you.

This power requires concentration, the direct attention of the target, and a relatively quiet environment. It is impossible to use this power on a battlefield. If you lose concentration, the power ends immediately and the target suspects that something happened.

Immortal (7-point Quality)

You are immortal. You will never know the ravages of time nor disease, nor will you produce children. Barring an accident or horrible murder, you might live forever; walking this world, and many others, until the heat death of the universe. You might already be a hundred years old, a thousand, or even one of the very first sentient people to awaken in the universe. You gain either the Quality: Jack of All Trades or Fast Healing for free.

Lightning Speed (7-point Quality)

You move so fast that you appear as a flash of light, running or flying at a speed close to Mach 1. You can complete simple and complex tasks in a tenth of the normal time, provided you have tools that can keep up with you. You act first in the Call Sheet order, so long as no one else involved has this Quality.

Those attacking you find it quite different to get their hands, weapons, or laser sights on you. All Body attacks against you, perpetrated by those who do not also have this Quality, suffer a -5 Wild Card penalty.

Paralyzing Gaze (7-point Quality)

Some say the eyes are the windows to the soul. When others gaze into yours, they only see the horrors of hell itself. If you lock eyes with another, you have the power to inflict this terror upon their very soul. Should you overcome their Plot Armor in a Soul Dramatic Moment (see page xx), you may freeze your target for the remainder of the scene. If you knock the target out of the story (page xx), their flesh will petrify and harden to stone.

Psychometry (7-point Quality)

Touch has always been your strongest sense. You, willingly or not, read the quantum entanglements and/or psychic residue left on objects touched or used during dramatic and traumatic moments. You can learn all sorts of information about a decades-old happy wedding by touching an old ring, see flashes of a hit-and-run by bumping into a hot rod, or feel the utter despair of the lost soul who took her own life when holding a particular knife.

The exact information learned by touching the object is determined by the Director. Directors should take care to apply just enough foreshadowing to entice the players without making them feel railroaded (see **Chapter Six: Director's Primer: Foreshadowing, Days of Future Past, and Alternative Ways of Playing with Time**, page xx).

Tough (7-point Quality)

Life is tough, and it never stops coming at you, so you learned to be that much tougher. Upon purchasing this Quality,

select one type of Consequence (Body, Heart, Mind, or Soul), and thereafter when you take Consequences of that type during a Dramatic Moment (page xx), cut the total in half (rounded down, to a minimum of 1). This Quality may be purchased more than once, but each instance of this Quality must be applied to a different Consequence category.

Telepathy (7-point Quality)

Thoughts are an energy that you've learned to read, project, and dampen. You can project your natural thoughts to anyone within line of sight. If you wish to read the thoughts of others, you must defeat them in a Dramatic Moment (page xx) . If successful, you may read current thoughts, ask the target a few questions, or review memories. Pre-requisite: Quality: Psychic (page xx).

Global Teleportation (8-point Quality)

You can create a portal or a wormhole that leads to anywhere in the world. You can take up to five characters with you. The only limitation is that you must have previously visited this location or studied it via an accurate picture. 

Horde of Followers (8-point Quality)

You lead a horde of followers (approximately ten support characters devoted to you) who worship you and obey your every whim. These Followers are created as full Support Characters, of your character's Archetype, at the starting points for the Budget: Movie of the Week (see **Chapter Two: Define a  Setting: Budget**, page xx).

Indomitable (8-point Quality)

You are an indomitable force of nature, beyond the scope of human limits. You have five points total to add to your Attribute scores as you see fit, even if doing so breaks the standard human cap for a category.

Major MacGuffin (8-point Quality)

You possess an advanced piece of truly inspiring equipment. This single item gives you five additional points to apply to your Wild Card Skill bonuses, with a Wild Card Skill cap of 4 to any individual Skill. In addition, while wielding this MacGuffin, you gain any two additional Qualities (8 points or less in total) at your Budget. You, or the MacGuffin, must have all of the pre-requisites for these Qualities.

The Major MacGuffin Quality cannot be purchased twice for the same item, but it can be purchased separately for different, unique items. In addition, this Quality cannot stack with other MacGuffin Qualities, no matter their rank, but can be added to other Qualities such as Calling Card (page xx). For more information, see **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Equipment**, page xx.

Major Projectile Weapon (8-point Quality)

Through arcane incantations, a cybernetic blaster, or channeling your inner *chi*, you possess the ability to blast your enemies with a projectile or energy bolt. When purchasing this Quality, select the source of your means to cast the bolt (cybernetic, magical, mystical, technological, spiritual, etc.), the energy type (concussion blast, electrical, fire,

ice, laser, necrotic, plasma, etc.), and the category of the Consequence your bolt inflects. Once selected, these attributes cannot be changed. Thereafter, if you succeed in a Dramatic Moment (page xx) against a target, you inflect 6 points of the selected Consequence.

Midas Touch (8-point Quality)

You were born blessed, as everything you touch seems to turn to gold. You are among the top 1% of your society, possessing wealth far beyond what the common person can even dream of. You have more money than you could spend in a dozen lifetimes. You may purchase any mundane item you desire, but still must purchase a MacGuffin Quality for unusual items, though at half the normal cost (round up). Thus, a Minor MacGuffin would normally cost 4 XP, but costs you 2 XP.

Sandman (8-point Quality)

Through strange magic or scientific apparatus, you flood your target with the neurotransmitters needed to induce sleep. Select the Attribute and Genre reason for this gift. Thereafter, you may target others and force them to sleep. Slumbering targets may be woken per normal. If attacked, or fighting, this Quality won't work due to the increased adrenalin.

Sorcerer (8-point Quality)

A scholar of the arcane, you've learned how cast potent spells that terrify the unlearned. You can learn six schools of magic (this includes the first three learned from previously possessing

Magical Dabbler, page xx). You can cast any spell of these schools, so long as the Difficulty Rating is 15 or below, and doing so does not break one of your Genre's Laws of Magic.

This Quality requires that your character possess at least three points of the Wild Card Skill: Magic. Each Genre that allows Sorcerer will have a Reference Material section titled Theory and Practice of Magic that will detail the origin, unique limits and range of magic inside of this Genre. (For more information, see **Chapter Five: Qualities: Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Magic**, page xx.)

Super Genius (8-point Quality)

You are a super genius, merging science, gumption, and occasionally spite. This Quality allows you invent, design, and build fantastical devices are four Tech Levels above your Genre's Technology level as defined in their Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Technology (see page xx). These fantastical devices are naturally MacGuffins, and anyone wishing to benefit from it (including you) must pay the price for the Quality. However, the cost for you to own one of your own MacGuffins is reduced by 4 points. If the cost of a McGuffin is reduced to zero or less, it is considered to be a 1-point Quality.

Telekinesis (8-point Quality)

You possess the ability to move objects with your mind. You can summon objects to your grasp, flick a switch, or push your enemies off a ledge. The heavier the object you wish to handle, the more

difficult it is to control. Some Genres can introduce a Wild Card Skill that replicates this Quality, such as Magic.

Technopathy (8-point Quality)

You control any machine with the power of your mind; access computers, turn off a bomb, or steer a tank. The only limitation is that you must either be able to see the machine or touch it. You can't make a machine perform a task outside of that which it's designed to do.

Elemental Form (9-point Quality)

You can transform into a living elemental in the classic western traditional – earth, wind, water, and fire. In this form, your body is completely made of the element you have defined. You have the ability to do whatever that element is known for and shape it for your desires. For example, if you are a water elemental, you can seep through cracks or a grate in the floor, as your shape is fluid. The downside is that you can't breathe or do the necessary things to live like eat and drink.

Intangible (9-point Quality)

One second, you are solid as rock, and then, with some concentration, you are as a ghost. You become immaterial to anything on the physical plane. You can only remain a ghost for brief periods of time, as you need to eat, drink, and otherwise sustain your physical body. While intangible, you can float in the air, move through walls and locked doors, and swim through the earth as if you were in water. However, this state of being has limits. Energies still affect your

form, and you are susceptible to Heart, Mind, and Soul attacks.

Power Mimic (9-point Quality)

By touching someone with a given Quality, you can duplicate the powers granted by this Quality (must be rated 9 points or less). This power lasts for the remainder of the story, unless you duplicate another power. Obviously, you can't duplicate a Quality that gives you relationships, wealth, or physical equipment.

You don't need to know the nature of the Quality before you absorb it, as you'll instinctually select the one you need the most. Directors can either choose a Quality, or allow the player to select one at random.

Regeneration (9-point Quality)

Your healing and regeneration abilities are a miracle. You can recover from any illness, regrow limbs, and recover from grievous wounds within minutes. If wounded, you heal one point of Body Consequences every five minutes, even while in combat.

Shields (9-point Quality)

You project an energy shield surrounding yourself, and anyone else within your line of sight. The nature of this shield depends upon your Genre, whether it's proton energy, magic, or something else. When purchasing this Quality, select one Consequence category. Thereafter, whenever someone protected by your shields loses a Dramatic Moment (page xx), halve the point value of all Consequences received (round up), leaving a minimum of 1 point of

Consequence. This Quality may only be purchased one per Consequence Category.

