

BLACK VOID™



QUICKSTART

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What you are holding in your hand - or indeed reading on your screen - is an introduction and quick start to the tabletop role-playing game BLACK VOID.
If you are new to role-playing, it is a pastime and hobby that allows you to become the protagonist of a dramatic story that you and your fellow players create together; communal story-telling, if you will. In role-playing games one participant is the Arbiter, weaving the plot for the other players to interact with and in. You - as a player - get to choose who your character (gaming persona) is, what he or she looks like, what he or she says and does while you and your friends explore lost worlds, battle terrible adversaries and uncover the secrets of the Cosmos.



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DISCLAIMER
For potentially impressionable readers/players it should be noted that this game is not meant to reflect or indeed be applied to reality. The themes, events and ideas expressed in the BLACK VOID RPG are fictional and do not reflect any belief, political conviction, opinion or existential viewpoints of its author(s). It is merely a game, meant to entertain and excite... Nothing more, nothing less!

In the days when Babylon was the greatest city on Earth, mankind lived in placid ignorance of the grandeur, vastness and horror of the Cosmos... yet such tranquillity is not meant to persist!

The awakening of mankind was ruthless as the heavens of Earth were torn asunder with a deafening rumble like massive thunderous waves crashing against the shore. Mankind stared in horrified awe as small specks of black mist appeared rapidly across the heavens. Pulsating and roiling as if somehow alive the specks began to extend and grow and it appeared as if an impossibly black fog was swallowing the heavens, a surging tidal wave engulfing the skies.

Akin to staring into the unbearable blackness of a midnight ocean - not knowing what abhorrent horrors could be lurking in the depths, yet still drawn irresistibly and inescapably towards it - a most primal fear gripped mankind: The paralyzing terror of the unknown and the dread of complete powerlessness.

At the centre of each speck a whirling cyclone evolved and eerie gurgling noises could be heard as if the gashes in the heavens were swallowing the very air. Slowly but incontestably the skies of Earth darkened and violent winds gusted towards the expanding black fog. Smokey tendrils began emanating from the gashes, pulsing as if they were alive. Engrossed in terror of the abysmal spectacle mankind watched as massive formless shadows could be glimpsed moving like storm-tossed waves in the darkness beyond each gash.

Then the gashes began to implode, violently sucking in and engulfing everything in their vicinity! In inconceivable panic the helpless peoples of Earth could do nothing as they were swept away by the screeching and howling gales of a maelstrom pulling everything into its maw. With pleading voices mankind cried to their Gods for salvation, yet no deliverance was to be found as men, women and children were sucked into the blackness of the Void, leaving their dying Earth behind.

The obliviousness of mankind was shattered; their eyes irrevocably opened to the truth about existence, their minds enlightened. The comprehension and sudden exposure to the enormity of existence and the Void beyond drove many to madness. Countless perished as mankind was heaved far and wide like debris swept away by the deluge of a typhoon.

There are places in existence where the Veil between the Void and the Cosmos is fragile and thin, where the two converge and where the Void emanates openly into the Cosmos. Llyhn the eternal is one such place, and it was here that the first survivors of mankind began to emerge, like driftwood washed up on distant unfamiliar shores. As time passed the lone stragglers and ragged survivors were scattered among the stars, Earth seemed all but a distant memory and a new era of desperate struggle for survival dawned for mankind.

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WELCOME TO THE VOID

Welcome to the Black Void role-playing game, where you play a descendant of the survivors from Earth. Mankind has been thrust into an outlandish subsistence at the bottom of the hierarchy in the esoteric cosmopolis Llyhn the Eternal - under the apathetic reign of the Unseen Rulers. It is a place of wonder, intrigue and decadence, swarming with outlandish lifeforms, eccentric Daimons and fickle demigods. You and your fellow players are among the human survivors struggling for survival in filthy alleys and shanties among beggars, slaves and the casteless. It is up to you whether humanity will rise to greatness or be trampled underfoot: The fate of mankind rests in your hands.

Black Void is a dark and exotic fantasy setting, where characters explore mysterious new worlds; encountering outlandish and bizarre species and struggle to survive under a decadent tyranny while navigating the intrigues within their own enclaves.

This is not a game of "good versus evil". Rather, this game takes a less rigid approach and probes the grey areas where morals depend on point of view and conventional conjecture is non-existent or irrelevant.

THE ROLES OF HUMANITY

Characters typically serve a patron, a figure of importance within a human enclave,

performing missions to aid the fledgling influence and power of mankind (or perhaps the aspirations of the patron). They may travel the Void currents seeking fortune and glory across a wondrous and menacing Cosmos, or even try to find the lost cradle of mankind, Earth. Other characters may seek to expand their influence to take their rightful place as leaders among men or seek enlightenment beyond the Veil of reality, in a Void haunted by mindless ghostly abominations.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

In order to play this game, you need two or more participants, at least one twelve-sided die per participant (preferably more), pen, paper, an eraser, character sheets (printed from the appendix) and the basic rules found in this quickstart or the complete rules found in the Black Void core book.

THE GAME

"Simplicity grants diversity" is the primary maxim behind the rules of the Black Void RPG system. The entire character creation and system is based on a few basic principles, making the rules easy to grasp and implement, which in the end gives more time for the fun bit, namely playing the game.

D12 BASED RULES SYSTEM: In the game, everything involving chance is based on rolling twelve-sided dice and adding or subtracting various modifiers and penalties in accordance with circumstances and your character's strengths or weaknesses. High rolls are more likely to succeed while low rolls often mean failure and sometimes disaster.

EASY AND FLEXIBLE CHARACTER CREATION: The basic character creation rules allow you to "build" a character in six simple steps where points are spent to determine the features, strengths and weaknesses of the character. The six steps comprise of deciding Traits, Talents, Background, Attributes, Powers and Skills.

TACTICAL FAST-PACED COMBAT SYSTEM: Based on a strategic application of combat manoeuvres while thinking creatively; combat is designed to be simple yet dramatic, exciting and unpredictable, compelling combatants to adapt tactics and use manoeuvres to gain the upper hand.

NONLINEAR AND VERSATILE CHARACTER PROGRESSION: As characters progress in the game they advance and develop their abilities. Players can select skills and abilities freely from a vast variety of options without limitations from career or class choices.

ENLIGHTENMENT & PRESTIGE: As characters discover the true nature of existence they begin to tread the path of enlightenment; an ascension that brings understanding, power and potency as the secrets of reality and the Void are disclosed and harnessed.

Characters obtain influence and prestige - known as "Wastah" - as they grow their reputation and influence, amassing clout and authority, which in turn can be exploited to achieve further accomplishments.

CHARACTER CREATION

CHARACTER POINTS

In the Black Void RPG, you “build” your character by spending points to determine the abilities and features a character has. A total of 48 character points are allotted for making a new character, divided between 24 points for Traits and the remaining 24 points for abilities including Talents, Backgrounds, Attributes, Powers and Skills. The latter points may be divided among these five categories any way the player sees fit so long as it complies with the requirements and limitations shown below:

CHARACTER POINT ALLOCATION

TRAITS – 24 points

Select Trait scores by distributing the 24 allotted Trait points between the eight Traits

Each Trait ranking costs one (1) character point

No Trait may have a score of less than one (1) - at least one point must be spent in each Trait

No more than five (5) points can be allocated to any Trait

ABILITIES – 24 points

The 24 points must be distributed between the categories: Talents, Backgrounds, Attributes, Powers and Skills

Point costs for abilities differ and range from 1 to 6 - refer to the category for individual point costs

Talents may only be acquired for Traits where the character has a score of three (3) or higher

Acquiring a Talent cost 3 points

Only characters with the Halfblood background may acquire Attributes

Skills cost one (1) point to acquire and an additional point per ranking

A maximum of skill-ranking of three (3) can be purchased during character creation

Your character is human, a descendant of the survivors of Earth. Mankind is largely seen as inferior and one of the lesser species among the other sentient beings of the Cosmos. Although rarely gifted with extraordinary abilities, humans have proven to be adaptable and resilient.

The emergence of mankind has led to interbreeding with several different sentient species and Halfbloods with inhuman attributes and abilities have begun to emerge among the human population. Players have the option of making their character a Halfblood when choosing Background.

The first step is deciding the character’s TRAIT SCORES. Traits determine the key characteristics of a character defining the innate physical qualities as well as the mental and social characteristics. There are eight Traits: Agility, Awareness, Stamina, Strength, Intellect, Persuasion, Presence and Willpower.

TALENTS are special capacities linked to a character’s Trait scores. Players can choose Talents for Traits with high scores. Talents serve to give characters more individuality and influence mechanics and possibilities throughout the game.

This quickstart rules set includes selected and abridged parts of the Black Void RPG rules and options. The comprehensive system rules and options for character creation can be found in the Black Void Core Book, including all talents and flaws | backgrounds | complete blood ritual and mysticism | complete skill list | complete weapon and armour list with modification possibilities | full combat manoeuvre selection | full enlightenment, ascension and prestige rules | extended sanity and madness rules | full Arbiter section | extensive setting background and guides to the Eternal City, the Cosmos, the Void and much more. Visit www.blackvoidgames.com for further details.

BACKGROUND defines a character's personal history, allies, resources and ancestry. Select from several different background options to provide specific in-game advantages and resources for the character as well as enriching the character's backstory.

ATTRIBUTES - extraordinary physical characteristics such as wings or horns - are available to Halfblood characters.

POWERS are supranatural abilities characters may possess. This guide includes the basic version of Blood Rituals, which allow characters to practice the imbue of boons and fortune through ceremonial bloodletting rituals.

SKILLS are the learned abilities of characters. These compile all ordinary abilities acquired through training allowing characters to perform complex activities or tasks within a specified field such as swordsmanship, survival, commerce and so on.

TRAITS

Players must distribute the 24 allotted character points between the eight Traits to fit the type of character they want to play. Trait scores are indicators of strengths and weaknesses of the character and the distribution affects the characters capabilities for the entire game as Traits and their modifiers are the basis for all action rolls.

A Trait score of one (1) indicates that the character is feeble within this area, while a score of five (5) indicates tremendous capability.

AGILITY: The character's Agility score determines her general coordination, balance and motor skills. The character's Agility score affects actions such as sleight-of-hand, hitting a target and so on.

AWARENESS: This Trait represents the sensory systems of the character - touch, taste, sight, hearing and smell - as well as an intuitive understanding of the Cosmos and Void.

STAMINA: A character's Stamina score determines his or her state of health and endurance, and resilience to disease, poison and toxins.

STRENGTH: This Trait illustrates the raw muscle power of a character. Strength is used for lifting, pushing and breaking things.

INTELLECT: The character's Intellect ranking indicates her aptitude for logic and reason, her understanding of



the world she lives in, her learnt abilities and memory.

PERSUASION: This Trait establishes a character's ability to convince or coerce others by argument, emotive cajoling, deception or cunning influence.

PRESENCE: The character's Presence score indicates his authority, appearance and charm; the aptitude for inspiring admiration, awe and occasionally fear.

WILLPOWER: The character's Willpower score indicates her mental fortitude and resolve, as well as resistance to influence from those who may attempt to manipulate her.

| TRAIT SCORE | DICE ROLL MODIFIER | MEANING | EXAMPLE |
|-------------|--------------------|------------|------------------------------------|
| 0 | -3 | Pathetic | The Strength of a rat |
| 1 | -2 | Feeble | The Intellect of a child |
| 2 | -1 | Poor | Willpower of a labour slave |
| 3 | 0 | Average | Ordinary score of humans |
| 4 | +1 | Excellent | Presence of a palace courtesan |
| 5 | +2 | Formidable | The Persuasion of a chatter broker |



TALENTS

Talents accentuate the strengths of a character and add flavour. They serve as more than just a bonus - they help you bring life to the character. Any Trait with a score of at least three (3) may be allotted a Talent.

AMBIDEXTERITY means that the character is equally adept in the use of both right and left hand. An ambidextrous character can use either hand without penalty to her action rolls. Furthermore, if the character is using both hands simultaneously the normal -3/-6 penalty is reduced to 0/-3.

BRAWNY: The character is rippling with muscles, making her look imposing and formidable. Add +1 to all intimidation attempts as well as dealing +1 damage with all brawling attacks.

CHARMER: The character is born with a silver tongue and can make even the foulest insults sound like poetry. Always ready with a witty and humorous remark in any social situation, the character gains an automatic +1 to actions involving seduction, socializing, enquiry and performance.

COLLECTED: The character has a way of keeping her wits, rarely being fazed or overly affected by distractions. Any penalties to action rolls due to external influences or injuries are reduced by one (1).

COMPOSURE: The character is naturally composed, remaining calm and in control even under tense circumstances. She does not usually panic and can keep a level head under the most strenuous circumstances, gaining +1 to all fear, awe, delirium and intimidation rolls.

DIRECTION SENSE: Your character intuitively knows the corners of the world, has an instinct for finding her way around any place, and rarely

gets lost even in unfamiliar locations. The character gets a +1 bonus to all action rolls involving determining her location, finding her way when lost, reading maps and the like.

FAST REFLEXES: The character reacts rapidly and has almost instant movement in response to stimulus. Having fast reflexes grants +1 to all surprise, initiative and dodge rolls.

FOCUSED: The character is particularly talented at focusing mental energy at a single task. You may add a +1 modifier when engaged in prolonged actions, such as research or crafting. Furthermore, you may reduce penalties caused by external distractions by a factor of one (1) from action rolls.

HIGH PAIN THRESHOLD: The character has an extremely high tolerance for pain. The character gains +1 to resist the effects of pain such as torture and anguish. If your character is Hurt (see Health Conditions the Combat Rules section) you suffer no penalty to actions and if your character is Injured you only suffer a -1 penalty.

INSPIRING: The character has remarkable charisma and can easily appeal to and excite others. Your character is the natural centre in a crowd and need use very little effort to get people's attention. People will naturally be drawn to the character and listen intently when spoken to. Add +1 to all reaction rolls and attempts to influence, impress or sway others.

MIMIC: The character is able to imitate the particular mannerisms and behaviour of individuals. With observation, research and familiarization, the character can emulate the behaviour, voice and conduct of studied individuals. Disguises and other aids may be required to complete the ruse, but people unfamiliar with the subject are automatically convinced, while a +3 modifier is applied to convince acquainted addressees that the mimic is indeed who she tries to imitate.

SPECIOUS: The character has a natural ability to appeal to people without real merit or argument, spinning pleasing or plausible arguments fitting what the listener wants to hear. You may add +1 modifier to any attempt to persuade others, such as when negotiating. When using skills, which are normally based on Presence you may use your Persuasion modifier instead.

TOUGH: The character is extraordinarily robust and able to withstand tremendous amounts of injury and harm. When calculating Health, you may do so as if the character has one higher stamina score than is the case.

QUICK THINKER: The character is exceptionally quick-witted, making swift sensible decisions in difficult or dangerous situations. Add +1 when dealing with diplomacy, negotiation, bargaining or similar encounters. The character's ability to quickly assess a situation and react accordingly also grants a +1 modifier to all surprise rolls.

VIGILANT: A constant state of vigilance governs this character. Noticing a disguised stalker in a vast crowd or stirring from sleep as prowlers are closing in are not unlikely feats for the vigilant character, who is always allowed an awareness roll if someone is approaching or hidden in the vicinity. Apply a +1 modifier to all surprise rolls and spotting rolls.

