

## EVERY ADVENTURE STARTS SOMEWHERE ...

Every hero story has its origins. Bring those tales to life with the Young Centurions RPG!

This **family-friendly** game puts you in the shoes of **teenage pulp heroes** of the early 1910s. Take on the neighborhood bully...or a mad scientist bent on world domination... or both! Discover ancient artifacts and get home before the dinner bell. Join your friends for exciting adventures at home and abroad.

In the Young Centurions RPG, you'll find:

- » Streamlined Fate-Acceleratedstyle rules set in a fun pulp atmosphere
- » A Campaign Rating system to help you easily adjust your games to the maturity level of your players
- Rules for Century stunts, mentors, and current approaches to integrate into your Fate Accelerated games
- » Everything you need to set off on high stakes adventure—character creation, story ideas, rules—all in one easy-to-digest package

YOUNG CENTURIONS. A world of adventure awaits!



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This is a game where people make up stories about wonderful, terrible, impossible, glorious things. All the characters and events portrayed in this work are fictional. Any resemblance to real people, events, movies, early 20th Century Midwestern America, young adults with amazing gifts, robots, martial arts societies, schoolyard bullies, racing tractors, or evil masterminds is purely coincidental, but kinda hilarious. We pinky-swear promise.

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## THE CENTURIONS AWAKEN ...

Jackson "Jet" Black was skipping stones. Actually, he was throwing the stones at an imaginary group of black robed priests who were trying to stop him from taking the equally imaginary sacred idol. Jet was an adventurer, but only in his head. In real life, he was the kind of scrawny kid who always got picked last.

"That idol belongs in a museum," he muttered, with a squint that he thought looked tough.

He would have fired off another missile, taking out the head priest, and then made a daring escape up along Strather's Creek, but he heard someone coming. He launched himself into the Hiding Place, underneath the arching roots of a large oak, and peered out.

Eugene Falks, the leader of Nebraska Township's most nefarious gang, chased Billy Block along the opposite bank. Billy was only eight, much smaller than Eugene, and destined to lose the race. Within moments, Eugene had tackled him, flipping him over with a teeth-rattling shake.

"You looked at me funny!" Eugene shouted at the smaller boy. "I saw you. You were makin' fun of me!"

"No, Eugene!" babbled Billy, desperate with terror. "Honest, I didn't."

"Liar!" Eugene grabbed a handful of rocky mud and smeared it into the smaller kid's hair. Billy bucked and squealed in pain. "Don't you lie to me."

Jet Black had had enough. He wasn't much bigger than Billy, and there was no way he could win an altercation against Eugene. The neighborhood bully was way too fast to be outrun. Intervening was stupid, but it was right. Jackson Black would have run away, but Jet Black? That was a hero's name, and it was his.

He made his careful way out of the Hiding Spot and walked closer, unwilling to give away the secret that had so often kept him safe. Only when he was away from the entrance did he call out, "Hey! Falks! Why don't you pick on someone your own size, you big bully?"

Both Eugene and Billy stared at him in shock for a moment, and then the race was on. Jet lost, except that Billy got away, so he'd really won. He couldn't help but grin as he faced off against the larger boy, holding up his fists. This felt like the beginning of something amazing. For the first time in his life, he felt like a real hero, and he wanted more.



"It must be interesting, to travel about and see so many things," said Nadya Petulengro, tilting her head to beam up at the soldier, so out of place in his uniform amidst the bright colors of the circus where she worked.

"Oh yes." The soldier basked in the attention. "We're on our way to Warsaw next. I hear it's very pretty."

"Sssh!" One of his buddies elbowed him. "Those orders are secret. What are you doing?"

"She's harmless!" protested the soldier. "I just... She's nice."

### INTRODUCTION



"Oh, I won't tell anybody," said Nadya gravely. "I know how to keep a secret. But you should probably go, or you'll miss the show under the big top. Our elephant has some new tricks today!"

She smiled and waved as the soldiers moved on, but as soon as they'd gone, the smile slipped off her face. The Germans were moving into Poland. It felt like disaster, the kind she should warn someone about, if only she knew someone to warn. Maybe the Ringmaster? It was probably futile, but she had to try.