Skin Changer (9-point Quality)

You can change your form to resemble any person, alien, or humanoid creature that you've met. You accurately replicate your target's form, clothing, and voice, but you must have Subterfuge to properly act like her. Those with the Quality: Eagle-Eyed may attempt to see past your disguise with a Dramatic Moment (page xx).

Tough as a Diamond (9-point Quality)

Almost nothing can crack your protective shell. Select one Consequence category. Thereafter, you can't be Knocked Out of the Story, no matter how many points you acquire in that particular category. You simply start the next Act with 1 point in the category. For example, if you have a Body of 5, and are caught in an explosion that would kill anyone else, you start the next Act with 4 points of Body Consequences.

Demigod (10-point Quality)

You are a living demigod, bound in human form and with unimaginable inherent or divine abilities. You have ten points to add to your Attribute scores as you see fit, even if doing so breaks the standard human cap for a category.

Epic MacGuffin (10-point Quality)

You possess an advanced piece of truly inspiring equipment. This single item grants you eight additional Wild Card Skill bonus points, with a bonus cap of 4 to any given Skill. In addition, while

wielding this MacGuffin, you gain four additional Qualities (of 8 points or lower) at this Budget level. You, or the MacGuffin, must have all of the prerequisites for any Quality purchased.

The Quality: Epic MacGuffin cannot be purchased twice for the same item, but can be purchased separately for different, unique items. In addition, this Quality cannot stack with other MacGuffin Qualities, no matter their rank, but can be added to other Qualities such as Calling Card (page xx). For more information, see **Chapter Four: Core Rules: Equipment**, page xx.

Master of the Mystic Arts (10-point Quality)

A scholar of the arcane and magic, you've learned how cast potent spells that terrify even other masters. You can cast spells and rituals from any school of magic, so long as the Difficulty Rating is 20 or less, and doing so does not break one of your Genre's Laws of Magic.

This Quality requires that your character possess at least three points of the Wild Card Skill: Magic, along with the Qualities: Mystical Dabbler and Sorcerer. Each Genre that allows Master of the Mystic Arts will have a Reference Material section, titled *Theory and Practice of Magic*, that will detail the origin, unique limits and range of magic inside of this Genre. For more information, see **Chapter Five: Qualities: Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Magic**, page xx.

Master of Technology (10-point Quality)

You are a once-in-a-lifetime genius, a giant among mere mortals. You invent

technological devices that nevertheless seem to operate by magic to others. This Quality allows you invent, design, and build fantastical devices up to six Tech Levels above your Genre's Technology level, as defined in the Reference Material: *Theory and Practice of Technology* (see page xx). These fantastical devices are naturally MacGuffins, and anyone wishing to benefit from this device (including you) must pay the price for the Quality. However, the cost for you to own one of your own MacGuffins is reduced by 6 points. If a McGuffin that costs zero or less points is considered

Wealth Beyond Measure (10-point Quality)

You are amongst the ruling elite. There is no mundane item, no matter how rare or valuable, you cannot own. You must still pay to obtain MacGuffins, but at a half-cost discount due to your wealth. Thus, a Minor MacGuffin which would normally cost 4 XP, costs you 2 XP.

Weather Control (10-point Quality)

You can control the weather with your thoughts and emotions. You can cause any natural condition, from a strange and sudden fog, to a snowstorm, or even a hurricane. You can push the weather in a certain direction with a Dramatic Moment (page xx), with a Difficulty Rating equal to the scope of the change (Director's discretion). For reference: taking weather from calm and clear skies to a hurricane would be an Epic Difficulty Rating.

Blockbuster / Major Cable Qualities

You're at the top. You have the budget to make nearly any dream a reality, and a horde of adoring fans (and definitely more than a few pointed critics).

General Qualities at this Budget are designed to be top of the line, Omega power-level, and beyond the pale of reality. Powers featured in these works can only be simulated through great amounts of Computer-Generated Imagery, entire teams of practical effect artists, and sky-high budgets to create epic sets, attract super-star actors, and recruit top-talent Directors.

Umbrella Genres that work well at this Budget include: Animation, Anime, Apocalyptic, Adventure, Action, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Spy Films, Superhero, and War.

Writer's Room Warning: Player Agency and Qualities

The nature of Qualities at this level is not always be appropriate for Lead Characters. These Qualities may be best served being used by Support Characters, such as Antagonists. As always, the final decision is lies with the Director.

Army of Darkness (11-point Quality)

You lead an army of dedicated warriors, who live and die to serve you and your cause.

These warriors are created as full Support Characters, at the starting points for the Budget: Major Motion Picture (see **Chapter Two: Define a Setting: Budget**, page xx).

Galactic Teleportation (11-point Quality)

You can create a portal or a wormhole that leads anywhere in the universe. You can take up to five characters with you. The only limitation is that you must have previously visited this location or studied it via an accurate picture.

Limited Vulnerability (11-point Quality)

You are, for all practical purposes, invulnerable to physical damage: you can endure bullets, explosions, and all manner of blunt trauma accidents without even a bruise. Yet, you are not yet beyond death's reach in regard to environmental factors, such as a lack of

oxygen, poison, or hazardous pressure. In addition, you are vulnerable to certain metals or radiation as determined by your story and your Genre. You gain no Body Consequences unless via your established vulnerability.

Space Flight (11-point Quality)

You can fly like a bird anywhere. You can hover, fly slowly until you clear landlocked obstacles, and then blast away at supersonic speeds. When you reach space, you can travel at intergalactic speeds, bouncing from planet to planet. Your body has the endurance to survive such speeds, but unless you've gone through the trouble of acquiring a relevant MacGuffin, your clothing will be shredded.

Reality Warper (11-point Quality)

You can change the very fabric of reality. The laws of the universe are mere suggestions to you, as you rearrange reality to suit your purpose. Like a hacker who has root access to reality, you can reprogram the world to be what you want. Your weakness is that too many changes to reality causes problems with your mental health.

To change reality as you know it, you must succeed in a Dramatic Moment (page xx), and the Difficulty is determined by the radicalness of the change to reality. If you fail, you gain Mental Consequences, 1 level per Difficulty Rating missed.

Creating New Qualities Guidelines

The list of general Qualities found in *Morra* is but a beginning. Future supplements will detail a wide range of Umbrella-Genres and specific Genre Qualities, along with new Archetype Qualities.

Directors or players can create Qualities specific to a unique story. To accommodate that, *Morra* presents a set of guidelines for creating custom Qualities. As always, all Qualities are subject to Director approval.

Creating New Archetypes Qualities

Each Archetype has three unique Qualities, ranging from one to three points, discounted to encourage mechanical support of specific story themes within the Genre.

There are three common types of Archetype Qualities; however this list is not all-inclusive:

- A Quality that establishes an authority, position, or rank within the Genre.
- A reskinned General Quality that strengthens the Archetype's place in the Genre.
- A Package Quality that grants a new low-level Qualities.

Reference Material: Theory and Practice of Magic

Somewhere between the boundaries of reality and the void of the unknown, Magic exists. For those who have the ability to harness the unknown and unexplained, impossible feats and incredible power awaits. It's in this nebulous place of potential that some of the best stories draw their inspiration, thriving in a world where anything is possible if you are willing to pay the price.

The possibilities found within the Magical realm are nigh endless, with every different practitioner of the arts holding a unique perspective on how they bend the energy of reality to their will. Some practioners rely heavily on ritual and tradition, invoking ancient deities, performing sacrifices, and utilizing a wide range of magical tools to help achieve their goals. Others rely on natural talent and luck, preferring to allow the wider universe to shape their magic.

Within the Genres of Morra, Magic is a unique and vibrant character in and of itself. The rules of magic and the way the power is utilized can vary wildly between Genres. Even individual characters might harness and wield their power in different manners, providing endless possibilities for adding Magic into any Genre.

Stories involving magic can offer a unique challenge to players and Directors alike. With so many variations available, it can be difficult to invoke the feeling of accomplishing the impossible while still defining limits and rules to encourage creativity. This section offers Directors assistance in defining the boundaries of magic within a Genre to offer players the mystery and allure of harnessing the power of the universe while still ensuring characters do not become overly unbalanced. As with all aspects of the Morra: Cinematic Universe, the information found in this section are merely suggestions, and anything can be adjusted to fit the needs of individual chronicles.

Step One: Mastery of Magic

In order to harness the power of Magic, a character must possess a Quality that grants her the ability to do so. Some Genres may allow any Archetype to choose the Qualities, while others might limit which character types can access the mystical arts. The value of these Qualities can be altered to match the specific needs of your Genre.