VIGOROUS: The character is particularly forceful and has a knack for carrying, pulling and heaving heavy objects beyond what would normally be possible. When exposed to prolonged physical exertion and lifting or hauling objects the character counts as having one higher strength score than she actually does.



| AGILITY | AWARENESS | STAMINA | STRENGTH | INTELLECT | PERSUASION | PRESENCE | WILLPOWER |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|---------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Ambidexterity | Direction Sense | High Pain Threshold | Brawny | Focused | Mimic | Inspiring | Collected |
| Fast Reflexes | Vigilant | Tough | Vigorous | Quick Thinker | Specious | Charmer | Composure |

BACKGROUND

People are influenced and shaped by their past and history. To illustrate this, players can acquire backgrounds for their characters. Each background grants an in-game benefit as well as giving you the opportunity to create a good backstory for your character. Backgrounds have varying character point costs and some have different tiers for greater benefits at a higher cost.

| BACKGROUND | POINT COST |
|------------|------------|
| Caste | 0 1 3 |
| Contacts | 2 4 |
| Halfblood | 1 |
| Local | 2 |
| Residence | 3 6 |
| Resources | 3 6 |

Below you can find the explanation of each background and the assets or benefits it grants your character. It is up to you to determine the specific circumstances regarding your attainment of the particular background and to incorporate it into the character story.

CASTE: The social hierarchy of the Eternal City is segmented into groups determined by species and birth. There are seven stratifications divided between casteless, low-castes, commoners and high castes. Characters always begin as casteless but can achieve ranks within the low-caste segment by spending character points. Different castes interact following strict social conventions and codes of conduct. As players spend points to acquire a higher caste the amount of money, resources and social standing available to the character increases.

KALBI (0): Kalbi are casteless - having no place or status in the social hierarchy. They do the work that no one else wants and are considered filthy, worthless and barred from certain districts and areas of the city.

BALTU (1): Largely associated with unskilled labourers and slaves of negligible importance - this caste enjoys few privileges and are at the very bottom of society.

SHAHRAH (3): Skilled labourers, craftsmen, farmers, peasants and fishermen make up this caste. Although a low caste they do enjoy privileges such as being able to move freely around the city.

CONTACTS: The character has a well-established network of contacts. These can be from any world, species and walk of life, and supply the character with a variety of information. Each contact has a specific area of knowledge and field of expertise within which he can gain access to information or further connections.

Which contacts are available to a character is resolved by agreement between the player and the Arbiter based on the character's history.

2 points - The character has a few contacts with a limited amount of information.

4 points - The character has several contacts with a good amount of information available within differing fields.

HALFBLOOD: Halfbloods are children of a human parent and another mortal species. Although the traits of their human ancestry are typically predominant, the characteristics of their other blood tend to be clearly evident somehow. Halfbloods may acquire Attributes during character creation.

LOCAL: The character is indigenous to a given geographical area or culture, knowing the regional setting, landscape, culture and history in great detail. The chosen area can be any clearly defined location or culture, such as a specific district or distinct tribe. An indigenous character has profound insight into the culture, is very familiar with the area and is acquainted with a significant amount of people. Characters gain +1 to all direction, lore, reputation and response rolls when in or with regards to the chosen region or culture.

RESIDENCE: The character owns a property or dwelling of some sort. The residence is a place where the character feels secure, avoids prying eyes and keeps her valuables and possessions safe. The location, layout, size and security or secrecy of the residence must be determined in agreement with the GM before the game commences. Residences can take many shapes and forms, ranging from opulent villas to grubby hovels or even dark, damp, underground rooms located in the sewers.

3 points: The dwelling is a small chamber or other space with room for only a few occupants and limited possessions.

6 points: The residence consists of one large room or two smaller rooms allowing for several occupants and substantial belongings.

RESOURCES: The character has an additional source of income or resources available regardless of which caste she belongs to. The nature or origin of this resource can stem from a variety of sources such as dealings in contraband, commerce, inheritance or whichever interesting scheme the player and GM can come up with.

3 points: Well-off (additional starting funds D12x10 copper Dhin and assets worth 500 copper Dhin)

6 points: Prosperous (additional starting funds D12x25 copper Dhin and assets worth 1000 copper Dhin)



ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are physical qualities and characteristics found in non-human species. Due to their mixed parentage Halfbloods have the possibility of acquiring physical or sensory attributes that no ordinary human have. Attributes vary in character points cost as shown in the table.

| ATTRIBUTES | POINT COST |
|-------------------|------------|
| Adaptive pigment | 1 |
| Alternative Sense | 1 |
| Claws | 1 2 2 |
| Horns | 1 2 |
| Large | 2 |
| Wings | 1 2 3 |

ADAPTIVE PIGMENT: Your character's skin changes hue in accordance with their surroundings. The character has an established skin colour and changes are usually subtle and corresponding to changes in light and shadows. This attribute confers an automatic +1 bonus to any attempt to hide. Note that any clothing worn does not change its colour.

ALTERNATIVE SENSE: Your character has an additional sense, which she can use for perception of her surroundings. This sense can be anything the Arbiter considers reasonable, such as echolocation, the ability to hear ultra-sonic sounds and so on. This Attribute does not cancel the normal senses available to a character (sight, hearing, etc.). Echolocation as an alternative sense would grant the character the ability to detect objects and possibly shapes in complete darkness, while a vomeronasal organ would allow the character to "taste" odours.

CLAWS, SMALL (1): Where ordinary people have fingernails, the character has small claws that can be used both as tools and for inflicting damage. The claws add +1 to attempts to climb and holding on, but cause -1 to actions involving fine manipulation. The claws cause D4 points of damage when used as weapons.

CLAWS, RETRACTABLE (2): Small claws can be made retractable at the cost of one additional character point. Retractable claws eliminate the claws' regular penalty to manipulation.

CLAWS, MEDIUM (2): The character's fingers extend into sizeable claws that can be used both as tools and for inflicting damage. The claws add +1 to attempts to climb, grapple and similar actions. The claws cause D6 points of damage when used as weapons, but prompt -2 to all actions involving digital coordination.

HORNS: SMALL (1): Small horns or antlers protrude from the characters skull and in addition to looking impressive they provide the capability of butting or ramming opponents. Horns can be used for charge manoeuvres and a successful hit with horns causes D4 points of damage.

HORNS, LARGE (2): The character has massive horns; the skull is likely partially covered with bone-plates. Large horns cause D6 + 1 points of damage and function like a helmet; granting +1 to rolls resisting stun and reducing damage from blows to the head by one (1).

LARGE: The character is significantly larger than a normal member of that species. Add +1 to strength score and roll an extra D12 when determining health score. Large characters however are limited when buying equipment, with increases in price or lack of availability a likely consequence. Large characters are more liable to be affected by cramped conditions restricting their movement. Large characters gain bonuses for size to grappling, knockdown, intimidation and so on.

WINGS: The character has wings protruding from their back or membranes appended to their limbs. Depending on their size, wings allow the character to fly, soar or glide, but may restrict freedom of movement within confined spaces. Possessing wings necessitates that clothes and armour are fabricated to accommodate them.

WINGS, SMALL (1 point): The character has small wings or membranes that allow gliding and controlled descend from an elevated position. In Earth-like gravity characters can glide a maximum distance of three metres per metre they descend. On worlds with lower gravity or with favourable conditions this may be increased.

WINGS, MEDIUM (2 points): The character has medium-sized wings and can sustain flight for a limited time. Characters are able to remain airborne for 10 minutes per Stamina score, while flight beyond this period requires a successful Stamina roll [6] every ten minutes. Characters with medium wings can glide at a ratio of six (6) to one (1).

WINGS, LARGE (3 points): Large wings allow for sustained flight, soaring and gliding. Characters with large wings can fly for a number of hours equalling their Stamina score without fatigue. Flight beyond this requires a successful Stamina roll [6] per hour. Stationary soaring can be maintained for up to three hours per Stamina score and gliding can be done at a ratio of twelve (12) to one (1).



POWERS

Many Beings in the Cosmos and Void have extraordinary Powers, such as manifesting phenomena defying ordinary reality, releasing the hidden powers of blood through rituals or Daimonic powers inherent in entities beyond mortal kin.

Only Blood ritual powers are presented in the Quick Start material. Blood rituals deal with divination and the extraction and imbue of boons through ritualistic sacrifice and consecration of blood. The blood of the sacrificial creature is used to imbue boons and fortune - granting temporary benefits - to those for whom the ritual is performed. Albeit slight, there are inherent risks about the practice as rituals may botch and potentially cause injury rather than boons to recipients.

| POWER | POINT COST |
|------------------------|------------|
| Bloodletting | 3 |
| Sacrificial divination | 3 |
| Blood Rite | 1 |

The rankings in blood rituals cost three (3) character points and grants access to a specific set of capabilities.

The initial ranking of bloodletting gives the character a limited capability for extracting power during a bloodletting ritual and imbuing him- or herself with it.

As he or she progress the power can be and the character can drawing on greater and from the blood.

conferred to others
more specific attributes

The first ranking in sacrificial divination grants fundamental knowledge of a few basic rituals to superficially read the signs in sacrificial the character gains further rankings, he or she can obtain increasingly detailed information as well as more precise answers to a wider range of inquiries.

the practitioner
and the ability
divination. As

Blood Rite rankings provide the practitioner with a +1 modifier when trying to carry out a Blood Ritual of any type.

| BLOODLETTING | EFFECT |
|--------------|--|
| Ranking 1 | The practitioner may perform one bloodletting ritual per day imbuing a boon on him- or herself. |
| Ranking 2 | The character can perform one ritual per day infusing a boon on him- or herself. The character adds +1 to the potency roll. |
| Ranking 3 | The ritualist may perform up to two ceremonies per day and can confer extracted boons to self or another. The character may add +1 to the potency dice and choose the boon freely from the cluster of results. |

| DIVINATION | EFFECT |
|------------|--|
| Ranking 1 | The character may perform one divination per day. The player can make a simple inquiry to know whether an outcome to a course of action or a prospect is possible or not. |
| Ranking 2 | The practitioner can perform one sacrificial divination per day. The player may make a simple query to know whether an outcome to a course of action is likely or unlikely. |
| Ranking 3 | The character may perform two divination rituals per day and is able to pose a compound question with several possible outcomes, learning the probable likelihood of each if possible. |



THE BLOOD RITUAL

A sacrificial creature must be acquired and prepared with sacred icons or marks drawn upon it while incantations of consecration are spoken for the ritual. The player makes an action roll, adding modifiers for preparation, Blood Rite ranking and any other relevant factors to the roll. The difficulty of the roll is determined by the Blood Potency of the sacrificial creature. Blood Potency is calculated by totalling all the Trait scores and innate abilities of the sacrificial creature, such as Talents, Attributes and so on. A roll equalling or exceeding the difficulty denotes a success and the designated recipient receives a boon or fortune: A temporary enhancement or bonus ability for the character.



BLOOD LETTING

| BLOOD POTENCY | DIFFICULTY | BOON IMBUEMENT MODIFIER | BACKLASH MODIFIER |
|---------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| < 9 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 10-18 | 9 | +1 | +1 |
| 19-27 | 11 | +2 | +2 |
| 28+ | 13 | +3 | +3 |

Once a ritual is performed successfully the practitioner makes a roll on the boon and fortune imbuments table, adding relevant modifiers to the roll. He or she may imbue any one of the results up to and including the rolled number onto the recipient. If the Blood ritualist succeeds and rolls a 7 on the Boons Table she can choose any result from the range 1-7. The chosen effect occurs immediately and lasts for the noted amount of time. An exceptional success allows the practitioner to add a +1 modifier to her imbue ment roll on the Boons and Fortunes table as well as doubling the effect period.

BOTCHED RITUALS

On a critically failed roll the practitioner has botched the rite - causing a sudden violent and uncontrollable conveyance of raw power. The recipient is unable to retain the released power and must make a successful Stamina roll - the difficulty is the same as the Blood Ritual difficulty - or suffer a backlash. If failed, make another roll and refer to the Bloodletting backlash table for the outcome; effects ranging from mildly bothersome to severely injurious.

BOON AND FORTUNE IMBUEMENTS

ROLL BOON OR FORTUNE

- 1 The character has Composure* for the next 12 hours
- 2 The character has Alertness* for the next 12 hours
- 3 The character is Collected* for 12 hours
- 4 The character is Focused* for the next 12 hours
- 5 Once within the next 12 hours increase one physical Trait by 1 for one hour (player's choice)
- 6 Once within the next 12 hours increase any one Trait by 1 for one hour (player's choice)
- 7 Good fortune: Ignore one Critical Failure within 12 hours (player's choice)
- 8 Any one roll of 11-12 counts as an exceptional success within the next 12 hours (player's choice)
- 9 Excellent Luck: Gain +1 to one action roll within the next 12 hours (player's choice, must be declared before the roll)
- 10 Re-roll one action dice roll within 12 hours (player's choice, the second roll is binding)
- 11 One action within 12 hours will automatically succeed, no action roll required (player's choice)
- 12+ All rolls of 11-12 count as an exceptional success within the next 12 hours

SKILLS

Skills are learnt abilities used when characters attempt to perform actions in the game. Characters are assumed to know fundamental skills such as how to light a fire, tie a basic knot, simple cooking and so on, so these do not cost any points to obtain nor should they be listed on the character sheet. Obtaining a skill costs one (1) character point and a further point for each ranking during character creation. Each ranking grants a +1 modifier to skill rolls, increasing the chance of success.

identifying potential buyers and trade routes. Bartering is used when negotiating prices and trading deals. Successful bartering confers a 5% increase or decrease in price per score value you overcame the opposing trader, up to maximum 5% per Commerce skill ranking of the character.

COMMON LORE: Common Lore is basic knowledge about a chosen subject, a culture, species or world – and this skill gives insight into matters such as habits, traditions, religious practices and other noteworthy

INTIMIDATION: Intimidation is employed when a character wants to coerce, discourage, impede or simply frighten people. The purpose of intimidation is to compel someone to do what you want by using direct or subtle threats.

LARCENY: Theft and robbery is commonplace and most residents in slums and other poor neighbourhoods are at least familiar with the larceny skill. Larceny encompasses most skills employed by thieving and pilfering gits: The art of lock-picking, setting and disarming traps, hiding stolen

| RANKING | COST | MOD | DESIGNATION | DESCRIPTION |
|---------|------|-----|-------------|--|
| - | - | -3 | Untrained | The character is completely unfamiliar with the skill |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | Dabbler | The character is vaguely familiar with the fundamentals |
| 1 | 2 | +1 | Initiate | Can accomplish a few basic feats without instruction |
| 2 | 3 | +2 | Novice | The character knows rudimentary techniques and theory |
| 3 | 4 | +3 | Apprentice | The character has mastered basic techniques and principles |

While some skills require a specific subject to be chosen when acquiring it, most skill definitions are quite broad and encompass an entire field, topic or practice. While skills are associated with differing Traits depending on their application, combat skills are always associated with the Agility Trait.