At that moment, her eyes caught the man standing just outside Cartagena's Wagon of Elixirs and Tonics. His hair was slick perfection, his suit immaculate. And expensive. On any other day, she would have thought him a mark. But instead, her heart leaped with nervousness. She remembered that face from other cities. Rome. Turin. Thessaloniki.

Perhaps he just loved circuses. Perhaps he wanted to join. But she knew deep in her heart that neither of these things were true. He was following someone.

He was following her.

Their eyes met, and Nadya felt her cheeks flame. She'd been alone in the world ever since her family died, along with the rest of her Romani clan. The Ringmaster had taken her in, and she was grateful for that, but sometimes the loneliness stung. But she'd never felt as alone as she did now, facing down this mysterious figure with his mysterious goals.

She turned away, stumbled over her own feet, and allowed herself a single glance at the man in the crowd. His beady eyes followed her every move. His fingers drummed an impatient rat-a-tat on the wheel of Cartagena's wagon.

It was time to run.



"You're grounded!" yelled Mrs. Silver. "For forever!"

Her evening gown was splattered with mud and rain; the perfect place settings for that night's dinner party sat under a pile of broken glass. Mack perched in the middle, his hands bleeding from the tough climb and the fistfight at the top. But it was useless to tell his mother about the manservant with the gun—the one who had been sitting on the roof next to the skylight since lunchtime, waiting for the ambassador to arrive for the party. He'd spotted the would-be assassin while climbing trees in the orangery and tried to tell her, but the only thing she'd been concerned about was the rip in his trousers. He didn't know why he'd bothered; Mother never listened to him. So he'd dealt with the problem himself. He was tall for twelve, and good with heights. Too bad he'd gotten thrown through the window for his trouble.

He didn't regret it. But he wished, just once, that his parents would listen. That they'd put him before their precious reputations. But they just thought of him as a screw-up. A black sheep. An embarrassment. He wished, and not for the first time, that he could just leave.

Then again, why couldn't he?

#### INTRODUCTION

"No, Mother," he said. "I'm leaving. And you can't stop me."

He walked away as she sputtered in the background, but he wasn't even listening. He felt free for the first time in his life, and he vowed that no one was going to cage him again. The world awaited him, and he was ready to take it all in, black-garbed assassins and all.



The baby was fussy. This might have been because he was hungry, or maybe because his sister, Sally Slick, had just rushed in covered in streaks of blood and plaster dust. He took one look at her and burst into tears. The rest of her brothers, clustered around the living room, launched to their feet in alarm.

"What happened?" demanded Isaiah.

"Who do we need to beat up?" added Wil, his fists already clenched.

"It's fine," said Sally, waving them all back into their places. "No need to panic."

"One of her inventions must have exploded again," said Henry, knowingly.

She stopped, tilted her head, and stared him down. It would have worked on most people, but brothers tend to be immune to even the best stare-downs.

"It was another pair of Steel Syndicate goons. I keep telling them to leave me alone, but they don't listen. So this time," she said grimly, "I *made* them listen." She paused for effect, but her conscience made her add, "I didn't hurt anyone, though. I'm not that kind of girl."

"Sally, come here, please." Ma's voice called from the kitchen, a tone that allowed no quarrel. The Slick boys exchanged wide-eyed looks. Their sister was going to get it.

Sally gulped, but squared her shoulders and went to face her fate bravely. Ma sat at the empty kitchen table, her hands folded before her.

"Ma," said Sally, not really sure excuses would work but willing to try. "Honest, I didn't do anything wrong. They tried to snatch me off the road, but I was prepared."

"Hush, baby. That's not it." Mrs. Slick took a deep breath. "I've decided that if this is who you are, we need to embrace it. And you need schooling if you're going to go haring off into danger on a weekly basis."

"Schooling...?" Sally blinked. "I don't think there's a school for danger."

"I've found you a teacher," said Ma, ignoring her. "He's going to give you lessons to make sure you come back to us safe."

A tall, cloaked figure appeared, as if by magic, from the darkened corner of the kitchen, near the icebox. Sally couldn't keep from shuddering as she glimpsed the featureless mask that spread across his face. This was her teacher? She tried to imagine him clapping erasers and couldn't.

"I am the Grey Ghost, Sally," he said in a voice that was surprisingly youthful. "I'm here to teach you about what you are."

"What's that?" she asked.

"You're a Centurion. And it's your job to save the world."