- Mystical Dabbler (page xx)
- Sorcerer (page xx)
- Master of Mystic Arts (page xx)

Step Two: Determine the Origin of Magic

Like any good character in a game, Magic in the Morra: Cinematic Universe needs some background information to really make it an effective tool. While the origins of magic in any given Genre may not be known to characters, the players should have some idea on how magic in the world came into existence. This will shape not only the way Magic in your Genre is used, but also informs how characters interact with and react to magic in the world around them. Here are some common historical and mythological examples. Select one or more of these options or create your own as needed. Once the origin of Magic has been determined, the Director may wish to further explore the possible stories found there.

- A divine creature sacrificed his or her life to bring knowledge and wisdom to mortals (Buddhism, Christianity).
- A great battle between the gods once took place on this world. Magic is the last ember of their divine blood.
- Some people inherit an innate talent for magic and must learn how to use it safely (*Dresden Files, Harry Potter*).
- One of the gods took pity upon humanity and gave the spark of magic to them in defiance of the Allfather (Prometheus).
- Magic is an energy field that surrounds us and binds us all together. Those who are sensitive to this energy field, through talent, training, or both, can manipulate it to achieve great effects. Of course, some say magic manipulates you for its own benefit as well (Wicca, Hermeticism, *Star Wars*).

Step Three: Magic Ecosystem: Base Difficulty Rating

Magic is the art of manipulating energy and patterns to achieve preternatural results. The richer the vein of magic, the easier it is for the caster to access the ambient mystical energy and transform

it into the fuel for magic. Based on the origins of magic in your Genre and your desire for magic to be accessible to characters, select one of the ecosystems below and modify it as needed for your Genre.

- Low: Mystical energy or knowledge is scarce, and therefore those with the skill and talent to cast magic are few and far between. Casting spells is extremely difficult without aid from others, ritual components, or other investments.
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls within your schools of magic: 15
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls outside your schools of magic: 25
- Medium: Mystical energy flows through this Genre, but training and discipline are required to tap into it. Think of the magical world and mundane separated by a barrier, and travel between them takes effort.
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls within your schools of magic: 10
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls outside your schools of magic: 15
- High: Magic flows freely in this Genre, and accessing it is relatively easy, even among untrained adepts. There is no barrier between worlds, there is only magic and the will to use it.
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls within your schools of magic: 5
 - Base Difficulty Rating for magic that falls outside your schools of magic: 10

Step Four: Determine the Genre's Laws of Magic

Magic by its very nature is unknown and mysterious and it can feel wrong or disrespectful to attempt to contain or define it. However, an authentic and believable Genre must follow consistent rules, lest the audience feel cheated. Magic should always *feel* possible, the cast and audience alike catching near-glimpses of it out of the corner of their mundane perception. To feel real and frightening, magic must have rules to explain what is allowed, what is forbidden, and what is impossible. To be an interesting part of the story without consuming the entire game, magic must have limitations, weaknesses, and costs.

When creating a magical system for your Genre, select from the magical laws below (adapted from the work of Aleister Crowley,

Isaac Bonewits, and James George Frazer) that best suit the needs of your story. If you don't find a law that fits your exact needs, modify or create your own.

Here's a list of some historical and mythological examples of Laws of Magic:

- Law of Backlash: Casting a spell requires exact precision and timing; if interrupted or miscast, the magic will backlash upon the caster. The caster takes double Consequences from any failures when casting magic.
- Law of Balance: Balance is always restored. Magic can neither create nor destroy, merely change the form of a thing. Casters must always take from something or someone to give to something else or someone else. Nothing is created anew; only changed in form or function.
- The Law of Consent: Magic is easier to cast upon those who have consented to it. If a target consents to the spellcasting, the Difficulty Rating of the casting lowers by 3.
- The Law of Contagion: Once two things have been linked together, they are always linked together. Thus, a magical link between two formerly connected things may be leveraged for magic. If you have something that once belonged to your target, or was in close proximity to her for at least a scene, the difficulty of casting a spell when incorporating that object lowers the Difficulty by 3.
- Law of Distortion: Magic cannot change anything permanently. The universe will have her way, given enough time. The world will bend back into shape along the course of least resistance. This might be thwarted, but only with great risk of provoking the Law of Backlash. Anything changed or altered by magic will revert to its natural state in time, if the spell is not recast. If that happens, then Law of Backlash is possible, if applicable to the Genre.
- The Law of Equivalent Exchange: Magic always has a price. A spell conveys a specific effect based on the worth of the components sacrificed in its casting. Due to some traditions' practice to engage in animal, or even human sacrifice, this principle is also referred to as *Blood for Blood*. Magic must be paid for with components of equal value to what the spell would create, even if it's in a different form.
- The Law(s) of God: The boundary between magic and faith can be fuzzy; and those who perform miracles on behalf of their chosen divinity can be just as powerful as any magician.

However, such power comes with a price. Players making characters blessed with divine (or infernal) power should work with their Director to devise a moral code, which *must* be adhered to. A character who violates this code risks angering her divine patron, and may lose her power until she repents or otherwise redeems herself.

- The Law of Items: Power is contained in enchanted or blessed items, such as a grimoire, magic wand, saint's medallion, or paper charm. A magician who loses the items she relies upon cannot cast magic until she regains them. These items may very well be MacGuffins.
- Law of Mortality: Death is the natural outcome of mortality. Magic can't prevent death, only extend life. A natural death may not be undone with magic. This limit does not extend to magical creatures, the divine, infernal, or those born without souls.
- Law of Names: Knowing the true and complete name of a phenomenon or spiritual entity (such as a ghost, a demon, or sphinx) grants the caster complete mastery of it. A magician may summon such a creature to do her bidding, or destroy it as she wishes. For this reason, many of the more powerful entities take great pains to conceal their true names; finding the name of a greater demon or powerful faerie lord should be quite difficult.
- The Law of Places: Some areas in the world are more replete with magical energy than others. This might be where ley lines cross, a specially blessed building, or a combination of the two - a structure that takes advantage of sacred geometry or similar principles. Magic can be impossible outside of these boundaries, or grant a Wild Card bonus to spells cast within them, as the Director sees appropriate.
- The Law of Reciprocity: Also called the Threefold Law, after the witches' saying that whatever one works by magic, the effect will rebound upon them threefold. Whatever a caster does by magic, for good or ill, will be repaid to her threefold. Dark deeds bring darkness into one's life, and violence begets violence. But those who sacrifice for heroic reasons shall also be rewarded.
- The Law of Reversal: Whatever magic can do, magic can undo. Anything created by one magician can be dispelled or otherwise undone by another caster, without needing to be physically destroyed. Conversely, this also allows space for anyone killed by magic to be brought back under the right conditions, even if doing so violates the law of Mortality.

- The Law of Words: Words, like names, have power. A magician must first learn these words of power to cast her spells. Unlike names, these do not summon and bind entities. Rather, they allow the caster a Wild Card bonus when attempting to create environmental effects – such as speaking the magic word for ‘wind’ to summon a hurricane. Such words of power are often jealously guarded by those who already know them, and a magician operating under the Law of Words must work hard to learn them.

Step Five: Select the Available Schools of Magic

Along with operating according to specific rules, magic also frequently has schools or traditions – collections of spells which have thematic elements in common. These schools of magic shape a spell and give it a unique flavor. For example, one could cast a classic Fireball using any number of schools, and each would appear differently. A Fireball cast using the Destruction school of magic might carry with it a sense of dread and doom and the scent of hellfire, while the Fireball from the Elemental school of magic might carry all the destruction, but in a manner more in accordance with the nature of the world. Burn patterns from an Elemental spell will show orderly waves of flames, while Destruction would be filled with chaos.

While the available schools of magic, as described below, include some suggestions for spells that might be appropriate, this list is not intended to be all-inclusive. This offers Directors and players the opportunity to explore their creativity and craft a magic system that will be unique to each game.

A Genre may have all, some, or just one school present. When designing the magic system for your particular Genre, select the school(s) available for your Genre. Then, detail any alternations to its standard scope, magical limitations, or magical laws. For instance, in a setting where all magic is tied to the classical elements, a Director may choose to assign Divination to water and Transfiguration to earth. Thus, all Divination spells cast within this Genre must incorporate water in some way. In an urban fantasy setting, however, the Director might decree that only vampires can cast Glamour and hedge witches have access only to Tantra and Necromancy.

If a type of magic is not covered here, but would be useful for your specific Genre, alter or add a new school of magic as best

works for your Genre. Remember, all laws, mystical components, and sample spells are merely suggestions and may be changed as needed to fit your Genre's needs.

Abjuration

Spells within the Abjuration school of magic weave a series of spells concerning protection, shields, and wards. These spells may be focused against particular creatures, forces, or items. This can also grant the magic user power over any creature or item within her control. For example, an intricate runic symbol drawn on the ground has the power to trap demons. Once there, the trapped demon is forbidden from attacking anyone else within the circle, as per the constraints of the original spell. Some spells may require those trapped inside to swear an oath of conduct or perform a ritual before they are released.