ACROBATICS: Acrobatics is the art of various movement techniques involving feats of balance and agility. This skill can be used when doing somersaults, back handsprings, scaling steep surfaces as well as balancing acts, acrobatic leaps and jumps.

ATHLETICS: The athletics skill covers a wide range of physical capabilities such as running, jumping, swimming, climbing and throwing. This skill is applicable for extensive or extraordinary physical exertion. Which trait is applicable for athletic actions depends entirely on the feat being attempted: An extensive sprint may use Stamina, where leaping between rooftops would apply the Strength trait.

COMMERCE: Commerce is the ability to appraise, buy and sell goods, bartering prices as well as

information related to the chosen subject. Common lore is usually acquired through interaction with the given subject, not through scholarly studies.

ENQUIRY: This skill revolves around investigating by questioning, research, finding key people with relevant information and reviewing the found information. Knowing whom to ask and the right questions to ask is vital - the enquiry skill allows prompt, thorough and systematic investigations.

HERBALISM: Herbalism is the knowledge of herbs, fungi and other plants with nutritional, aphrodisiac, hallucinogenic, remedial or detrimental properties. Herbalism allows a character to identify and distinguish between numerous plants and furthermore to curate and prepare these to create various balms, teas, ointments, poisons and the like.

goods, picking pockets, swindling and so on.

NAVIGATION: The navigation skill is employed when trying to charter a course, traversing unknown territory, reading maps, calculating routes and for cartography.

OBSERVATION: The character is trained in the art of scrutiny and examination. The observation skill can be used for a variety of purposes such as searching an area to find concealed objects or traps, following tracks, noticing out-of-place behaviour and largely for detecting anything out of the ordinary.

SOCIALIZE: Social competence can be as imperative to character survival as the ability to swing a scimitar. The socialize skill confers the ability to effortlessly mingle and partake in social situations while steering conversations, subtly influencing the mood or otherwise pushing an agenda. The socialize skill provides the habits necessary for acting and participating within society by applying moral norms, attitudes, values, motives and social roles.

STEALTH: The ability to move undetected, hiding and otherwise avoiding unwanted attention. Stealth is used when a character attempts to blend





into a crowd, shadow someone, hide from prying eyes or cover her tracks from a pursuer. Stealth actions are usually contested with the opposing individual using his Awareness as basis for his skill-roll.

STREETWISE: Streetwise entails the knowledge and shrewd resourcefulness needed to survive in the rough streets of an urban environment. The streetwise skill can be used to identify likely cooperative individuals and whom to avoid, which areas of a city to steer clear of and where opportunity may be found. Streetwise gives insight and ability to handle gangs, thugs and street-rats as well as the jargon and behaviour necessary to avoid a slit throat.

SUBTERFUGE: Subterfuge is used when your character intentionally attempts to deceive someone or misrepresent the true nature of an activity or object. This skill is used if a character wants to mislead people, create forgeries or disguise her own appearance.

SURVIVAL: This skill covers the various aptitudes needed to survive in the wild. This includes being able to create shelter, foraging, hunting and so on. Additionally, survival allows a character to find passable trails and navigate when travelling in wilderness.



| SKILL | ASSOCIATED TRAIT(s) |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Acrobatics | AG / STA / STR |
| Athletics | AG / STA / STR |
| Commerce | PERS / INT / PRE |
| Common Lore | INT |
| Enquiry | INT / AWA / PRE / PERS |
| Herbalism | INT / AWA |
| Intimidation | PRE / STR / PERS / INT |
| Larceny | AG / INT / PERS |
| Navigation | INT / AWA |
| Observation | AWA |
| Socialize | PRE / PERS |
| Stealth | AG |
| Streetwise | INT |
| Subterfuge | PERS / INT |
| Survival | AWA / INT |

COMBAT SKILLS

AXES: This skill grants your character the ability to fight with all manners of axes and other bladed weapons mounted on short to medium length shafts such as crowbills.

BLADE WEAPONS: Swords range from single-edged sabres and short swords used in one hand to massive great scimitars requiring both hands to be wielded. The blades skill enables characters to competently use any type of sword.

BOWS: The bow skill covers the capability to efficiently nock, aim and fire arrows from any type of bow.

DODGE: This skill gives characters the ability to dodge incoming close combat attacks or impacts. Dodge can also be used in non-combat situations if a character is trying to avoid collisions.

POLEARMS: This skill covers long-shafted weapons of different varieties such as glaives, halberds and spears.

SMALL BLADE WEAPONS: Using a small blade as a weapon rather than a utility tool requires skilfulness and schooling. This skill allows characters to proficiently use any knife, dagger or other small bladed weapon in close combat.

UNARMED: The art of unarmed close combat uses the body itself as a weapon. Characters trained in unarmed combat increase their damage to D4 rather than the regular D3.

COMBAT SKILL ASSOCIATED TRAIT

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Axes | AG |
| Blade weapons | AG |
| Bows | AG |
| Dodge | AG |
| Polearms | AG |
| Small blade weapons | AG |
| Unarmed | AG |



ENLIGHTENMENT

In the war for survival understanding is often more powerful than a strong arm. The illuminated mind sees the greater mysteries of the Cosmos revealed, while the ignorant merely see earth, air and water. Enlightenment is not knowledge as such, but an intuitive understanding of matter and form, chaos and Cosmos, reality and unreality. As characters explore and gain understanding of Existence they become enlightened and obtain abilities no ordinary human has.

Most characters begin play with an Enlightenment score of zero, signifying that they have no real understanding of what is beyond the apparent Cosmos.

Enlightenment cannot be purchased during character creation and advancement is separate from ordinary character progression, occurring only as the character discovers the secrets of existence and as determined by the Arbiter. Each ranking grant extraordinary abilities and powers when achieved.

WASTAH

In the Eternal City, everything is about whom you know. Being well-connected goes beyond caste and social status, and personal prowess is often insignificant compared to the power of influence. In game terms, this influence is called Wastah. Wastah - or clout if you prefer - is a factor significantly impacting the possibilities of characters as it confers sway, authority and dominance that can be used to impact social situations, push agendas and influence people.

Similarly to enlightenment, Wastah cannot be purchased and most characters begin play without it. Wastah achievement is likewise story-driven and separate from ordinary character progression. Wastah ranks are obtained through interaction with others and tied to specific individuals or factions with whom a character has gained influence. A Wastah score of zero indicates that the character has no social clout whatsoever, whereas a higher score means the character is influential with certain people or factions in accordance with the character's relations and past.

APPLYING Wastah

Each ranking in Wastah carries an intrinsic bonus to the character, such as getting a +1 response modifier when dealing with a certain species or faction and so on. However,

players can also choose to utilise their influence to directly affect a situation to the character's advantage during game-sessions. This means that the character calls in a lot of favours to achieve a goal, at the cost of depleting some of the influence he or she has. The player must declare that she uses her Wastah in this way and then remove a Wastah point - and associated bonus - from her character sheet. This use of Wastah can achieve one of the below effects, disregarding caste and status:

- Force one or several people of lower Wastah to comply with a request or command
- Persuade one or several people of higher Wastah to bestow preferential treatment
- Gain access to restricted or privileged facilities, information or people
- Obtain backing, funding or assistance to further an agenda or achievement

SANITY

The Cosmos, and particularly the Void, is not a place for the fainthearted, and the sanity of characters is constantly under threat. A character's Sanity score determines how much fear and anxiety she can withstand before risking mental deterioration and eventual madness. To establish a character's Sanity a player multiplies his or her Willpower score by six (6) and adds D12. While characters have a fixed base Sanity score, the actual number fluctuates during sessions as characters are subjugated to horrific occurrences and lose points as a consequence. As a character's Sanity points diminish the risk of mental volatility and insanity increases.

MOVEMENT

Movement indicates how fast a person is able to walk, run or sprint in the game. This factor is used when calculating the distances characters can travel in a given amount of time and how fast they can move during combat. Normal movement is calculated as kilometres per hour while combat movement is measured in metres per combat round (3 seconds).

| MOVEMENT | POINT COST |
|------------------|---------------|
| Walking (km/h) | 5 + STR mod |
| Running (km/h) | as walking x2 |
| Sprinting (km/h) | as walking x4 |
| Combat (m/3 sec) | as walking |

NAMES

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|-------|--------|---------|---------|
| Abadan | Aimai | Ahra | Amara | Agarah | Achala |
| Cheherazad | Gulandam | Dara | Chavy | Channa | Chamali |
| Dehmeher | Hirabai | Heng | Chenda | Daham | Dayani |
| Ishvat | Meher | Narin | Mealea | Mahesh | Jayana |
| Raham | Tanaz | Sann | Sathea | Ranasha | Namal |

HEALTH

The character's Health score designates her physical condition and how much damage and injury she can take. To establish the amount of health the player must multiply the character's Stamina score by six (6) and add D12.

While a character has a fixed base score of Health, the actual score varies throughout the game because of injuries. As characters lose Health points they suffer detrimental effects until they have recovered. A character reaching zero Health points is rendered incapacitated and will eventually die unless cared for.

CASTE & WEALTH

All characters begin with a few basic necessities and possessions such as clothing, a utilitarian small blade as well as a sum of money based on their caste. These funds can be used to buy additional equipment or saved for use later in the game. Refer to the Equipment section for further details on purchasing equipment.

| CASTE | WEALTH | EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY |
|-----------|----------------------|---|
| Kalbi | 10 + D12 copper Dhin | Ragged clothing or a waistcloth, a rusty dagger (poor quality), threadbare sandals and a few personal items. |
| Baltu | 20 + D12 copper Dhin | Worn clothing and sandals or slippers, a dagger and a poor-quality weapon of choice, a bag and a few basic supplies. |
| Shahravah | 40 + D12 copper Dhin | Regular clothes and a cloak, turban or other headgear, slippers or boots, a dagger, some supplies of choice and a basic quality weapon. |



You have now completed the fundamentals of your character and as the finishing touch you must name and equip your creation. Human names tend to reflect the character's ancestral civilisations and cultures of Earth. The list below contains some of the more common names used by humans in the Eternal City.

EQUIPMENT

Characters start the game with basic clothing and equipment befitting their caste and may purchase further items using the starting funds available to them.

QUALITY: The quality of equipment influences how well it works - having a direct impact on action rolls - as well as its cost. The quickstart rules cover three equipment quality categories.

| QUALITY | MODIFIER | COST ADJUSTMENT |
|----------|--------------|-----------------|
| Poor | -1 penalty | x 0,5 |
| Basic | No modifiers | No adjustment |
| Superior | +1 modifier | x 5 |

The included equipment lists are not comprehensive but give an idea of the prices and commodities available in Llyhn. All equipment, items and services listed are of basic quality.



ASSORTED EQUIPMENT



| ITEM | DESCRIPTION | AVAILABILITY | COST |
|----------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Bag | Made from hemp, leather or fabric this is a simple container for goods and items. | Common | 3 Dhin |
| Bandages | Scraps of cloth used for binding wounds | Common | 1 Dhin |
| Bone needle (thread) | Needle for everyday as well as surgical needs | Common | 2 Dhin |
| Bread | A loaf of flatbread is the basic daily meal | Common | 1 Dhin |
| Cape/Cloak | A long piece of cloth draped from the shoulders as protection from weather. | Common | 3 Dhin |
| Clay tablet | A tablet made from wet clay in which to imprint letters and numbers using a stylus (reed pen). | Common | 1 Dhin |
| Clothes, fine | Rich clothes including gloves, shawls and other accessories associated with the lifestyle and fashion of the wealthy. | Uncommon | 50 Dhin |
| Clothes, regular | Ordinary clothing of basic quality. | Common | 5 Dhin |
| Cylinder seal | A cylindrical signatory device used as a roller stamp. | Common | 10 Dhin |
| Herbal tea | Tea is for anything from medicinal purposes to social and religious ceremonies. | Common | 2 Dhin |
| Oil lamp, clay | Clay lamp with oil for lighting | Common | 3 Dhin |
| Oil lamp, copper | Copper lamp with oil for lighting | Common | 30 Dhin |
| Poppy juice | Intoxicating liquid used to numb and sedate | Uncommon | 20 Dhin |
| Rope, hemp | A twined piece of rope up to 20 metres long. | Common | 3 Dhin |
| Stylus (reed pen) | A writing utensil typically made from reed. | Common | 5 for 1 Dhin |
| Water/Wineskin | A soft bag made from skin to hold liquids | Common | 3 Dhin |

BAG: The most ordinary form of container. Bags take many shapes; most are simple pouches with attached straps for easy carrying made from cloth, hemp or leather.

BANDAGES: Scraps of cloth or a similar material cut into strips fitting to bind wounds and keep broken limbs in place.

BONE NEEDLE: Needles made from carved bones are as effective for sewing cloth and leather for a clothier as for skin and flesh on the physician's table.

BREAD: Bread is a base necessity for survival and the price is therefore used as an everyday gauge for wages.

CAPE/CLOAK: Capes are commonly worn over clothing to give added protection against the elements, whether this is scorching sun or heavy rainfall.

CLAY TABLET: The most common type of writing implement. Clay tablets can be dried in the sun, which leaves them fragile yet reusable as they can be soaked in water and the writing erased, or they can be fired in a kiln making them set but durable.

CLOTHES, FINE: The aristocracy and high castes of the Eternal City follow

the whims of fashion, always seeking to outshine each other with new cuts and colours. This helps keeping the clothiers busy and charging extravagant costs; the more flamboyant and impractical the better.

CLOTHES, REGULAR: Utilitarian work-clothes in a durable but simple and preferably inexpensive material fitted to the species and culture. Regular clothes usually consist of a tunic or similar top and a skirt or breeches

CYLINDER SEAL: A small round cylinder engraved with writing or images used for pressing into wet clay leaving an impression. Primarily a signature device, cylinder seals are also used for notarization, as jewellery or hallowed charms to be worn. Cylinder seals are commonly carved from stone or another durable material for longevity.

HERBAL TEA: An aromatic drink prepared from herbs or cured leaves boiled in water. Some brews are purely for pleasure while others have medicinal properties or hallucinogenic effects.

OIL LAMP: Mainly made from clay, copper or bronze, oil lamps are able to

produce light for extended periods of time using oil to fuel a burning wick. Usually fitted with a handle to allow easy transport, oil lamps are by far the most common light source in the Eternal City.

POPPY JUICE: Poppy juice is dried latex from the poppy plant used as an intoxicant or stupeficient and sedative by physicians. A mild concoction of poppy juice negates penalties from pain or injury for D3 hours. A medium concoction also causes intoxication and impaired judgement while a strong concoction causes the drinker to become unconscious.

ROPE, HEMP: Made from spun hemp fibre rope is used in all aspects of daily life and can carry heavy loads.

STYLUS: Styluses are writing utensil typically made from reed, bone or wood. The stylus is used by pressing the wedge-shaped point into soft clay, forming letters.

WINESKIN: A bag that is made from the skin of an animal and used for holding wine, water or other liquids.