INTROPUCTION



## WHAT IS THIS THING?

*Young Centurions RPG* is a pick-up-and-play roleplaying game about teenage pulp heroes. It's got adventure! Thrills! Chills! And other things you'd say like a movie voiceover guy! If you've ever wanted to experience an adventure à la *Young Indiana Jones*, this is your opportunity to do so without any close encounters with snakes.

This game is designed to be rules minimum and story maximum. The focus should be on the characters and the world and the fun, not on looking up the specific rules for tractor racing at nighttime. You can still race tractors at night if you want (and who doesn't?) but our goal is to make that tractor race *easy* to tell and *fun* to play out, unburdened by lots of rules.

The Young Centurions rules are based on Fate Accelerated Edition; if you've played that game, you'll see a lot of familiar elements. (Want to cut right to the chase, FAE experts? "New Stuff for Fate Accelerated Edition Veterans" on page 43 will bring you up to speed quickly.) But you don't need to be an experienced gamer to play, because we've included the basics you need to get started. And if you're an RPG expert, this is an ideal game for introducing your stubborn holdout friends who've never played or for introducing your favorite geeklings to the hobby. Plus, it's a fun, quick pick-up game for times when you're low on prep.

## Gathering Supplies

Here's what you need to get started:

- Three to five people. One is the gamemaster, often abbreviated as GM. The rest are players. More about that later.
- Fate Dice or a Deck of Fate. Fate Dice are a set of four six-sided dice with two sides, two sides, and two blank sides. You might also find them in stores under the name Fudge dice. The Deck of Fate is a stack of cards if you prefer picking a card to rolling dice.
- One character sheet per player. You can download them from *www.evilhat.com*.
- Index cards, sticky notes, or paper—anything you can write short notes on and put in the middle of the table for everyone to see.
- Fate tokens. You can use anything—poker chips, beads, pennies, bottle caps, etc. You'll need about 30 or 40.

### NOT GONNA BUY NEW DICE

If you prefer, you can use four regular six-sided dice. Just read a 5 or 6 as  $\square$ , 1 or 2 as  $\square$ , and 3 or 4 as  $\square$ .





### INTROPUCTION

## Choosing a Gamemaster

If you're new to gaming—and you have one or more experienced players in your group—you might want to let one of the experienced gamers run the game. GMing is a lot of fun and worth learning to do, but it's a lot to learn. We recommend that new gamers and young gamers start out as player characters whenever possible.

If everyone in the group is new to gaming, the person who chooses to be the gamemaster needs to read this entire book from cover to cover. Make sure you're comfortable with the rules and familiar with the setting before the first session. You don't need to have the book memorized, but you want to be able to find rules quickly and to make good educated guesses when you don't have time to look things up.





## Kid Gamers

We want *Young Centurions RPG* to be accessible to gamers of any age or experience level, because it seems silly to make a game about kid heroes and then only let grownups play it! So we've tried to make this the kind of game that both kids and adults can enjoy. You might use it to introduce your kids to the hobby, or if you're an electronic gamer looking to take a peek at tabletop, or if you're new to gaming altogether. Not only is tabletop gaming a load of fun, but it also encourages creativity and critical thinking, and sometimes it has talking apes in it. Really, you can't go wrong with talking apes.

So, anyone can play this, right? Well, not exactly. You do need a few basic skills. If you're reading this right now, chances are you probably have them, but let's take a look anyway:

- You need to be able to read and write to play this game. It's hard to make decisions about your character if you can't read the sheet.
- You need to be able to sit through an entire movie if you want to play a full gaming session. If that seems too long, consider hitting pause in the action and taking breaks.
- Kid gamers should have parental permission to play. Upsetting parents is never a good idea.

## HOW DO YOU PLAY?

To put it simply, roleplaying games are all about telling stories. Each player creates a character, the gamemaster sets the stage, and you work together to tell the story of what happens when the characters go on their latest adventure. The dice (or cards) help determine how things turn out. Good dice rolls mean success, but sometimes poor rolls are even more fun to play. We talk about the rules in lots of detail starting on page 54.

Before you get started, read through this book and learn more about the *Young Centurions RPG*. This is the world your story takes place in. It's important that everyone in your group is familiar with this world and with the basic rules of how the game works. The gamemaster has a little extra work to do learning how to moderate ("run") the game, and there are some GM-specific sections in this book to help you do that. You only need to read them if you intend to run a game.