This school of magic is, by and large, used for protective purposes. Each spell should have a beneficial effect. For example, a spell that prevents any rabbits from crossing the town line because once they step foot inside the cursed areas, they become zombies is an acceptable use of the school of Abjuration, while one that destroys any rabbit on impact is not. Spells that are overly aggressive rather than defensive might still be allowed by the Director, but magic always comes at a price, and the universe doesn't care for those who attempt to circumvent her rules.

The school of Abjuration typically follows set rules. Those who abide by those rules by utilizing appropriate mystical components and ritual often find they have a great deal more power behind their spells.

Laws: Consent, Contagion, Naming

Mystical Components: True Name, Creature Blood, Specialized Knowledge, High Ritual

Sample Spells: Alarm, Anti-Magic Ward, Armor, Barrier, Dispel Magic, Invisibility Shroud, Protection from Evil, Repel Animal, Spell Immunity

Chaos

This school of magic inflicts bedlam, disrupts patterns of mystical energy, and even changes the stars themselves to alter destiny. Chaos is change without form, purpose, or

reason and this school of magic draws on the chaotic power that fills reality. By harnessing this chaos, practitioners have the ability to create, manipulate, and wield power from the beyond. However, the magic of the Chaos school of magic is unpredictable and dangerous, and most who dabble in this art find themselves lunch for a cranky elder god before they ever gain true mastery over the arts. Those who have found some level of proficiency wield power over extradimensional travel, weather patterns, the disruption of vast ecosystems, and rumors even abound of those who have harnessed the powers of the gods themselves.

This school of magic is unique in that it draws inspiration from many other schools, but every spell cast using Chaos comes with some unintended consequence. For example, one could harness Chaos to summon a Fae from another realm in order to glean knowledge from her area of expertise. However, when the door to Arcadia swings open, a horde of very unhappy Ogre warriors come with, and they must be dealt with eventually. Wise Chaotic practitioners clean up their mess, and rumors abound of those who failed to do so and the deadly consequences that awaited them.

Wielders of Chaos magic accept that their intended outcome is rarely the only one. For example, one might utilize Chaos magic to enact a love spell intended to bring someone's fated love back to them. The spell works, but as a consequence, the intended lover's spouse is killed long before it is his time. This makes what should be a happy beginning of a relationship one marked by death. By meddling with the universe, rather than allowing for the natural progression of things, unintended consequences are served, often on innocent bystanders. Some of the chaotic consequences can be mitigated through spell components.

Laws: Balance, Distortion, Contagion

Mystical Components: Enochian, ritual sacrifice, sacred geometry

Sample Spells: Confusion, Counterspell, Darkness, Door, Fate Manipulation, Interdimensional Portal, Lightning Bolt,

Magic Disruption, Pestilence, Summon Insect Horde,
Summon Lesser God, Weather Control

Conjuration

Conjuration is a school of magic that revolves around the spaces between objects, and traveling from different points in the universe. The school of Conjuration functions on the belief that matter can never be created nor destroyed. For example, a stage magician who wishes to perform the classic rabbit in a hat trick doesn't create it out of thin air, but rather conjures the animal from a different place. In this simple example of Conjuration, the rabbit being mere feet away from the hat makes the spell easier than if the creature was pulled from the other side of the world. Powerful practitioners of this school are capable of great feats such as teleporting a group of people to Mars, or drawing a leviathan up from the ocean deep.

Practitioners of the Conjuration school of magic must extensively research the locations or objects she wishes to affect. Failure to do so can have disastrous results, and Conjuration users quickly learn to avoid such failure at all costs. Distance and target size are both heavy factors when considering a Conjuration effect. The closer and smaller the target, the easier the spell. As always, the Director has final say as to how difficult a conjuring is.

Some magic users boast the ability to assemble and destruct items at a subatomic level, but this power is exceedingly rare and dangerous. Those who manage to pull it off find that the universe serves up massive backlash to those who attempt to disrupt the natural order of things. Those who use Conjuration to summon creatures must always be aware that just because they can call a creature to their location, doesn't mean they have any control over its actions.

Laws: Backlash, Balance, Distortion, Equivalent Exchange, Names

Mystical Components: Star Maps, Photograph, DNA, Sample Object

Sample Spells: Conjure Elemental, Dispel Magic, Earthquake, Repel Animal, Summon Creature Type, Telekinesis, Teleportation,

Destruction

Destruction is the school of magic also commonly referred to as War magic. The power found within the school of Destruction allows the magic user to manipulate magical energy to hex her enemies, curse the land, or rain down heavenly fire on opposing armies. This school of magic is tremendously potent, and quite costly for the practitioner in terms of sheer power drain. Major effects require major sacrifice, and few magic users have the juice to satisfy the steep requirements.

Magic cast from the Destruction school is always aggressive in nature, and many practitioners of mystical arts see these spells as an immediate declaration of war. While more subtle effects are possible, it takes great skill to control the destructive forces of reality.

Of course, those who don't fear revealing their powers enjoy the blatant display of power. Most magic found within this school operates within a large area of effect, rather than a single target. Utilizing mystical components can help the magic user narrow the focus to a smaller area or even a single person. The magic found within the school of War can quickly turn sour on an inexperienced practitioner. One slip, and the tremendous power she wields turns upon her. Some magicians see their work as a holy calling, to clear away the weak or faithless so the strong and devout can thrive. Others are patriots, putting their talents to use for their family, community, or nation.

Laws: Backlash, Equivalent Exchange, Sympathy, Reversal

Mystical Components: Crystals, Hair, Sympathetic Bond, Wand

Sample Spells: Battle Tactics, Celestial Flame, Crushing Blow, Evocation, Lightning Bolt, Magic Deflection

Divination

The art of Divination studies the divine order of the universe, harnessing that power to delve into secrets and dreams. The word Divination comes from the Latin *divinare*, to foresee, or to be inspired by a god. Despite the etymology of the word, however, this magic may or may

not be divinely inspired. Practitioners seek to understand the hidden patterns in seemingly random occurrences and drag secrets into the light: foreseeing and foretelling the future through augury, synchronicity, or divine revelation. Divination spells oppose the school of Phantasmagoria, as one is based on truth and the other deception.

Divination takes on many different forms, and those who practice the art are often influenced by regional or spiritual factors. Some use tarot cards to understand something influencing her life, while others might prefer Aracnomancy—answering questions through the study of spiders. While the power of Divination does not allow for direct action against a target, there is an endless amount of knowledge to be gleaned from the past, future, and dreams of humanity.

Directors should work with players to create a Divination system that makes sense for their genre. For example, some Directors prefer to allow players to ask a certain number of questions if they are successful with their Divination, while others prefer to give characters a specific set of information through a vision or other such means.

Divination and the Real World

There are numerous methods of divination utilized within the real world. For many, this is a spiritual interaction, one that is deeply personal. When drawing inspiration from one of these real-world divination practices, care must be taken to ensure these very real religious beliefs are treated with the appropriate respect. Attempts to belittle or mock the spiritual beliefs of others should be discouraged.

Laws: Consent, Items, Names, Words

Mystical Components: Chalice, Crystals, Entrails, Pendulum, Talking Board, Tarot Cards

Sample Divination Means: Astrology, Automatic Writing, Bibliomancy, Cartomancy, Cleromancy, Cromniomancy, Cryptomancy, Dowsing, Lithomancy, Numerology, Oneiromancy, Osteomancy, Tasseography, Water Scrying

Elemental

The Elemental school of magic revolves around the creation, manipulation, and command of the four classic elements according to Western Occult traditions: earth, wind, fire, and water. Expertise in this school of magic

allows the castor to shape and manipulate the elements according to her desires. This might allow her to move objects through the earth, start fires out of thin air, send tree roots crashing up through the ground, or instantly freeze water into ice. Traditionally, the Elemental school of magic focuses mainly on the four natural elements; however, masters of the art can extend their influence over any substance known to man. These unique substances, such as sound waves, light, or electricity, are more difficult to manipulate, but can offer a great deal of power to those who master them. The Director deems any element appropriate or not, as best suits the Genre.

Practitioners of the Elemental school of magic typically specialize in one element, though some elect to vary their knowledge based on need or interest. There must always be balance; the matter and energy expended to create elemental constructs must come from somewhere, and casters must take care to not inflict too much environmental damage when performing spells.

While most Elemental magicians adhere to the western elements, some prefer to utilize the Eastern Occult tradition of the elements as Metal, Wood, Fire, Earth, and Water.

Laws: Balance, Equivalent Exchange

Mystical Components: Any representation of the desired element

Sample Spells: Air Bubble, Fire Ball, Hedge Row, Lightning Bolt, Nuclear, Poison Air, Sonic Blast

Enchantment

Enchantment is the mystical school for creating items imbued with magic. These magical baubles might be as minor as a brush that changes the user's hair to whatever color she desires, or as dramatic as a flower that can revive a recently deceased comrade. Enchantments beyond the simple and mundane require unique and unusual materials, along with a great deal of effort and symbolic sacrifice during their creation. The more impressive the magical item, the grander the effort required.