BEASTS OF BURDEN & RIDING ANIMALS

| ANIMAL | SIZE | HEALTH | MOVEMENT | CARRYING CAPACITY | RARITY | COST |
|-----------------|--------|--------|----------|-------------------|----------|------|
| Akopi | Large | 20 | 12 | 120 kg | Uncommon | 180 |
| Beetle, draught | Large | 34 | 5 | 500 kg | Common | 300 |
| Tipar | Medium | 24 | 8 | 180 kg | Common | 150 |



AKOPI: The blue-tongued akopi are a species of quadruped herbivore standing about as tall as a human at the shoulders. The distinctive reddish-brown fur, soft back quills as well as striped hindquarters and legs make them easily recognisable while serving as camouflage in their natural forest habitat. Akopi are caught in the dense jungle and foothills surrounding Llyhn and over time can be domesticated to serve as mounts. Akopi are easily trained, making them prized mounts

BETLES, DRAUGHT: Large and giant beetles have been domesticated and used as draft animals in Llyhn and on many different worlds. Their compliant demeanour combined with considerable strength and stamina make them ideal draft animals. All giant beetles share a basic anatomy of having six legs and a hard exoskeleton, but vary immensely in size, colouration and head structures. As male beetles tend to be territorial they are rarely used as draft animals, but frequently used in staged fights for entertainment or wagering.

RED-BACKED TIPAR: This stubby species of herbivore is easily recognisable by its short trunk, sensory appendages and coat of short stripped-and-spotted reddish brown fur. Although reluctant to carry riders tipars are superb pack animals due to their sturdy physique. Tipars fare equally well at night or day as poor eyesight means they rely mainly on their sensitive ears and a keen sense of smell to detect surroundings and danger.



SERVICES & PROPERTY

| SERVICE | DESCRIPTION | QUALITY | COST |
|------------------|---|---------|----------|
| Attendant | A hired servant | Basic | 20/week |
| Drink | Watered wine, ale or similar | Basic | 1 |
| Meal, basic | Bland meal | Basic | 2 |
| Physician | Remedial attention | Basic | 30 |
| Room, guesthouse | Accommodation for one night including a meal | Basic | 10/night |
| Slave, educated | Slave able to teach, administrate and govern households | Basic | 1000+ |
| Slave, house | Slave to serve and attend in the household | Basic | 250+ |
| Slave, labour | Slave for menial and manual labour | Basic | 100+ |

ATTENDANT: An attendant is a hired servant who will attend his employer, run errands, support endeavours and make purchases.

DRINK: A glass of watered wine, ale or other drink from an establishment or a drink from water carriers roaming the streets peddling cups of water across the Eternal City.

MEAL, BASIC: A bland meal consisting of bread, vegetables and some type of meat providing basic sustenance.

PHYSICIAN: Physician is a term widely used for anyone dealing with disease, injury and curative practice, such as surgeons, herbalists and so on. Physicians charge for appointments and further for remedial work performed.

ROOM, GUESTHOUSE: Renting a room with a bed at a moderate establishment in the Eternal City.

SLAVES: Labour slaves are the cheapest and most common in Llyhn; they work the fields and mines, carry goods and perform menial tasks. House slaves comprise a group of assorted roles in households, mansions, temples and palaces where they function as servants, cooks, cleaners and so on. Educated slaves are rare and often serve as tutors for children, overseers of entire households or as specialised retainers for their owner.

WEAPONRY

Sentient beings have always used weapons to hunt or fight. Weapons are categorised into groups (i.e. swords, spears, etc.) and although variations may occur within each group, the general properties and applications of all weapons within a group remain virtually the same.

For gaming purposes, each weapon group has been given a set of designations with corresponding figures determining the qualities, characteristics and potential effects of a weapon. The designations are presented in the weaponry list and are as follows: Name, Type, Size, Range, Damage Potential and Properties.

Type indicates whether a weapon is a melee, a missile or a thrown weapon.

The *Size* indicates the Strength score needed to efficiently use the weapon. Should the combatant lack the required strength score indicated by the weapon size, a -1 penalty must be applied to initiative and attack rolls for each point of difference between the two scores.

Range determines how far a reach each weapon has. There are three range categories for melee weapons: Close, adjacent and near. Close range indicates that the weapon can be used against opponents within touch-distance, adjacent have a one- or two-metre radius of the wielder. Near range designates shafted and other handheld weapons with extended reach of up to three or four metres, and can be used within adjacent range as well.

Missile weapons have fixed ranges divided between: short, medium and long range. For ranged attacks penalties are applied to attack rolls illustrating the increased difficulty of hitting faraway targets. Short range attacks incur no roll modifier. Attacks aimed at targets in medium range incur a -1 penalty to the attack roll, while long range attacks entail a -2 penalty to the roll.

Damage indicates the amount of injury the weapon inflicts. Roll the designated dice, add Strength modifiers and reduce the Health points of the target accordingly.

Properties describe any attributes a weapon might possess, such as being particularly useful for parrying, piercing armour, requiring two hands to use and so forth.



BATTLE-AXE: The battle-axe is a brutal weapon devised to cause massive amounts of damage. It comes in numerous shapes and sizes, with a wooden or metal shaft and a mounted blade, ranging from the customary triangular blade, to long or broad curved blades, inverted crescent-shaped blades and even forked blades. Due to its cumbersome handling, the battle-axe is traditionally utilised by proficient warriors and very few others.

Size: 4

Range: Adjacent (1)

Damage: 2D6



BOW: The bow is a common tool used for hunting and warfare alike. It is a prized weapon that grants good range and reliability and can cause a fair amount of damage. A bow requires significant strength to be used effectively. It can be made from a myriad of materials, ranging from wood and bamboo to bone, horns and tusks.

Size: 4(1)

Range: Ranged (50/75/100)

Damage: D6

Properties: Piercing [2], Two-handed, Nocking

DAGGER: Daggers and similar short blades are the most commonly used tools and weapons on virtually any world. Beggars, soldiers and viziers alike carry daggers, be they ornate and priceless or simple utilitarian tools. Most daggers in Llyhn have wide, curved blades and are approximately two hands long, but almost any design can be procured in the various bazaars. The dagger category comprises and include any type of short blade, dirk, stiletto, knife and punching dagger.

Size: 1

Range: Close (0)

Damage: D4



GLAIVE: The most common pole arm in Llyhn is the glaive. The shaft of a glaive is customarily two metres long and has a curved blade of approximately half a metre mounted atop. Its effective range averages at about three metres. Glaives are challenging to use in confined fighting conditions, but their long range and commanding aspect make them ideal for soldiers and guards.

Size: 4

Range: Near (4)

Damage: 2D6

Properties: Two-handed



WEAPONRY

| NAME | TYPE | SIZE | RANGE | DAMAGE | PROPERTIES | AVAILABILITY | COST |
|-------------|---------|------|-----------|--------|-----------------------------------|--------------|------|
| Battle Axe | Melee | 4 | Adjacent | 2D6 | - | Rare | 60 |
| Bow | Missile | 4 | 50/75/100 | D6 | Piercing [2], Two-handed, Nocking | Common | 60 |
| Dagger | Melee | 1 | Close | D4 | - | Common | 10 |
| Glaive | Melee | 3 | Near | 2D6 | Two-handed | Uncommon | 35 |
| Halberd | Melee | 4 | Near | 2D6 | Two-handed, Piercing [1] / +1 dmg | Uncommon | 50 |
| Short Sword | Melee | 2 | Adjacent | D6 | Parry | Common | 30 |
| Sword | Melee | 3 | Adjacent | D12 | Parry | Uncommon | 50 |

HALBERD: The halberd combines the slashing capabilities of a long-shafted axe with thrusting attack of a spear. Attacking with a halberd can be either a swing using the axe-like blade, conferring a +1 damage bonus or thrust using the spear-like tip bestowing the Piercing [1] property. While the significant reach and diverse functionality of halberds make them a formidable choice of weapon confined fighting conditions are severely hampering.

Size: 4

Range: Near (4)

Damage: 2D6 +1 damage or Piercing [1]

Properties: Two-handed

SHORT SWORD: The short sword tends to be half a metre long and is primarily used for stabbing, as opposed to traditional swords that are more frequently used for cutting and slashing. Not as cumbersome or brutal as conventional swords, the short sword is the weapon of choice for many due to its convenience and efficiency especially in close-quarter combat.

Size: 2

Range: Adjacent (1)

Damage: D6

Properties: Parry



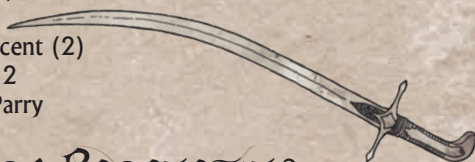
SWORD: Swords are used by and reflect many different cultures and species and can be found in virtually any imaginable style, shape and size. Curved blades, double-curved or straight swords ranging from crude utilitarian blades to elegant ceremonial swords and the list goes on. Many species residing in Llyhn favour a single-edged, curved and tapered blade, such as the saif, scimitar, talwar and shamshir, which can be wielded in one hand.

Size: 3

Range: Adjacent (2)

Damage: D12

Properties: Parry



WEAPON PROPERTIES

NOCKING: Once an arrow has been loosed, another must be readied, nocked and drawn, which takes time. Using a bow will subtract three (3) from initiative roll if arrows are readily available (already held or stuck in the ground next to the archer) or six (6) if the arrow must be pulled from a quiver.

PARRY: The defender may utilise the Parry combat manoeuvre without suffering any penalties (see the combat section for rules).

PIERCING: Upon a successful hit, armour-piercing weapons diminish the effect of protective equipment, by negating a certain amount from the Armour Value. The specific armour value reduction is noted in the weapon description and usually lies between 1 and 4. If an opponent is not wearing any armour, a piercing weapon has no added effect.

TWO-HANDED: Certain weapons require the use of two hands to be used efficiently. This is either due to the weapon being too heavy to wield without the added strength or it simply being inoperable without the use of two hands - as is the case with bows.



ARMOUR



While some species have natural protection in the form of thick tough skin, scales or an exoskeleton, most sentient species have had to develop armour to protect themselves from attacks.

In the game mechanics armour reduces the amount of damage your character sustains when hit by an attack. Each piece of armour has a predefined damage reduction value. When damage from a successful blow has been calculated you may decrease it by the armour damage reduction accordingly. The subsequent total is the amount of Health points the character loses from the hit.

Armour is divided into categories depending on their specific placements, and the various categories can be combined to provide greater protection, i.e. cumulative damage reduction, but only one category of armour can be worn in any one placement at a time.

The damage reduction value for a combatant is calculated as a total amount regardless of where the armour pieces are placed on the body. This means that damage will always be decreased by the total amount of armour damage reduction, unless a called attack to a specific body part has been performed, in which case only the armour covering this area is applicable.

For gaming purposes, each particular piece of armour has a set of designations and values corresponding to the qualities, characteristics, usage and capabilities. The designations presented in the armour list are as follows: Type, Material, Category, Damage Reduction, Bulk and Properties.

There are seven *Types* of armour commonly found across the Cosmos (three are included in the quick start rules): fabric, scale, lamellar, mail, laminated, splint and plate. Each type is distinct from the others in its fabrication and basic properties.

Material designates which primary material has been used for this piece of armour.

Category indicates which kind of armour it is as well as the placement or application of it.

Damage Reduction determines the amount of protection the armour grants its wearer; in terms of the amount of damage it negates.

Bulk determines the Strength score necessary for using the armour without suffering penalties when performing physical actions. For every point a combatant does not meet the required Strength score she receives a -1 penalty to any physical actions requiring Agility, including attacking and defending (potentially reducing Defence Value).

Properties describe any additional assets or detriments of the armour.

ARMOUR

| TYPE | MATERIAL | CATEGORY | DMG Reduction | BULK | PROPERTIES | COST |
|------|----------|----------|---------------|------|------------|------|
|------|----------|----------|---------------|------|------------|------|

FABRIC ARMOUR

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|---|---|--|----|
| Layered Cloth | Torso | 1 | 1 | | 15 |
| Padded Leather | Torso | 2 | 2 | | 35 |
| Studded Leather | Torso | 2 | 2 | | 35 |
| Hardened Leather | Torso | 3 | 2 | | 50 |

SCALE ARMOUR

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----------|---|---|------------|-----|
| Leather | Torso | 2 | 2 | | 25 |
| Leather | Full Body | 4 | 3 | Rigid | 65 |
| Metal | Torso | 4 | 3 | | 80 |
| Metal | Full Body | 8 | 4 | Cumbersome | 520 |

SPLINT ARMOUR

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----------|---|---|-------|-----|
| Metal | Torso | 4 | 3 | | 90 |
| Metal | Full Body | 7 | 4 | Rigid | 360 |

BRACERS

| | | | | | |
|---------|------|---|-----|--|----|
| Leather | Arms | 1 | - | | 10 |
| Metal | Arms | 2 | +1* | | 35 |

* No Bulk if worn alone / +1 if combined with other armour pieces

FABRIC ARMOUR

Fabric armour is the oldest, simplest and most widespread form of armour. It cannot be tied to any one species or place and it is found across many worlds among both primitive and civilised cultures. Armour consisting of layered fabric, cloth or hide protects the wearer from the impact of strikes as well as cuts and is a cheap and relatively effective form of defence.



BRACERS

These pieces of armour cover the lower arm providing limited protection to a wearer. Bracers can be fabricated in various armour types and materials such as splint or scale armour.

SCALE ARMOUR

This type of armour comes in many varieties and materials but essentially consists of scales laced or otherwise tied to each other in connected rows on a fabric foundation. While scale armour is usually found as shirts covering only the torso and with short sleeves, long scale coats covering the entire body or fashioned to accommodate the limbs of the wearer do exist. Scale armour provides substantial protection but because the scales are sewn in close-set rows and cannot turn back on each other it has an inherent lack of flexibility.



SPLINT ARMOUR

This type of armour consists of straight metal splints joined in convex sections, laced together to protect the wearer. Usually backed by leather or joined by straps at the ends this not only secured the splints but also protects the wearer from potentially sharp edges.

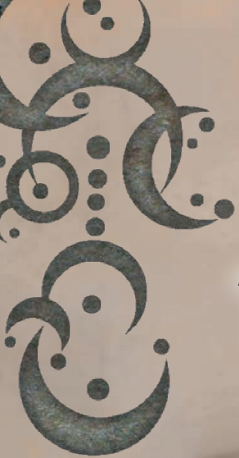
Studded leather armour

ARMOUR PROPERTIES

CUMBERSOME: Either due to the construction or sheer weight of materials this armour is heavy and cumbersome, making movement difficult. All Agility actions involving full body movement suffer a -1 penalty and the basic movement rate of the wearer is reduced by one (1).

RIGID: The inflexibility of this armour inhibits the movement of the wearer. Wearing this armour will give a -1 penalty to Agility actions requiring the use of the entire body, such as Acrobatics, Dodge and Defence modifiers.

Scale armour



PLAYING THE GAME



BASIC RULES

As the newly created characters embark upon strange, exciting and possibly horrifying adventures they must perform incredible feats and face fearsome opponents. The game system and mechanisms are designed to control and handle all this. The following section details the rules regarding actions, combat and other aspects needed to play the game.

As in the actual world, things do not always work out the way your character intend them to. To mimic the part of fortune, dice rolls determine the success or failure when actions are performed. Not everything is left to chance of course, and the characters' abilities factor into the rolls adding bonuses or penalties depending on skill-rankings and so on. Some actions are so simple or inconsequential that a dice roll is not needed, but whenever an action is complex or the outcome is important to the story a dice-roll is generally required. The primary dice used in the Black Void RPG are twelve-sided (D12 in game-terms).