After that, it's time to get started! Adventure awaits!

INTROPUCTION

### YOUNG CENTURIONS, FATE CORE, AND FATE ACCELERATED EDITION

If you want to learn more about the rules for *Young Centurions*, or are curious about using the same rules to play games in other settings, check out *Fate Accelerated Edition* (FAE) and *Fate Core System*, both available from Evil Hat productions: *www.evilhat.com*. The PDFs are pay-what-you-want (including free!). *Young Centurions* is based on the FAE rules. *Fate Core System* is full of discussions about why the rules work the way they do and how to get the most out of them. If you love roleplaying game systems, take a look!





# CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

Young Centurions RPG is a game about pulp heroes between the ages of 13 and 18 during the early 1900s. It's part of the Spirit of the Century universe—*Spirit of the Century* tells the story of these same heroes during their prime crime-fighting days during the 1930s. *Shadow of the Century* covers their decline during the bleak yet flashy 1980s. But here, we're focused on where these heroes came from. Kids *can* make a difference, and in this game, they take center stage.

In the game, your characters are **Spirits**—young pulp heroes. These teens and tweens are just beginning to come into their powers and taking the first steps on their mission to save the world. The history of the world they live in is very similar to ours...with a few very notable changes (for more, see *"Overview of the World in the 1910s"* on page 34).

## WHAT'S A PULP HERO?

"Pulps" were magazines and books full of adventure fiction published in the late 1800s and first few decades of the 1900s. The term "pulp" comes from the cheap paper they were printed on.

Featuring genres like science fiction, westerns, adventure thrillers, and many more, pulps often featured larger-than-life heroes who performed incredible feats of daring. Think about characters like Indiana Jones, Lara Croft, Zorro, Captain America, Katniss Everdeen, Batman, Captain Kirk, or even Dora the Explorer—if you know about any of them, you have a pretty good idea of what a pulp hero is.



## CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS WHAT'S A SPIRIT?

To put it simply, the Spirits are the good guys. Also called **Spirit Centurions**, they're born at the stroke of midnight on the cusp between December 31st and January 1st at the beginning of each new century. Each Centurion represents a specific ideal that defines their era. You know those labels that historians slap in textbooks—it was an "age of progress" or an "era of technological advancement," things like that? Those are the kinds of ideals we're talking about. So you might have a Spirit of Progress or a Spirit of Technology. And when it comes to their ideals, Spirits truly embody them. In fact, they can accomplish amazing, almost superhuman things when it comes to their given ideal.

## IDEALS AND ASPECTS

The ideal your Spirit embodies is described on your character sheet as something called an **aspect**—a word or phrase that describes something really important about your character. We talk about aspects on page 80.

Not every child born on the first day of the century is a Centurion, and the ability doesn't seem to be inherited. Children of Spirits aren't more likely to be Spirits themselves—which is probably a good thing since the baby would be born on Mom or Dad's 100th birthday! And each ideal can be duplicated. In the early 1900s, there are many documented Spirits of Progress, for example. Progress (or bravery, or creativity, or any other ideal) takes many forms, and those forms are reflected in the makeup of each generation of Centurions.

Around puberty, Spirits begin to manifest their abilities in earnest, although most of them don't realize there's anything strange going on at first. We're not talking superpowers here—they can't fly or shoot laser beams out of their eyes. But they have incredible luck and/or skill. For example, a Spirit of Ingenuity would be abnormally ingenious. She might be able to build a gadget to meet any need, even going so far as to invent an airplane engine in Pa's old cow barn. As she grows into her powers, what used to be idle tinkering now results in amazing inventions. A Spirit of Optimism might be able to find his way out of the most dire situations, when all hope is apparently lost. And so on. They aren't superhuman. They're the people who always happen to be at the right place at the right time to stand up for what's right. They're at the forefront of scientific discoveries, political peace treaties, hostage rescues...any place where a hero is needed to lead the way.





Sometimes a Centurion's ideals get them into trouble just as much as they get them out of it. A girl who embodies the Spirit of Exploration might be able to find her way out of a maze full of punji sticks and hostile foes, but she also can't resist going into the maze in the first place, despite knowing the dangers. In fact, a Spirit finds it very difficult—even uncomfortable to act against their ideal.