Though many Enchantment mages follow similar steps to create items possessing similar traits, each item is thoroughly unique, just as each magician's magic carries a distinctive flavor. Once a magic item is created through Enchantment, it be bound to its user in order to offer any benefit (or hindrance). Uninitiated magicians (those without one of the Magical Qualities (see page xx)) must undertake a quest if they wish to bond with the item and utilize its magical abilities. The difficulty and dangers associated with this quest are commiserate with the benefits of the magical item. Creation of an item requires the XP expenditure of the appropriate MacGuffin Quality to tether it to this reality. This can be spent by either the caster or the intended wielder.

Each magical item created by the Enchantment school is comprised of a variety of mystical components. Nearly anything can act as a mystical component for this school of magic, based entirely on the desired magical effects and the mage casting the spell.

Laws: Distortion, Contagion, Equivalent Exchange, Sympathy

Mystical Components: The first tear of a newborn, Graveyard dirt, a Monkey's Paw, a black candle, Rosewater, an unenchanted magical foci

Sample Enchanted Items: Hand of Midas, Healing Stone, Flying Carpet, Excalibur, Babel Stones, Julia Child's Apron, Mary Poppins' Bag, Pandora's Box

Glamour

The school of Glamour concerns itself with mental and emotional dominion over people, animals, and even monsters. The school of Glamour is utilized in a variety of ways. One caster might harness this power to make herself appear always put-together and in control of the situation, while another might alter her appearance and aura to become threatening and intimidating. Derelict castle walls might transform into gleaming and well-defended stones, while a well-provisioned storage hut might become little more than another hovel in a wasteland.

Although the magic found in this school can be potent, the effects are rarely permanent. A spell to inspire love and confidence might draw a suitor, but when the effects wear off, she will inevitably see the caster for who they truly are. Further, while Glamour might stimulate some of the outward long-term effects of strong emotions such as love, hate, or revenge, it can't force a target to adopt those feelings permanently. Clever practitioners avoid such legalities by manipulating their Glamour in a subtle manner; rather than beginning an outright war that has little reasonable explanation, she might instead sow seeds of discord among a royal court in hopes that her ploy will eventually lead to her desired outcome.

Glamour performed on oneself is often a simple enough procedure, dependent on how potent the desired effect is. However, when it comes to placing a Glamour on another person, place, or thing, it can become a bit trickier. In these situations, mystical components help power the spell

Limitations of Glamour

Glamour cannot be used to force a target to do something directly self-destructive, such as "shoot yourself in the foot." However, the caster can issue orders which are not automatically harmful but might nevertheless lead to a dangerous situation. A magician could Glamour someone to attack a mob of dangerous robots or pack of werewolves. This action would almost certainly lead to trouble, and possibly get the target harmed, but it is not directly self-destructive.

It is possible for an order issued with Glamour to be initially non-harmful and then become directly harmful later. If this happens, the Glamour breaks just before its implanted orders become directly harmful. If a character commands her target to, "Walk straight ahead until I say stop," the target would be forced to move forward. However, she will stop before stepping in front of a bus or walking off a cliff. This power grants the target no supernatural ability to sense when something is dangerous. Therefore, if the victim did not know a cliff lay ahead and could not sense it, she would continue walking forward until she realized the danger — which may very well come too late.

Laws: Contagion, Distortion, Words

Mystical Components: Effigy, Perfume, Flowers, Makeup, Artwork, Clothing

Sample Spells: Bravery, Charm Creature, Dread, Inspiration, Magnetism, Perfect Appearance, Repel Creature

Kinetic

Kinetic magic relates to the motion and animation of matter and energy. Those who utilize this school of magic understand the intricacies of the energy of the world, which allows them to manipulate that energy and bend it to their will. Kinetic magic might be cast as electrical bolts drawn from a power outlet or bringing inanimate objects to life. This school of magic functions best when performed on a smaller scale such as objects or individuals. While earth-shattering magic such as leveling mountains or draining oceans is possible, the cost is astronomical and such effects require a group casting effort. Particularly talented Kinetic magicians learn how to unravel and create items at a subatomic level, though this delicate work requires mystical components to succeed.

Magic from this school is bound by the belief that matter and energy must always come from some place in the environment. Foolish casters who care little for the environmental damage often find themselves suffering when the attempt affect backfires.

Laws: Balance, Equivalent Exchange

Mystical Components: Elemental Representation, Foci,

Sample Spells: Bullet Train, Gravitational Force, Increased Density, Increased Speed, Strength, Telekinesis

Necromancy

Necromancy is the art of communicating, commanding, and celebrating with the dead, undead, and everything in between. Many magic users find Necromancy distasteful at best, while some cultures believe it to be outright evil. The effects of this school of magic range from helping a restless spirit find their peace to raising graveyards filled with zombies. Known practitioners of this art are often shunned and reviled, though those with great skill know how to leverage their knowledge in exchange for rewards and praise.

While Necromancers possess nominal control over the creatures they summon and reanimate, the dead can be unpredictable, and a wise Necromancer is always prepared for every situation. A kill switch of sorts is often employed to ensure a situation doesn't get too far out of hand, even

when communication with the other side is all that is desired. Opening gateways to the realms of the dead is always a dangerous prospect, as the entities of darkness always seek roads back to the light.

This school of magic brings to light questions that must be answered regarding the Genre as a whole. For example, the Director and players might need to determine what role the divine has on mortal life, if there is an underworld where souls cross over into a new existence, and how (if at all) a soul is judged. The answers to these questions determine the suitability for this school of magic in any given Genre.

Laws: Balance, Distortion, Names, Mortality, Reciprocity, Reversal, Sympathy

Mystical Components: Body Parts, Photograph, Treasured Item, Murder Weapon

Sample Spells: Spirit Touch, Ghostly Voice, Possession, Restless Dead, Summon Ghost, Repel Ghost

Phantasmagoria

This school of magic is named for how its students exhibit trickery, optical effects, and illusions which are similarly employed by entertainers to delight their audiences. Illusions, deception, and trickery are typical uses for this school of magic. While much of the magic found with Phantasmagoria cannot directly harm another, the mental manipulation can be just as damaging. For example, a skilled user of the art might play the part of a mystic capable of conducting a séance. Rather than any true communication with the dead, she plays up the charade with flickering lights and whispered voices, tricking her victims into believing they have interacted with a dead loved one.

As a school known for parlor tricks and petty pranks, practitioners of Phantasmagoria are often viewed poorly by other magicians. While it is true that inexperienced users tend to dabble in the more minor illusions, those with skill and expertise can craft intricate and bewildering illusions, cloak their presence and intent, or otherwise distract and befuddle their enemies.

Laws: Balance, Distortion, Items

Mystical Components: Clothing, Camera, Eyeglasses, Mirror

Sample Spells: Distraction, Doppelganger, Fairy Lights, Inspire Love, Instill Fear, Intentions, Invisibility, Magic Lantern

Summoning

The school of Summoning allows for the castor to summon angels, demons, djinn, faeries, and a wide variety of entities of varying power levels to do her bidding. This school of magic is renowned for the inherent danger found in dealing with most other-worldly creatures. Untrained magicians who dabble in Summoning are often in for a rude awakening when they encounter a creature who has little desire to play nice with others. Wise Summoners ensure they always have an appropriate sacrifice or gift to offer the entity they entice.

Although magicians utilizing this school of magic have the ability to summon and compel entities to appear before her, this does not guarantee her ability to communicate with them. A great deal of study and knowledge often makes interactions with these entities slightly more survivable. This school of magic also allows talented Summoners to banish entities from this plane of existence.

Typically, Summoners specialize in one type of entity, as this allows her to gain the most expertise in that particular area. Entities called forth in such a manner are usually only compelled to perform a single service before they're released, though particularly powerful casters can maintain their binding for longer periods of time. Those who utilize this school of magic and fail to provide appropriate offerings or respect to the entity will find themselves notorious for breaking deals.

Laws: Balance, Distortion, Items

Mystical Components: Sacrifice, Ritual, Binding Circles

Sample Spells: Banish Creature, Bind Creature, Control Creature, Summon Creature, Transform Creature

Tantra

Tantra is the school of magic concerned with manipulating the energy of creation contained within all life. The word literally translates to loom, warp, and weft in reference to

the manner in which this school can be leveraged to manipulate and transform the human body. This school of magic is most commonly used to create spells to heal physical or metaphysical wounds, enhance the athletic ability of a human for short periods of time, or physically degrade the body of an enemy.

Although magic from this school can perform great feats on a physical body, it can only enhance and encourage what is already there. For example, Tantra may be utilized to help an injured comrade regrow a mangled limb, but it cannot bring that same companion back to life if they die of gangrene first. Some practitioners cast this magic on creatures or plant life to the same effect—granting them increased vitality or decay as desired. While Tantra can be leveraged to heal a variety of injuries, some damage is spiritual in nature rather than physical. The school can soothe the physical manifestation of spiritual pain, but it cannot heal such wounds.