PERFORMING ACTIONS

In the game, players declare what their characters are doing and which actions they are taking. To determine the success or failure of these actions the game resorts to rolling a twelve-sided dice: The higher the roll, the greater the chance of success for an action; the lower the roll, the bigger the risk of failure. Similarly, a high roll will cause a substantial outcome while a low roll will bring about a lesser effect. The point of simple rules is that they can be made to fit anything an inventive Arbiter or player can come up with, thus granting endless possibilities within the game.

ROLLING THE DICE AND RESOLVING ACTIONS

Each action has a difficulty. To resolve an action the player rolls a D12 and adds relevant modifiers to the roll. If the result equals or exceeds the difficulty of the action the character is successful. If the total is less than the difficulty, the character has failed. The average difficulty for an action is seven (7). An average difficulty action would therefore need a result of 7 or higher (roll + modifiers) to be successful.

ACTION DIFFICULTY

The difficulty rating is determined either on the spot by the Arbiter, with reference to a generic rating - noted in [] - or by a set difficulty such as the opponent's Defence Value in combat. Action rolls are influenced by applying bonuses or penalties based on the character's abilities and skills; making



capable characters more likely of succeeding. Oftentimes the player does not - and should not - know the difficulty he or she is trying to beat, while at other times the Arbiter openly informs how difficult a task is.

MODIFIERS: Actions always correspond with a specific Trait and often also with a related Skill, Power or other ability, which add modifiers to dice-rolls. The higher the Trait and relevant skill-ranking a character has, the better the modifier. Skills, Traits and abilities confer modifiers as shown in the table. If an action requires a skill that a character does not have, a penalty of -3 is applied to the roll. External conditions - for example weather - may also be relevant and add modifiers to action rolls as shown in the table below.

EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS: An unmodified action-roll of 12 confers an enhanced consequence as the character has managed to perform the action perfectly. If a natural roll of 12 is not enough for ordinary success - for instance when rolling against difficulty 14 - an exceptional success does not occur, but allows a second roll added to the first to see if you can beat the difficulty and succeed the action.

CRITICAL FAILURE: Whenever a natural 1 is made on an action-roll, the attempt is always a failure and a critical one at that. The Arbiter generally decide which catastrophic consequence occur as a result, while in some cases - such as combat - a table dictates the specific consequences.

ACTION ROLL MODIFIERS

| MODIFIER | TRAIT SCORE | SKILL RANKING | ITEM QUALITY | ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS |
|----------|-------------|---------------|--------------|---|
| -3 | 0 | Unskilled | | Dark/very bright/storm or partially blind |
| -2 | 1 | - | | Major Distraction |
| -1 | 2 | - | Poor | Rain/dusk/windy or Minor distraction |
| 0 | 3 | 0 | Basic | None |
| +1 | 4 | 1 | Superior | |
| +2 | 5 | 2 | | |

ACTION TYPES

BASIC ACTION: This type of action revolves only around the innate capacities of the character and therefore only Trait modifiers apply. No Skill, Power or other ability is ever applicable to a basic action, but the modifier or penalty of the associated Trait is doubled.

STANDARD ACTION: A standard action encompasses the use of a skill, power or ability. All relevant modifiers are added to the roll and if the total equals or exceeds the difficulty the action is successful.

SEQUENTIAL ACTION: This is a series or sequence of actions where the overall success depends on cumulative success of each individual roll. Each individual action must be successful for the following action to commence.

OPPOSED ACTION: Certain activities comprise two or more people competing at a single task and trying to beat each other. All participants make an action roll, add their respective modifiers and the contender with the highest total succeeds.

RESISTED ACTION: When a character passively resists an action, relevant opposing Trait and Skill modifiers are added to the difficulty of the roll. Resisted actions do not affect the action-roll, but rather the difficulty rating of the action.

COOPERATIVE ACTION: When two or more characters are helping each other perform an action, one is designated as the primary doer. The primary character makes a roll adding her relevant modifiers to the roll. In addition to this she may add the relevant modifiers divided by two, rounded up, from supporters participating in the cooperative action.

ACTION CONSEQUENCES

While most actions simply denote whether a character has succeeded at something or not, some actions require an additional roll to define the actual consequences of the success; as in case of combat where the amount of damage caused must be determined by a dice-roll. In some cases - like crippling injuries or failed sanity rolls - tables have been developed to provide a range of consequences.

COMBAT RULES

As the game progress the characters are bound to face encounters likely leading to violence. The combat mechanics are designed to generate action, drama and excitement as blades clash and battle ensues. To make the process easy and fluent, combat is divided into simple rounds considered to last roughly three seconds in game time. During a round each combatant can declare, perform and resolve one or more actions. Once all combatants have acted the combat round is over and - depending on the outcome - the conflict is either resolved or another combat round begins.



THE COMBAT ROUND

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Step 1: Initiative roll | All combatants roll D12 and add Agility, fast reflexes, swiftness and other applicable modifiers. | The character with the highest total acts first, while the rest follow in order. |
| Step 2: Declare and resolve actions | In order of initiative all combatants state which action they intend to perform, resolve the action and establish consequences. | Combat actions are divided into: Movement, Combat Manoeuvres, Miscellaneous and Extended. |

WHO GOES FIRST? All involved combatants roll a D12 and add the applicable modifiers. The combatant with the highest total score acts first and then the remaining combatants act in descending order. If two or more combatants have the same score they are considered to be acting simultaneously. Once the order of initiative has been determined it remains the same throughout the encounter.

COMBAT ACTIONS: Declaring a combat action simply means informing the Arbiter which action the character intends to perform during the combat round. Players take turn based on their initiative score, choosing various forms of attack or defence and moving around the battlefield from the list of actions and manoeuvres.

REACTIONS: Some manoeuvres can be used even though it is not the character's turn to act; these are called reactions. A reaction manoeuvre is typically a defensive manoeuvre such as dodge. To use a reaction during combat, an action must be directed towards the character and the character reacting cannot have acted previously in this combat round. A reaction must be declared immediately after an action has been announced and before it is resolved. The initial action then becomes an opposed action against the reaction.

RESOLVING COMBAT ACTIONS

A combat action is resolved in the same way as any other action: By rolling D12 and adding applicable modifiers against a difficulty - the Defence Value of the target. The applicable attack modifiers are Agility, relevant combat skill and abilities. The higher a character's Defence Value, the harder he or she is to successfully hit and therefore injure. A character's basic Defence Value is always 7. Agility modifiers, defence skill and other ability-based modifiers adjust the Defence Value. If the attack roll including modifiers is equal to or higher than the opponent's Defence Value, the attack is successful and the damage and/or effect can be resolved.

EXCEPTIONAL HITS: When a combatant manages to roll an unmodified 12 for her combat action and the attack hits its target exceptional and extensive injury is caused. To illustrate this the attacker may make an additional roll on the exceptional hits table for extraordinary injury effects.

CRITICAL MISHAP: In case a combatant rolls a natural 1 for a combat action, the attack not only misses its mark but also cause a mishap to occur. The combatant must make a roll and the Arbiter refers to the critical mishap table to determine what follows.

COMBAT ACTIONS

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| All-out Attack | + 3 attack mod -3 defence mod |
| Backstab | + 3 attack mod 11+ exceptional hit (surprise/weapon size < 2 only) |
| Called Attack | -3 attack mod hit specific area |
| Defensive Stance | Add combat skill to Defence + 1 to resist Knock-down |
| Disengage | Disengage opponent Half Move |
| Dodge | Opposed roll to avoid attack (reaction/delayed) |
| Draw or Grab Item | Half Move Equip weapon/item |
| Engage | Half Move Engage opponent Perform manoeuvre/action |
| Flee | Run or sprint Free opponent attack opportunity |
| Grapple | No dmg -3 attack mod Opposed roll to pin opponent |
| Knockdown | No dmg Opposed roll to knock opponent down |
| Move | Normal Move distance |
| Parry | Opposed roll to avoid attack (reaction) |
| Run | Double Move Opponent Missile -1 |
| Standard Attack | Normal attack Normal dmg |
| Various | Use a power, attribute, skill or ability (possible sequential or extended) |

ALL-OUT ATTACK: With this manoeuvre, the attacker unleashes a barrage of strikes; slashes and blows with little concern for personal safety. The combatant may make a single attack with a +3 modifier, but suffer a -3 to his own Defence Value and may not perform any other actions this combat round.

BACKSTAB: A backstab manoeuvre is an attack performed from a blind angle as a surprise attack. A backstab necessitates that the target is either surprised or unaware of the attacker. A backstab has a +3 modifier and will cause an exceptional hit on a roll of 11+. Due to the nature of the manoeuvre this attack can only be performed with weapons of size 2 or smaller.

CALLED ATTACK: A called attack is used when a combatant attempt to hit a specific part of an opponent's anatomy. The attacker determines the intended hit location and makes an attack roll applying a -3 penalty. This attack form allows a combatant to target an unprotected body part to avoid armour or to induce a special consequence such as tripping someone up and so on.

DEFENSIVE STANCE: When assuming the defensive stance a combatant gives full attention to avoiding getting hit by giving up all attack opportunities. The combatant may add her combat skill modifier to her Defence Value and gets a +1 bonus to resist getting knocked down.

DISENGAGE: A character may disengage an opponent and move up to half her movement rate without granting the opponent a free attack opportunity. The opponent is - of course - allowed to follow the character with his own action if he has any actions left this combat round.

DODGE (Reaction): The dodge manoeuvre allows combatants to avoid being hit by dodging and evading attacks aimed at them. A dodge action is an opposed action versus an incoming melee attack. A successful dodge indicates that the combatant has avoided the incoming strike; suffering no damage or other effects. Note that characters are only allowed to dodge attacks from opponents whom they can see - attacks from the rear or blind spots cannot be dodged.

DRAW OR GRAB ITEM: A combatant may draw a weapon or grab a nearby item and move up to half her movement rate during a combat round. If a character is engaged in combat while performing this action she cannot move as she is busy trying to avoid the opponent's blows simultaneously.

ENGAGE: A combatant who is moving to engage an opponent may move half her movement rate and perform a manoeuvre or action.

FLEE: A combatant may turn tail and flee from an opponent moving at running or sprinting speed. Fleeing allows an adjacent adversary a free attack action.

GRAPPLE: A combatant can attempt to pin an opponent by successfully making a called attack followed by an opposed Strength roll. If the attack is successful, the victim is held immobilized and cannot perform any actions until she breaks free. Any attempt to wrestle free after being pinned requires an opposed roll with a -1 penalty from the victim. This attack causes no damage unless an exceptional success is rolled.

KNOCKDOWN: A combatant may attempt to use a body-slam or heavy weapon to knock an opponent off her feet. A knockdown is a standard attack, which - instead of damage - triggers an opposed Strength roll to determine if the target is rendered prone. Strength and other relevant modifiers are applicable. Creature size adds +3 modifier to the roll for each size category difference to the larger of the two. In case of an exceptional success the knockdown also causes damage.

MOVE: A character that is not engaged in close combat may move her full combat movement rate during a round. If she moves through an opponent's reach during the move the opponent can use his or her action to attack the mover as a reaction.

PARRY (Reaction): Parrying involves a combatant using her weapon to



deflect an incoming strike from an opponent. The defender must declare her intent to parry an incoming attack before the attack roll has been resolved. The parry action is an opposed action with the defender using his or her combat skill against the attack roll. If the defender's roll equals or surpasses the incoming attack roll it is parried and no damage is caused. Any weapons without the parry property will be affected by a -1 penalty to parrying attempts.

RUN: A character may run at twice her movement rate during a combat round. Missile attacks against the character will suffer a -1 penalty during this round. The runner may be attacked if he or she enters an opponent's striking range. A character breaking out of a run to perform another action will suffer a -3 to initiative.

STANDARD ATTACK: A standard attack is any regular strike, slash, thrust, throw or shot intended to hit and injure an opponent. When attacking the player rolls D12 and add the Agility modifier, relevant combat skill and other applicable modifiers. If the total exceeds or is equal to the opponents Defence Value the attack is a success and the player may roll for damage.

VARIOUS: A character may utilize any power, ability, attribute or skill at her disposal during combat. Usually an initiative modifier is associated with this.

DAMAGE & INJURIES

This section deals with the damage and injuries combatants sustain when they are hit.

DAMAGE: When a combatant is hit he suffers injury, which in game mechanics is measured as a loss of Health points. To determine the amount of damage incurred, the attacker makes a roll using the dice stated in the weapon description and adds applicable modifiers. Hand-wielded weaponry typically allows the addition of the Strength modifier. The total is the amount of Health points the target loses.

ARMOUR: Having tough hide, wearing armour or other protective gear negates some of the damage sustained from attacks, reducing the loss of Health Points. Whenever your character suffers an injury from an attack you may reduce the amount of Health points lost by an amount equalling the character's Damage Reduction.

MASSIVE DAMAGE & INSTANT INCAPACITATION: Suffering immense damage in an instant causes severe trauma, leaving the body broken and scarred, possibly even resulting in paralysis, shock or outright death. A character losing more than half of her total starting amount of Health points from a single blow immediately suffers a crippling injury.

CRIPPLING INJURIES: Suffering massive damage or being the target of an exceptional hit occasionally causes a crippling injury. When a crippling injury occurs roll D12 and refer to the crippling injury table to determine the effect.

HEALTH CONDITIONS: Sustaining damage and the subsequent loss of Health Points is more than a simple countdown to incapacitation - pain, fatigue, shock and disability follow in the wake of injury. To illustrate the body's response to injury four conditions define the detrimental effect.

BRUISED: Losing up to half of the total amount of Health means that a person is wounded but suffering no penalizing effects.

HURT: While a character has less than half of his or her original Health points (rounded up) all action rolls are made with a -1 penalty.

INJURED: Once a character has less than a quarter of their original Health points (rounded up) all actions have a -3 penalty.

INCAPACITATED: Upon reaching zero Health points a character is incapacitated and unable to act. A character in this state will eventually die from bleeding or injuries unless treated. Bleeding out takes a number of combat rounds equal to half her total starting Health points minus the amount of damage she is below zero.

DEAD: If a character is ever injured to the point of being below minus half her total starting Health point she is dead.

RECOVERY & HEALING INJURIES: With rest and care injuries will heal in time. When wounds heal the character regains Health points until she has reached her beginning total amount. The amount of Health points regained per day equals the character's Stamina score, hence a character with a Stamina score of three (3) will regain three Health points per day if under proper care. If wounds are not bandaged or rest is not received, injuries heal only at a rate of 1 Health point per day.



SANITY & MADNESS

The sanity and sensibilities of sentient beings are fragile and the Cosmos is not a kind nor forgiving place. Brutal empires and eldritch alien species wage endless wars across the worlds; unleashing terrible horror and malice as they lay waste to each other. Perfidy and cruelty is commonplace, terrible things lurk in the shadows, and always the mindless abominations of the Void encroach upon the Cosmos.

This section deals with threats concerning characters mental health. The first section covers Fear, one of the mental effects impacting characters instantaneously and temporarily, while the second part focuses on the gradual descent into degeneration and eventual madness.

FEAR

Characters who explore the Cosmos seeking enlightenment and riches often find themselves in sinister places, facing atrocities and horrors. When a character is faced with a fearsome encounter, a Fear roll is required to determine whether she can remain composed or succumbs to primal fear. How fearsome an encounter is, and the difficulty of the mental effect roll is termed as a fear rating. Mildly shocking sights may have a Fear rating of [3] while a scene of utter carnage would be [9]. Only events deriving from supranatural causes can have a Fear rating higher than 9.

When the Arbiter has declared that a fearsome encounter or event occurs the players must make a Basic action roll modified by Willpower against the Fear ranking to resist the effects. If the roll is failed, the character succumbs to the fear and must make a further roll referring to the Fear Effect table.

While most fear effects are temporary and fade as soon as the character has departed the source of fear, high rolls with particularly impactful results may cause a character to lose a Sanity point, bringing her one step closer to the edge of madness. When one or more sanity points are lost the character suffers a temporary insanity and must make a roll on the Madness table.

SANITY CONDITIONS: Exposure to abhorrent incidents and Cosmic horrors affects the sanity of any mortal and in game terms this means a loss of Sanity Points; as the character's tenuous grasp on rationality is slowly weakened. To illustrate this, four conditions define the detrimental effects of sanity loss.

LUCID: Losing up to half of the total amount of Sanity means that the character might be upset by her experiences, but suffers no harmful effects.

ANXIOUS: If a character has less than half of her original Sanity points (rounded up) madness rolls have a +1 modifier.

DISTURBED: When a character has less than a quarter of original total Sanity points left (rounded up) madness rolls are made with a +3 modifier.

RAVING: Upon reaching zero Sanity points the character is considered to have lost all sense and sensibility, screaming at imagined horrors - or real ones if the situation dictates. Although - at the Arbiter's discretion - it is possible to be nursed back to some sort of sanity.

REGAINING SANITY: Mental faculties are not regained quite as easily as Health and require longer recovery time. Consulting spiritual advisors or extended respites providing quiet and calm, may soothe the mind allowing characters to regain Sanity points. The Arbiter determines the recovery rate and time depending on the circumstances and severity of the sanity loss.



CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

As characters explore; discover and learn, they gain experience, which translates into additional points that can be spent to improve skills and abilities or to acquire new ones. After each session or adventure the Arbiter awards each character an amount of experience points based on the session's achievements, character efforts or good roleplaying.

The areas of character progression covered in the quick start are limited to skills and powers as these are learned or developed abilities. Players are free to choose any skill or ability they want for their character as long as the requirements stipulated in the character creation chapter are met. From a story-telling perspective however, players should be encouraged to choose progression that makes sense for the character in terms of what he or she has focused on in the game. For instance, a character that has spent an entire session employing diplomacy and subterfuge to infiltrate the court of a sultan would hardly be disposed to gain a ranking in swordsmanship.

SKILL & ABILITY ADVANCEMENT

While the method for character advancement and spending experience points is fundamentally the same as in character creation, costs are slightly different. As it is inherently more difficult to achieve high mastery than it is to acquire basic familiarity; it becomes progressively more expensive to acquire higher rankings in Skills and Abilities during character progression. Whilst one point equated one ranking during character creation, the cost of subsequent advancement is the same as the ranking the character wants to achieve. Note that skills and powers with a beginning cost of 3 points - such as the Bloodletting power - are progressively more expensive as well. If a character wishes to develop more than one rank at a time, each intervening rank must be purchased as well; to move from rank 2 to rank 4 costs 7 points - 3 points to attain rank 3, then another 4 to attain rank 4.

ADVANCEMENT POINT COSTS

| RANKING | MODIFIER | COST |
|---------|----------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1 | +1 | 1 |
| 2 | +2 | 2 |
| 3 | +3 | 3 |
| 4 | +4 | 4 |
| 5 | +5 | 5 |
| 6 | +6 | 6 |

ENLIGHTENMENT ADVANCEMENT

In the Black Void, sentient beings are often driven by a desire for insight; understanding and the power it brings. This is known as enlightenment: An inexplicable awareness and sentience about the Cosmos; Void and the duality of existence. Enlightenment edifies the mind, allows characters to traverse

the Void and potentially changes the essence and even physical nature of a being. Enlightenment works differently from ordinary character advancement mechanically as it is achieved through epiphany rather than training. There are tiers of enlightenment, each adding a further capability to a character.

The Arbiter alone decides if and when a character reaches and indeed advances in enlightenment. This should always be caused by or interwoven with an encounter with an entity or other Void influence. The first sign of enlightenment is that an individual intuitively begins to comprehend the fundamental relation between the Cosmos and the Void. This allows a character to sense areas where the Veil between the Void and Cosmos are thin and can evolve into the ability to navigate and traverse the Void. As a character's enlightenment increase she begins to change and physical effects of the ascension begin to manifest, imbuing the character with new abilities, attributes or talents.

WASTAH ADVANCEMENT

The struggle for survival and ultimately a rise to power requires influence and mandate. Wastah means that the character knows people in the right places and has the clout to make them exert their authority on his or her behalf. Wastah grants overt influence and social advantages allowing characters to rise above their station and ascend to the pinnacles of power. Each achieved tier of Wastah signify the rising authority, mandate and societal prominence of the character. Gaining Wastah is story-driven, prompted by the characters' exploits and activities and awarded by the Arbiter when a character has beholden an individual or group of power.



ARBITRATING



HOW TO RUN THE GAME

Now you have the basic components and mechanisms used to play the Black Void role-playing game. As mentioned above, you need two or more participants to play. One is the Arbiter, while the others are players. Each player has his or her character, which they control throughout the game while the Arbiter is in control of all other aspects of the game, establishing the basic plot and events for the players to explore. His or her task is to be the moderator, determining the encounters, locations, mood, atmosphere and concept, which the characters navigate and act in as well as the actions and reactions of the non-player characters and adversaries. Since the Arbiter needs to manage everything going on in the game, it is important that he or she has a firm grasp of the rules and mechanics, an imaginative mind, a knack for telling stories and building drama, as well as a good sense of fair play and an eye for detail.

You - as Arbiter - are responsible for outlining the plot the players are to lead their characters through. Some Arbiters like to invent their own campaigns while others prefer using pre-made adventure modules. There is no right or wrong way of going about it; the primary objective is that everyone has fun.

When planning a session, it is a good idea to incorporate the ideas and wishes of the players to make sure that everyone is invested in the game.

It is important for Arbiters to note that the rules and setting is very much a framework, rather than highly rigid and detailed set of commandments. Participants - and particularly you as Arbiter - are not only invited to introduce your own ideas into the game, you are implored to do so. The reasoning is that this will not only enrich the environment and story, it gives all involved a sense of belonging by being active contributors.

SETTING

The Black Void is a role-playing game about the fall, exodus and subsequent resurgence of mankind. It takes place in a distant past in a Cosmos which is both familiar and outlandish in its dark and exotic ambience. Adventures typically revolve around the exploration of the deep dark unknown and the pursuit of enlightenment; prestige and power to ensure the survival and rise of Mankind - or indeed the characters own interests.

The Black Void RPG is set in a dual reality: A vast Cosmos, and beyond this evident world an intangible Void. The Cosmos is the universe we know; home to mortal species such

as mankind and - as it turned out - many others. Where some Cosmic worlds resemble Earth, others are alien and esoteric; some supporting grand civilizations while others are completely devoid of life. In contrast, the Void is an entirely alien and bizarre domain; an ethereal ocean constantly fluctuating, and its depths inhabited by unimaginable life forms. The Void is chaos and catalyst as opposed to the order and constancy of the Cosmos.

A metaphysical entity - divides and screens from each other. But the influence of other. There perforated boundary Void is

- known as the Veil these contrasting spheres the Veil is unstable, allowing one to emanate into the are places where the Veil is to such an extent that the between the Cosmos and muddled. These areas are known as border worlds.

The central arena of the game is Llyhn the eternal, a border domain located at the heart of a massive convergence of Void-currents. Llyhn is a principal hub and waypoint connecting major trade routes and a vibrant melting pot of species from across the known Cosmos, as well as more esoteric entities from beyond the evident world. A main staging point for exploration of the unknown reaches of the Cosmos, Llyhn is a median port and cosmopolis. Independent from external influence the city is considered neutral ground and hosts numerous diplomatic missions from across the Cosmos making it a natural place for enlightened species to congregate; attracting cultural tensions, social intricacies, religious polemic and political rivalry while immense armies are accommodated for transit under the watchful eyes of the masked Hohn'loh'kin, the extended arm of the Unseen Rulers of Llyhn.

CONCEPT & THEMES

This is a game revolving around the fall and subsequent resurgence of mankind - allowing players to focus on the personal struggle and story of their own characters or expand and put emphasis on the fate of humanity as a species and the part they play in this.

IN THE UNKNOWN

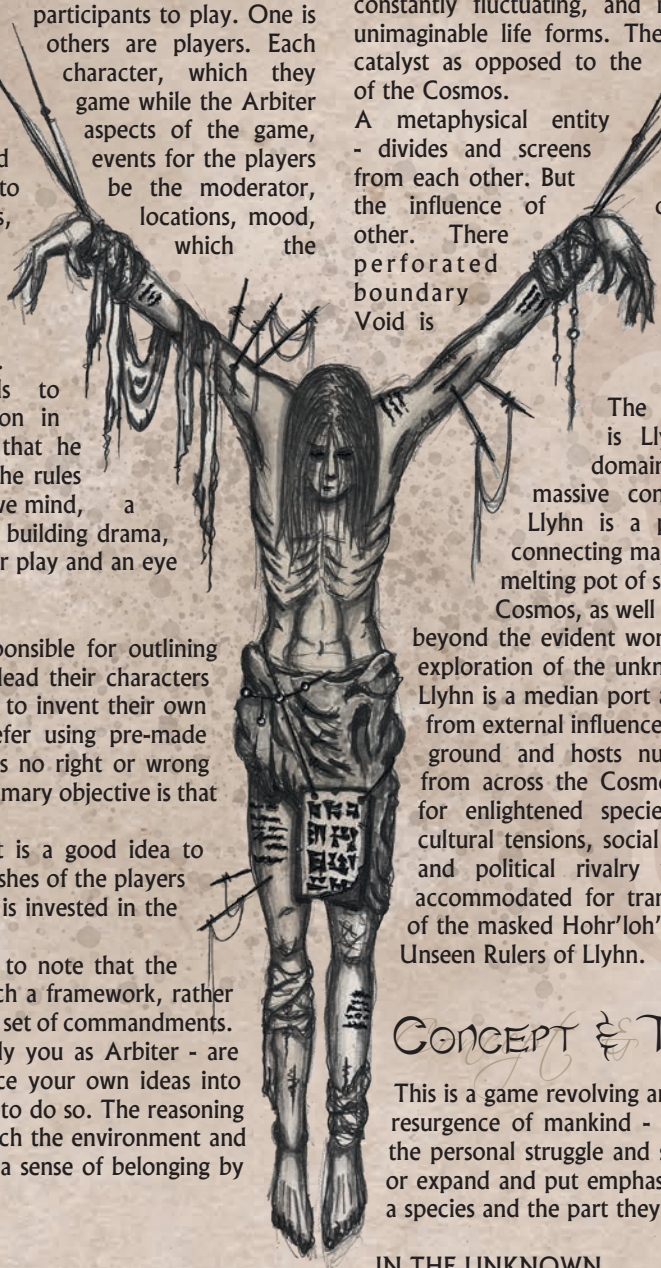
How does humanity fit into a Cosmos it knows little about and where the possibilities are endless? Encountering sentient species whose mentalities are as alien as their appearance is unnerving and bound to make humanity question what has previously been taken for granted.

BEYOND THE HORIZON

Exploring the Cosmos and faced with adversity, political intrigue and cultural tension on a scale unknown to humanity, players must cope or risk becoming collateral damage in the struggles of uncaring factions.

WHAT IS HUMANITY?

Rootless and without ethos, humanity must define and establish itself - leaving the players to decide what humanity is and what its place will be in the Cosmos!



APPLYING THE RULES

One of the key responsibilities for Arbiters is determining action difficulties and defining the outcome once resolved. The below table is a generic account of difficulties. While the Arbiter is not obligated to tell players how difficult a task is - and perhaps should not in order to maintain suspense - he or she can comfortably do so for more mundane actions and encounters the players come across.

ACTION DIFFICULTY RATINGS

| DIFFICULTY RATING | DESCRIPTION |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 4+ | Easy |
| 7+ | Average |
| 10+ | Challenging |
| 13+ | Demanding |

Declaring and resolving actions is generally explained in the rules section, but it is up to the Arbiter to determine the outcome of an action. While the outcome of many actions is a simple question of success or failure, some need a bit of ingenuity on the part of the Arbiter to establish and describe what occurs, while others are determined by a roll on one of the various effect tables. Only the Arbiter should have access to these tables, as shown below.

When resolving actions, the Arbiter should note that a successful action-roll does not always equal the character achieving his or her intended goal. For instance, a group of characters decide to search for tracks in a given area. The Arbiter knows that there are no tracks to be found but cannot - and indeed should not - refuse their request. The Arbiter now has two options; he can either choose to let all action-rolls fail since there are no tracks, but not divulging this info to the characters, or he can set a difficulty rating which will - if achieved - let the characters discover that there are no relevant tracks to find. The characters are asked to make their search rolls, but without the Arbiter revealing the difficulty rating. The Arbiter has decided that the search will have a difficulty rating of 10. Failed rolls only reveal that the characters were unable to find any tracks. A success would not reveal any tracks either, but the Arbiter would inform the characters that there are no tracks to be found in this area, giving them certainty that no further efforts would reveal anything.

EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS

When an exceptional success is achieved it is important to make it interesting and an added benefit, perhaps later in the game session. Avoid clichés and try to come up with something that makes the player excited. A useful trick is to vividly describe how the characters overwhelmingly succeeds at the task.

CRITICAL FAILURE

It is important to handle critical failures with a bit of care: They should create tension or provide an additional challenge to enhance the peril; not ruin the game. Critical failures do not necessarily have to afflict the perpetrator directly or only! It works well if they cause a general increase in danger or drama affecting all the characters or

those involved in an encounter equally. An example could be that a character critically misses her footing, falls and catches on a rope attached to a bell. While she suffers no injury or direct harm the now clanging bell awakens the slumbering palace guards and the chase is on! Again, try to avoid clichés and make sure that the incident is disturbing but ultimately adds to the enjoyment of the game.

BLOOD RITUAL DIVINATION

When performing a sacrificial divination, a query must be formulated, which determines the difficulty of the roll depending on its complexity. How complex a query the ritualist can reasonably expect to divine the answer to depends on his or her sacrificial divination ranking. A novice ritualist may perform simple readings, obtaining replies to enquiries answerable by a yes or no. As characters gain further rankings in sacrificial divination the variety of inquiries and possible aspects of answers expands, allowing the character more profound information than simple indications to yes-no questions.