Laws: Backlash, Balance, Distortion, Consent, Equivalent Exchange, Mortality

Mystical Components: Blood, Healing Salve, Personal Items, Stones

Sample Spells: Blindness, Buff, Decay, Healing, Long Jump, Physical Perfection

Transfiguration

The school of Transfiguration revolves around transforming one thing into something completely new. This magic can be unleashed against any living creature or inanimate object, but requires the matter and energy in a transfiguration remain the same. A caster might turn a mouse into a hamster, or a chunk of lead into a bar of gold, but she would not be able to transform a pebble into a building.

Transfiguration performed on a living subject can be difficult, as the energy comprising humans and animals is much more complex than that of inanimate objects. Further, these changes are easier to enact the closer they are to the original object. For example, it is easier to turn a goldfish into a frog than it is to turn a human into a tree.

The universe does not like being manipulated outside of the bounds of reality, a fact which Transfiguration mages learn early in their training. Backlash from this type of magic is often brutal and messy, with the caster bearing the brunt of her failure. The effects of Transfiguration are typically fleeting, however particularly talented mages can ensure their target stays in its new form for a very long time.

Laws: Backlash, Balance, Distortion, Consent, Equivalent Exchange, Mortality

Mystical Components: Foci, Runes, Sacred Geometry, Sacrifice

Sample Spells: Alter Physical Trait, Animate Objects, Create Acid, Create Rain, Enhancement, Glass Cannon, Petrify Objects, Stone Skin

Casting Magic

Magic is an art which must be practiced with discipline, will, and exacting precision. Depending on the Genre's Laws of Magic, a single wrong intonation or gesture might ruin a spell, or worse, cause it to backfire painfully. Bending the universe to one's will is never an easy task, even under the best conditions, and attempting such a feat during a Dramatic Moment can be damned near impossible.

Casting magic has the same Action Pool as any Dramatic Moment:

Soul Attribute + Magic Skill + Wild Card + 2d6 = Action Pool

The following flowchart has been designed for players and Directors to calculate the Difficulty Rating of any particular piece of spell craft.

The base Difficulty Rating is derived from the type of magical ecosystem the Genre possesses. If a caster attempts to cast a spell that crosses schools, then the base Difficulty Rating is whichever is higher for the schools involved. For example, if a wizard wants to add an effect from the Out-of-School school of Glamour to a ring via the In-School Enchantment, then the cost for the casting would be for Out-of-School. Remember that each magical merit grants a limited, but successive number of schools of magic.

Magic Ecosystem	Base Difficulty Rating
Low Magic	In-School Casting: 15 Out-of-School Casting: 25
Medium Magic	In-School Casting: 10 Out-of-School Casting: 15
High Magic	In-School Casting: 5 Out-of-School Casting: 10

Directors should feel free to revise or even ignore this flowchart when determining the Difficulty Rating of specified magical spell, based on the needs of the story and constraints of the Genre.

Step One: Intent

The spellcaster clearly states her character's intention and goals for casting this piece of magic. The Director then calculates the exact Difficulty Rating for the spell.

Step Two: Preparation

The idiom that *knowledge is power* is quite apt when considering magic, but it might be better amended to state that preparation is mastery of power. Research, gathering mystical components to aid the casting, and finding the right time and place is as vital as the physical casting.

Spell Work	Difficulty Penalty
Researched Spell or Ritual	-3
Gathered appropriate spell components	-5
Invoking a deity or higher power, who claims the nature of this spell as his/her/its specialty	-3
Special sacrifice of that which is sacred to the deity or higher power	-4
Using the True Name of a deity or higher power, if appropriate.	-6
Worthy blood sacrifice	-4
Casting at a time and/or in a place of power	-3 to -6

Apprentices, assistants, cultists, coven-mates, or similar help.	-4 to -8
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Step Three: Scope

Scope is the number of objects or people affected by your casting. The larger the target, the stronger the magic required to alter it.

The Director and the caster should nail down the scope of casting via the below chart.

Spell Work	Difficulty Penalty
A small object /Self	+3
A collection of small objects that you can fit in your hand, or a person	+4
A very large object or a couple of people	+6
A neighborhood	+10
A city	+20
A state or region	+30
The world	+40

Step Four: Laws of Magic

The Laws of Magic are pillars of mystical mathematics. Casters who obey these known laws find their magic easier. Those who resist or attempt to circumvent these laws find that practicing magic is quite difficult. If a character can appropriately justify how the spell follows one of the principles of a Law of Magic necessary to the school, Directors may grant bonuses or penalties according to the following chart.

Laws of Magic	Difficulty Wildcard
Spell directly leverages one principle relating to one applicable Law of Magic.	-3
Spell directly leverages one principle relating to two applicable Laws of Magic.	-6

Spell directly leverages three or more principles, relating to three or more applicable Laws of Magic.	+5 to +10
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Step Five: Calculate the Difficulty Rating

Calculate the final Difficulty Rating for the Spellcasting based on the steps above, and then verify that the proposed spell isn't outside of the mastery granted by the character's Qualities (see page xx). Then roll the dice, compute the Action Pool, and the Director will narrate the results!

Theory and Practice of Technology

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

— Arthur C. Clarke

Prometheus stole the gift of fire and the secrets of metalworking from the gods, according to the Greeks. Jupiter punished the trickster god by commanding that he be chained to a rock for all of eternity and that daily an eagle would consume his liver.

The poor bastard had it coming. At least according to some.

A Genre for Morra: Cinematic Universal Game System can be set in any era (past or future), any world (real or imagined), and in any story that can be told. Players might find themselves in an alternative Rome with magic and wonders, a World War II dominated by dark powers, or a world of technologically so advanced that humanity ascends into the prophesied singularity.

A story is shaped by the technology of the Genre it inhabits. It informs the lives of the characters, their motivations, and how they perceive the world around them.

This streamlined chart helps Directors define the boundaries of technology within a Genre to give any story texture and spice.

Step One: Mastery of Technology

There are two Qualities granting a character the ability to wield and practice technology above the Genre's standard Technology

Levels. Directors can alter the value of these Qualities to match the specific needs of your Genre.

- Super Genius (page xx)
- Master of Technology (page xx)

Step Two: Define the Technology Level Attributes for Technological Categories

Technology is a vague term for the techniques, skills, methods, and processes leveraged to accomplish objectives, tasks, and craft goods. Shape your Genre by assigning a score to the Tech Level Attributes of the Technological Categories, using story's culture and editing the details as needed.

Writer's Room Commentary: History and Technology

The history of technology in the real world is scattershot with an asynchronous series of progressions and regressions - one civilization might achieve steel and gunpowder while another the next still hunts with bows. The romans of antiquity produced concrete and built roads in use two thousand years later. The modern world lost that formulas and can't reproduce it, despite the many theories of historians.

Historic civilizations advanced their technology at vast different rates due to culture, environmental, economic, and hundreds of other factors. Imagined worlds might feature unknown elements or resources that create new magic or combine magic with technology or begin with special resources.

Directors can alter the value of these Attributes to match the specific needs of your Genre.

- **Tech Level (number):** Tech Level for determining effectiveness for Qualities
- **Description:** a guideline on what is available at that level
- **Accessibility:** This determines how easily one can acquire the most advanced level of technology.
 - Common: Tech is easy to get
 - Uncommon: Tech requires a bit of work to acquire (e.g. saving up money, researching sources)
 - Rare: Tech is prohibitively expensive and hard to locate due to limited numbers or hoarding
 - One of a Kind: There's only one like it anywhere. Good luck finding it.

Historical Technology Levels

For historical Genres, use the default Tech Level that fits the Genre's period. Just pick the right Tech Level, then off you go!

For more customized Genres, start with a default level as a baseline for all categories. Then, adjust each category up or down as suits your Genre. This system allows for high-concept science fiction, time travel, speculative fiction, and other classifications.

- 1: Pre-history.
- 2: Bronze Age civilizations (Sumer, early Egypt, Indus Valley).
- 3: Iron Age (Classical Greece and Rome, early Chinese dynasties, pre-Colombian Mesoamerica, Kingdom of Aksum, Mauryan Empire).
- 4: Medieval Europe, Chinese Tang Dynasty, African Mali Empire.
- 5: European Renaissance/Age of Sail, Chinese Ming Dynasty to end of Qing Dynasty, Indian Vijayanagara Empire, Japanese Sengoku Era.
- 6: Industrial Revolution (mass-produced goods, technology levels become more standardized globally).
- 7: Mechanized Age (steam engines leading to internal combustion).
- 8: Nuclear Age (weapons of mass destruction, primitive space travel).
- 9: Digital Age (mass computing, mobile technology, rudimentary artificial intelligence and robotics, early interplanetary travel).
- 10: Near Future (Twenty years of advancement, advanced artificial intelligence, commonplace robotics, civilian interplanetary travel).
- 11: Future (Fifty years of advancement, scarcity of basic needs is unheard of, manual labor is largely robotic, generational interstellar travel is possible).
- 12: Far Future (100 years of advancement, common diseases eradicated, planetary colonization possible, near light-speed travel possible).
- 13: Distant Future (500 years of advancement, self-sustaining planetary colonies as robust and prosperous as Earth cities, faster-than-light travel possible).
- 14: Mythic Future (1000+ years of advancement, faster-than-light travel commonplace, communication at the actual speed of thought, technology and magic become indistinguishable).

Technological Categories

Communication

This Technological Category defines the means by which characters in this Genre exchange ideas and concepts.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
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1	Communication has moved beyond grunting, but not by much. Spoken language has developed but is specific to small geographic areas. A few individuals have started using crude cave paintings to record history and other information, but it is very rare.	One of a Kind
2	Spoken dialects have expanded geographically, due to migration and conquest. Advanced civilizations have begun using pictograms carved into clay or stone tablets to record information, and to send messages across longer distances.	Rare
3	Written language has evolved from pictograms to phonetic scripts. Literacy is still limited to scholars and their students. The most common method of writing used wax tablets, but some civilizations begin using the papyrus plant to create long rolls which are lighter and easier to transport.	Rare
4	Writing and the materials to do so with have not changed much but have become more common. Paper and vellum are now the method of choice for recording and communication. Entire monasteries are devoted to the creation of books.	Uncommon
5	The creation of hand-set printing presses allows for more uniform and quicker duplication of materials. The creation of the first printed book greatly expands literacy among all levels of society.	Uncommon
6	Improvements to printing presses allow for the mass production of written material, giving rise to newspapers and inexpensive books for the first time	Uncommon (Common at TL 7+)

7	The invention of the telegraph and the telephone allow for the first instantaneous communication across large distances.	Uncommon
8	Radio and television allow for the distribution of news and entertainment in real time across large segments of the population simultaneously.	Uncommon
9	The development of the internet as an uninterrupted communication network spawns the World Wide Web, an information hub and repository for user-generated content. Information accessibility is improved greatly with the advent of smartphones.	Common
10	Full sensory augmented reality is now possible, though limited to physical locations which have been built for the experience.	Uncommon
11	Augmented reality has progressed to the points where users now connect physically to hardware to experience it, rather than having to enter a prepared location. Communication between colonies within the solar system is now instantaneous.	Uncommon
12	Instant communication anywhere within the galaxy is now possible. Fully independent artificial intelligences are now common.	Common
13	At this point in technology, the only limitation to communication is the speed of thought. Distance is no longer a barrier. Thoughts can be transcribed directly into data, and even the human consciousness can be transferred into other vessels.	Common

14	At the highest reaches of technology, the concept of communication is radically different. Human consciousness has merged into a single gestalt. All communication is instantaneous. Knowledge no longer needs to be recorded or stored because it exists in the mind of every consciousness.	Common
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Travel and Transport

This Technological Category defines the means by which characters in this Genre travel and transport goods and services.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
1	If you can't get there on your own two feet, you're probably not getting there.	Common
2	Land travel has expanded with the taming of various herd animals (horses, oxen) and the invention of the wheel. Sea travel is possible, but not common. Triremes and other ships hug the coasts, refusing to cross deep water.	Uncommon
3	Networks of roads radiate from Rome, allowing for the quick transport of goods from one end of the empire to the other. Carriages and sturdy wagons allow for rapid travel by the wealthy.	Uncommon
4	After the fall of the Empire overland travel became much slower, but great advances were made in sea travel. Rudders allowed for easier steering of ships, and advances in rigging and three-mast ships allowed for ships to leave the comfort of the shorelines.	Rare
5	Galleons and other large ships cross the Pacific laden with treasure from native civilizations. Pirates and privateers ply the trade routes, looking for ships to plunder.	Rare

	Land travel continues to languish, with most roads remaining muddy tracks across the wilderness with no real protection.	
6	The steam engine has enormous impact on both land and sea travel. Locomotives now criss-cross entire continents, and steamboats traverse rivers and oceans.	Uncommon
7	The internal combustion not only gives individuals the ability to travel across large distances under their own direction over land and sea, but ushers in a new era of travel with the discovery of flight. Zeppelins, dirigibles, and eventually airplanes allow people to ascend to the heavens.	Common
8	The Age of Flight gives way to the Space Race. After several unsuccessful attempts, humans make it outside of Earth's atmosphere and return successfully. Shortly after, they make their first visit to the Moon.	Uncommon
9	Advances in navigation, notably the GPS system, allows for greater mobility for individuals. Automation also begins to take hold, with all vehicles becoming fully capable of autonomous operation.	Common
10	Humanity is no longer limited to travel within the Earth's orbit and its moon. All of the planets in the solar system are within reach, though the time to reach them make it prohibitive to travel much past Venus and Mars.	Uncommon
11	With sustainable systems, interstellar travel is now possible. The speed of travel is slow enough that entire generations are born and die before the destination is finally reached.	Uncommon

12	While the final barrier hasn't been breached yet, speed of travel has come so close to the speed of light that there is virtually no daylight between them. This allows for true interstellar colonization to commence, as supplies can now be transported between systems in time for them to make a difference.	Common
13	The final speed barrier has fallen. Faster-than-light travel is possible, allowing for intergalactic travel and colonization.	Common
14	Distance is now irrelevant to travel. All transport of goods or individuals is now instantaneous anywhere within the known universe, using a massive system of transporter arrays.	Common

Medicine and Healthcare

This Technological Category defines the process by which characters in this Genre seek healthcare and the medical means the culture heals ailments and wounds.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
1	Medicine as a concept does not exist. At the most advanced limits of this time, certain plants have been discovered to have curative properties.	One of a Kind
2	The first medical texts are developed, allowing for medical knowledge (such as it is) to be preserved and passed down to later students. Surgery is performed, though rarely successful.	Rare
3	The Hippocratic Corpus becomes available, a collection of 60 Greek texts which formed the basis of medical knowledge.	Uncommon

	Humorism (the idea that the body's health is determined on the balance of the four humors) is conceived.	
4	<p>The emergence of the Black Plague leads to the concept of quarantine.</p> <p>The first eyeglasses are developed.</p> <p>The first human dissections are performed, leading to the first trial for dissecting a human.</p>	Rare
5	<p>Easing of legal and cultural restrictions on human dissection leads to greater understanding of human anatomy.</p> <p>The first hospitals were established, as places to treat the sick and to advance medical knowledge.</p>	Rare
6	<p>More effective medicines are developed as the Scientific Method is applied and modern study techniques are developed.</p> <p>With these new techniques, modernization of medical ethics becomes necessary to prevent unscrupulous and unconscionable medical experimentation.</p>	Uncommon
7	<p>Germ Theory becomes accepted science.</p> <p>New surgical tools are discovered, including the stethoscope, anesthesia, and the x-ray.</p>	Uncommon
8	<p>Psychiatry becomes accepted medical practice, with mental illness fully recognized as treatable diseases.</p> <p>Sanitization becomes common to stop the spread of infectious diseases in hospitals and other medical settings.</p> <p>Antibiotics become prevalent, allowing for common bacterial illnesses to be treated as a matter of course.</p>	Common

<p>9</p>	<p>The World Health Organization is established, with a mission of informing the public and improving its health.</p> <p>Common diseases such as smallpox and polio have been eliminated from the general population. Vaccines and Antiviral drugs are common and used by everyone.</p>	<p>Uncommon</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Medicine and healthcare are removed from private ownership and investment across the globe. Everyone has access to the latest techniques and medications. Healthcare standards become global, rather than varying from nation to nation.</p>	<p>Uncommon</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Gene splicing and genetic editing allows for the elimination of almost all genetic diseases. The greatest among these is eliminating cancer almost entirely from the general population.</p>	<p>Common</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Medications are now tailored both to the individual and their illness, rather than being collections of most likely candidates. Organ transplants are now performed with cloned organs from the transplant patient to remove the chance of rejection by the host.</p>	<p>Common</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Humankind's mastery of the human body is so advanced that full limbs can now be regenerated. Age is still a concern, as no cell can replicate perfectly forever, but lifespans are now measured in centuries rather than decades.</p>	<p>Common</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>The life of an individual human no longer ends naturally, but when they decide they no longer wish to exist. While there are practical limits to how long a single body can exist, it is so long that no one has ever reached it.</p>	<p>Common</p>