DIVINATION

| Query | Requirements | Insight | Difficulty | Backlash |
|---------------------|--------------|--|------------|----------|
| Yes-no | Ranking 1 | Simple possibility | 7 | 0 |
| Prospect | Ranking 2 | The likelihood of a specified outcome | 10 | +1 |
| Guided closed query | Ranking 3 | The probabilities of multiple declared options | 13 | +1 |

BOTCHED BLOODLETTING RITUALS

Occasionally a bloodletting ritual goes awry. The recipient is unable to retain the released power and must make a successful Stamina roll - against the same difficulty as the Blood Ritual - or suffer a backlash. If failed, the player roll a D12 and confers with the table below to determine the effect of the backlash.



BACKLASH EFFECT TABLE

| Roll | Backlash |
|------|--|
| < 3 | Traumatized and weakened by the ritual the recipient is reluctant to partake in another Bloodletting Ritual for D3 days. |
| 4-6 | Frightened by the occurrence of the backlash the recipient develops a temporary phobia for blood and particularly Blood Rituals, lasting D6 days. |
| 7 | The grisly ritual leaves the character nauseated and queasy, suffering a -1 penalty to physical action rolls for 12 hours. |
| 8 | Rattled by the experience the character suffers minor tics; shakes and shivering. All natural rolls of 1-2 count as critical failures until the character has slept a full night. |
| 9 | Overwhelmed by the sheer force of the backlash, the recipient will lose consciousness for D12 hours*. |
| 10+ | The practitioner is unable to cope with the physical strain of the ritual, suffering a trauma causing a -1 penalty to all action rolls and inducing the mild cramps Flaw for D3 days*. |

When a combatant rolls an exceptional hit, refer to the below table for the effect. Note that while attackers may be allowed to roll twice or even thrice for damage, the Strength and other damage modifiers are only added once.

EXCEPTIONAL HITS TABLE

| SEVERITY ROLL | DMG | EFFECT |
|---------------|-----|--|
| < 2 | x1 | A grazing blow to the head shakes the target, causing a -1 penalty to all physical actions and halving Move for 1 round |
| 3 | x1 | The legs buckle and the target stumbles under the impact of the attack, leaving her immobile and suffering -1 to all actions for 1 round while trying to regain her balance |
| 4 | x1 | The target takes a severe clobbering; roll for knockdown and place the target prone if successful |
| 5 | x1 | A deep ripping gash in the forehead splatters blood into the eyes of the target leaving her blinded for 1 round (-3 and no orientation or reactions) |
| 6 | x2 | A series of violent strike bashes the target to the ground; leaving her knocked down and prone |
| 7 | x2 | The brutal impact of a thrashing assault renders the target dazed and confused, suffering -3 penalty to all actions for D3 rounds |
| 8 | x2 | A battering attack numbs the target's arm and shoulder causing any held item to be dropped and the arm to be useless for D3 rounds |
| 9 | x2 | A forceful blow to the chest leaves the target in violent pain and gasping for breath. The target is prone, writhing in agony and counts as stunned for D3 rounds |
| 10 | x3 | A violent impact shatters the arm leaving the target whimpering in anguish. Held items are dropped, the arm is useless until fully recovered. Any physical actions suffer -3 penalty due to the immense pain until the arm is bound and pinned |
| 11 | x3 | With a nauseating crunch multiple bones shatter and with eyes bulging the target collapses to the ground with sickening gurgling noises. The combatant is stunned for D6 rounds and unable to do anything but crawl at half movement until patched up. Witnessing combatants must make a Stamina roll [7] or succumb to vomiting nausea for D3 rounds |
| 12+ | x3 | An assault of pure carnage sends blood and guts spraying; drenching everyone in the vicinity. The target flops to the ground a bloody mass of mangled limbs. Collapsed and in shock the victim is unable to move for D12 rounds. Roll twice on the crippling Injury table. Adjacent combatants drenched by the carnage make a Stamina roll [7] or be sick for D3 rounds at the macabre vista |

When a combatant induces a critical mishap, refer to the mishaps table below for the effect. To allow drama and personalisation to the encounter Arbiters do not have to strictly abide by the noted effect as long as the outcome is similar in severity.

MISHAPS TABLE

| ROLL | EFFECT |
|------|--|
| 1 | As the combatants circle each other they inadvertently shift positions moving D3 metres in a random direction, possibly colliding with other combatants or finding themselves on precarious footing |
| 2 | Location disturbance: An element in the encounter location or conditions suddenly shifts introducing a new element to the encounter |
| 3 | The combatant inadvertently causes a location hazard: The hazard causes immediate danger or disruption to all combatants |
| 4 | Overextending, the attacker loses her footing and stumbles. Roll Agility [7] if successful the attacker stumbles and recovers in an unfavourable position suffering a -3 penalty on the next physical action. If failed she drops her weapon - or other held item - in an effort to keep her balance |
| 5 | The combatant gets turned around and unintentionally moves away from her opponent, offering her opponent a free attack opportunity with a -3 penalty. Afterwards both combatants count as disengaged |
| 6 | An overenthusiastic attack sends the combatant tumbling. Nearby combatants may attempt to dodge [7] the thrashing combatant or risk being knocked down as well. Place the attacker prone and make knockdown rolls for any adjacent combatants that failed to dodge |
| 7 | The attacker loses her balance and swings wildly striking a combatant within reach. Roll to hit as normal on a random adjacent person |
| 8 | A hard block sends the attacker's weapon flying. The weapon flies D3 metres in a random direction striking the first object in its path; causing half normal damage |
| 9 | Distracted and confused by the turmoil of combat the attacker completely loses focus and suffers -3 penalty to her next action |
| 10 | Pinching a nerve the combatant is unable to employ any combat manoeuvres in the following round. Moving actions are allowed |
| 11 | In a complete blunder the combatant leaves herself unprotected and vulnerable to attack. An opponent gets a free attack opportunity |
| 12 | In an exceptional display of ineptness the combatant strikes herself, causing damage as normal |



When a crippling injury occurs, roll and add the applicable Strength modifier to determine the injury the character sustains.

CRIPPLING INJURIES TABLE

SEVERITY INJURY
ROLL

| | |
|-----|--|
| < 2 | The bones in the arm are fractured and while the arm can be used, it is painful; causing a -3 penalty for D3 days |
| 3 | A numbing strike to the leg causes paralysis, making the leg unable to support any weight and useless for D6 days. Half walking movement rate is possible with crutches and general mobility is severely hampered |
| 4 | Broken leg: The bone is broken leaving the character unable to lean on it until it is healed. Although half walking movement rate is possible with crutches other mobility is severely limited until the bone is mended |
| 5 | Several fingers have been squashed or severed leaving the character with only half a hand. The character suffers from applicable impairment and the mild flaw Weak Grip going forward |
| 6 | Numerous blows to the head have left the character scarred and debilitated. The player must roll to determine the moderate flaw sustained: Amnesia, confused, hideous, bad hearing, hypersensitive eyes, night blindness or partial blindness |
| 7 | The injuries have left a horrid scar across the character's face. The character loses one (1) point of Presence permanently |
| 8 | Badly mended bones and strained muscles causes the character limited flexibility with ungainly and awkward movements. Deduct one (1) point from the character's Agility permanently |
| 9 | Sustained injuries have left the character crippled and broken. Roll randomly to determine a severe Flaw the character has acquired: Clumsy, cramps, Easily exhausted or weak grip |
| 10 | The hand of the character has been mangled so badly that it is unusable. The arm remains but the character is incapable of actions involving the use of two hands and will suffer penalties if only her secondary hand remains |
| 11 | With a wet tearing sound, the arm is severed at the shoulder or elbow, leaving only a mangled and bloody stump. All actions requiring the use of two appendages are impossible to perform, two-handed weapons cannot be used and penalties apply to actions if it is the secondary arm and hand that remains |
| 12 | Brutal damage has crushed the torso; leaving the character incapable of anything other than speaking |

When a character succumbs to Fear refer to the below table to determine the outcome and effect.

FEAR EFFECT TABLE

ROLL EFFECT

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1-3 | Disconcerted, the character will not move close to the source of her fright. She may perform any other action as normal; suffering no further penalties |
| 4-6 | The character is startled and immediately runs away from the source of fear for D3 rounds. The character performs actions at -1 penalty while the source of her fright is within sight |
| 7-8 | Panicking, the character turn and flees directly away from the source of fear at sprinting speed for D3 rounds. If unable to do so she is immobilised with fear and unable to act or move for an equivalent period. Subsequent actions are made at -1 penalty while the source of fear is viewable |
| 9 | Panicked for D6 rounds, the character is frozen to the spot while screaming hysterically and attacking anyone adjacent to her making random wild swings. After the panic she faints, falling unconscious for D3 rounds |
| 10 | Overcome with sheer terror the character falls to the ground trembling and babbling incoherently. The character is placed prone and counts as stunned for D6 rounds. All actions suffer a -3 penalty for the following D6 rounds |
| 11 | Shaken by the horror unfolding before her the character flees as fast as possible. The character must sprint directly away from the source of fear for D12 rounds and loses one (1) Sanity point |
| 12+ | Completely overcome with terror, the character collapses quivering to the ground for D12 rounds. The character is traumatized and immediately loses one (1) Sanity point |

When a character loses a Sanity point he or she must make a madness roll to determine the effect of the temporary insanity. Let the player make the roll and refer to the table below.

MADNESS EFFECT TABLE

Roll EFFECT

| | |
|------|---|
| 1-4 | For D3 days the character suffers from phobia towards the source of madness. If the cause of the phobia is within sight a willpower roll [7] must be made or the character suffers a panic attack: The character runs away for D3 rounds and performs subsequent actions at -1 penalty while the source is near |
| 5-8 | The character becomes obsessive compulsive for D3 days; constantly reciting litanies, making odd ritualistic gestures or similar. The character acts distanced from reality and all actions involving Intellect, Presence, Awareness, Persuasion or Willpower suffer a -3 penalty for the duration |
| 9-12 | An atrocious sight is burned into the mind of the character, continuously feeding the character with hallucinations of unspeakable horrors for D6 days. Any encounter, friendly or hostile, causes a fear roll [7] for the character |



SAMPLE SPECIES

The perhaps most profound realisation humanity had when they washed up from the bleak obliviousness of the Void was that they were not alone. Wherever survivors emerged they encountered otherworldly lifeforms or the remnants of these. This chapter details a few of the more common mortal species encountered in the Eternal City.

Ba'waikh

DESCRIPTION: Ba'waikh are slender, short bipeds with pale blue greenish skin-tones. Their faces are prominently flat, having no noticeable nose-structure and comparatively large eyes that they tend to squint when away from the dusky illumination of their homeworld Ogé. Sensitive eyes grant them keen sight in low-light conditions while impeding their vision in bright light. Neither gender has any hair-growth, but males have five distinctive feathery protrusions in their face - over each eye, to either side of and below the mouth. Their elongated skulls are typically covered with elaborate headgear, scarfs or turbans. Ba'waikh have rather oddly shaped hands with each digit being a different length and covered in ridges, enabling them to manipulate objects very precisely.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: The Ba'waikh are indigenous to Ogé a particularly large world divided into numerous small continents. The world orbits a large dying star keeping Ogé in more or less perpetual dusk and a similar climate globally.

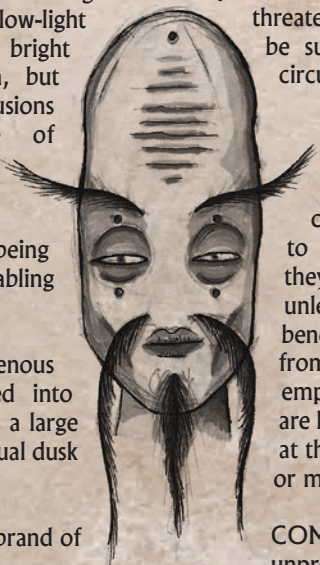
BEHAVIOUR: A fervent belief in their own brand of

karmic vocation make Ba'waikh a driven and hard-working species. Ba'waikh tend to stick together in closely knit social circles and while outwardly unassertive they have a severe internal social regimen instituted by the karmic creed. This certainty in kismet is confined to their own species, and they consider outsiders who seek to meddle in their affairs profane. This inclination comes to the fore if they feel threatened or wronged by outsiders and they can be surprisingly conniving and vindictive in such circumstances.

ENCOUNTERS: Serving at all echelons of the Eternal City characters can run into Ba'waikh under a vast assortment of circumstances and situations. Ba'waikh tend to stay unobtrusive and it is unlikely that they should seek the attention of humans unless they feel threatened or see a benefit to their internal schemes from doing so. Ba'waikh in the employ of others, however are likely to accost characters at the behest of their master or mistress.

COMBAT: Ba'waikh can be unpredictably coordinated and competent if challenged and seem to have an instinct for method in perilous circumstances. If faced with dire odds they frequently bide their time using defensive strategies until reinforcements can arrive or retreat if this seems unlikely. In favourable conflicts they retain caution reducing losses and injury while pressing their advantage. Favoured combat manoeuvres comprise defensive stance, block, parry, dodge, disarm and calculated strike.

VISION: Ba'waikh eyes are very sensitive to light and they can see well in low light conditions. No penalties apply for performing actions in the dark unless all light sources are gone. Ba'waikh suffer a -1 penalty to rolls involving sight in bright conditions.



| Ba'waikh | | | |
|------------|---|--|--------------|
| AGILITY | 3 | HEALTH | 19 |
| AWARENESS | 3 | SIZE | Medium |
| STAMINA | 2 | MOVE | 4 |
| STRENGTH | 2 | WEAPON | Various |
| INTELLECT | 3 | REACH | As weapon |
| PERSUASION | 2 | ATT MOD | + 1 |
| PRESENCE | 4 | ATT SPEED | 0 |
| WILLPOWER | 2 | DMG | As weapon -1 |
| | | DV | 7 |
| | | PROTECTION | DR 3 |
| TALENTS | | Night vision | |
| FLAWS | | Light sensitivity | |
| ATTRIBUTES | | Nimble fingers | |
| SPECIAL | - | | |
| OTHER | - | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | Standard clothing, hardened leather armour, personal items and wealth, preference for short bows, short swords and polearms. | |

Ka'Alum

DESCRIPTION: Somewhat resembling large flightless birds, the Ka'Alum stand over four cubits tall with long sinewy legs built for speed, a flexible neck and the small head has a thin elongated and long curved beak. Males are partially covered in short purplish downy fur while females are a variety of earthy colours, ranging from sandy beige to reddish clay. Both genders have bald legs, necks and heads showing their dark leathery skin. Two front limbs with hook-like claws are used for grabbing and manipulating objects and a long tail with tousled featherlike protrusions provides balance. Certain members have two short appendages on their back also with protrusions occasionally used in displays of dominance. Ka'Alum are well-known for their cleverness and robust physique, making them extremely capable individuals.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: Ka'Alum prefer subtropical environments comprising mainly savannahs and plains but they can endure a variety of conditions due to their resilient physique. Once the Ka'Alum became enlightened they quickly expanded unto habitable but unpopulated worlds setting up colonies that - once they reached a certain size - became relatively self-governing. As a result, the Ka'Alum have highly evolved societies spanning several worlds, all supremely ruled by an elected conclave residing a limited time on each of the worlds within the federation.