Computing and Robotics

This Technological Category defines the process by which characters in this Genre complete calculation, track wealth, and automate processes and create robotics.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
1	Early computing went no further than your available appendages and digits.	One of a Kind
2	Basic mathematics are commonplace, while the beginnings of algebra are developed in Babylon and Mesopotamia.	Uncommon
3	Euclid writes <i>The Elements</i> , a collection of 13 books which will become the basis for geometry. The Chinese invent the abacus, creating the first known calculator.	Rare
4	The first clocks (water and mechanical) are developed, though still rare. Modern algebra is developed though not widely taught.	Rare
5	Mechanical calculators are invented, primarily to benefit tax collection.	Rare
6	The first automatic mechanical calculator (the difference engine) is developed. The first examples of automation are found with the creation of the automatic loom, greatly accelerating textile production.	Rare
7	The binary calculation system is invented, leading to the development of the first punch card computers.	Uncommon
8	Transistors and other electronic advances lead to the creation of the first personal computer.	Uncommon
9	Personal computing becomes more powerful and more miniaturized, allowing for wearable computing. Basic AIs are	Uncommon

	created, which are quickly subverted by humanity to mimic their worst behaviors.	
10	Robots which are physically indistinguishable from humanity are available for a variety of purposes, from wholesome to lecherous. While not completely autonomous, they have complex decision-making algorithms that allow them to react to unexpected stimuli.	Uncommon
11	Manual labor has been eliminated with the advent of fully autonomous robots taking on all hazardous and undesirable work.	Uncommon
12	Computers and computing become fully integrated with humanity in a physical sense, with cybernetics allowing for humans to perform at much higher levels by taking control of reflexive actions.	Common
13	Robotics now span the full size of the imagination. Building sized robots perform terraforming and other construction functions. Nanites busily self-replicate to form enormous colonies of workers performing delicate technological and medical work.	Common
14	Enormous robots are now homes for humanity as well as servants. These habitats provide everything (food, water, shelter) required for survival, allowing for Dyson Sphere-like existence hurtling through space.	Common

Agriculture and Ecology

This Technological Category defines the process by which characters in this Genre grow their food and manage their natural resources.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
1	All food is found rather than produced.	One of a Kind

2	Crops are grown deliberately for the first time, with water brought in via irrigation to areas where it is not readily available. Foods are preserved via dehydration, either smoking or salting.	Uncommon
3	Crops are no longer grown only for subsistence, but also for trade and export. Multiple types of livestock are domesticated, leading to the decline of hunting. Fermentation is developed as a means of preservation and sanitation, leading to leavened bread and the all-important BEER.	Uncommon
4	Individual land rights were subsumed into the Manor system, with land ownership passing to designated lords. The three-field crop rotation system is developed, allowing for fields to lie fallow for shorter periods of time.	Rare
5	Farms become larger as individual wealth grows. They also become more specialized, focusing on a few items rather than attempting to grow all potential crops and animals in a single location.	Rare
6	The four-field crop rotation system is developed, adding a fodder crop for livestock to allow for year-round breeding. Canning is developed as a preservation method, allowing for some foods to be stored almost indefinitely.	Uncommon
7	Gas powered tractors and other large and expensive farm equipment ushers in the practice of collective farming, with multiple families coming together to combine farms.	Uncommon

8	Advances in machinery and techniques, as well as government investment, cause agricultural productivity to skyrocket. Food scarcity is now largely a matter of distribution.	Uncommon
9	As part of the Green Revolution, pesticides are eliminated from commercial crop production. In their place, crops are genetically modified to be pest and blight resistant.	Common
10	All farming is now managed and performed by artificial intelligence and robotic workers, allowing for much greater efficiency and productivity.	Uncommon
11	Organic matter recycling is vastly improved, allowing for the complete transformation of organic waste products into a bland, but nutritious paste.	Rare
12	The development of accelerated growth technologies allows for plants to be grown in a matter of days instead of hours, eliminating food scarcity at a global level.	Common
13	With land mass more and more often taken up by human habitation, large scale farming is moved to enormous orbital space platforms.	Common
14	Agriculture and animal husbandry are no longer necessary with the invention of energy to organic matter conversion. Any foodstuff can be generated at a thought.	Common

Military and Weaponry

This Technological Category defines the process by which characters in this Genre fight wars and battle each other.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
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1	<p>Stones were used to break their bones. Sticks and string were used to fling and pierce things from afar.</p>	Common
2	<p>The ability to smelt metal and forge it into shapes leads to the development of personal weapons such as maces and swords. Wood layering techniques allow for the development of composite bows, which can shoot much greater distances.</p> <p>Naval warfare was not common, and primarily used as troop transport.</p>	Uncommon
3	<p>The legions of Rome were the envy of the world. Their shields and short weapons were designed for fighting in tightly packed ranks, and the introduction of ballistae and catapults provided fire support across the battlefield.</p> <p>Naval warfare becomes much more common.</p>	Uncommon
4	<p>As cities walls and fortresses became sturdier and sturdier, trebuchets were developed to launch boulders large enough to knock them down. The crossbow becomes common, as a weapon that is easy to use and a counter to heavily armored knights.</p>	Uncommon
5	<p>The invention of gunpowder leads to the development of single-use explosives and rockets. Further experimentation results in the cannon. Refinement and miniaturization of cannon technology leads to matchlocks, flintlocks, muskets, and other personal firearms, as well as smaller cannon which can be used in ship-to-ship combat.</p>	Rare
6	<p>Repeating firearms allow a single person to fire multiple shots in succession without reloading.</p>	Uncommon

	Naval warfare sees the rise of the Ironclads, the first armored battleships.	
7	<p>Fully automatic firearms evolve, allowing someone to fire an entire magazine in a matter of seconds.</p> <p>Naval warfare continues to evolve the armored ship, deploying battleships and other large weapon platforms.</p> <p>Air warfare is developed as airplanes become more reliable, and firearms are sufficiently small and powerful to be mounted on them.</p>	Uncommon
8	<p>"I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."</p> <p>The atom is split and weaponized, resulting in the atomic bomb.</p>	Uncommon
9	<p>Personal firearms attain additional stopping power and armor piercing capabilities. Less than lethal ordinance becomes more common.</p> <p>Jet fighters launch from airbases and naval carriers carrying bunker busters, while bombers carry the MOAB which can demolish mountains.</p>	Uncommon
10	<p>AIs are now tasked with targeting and firing of vehicle and other platform weapons, greatly improving accuracy and reducing unintended casualties.</p>	Uncommon
11	<p>Miniaturized computing allows for personal firearms to manage targeting and firing capabilities, with improved biometrics preventing the usage of stolen weapons. Small scale laser weapons are now prevalent.</p>	Common

12	Humanity no longer engaged directly in man-to-man warfare, using robotic proxies on all fields (Land, Air, and Sea).	Common
13	Combustion based projectile weapons are now a thing of the past. High-energy weapons (plasma, neutron) are now the standard across all applications.	Common
14	Mobile battlestations with enough firepower to destroy a planet. Not that anyone would destroy a planet. Humanity is far too civilized for such things.	Common

Construction and Engineering

This Technological Category defines the process by which characters in this Genre construct and build their homes and civilized infrastructure.

Tech Level	Description	Accessibility
1	Stone hand axes are used to fell trees to cross bridges and other small gaps. Animal hides are used to create rudimentary tents, but the majority of humanity continues to live in natural structures such as caves.	Uncommon
2	Mud brick is used to build the first settlements large enough to be called cities. The post and lintel are used for supporting openings.	Uncommon
3	Cut stone becomes the basis for wealthy and religious construction in areas with easily accessed and exposed stone deposits. Fired brick and the brick arch are developed in areas where stone is not plentiful. The most advanced civilizations begin using concrete.	Uncommon
4	While many of the advances of the prior level were lost with the fall of Rome, cut stone, stained glass, and other techniques	Rare

	were preserved and found in cathedrals and castles. The less fortunate managed with log or wattle and daub dwellings.	
5	Water mills are now common, and windmills are being used where water mills are not practical. Many Roman techniques are rediscovered, including domes, clear glass, and plumbing. Skilled laborers band together, forming guilds to develop standards and fix pricing for specific work.	Rare
6	Large-scale production of iron begins the age of machines. Cast iron bridges are created, and metal bracing allows for the construction of buildings up to seven stories tall.	Rare
7	Electricity and carbon steel allow for the construction of massive projects, such as suspension bridges and hundred-story buildings. Power tools greatly decrease construction time.	Uncommon
8	Off-site fabrication and modular construction allow for creation of components by specialized workers which are assembled on site by construction crews. Plastics, fiberglass, and tempered glass replace normal glass.	Uncommon
9	Computer assisted drafting (CAD) and Building information management (BIM) allow for all aspects of construction to collaborate in real time with each other, creating stronger and more advanced buildings.	Uncommon
10	Basic terraforming allows humanity to substantially alter the geography of Earth, opening up larger areas of the planet to human population.	Uncommon

11	Construction of spaceships too massive to perform planet-side creates a need for enormous construction yards in near orbit, with space elevators delivering materials.	Uncommon
12	Terraforming techniques have advanced to the point where climate and atmosphere can be altered much the way geography is, paving the way for colonization of too-hostile planets.	Common
13	Space stations the size of cities are now commonplace in locations where no physical objects are present to house a colony or waystations are needed for interstellar travel.	Common
14	Terraforming technology reaches its pinnacle with the ability to construct an entire planet. Flora, fauna, geography, climate, and atmosphere design are part of the process. Intergalactic regulations stipulate that no created planet may be named "Bob".	Common