BEHAVIOUR: The species is known as having a practical, astute if occasionally callous nature. They habitually treat others with nonchalant politeness and act in terms of what they can gain from this person - not necessarily exploitative, simply how can this person benefit them. The Ka'Alum have a - perhaps undeserved - notorious reputation as pitiless slavers. In truth it is probably only a rather small proportion of the species that engage in slave-trade, but the natural pragmatism of the species seems to make them highly competent and prosperous within this trade.

ENCOUNTERS: Ka'Alum can be encountered in more or less any conceivable capacity; be it direct adversaries, allies or as disinterested parties to have dealings with. They frequently conduct their business as independent entities with a gathering of foreign aides as support rather than fellow members of their species, and they can only rarely be found in the employ of another unless it benefits them substantially to do so. Anyone with opposing interests to a Ka'Alum may find themselves confronted by a very capable individual prepared to make every effort to achieve success. However, once this is accomplished the Ka'Alum has no further interest in overcoming the former contender. A Ka'Alum faced with determined opposition weighs its options, changing tactics or possibly withdraws if success is unlikely.

COMBAT: Ka'Alum are analytical and decisive in their approach to violent conflict, quickly gauging their opportunities and odds to proceed with the greatest prospect of conquest or otherwise resolving the conflict to their advantage. In a fight the Ka'Alum adopt the tactic that ensures the least risk of harm to itself or its followers and utilise the means and conditions at their disposal to the best of their ability and are not averse to get involved if this grants the best chance of success. Ka'Alum tend to

be proficient in ranged weapons or polearms, increasing their own reach and keeping adversaries away. Preferred manoeuvres depend entirely on their opponent as they adopt the tactic suited to that particular adversary.



Ka'Alum

| | | | |
|------------|---|------------|--------------|
| AGILITY | 4 | HEALTH | 35 |
| AWARENESS | 5 | SIZE | Large |
| STAMINA | 4 | MOVE | 8 |
| STRENGTH | 3 | WEAPON | Glaive / bow |
| INTELLECT | 6 | REACH | As weapon |
| PERSUASION | 5 | ATT MOD | +4 |
| PRESENCE | 3 | ATT SPEED | +1 |
| WILLPOWER | 4 | DMG | As weapon |
| | | DV | 7 |
| | | PROTECTION | DR 2 |

| | |
|------------|--|
| TALENTS | Quick thinker |
| FLAWS | Distinctive appearance |
| ATTRIBUTES | Long digitigrade legs, peripheral vision, small claws and tail |
| EQUIPMENT | Fine clothes, reinforced cloth armour, daggers, glaive or other polearm, composite longbow and occasionally whips. |

TALATH

DESCRIPTION: There are two breeds of Talath, both of them stocky and muscular with the most common breed standing about four and a half cubits high and the other up to seven cubits tall. The skin of the common breed is a brownish red occasionally with sparse patches of fur. Their faces have pronounced cheekbones and massive jaws with wide-set pale eyes providing extensive peripheral vision. Their large furrowed mouths are filled with short pointed teeth giving them a menacing grin. Two small nostrils sit almost centred in the face with little noticeable nose protrusion. Thick locks of hair grow from high on the scalp to the upper back resembling massive manes ranging from black to whitish grey. As Talath age their skin thickens and spots of scale-like membranes appear randomly across their body.

Their arms are brawny with exaggerated forearms ending in stubby paddle-like hands with thick conical fingers. Their digitigrade legs are thick with flat flexible feet and broad wrinkled toes providing great stability as well as momentum.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: Hailing from a vastly savage world called Aqihabara, Talath are nomadic - gathering in packs, ranging from just a few to several hundred individuals - travelling across the vast steppes and plateaus of the globe. The social customs among the Talath seem rather peculiar and their hierarchical behavioural patterns are often hard to understand by others, as positions seem to change constantly within a given group.

BEHAVIOR: Talath are perceived as brutish and bad-tempered by most other races and they tend to lack the common social acumen found amongst most other enlightened species. This possibly stems from a tendency to act on impulse rather than contemplation, making interaction with other races a rather delicate matter for any outsider. Talath respect strength and their social customs are very brusque and loudish.

ENCOUNTERS: Quick to anger, Talath can often be found brawling in wine dens or anywhere for that matter. They work for high or low in the Eternal City, accepting employment based on respect and whether someone is deemed a worthy employer. In this capacity Talath can just as easily be adversaries as allies and met almost everywhere except the Penda'Rinn district where they are barred due to their volatile nature and past incidents.

COMBAT: This species is born for warfare and violence. Talath are determined and proficient warriors who - if encountered in packs - are well-organised and utilising surprisingly sound tactics considering their limited intellect. A Talath pack always has a designated alpha member directing the efforts and leading the charge with other pack members having roles such as scouts, defenders, flankers and so on enabling the pack to take advantage of their individual capabilities. Favoured combat manoeuvres include furious charge, All-out attack, called attack, knockdown, block and counter-attack. All Talath innately have the formation-fighting specialisation.



TALATH

| | | | |
|------------|---|------------|---------------|
| AGILITY | 3 | HEALTH | 43 |
| AWARENESS | 2 | SIZE | Large |
| STAMINA | 5 | MOVE | 7 |
| STRENGTH | 7 | WEAPON | Great weapons |
| INTELLECT | 2 | REACH | Near (4) |
| PERSUASION | 2 | ATT MOD | +5 |
| PRESENCE | 3 | ATT SPEED | +1 |
| WILLPOWER | 3 | DMG | As weapon +5 |
| | | DV | 6 |
| | | PROTECTION | DR 6 |

TALENTS

Explosive force

FLAWS

Primitive and bad temper (both moderate)

ATTRIBUTES

Tough hide and digitigrade legs

SPECIAL

Innate formation fighting

EQUIPMENT

Any combination of armour, a great weapon, multiple extra weapons and looted goods.

Yiagh'Zii

DESCRIPTION: Yiagh'Zii are a species of Void entities known to dance on pernicious peaks in demented rapture to please their indefinite masters from the deep oblivion. These slithering abominations have a three-sectioned body with the lower half being a tangle of three to five tendrils ending in fleshy lumps functioning as anchors, affixing the Yiagh'Zii to almost any surface.

Between these and four repulsively arm-like appendages a flexible white membrane allows the entities to produce a variety of horrid sounds as it expands and retracts in wavy patterns. From a fissured cone-shaped head-parallel a short trunk infolds an extendable tongue ending in a peculiar mouthpiece with protruding lobes used as a sensory organ. Numerous ogling eyes are interspersed chaotically across the entire corpus of the entity.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: At home in the depths of the Void, the Yiagh'Zii surreptitiously venture into the Cosmos in irregular cycles as if following some peculiar almanack.

Gathering in herds akin to raiding parties, they appear and perform their abhorrent activities and then leave, seemingly having satisfied some voracious obligation known and understood only by themselves.

BEHAVIOUR: Yiagh'Zii irregularly appear on Cosmic worlds capturing slaves to drag to remote locations, sacrificing and paying homage through their demented dance.

Captured slaves get tasted with licks of the foul Yiagh'Zii tongues after which select individuals are dragged along, and the remaining are discarded or torn apart. Once gathered, the raiding party withdraws to sacrosanct locations, typically on far-flung moons. Here the profane ceremony leaves the sacrificed not quite dead but empty, devoid of cognisance, sentiment or sentience - living shells, scarred and broken.

ENCOUNTERS: Yiagh'Zii can be encountered almost everywhere, excluding densely populated areas, which they avoid. Happenstances are most likely to occur just before, during or after a Yiagh'Zii raid, but before they have departed for their remote destination.

Yiagh'Zii are intelligent but cannot be reasoned with, and any attempt to read minds or gauge motivation will be utterly incomprehensible. Yiagh'Zii do not necessarily act hostilely towards others but will be inquisitive and perhaps even "taste" someone and try to drag them off, if found delectable due to high Mental scores. Defiance and resistance will be met with immediate brutality.

COMBAT: Aggravated Yiagh'Zii have a variety of possibilities available to them when engaged in conflict. Their multiple eyes and odd physiology mean that they have no front or rear, ignoring direction completely. When agitated their membranes reverberate incessantly producing subsonic waves causing nausea and disorientation. Non-Yiagh'Zii within D12 metres must make a Stamina roll [7] or succumb to biliousness: The character falls to the ground quivering and prone, counting as stunned for D6 rounds, after which all actions suffer a -3 penalty for D6 rounds.

Yiagh'Zii will use their tongue to drain the cerebral essence of stunned adversaries. A draining attempt counts as a normal action taking a full round (initiative -6) where the Yiagh'Zii makes an opposed Awareness roll against a randomly determined Mental Trait of the victim. A successful drain reduces the victim's designated Trait score by one point permanently. If engaged in close combat Yiagh'Zii will make up to four attacks per round using its arms, suffering no penalties; each causing D6 + 2 [2] noxious damage: Stamina roll [7] or suffer Delirium.

ABILITIES: Their horrid nebulous appearance cause Fear [7] effect +4 and their insubstantial flesh suffer only half damage from physical damage.

| Yiagh'Zii | | | |
|------------|---|--|---------------|
| AGILITY | 6 | HEALTH | 29 |
| AWARENESS | 7 | SIZE | Medium |
| STAMINA | 4 | MOVE | 12 (Void) |
| STRENGTH | 5 | | 6 (Cosmos) |
| INTELLECT | 9 | WEAPON | Claws |
| PERSUASION | 0 | REACH | Adjacent (1) |
| PRESENCE | 7 | ATT MOD | +4 |
| WILLPOWER | 9 | ATT SPEED | +3 |
| | | DMG | D6 + 2 [2] |
| | | DV | 10 |
| | | PROTECTION | Insubstantial |
| ATTRIBUTES | | Four arms, claws, insubstantial flesh, multiple eyes, natural immunity, tentacles and Void entity [3]. | |
| POWERS | | Drain Mental Traits. | |
| SPECIAL | | Fear [7] and immunity to mental assaults and ignore injuries. | |



PLAYER NAME: _____

BLACK VOID

| | | | | |
|---------|------|-------------|------------|-------|
| NAME: | | SPECIES: | HOMEWORLD: | |
| GENDER: | AGE: | SKIN: | EYES: | HAIR: |
| BUILD: | | APPEARANCE: | | |

PERSONALITY

DESIRE AND MOTIVATION:

DISLIKES, SECRETS AND REGRETS

PHILOSOPHY & PRINCIPLES:

MANNERISM

QUIRKS AND HABITS:

SAYINGS:

ORIGIN

ANCESTRY AND RELATIONS:

CASTE:

FACTION AND ALLEGIANCE:

OCCUPATION:

PATRON:

WASTAH

INTELLECT

AGILITY

AWARENESS

STAMINA

STRENGTH

WILLPOWER

PRESENCE

PERSUASION

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SANITY

TOTAL SANITY

ANXIOUS (+1 TO MADNESS)

DISTURBED (+3 TO MADNESS)

MADNESS

ENLIGHTENMENT

HEALTH

TOTAL HEALTH

HURT (-1 PENALTY)

INJURED (-3 PENALTY)

DEAD

[illegible][illegible]

| POWERS | | RANKING | COST |
|--------|--|-------------|-------|
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[illegible][illegible]

BLACK VOID

CHARACTER HISTORY:

FRIENDS & ALLIES:

KNOWN ENEMIES:

NOTABLE PEOPLE:

NOTABLE EXPERIENCES:

MOVEMENT (KM/HOUR)

WALKING SPEED: _____

RUNNING SPEED (x2): _____

SPRINTING SPEED (x4): _____

COMBAT SPEED:
(METRES/ROUND)



DEFENCE VALUE

AGILITY MODIFIER: _____

SKILL MODIFIER: _____

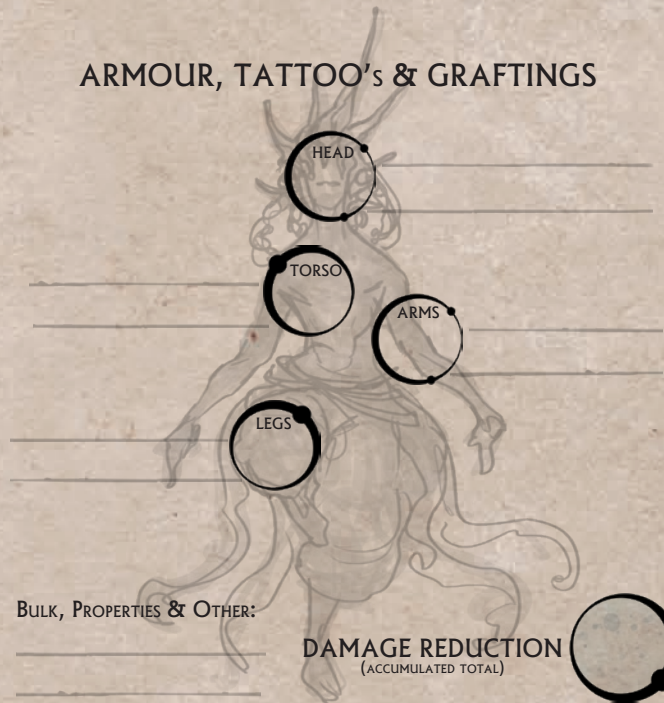
SHIELD MODIFIER: _____

OTHER MODIFIERS: _____

DEFENCE VALUE



ARMOUR, TATTOO's & GRAFTINGS



WEALTH

PROPERTY / ASSETS

EQUIPMENT

WEAPONS

| TYPE | SIZE | RANGE | ATTACK MODIFIER | SPEED | DAMAGE | PROPERTIES | SPECIAL |
|------|------|-------|--------------------|-------|--------|------------|---------|
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SURVIVAL IS ONLY THE BEGINNING...!

In the days when Babylon was the greatest city on Earth, mankind lived in placid ignorance of the grandeur, vastness and horror of the Cosmos. Following cataclysmic events on Earth the fragile Veil between reality and the Void was shattered and the truth of existence was revealed. As mankind cried to their Gods for salvation, they were torn from Earth by Void torrents and the surviving peoples were scattered among the stars. Countless were lost and mankind seemed all but perished.

Over the decades the lone survivors, stragglers and ragged remnants of mankind's tribes struggled for survival across countless uncaring worlds. However, a few managed to go beyond mere subsistence and travelled the Void currents to find fabled Llyhn, epicentre of the Cosmos. The survivors congregated and created enclaves within the Eternal City - small communities where mankind could survive and start to rebuild all which was lost.

You are descendants of the survivors from Earth, the lost cradle of humanity. Llyhn is your home now. Swarming with outlandish life forms, eccentric Daimons and fickle demigods; it is a swelling cosmopolis of intrigue, wonder, treachery, corruption, beauty, decadence and eldritch menace. Behind you lie the smouldering ruins of a once great species trying to reclaim former glory, before you the mysteries of Llyhn and a vast treacherous Cosmos...!

The quickstart contains basic rules and content enabling you to play the role-playing game BLACK VOID, including:

- The basic character-building system
- An introduction to the D12-based rules system
- Selected manoeuvres to run enticing combat encounters
- Basic Blood ritual power mechanics
- Equipment, weapons and armour sample lists
- Basic Arbiter's guide including abridged Fear, Madness, Injury tables and more...
- Four species samples
- Character sheet

IN THE UNKNOWN | BEYOND THE HORIZON | WHAT IS HUMANITY

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Print-friendly character sheet and other resources available for download

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GAMES**

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