Centurions make things happen, often because they give in to the urge to press the unlabeled red button or investigate the mystery. They might not be the ones on the front pages of the newspapers, but they're the ones in the background who set things in motion. Sometimes they even do it on purpose!

All in all, Spirits are people who push the limits. They're like Indiana Jones; they can get shot at, thrown into a pit of snakes, beaten up, dragged behind a car, and thrown off a plane...and still get up and make wisecracks. These are the people who are always in the right place at the right time, and they've got the moxie, skills, and sometimes the blind luck necessary to come out on top. And in *Young Centurions*, they happen to be kids.

**Sally Slick, Spirit Centurion:** Sally Slick, a farm girl from Illinois, is a Spirit of Ingenuity. She spends most of her days at school, helping Ma in the kitchen, or racing tractors with her brothers. But in her spare time, she sneaks out to Pa's old crib barn and invents things. Many of them work. Others—like the Hair Trimmifier—are better left unmentioned. At 13, she dreams of running off to the city to learn to be an engineer. The next year, she invents the jet engine and thwarts a criminal syndicate. A teenage Sally eventually leaves home to do her part in the war, but she never forgets that she's fighting for the family she left behind.





## Yup, They're Kids

The events of *Young Centurions* take place during the years 1913-1918, which makes our Spirit heroes between the ages of 12 and 17. That's right; they're kids. And as kids, they're at a real turning point. On one hand, their Spirit abilities are really starting to manifest—when you combine the upheaval of puberty with sudden urges to invent things/buy an airplane and explore the Yukon/start investigating the crimes reported in the local newspaper, it makes the teen years extra exciting. But they're also still dealing with real world kid problems. That boy down the street might be just a neighborhood bully or he might be a spy for the criminal underworld. Or both.

Some Centurions can't resist the call of adventure and leave home early; Jet Black lied about his age to enlist in the military at the age of 17. Others don't really have what many of us would call a "typical" childhood; Nadya Petulengro was a Romani traveler and spy for the Allied Forces. But that doesn't mean their home life isn't important—those family ties and childhood experiences are part of what drives them to do great things. And that is what *Young Centurions* is all about—those moments when heroism is born and the homes those new heroes go back to. If they're lucky, that is.

While they're still at home, a Young Centurion has to go to school or work and deal with the same things most teens have to deal with. They might have just saved the world, but that doesn't mean they won't be punished if they're not home for 8:00 supper. And just as their abilities make them a homing beacon for astonishing adventures, they also attract drama in their everyday lives. It's as if the strands of fate twist around them, making them the focal point of problems that need fixing. So a teenage Spirit might find herself fighting a school bully one day and fencing with a criminal mastermind the next. To most people, that might seem kind of strange; to them, it's just life.

## THE MORE YOU KNOW

For more information on what life was like for kids and teenagers in the early 1900s, go to page 39 and read the creatively titled *"Coming of Age in the 1910s."* GMs can find advice about age-appropriate challenges and opponents on page 118.



## The Century Club

Every hero has a home base for operations, or they should! Batman has the Batcave. Superman has the Fortress of Solitude. The Centurions are no exception; many of them belong to the **Century Club**. This super-secret organization can trace its official existence back to the early 1700s, although it was probably in play long before that. The purpose of the Century Club is to fight the shadows that threaten each century, both literally and figuratively. (More information on **Shadows** with a capital S can be found in *"What's a Shadow?"* on page 25.) The organization locates, trains, and coordinates the activities of Spirits all around the world.

The Century Club has a main chapter house, where the most senior Spirits work to identify threats to world peace and prosperity and to coordinate a response. The original main chapter house was located in Paris until a fire consumed it in 1769. At the time of *Young Centurions*, it's in London, but there are smaller chapter houses located throughout the world. Chapter houses provide all kinds of services. They offer sleeping and training facilities, equipment such as aeroplanes, automobiles, and weaponry, legal and financial services—anything a Centurion needs to help them continue to serve the forces of good.

All of those services need someone to run them, especially at a time when all of the Spirits are either really, *really* old or very young, as is the case in the world of *Young Centurions*. That's where the **Century Retainers** come in.

## The Century Retainers

The Retainers are the backbone of the Century Club. Most people believe the Century Club is a service and social club, similar to the Masons, and yes, many of its members are just normal people, looking to make a difference with a few friends. But behind the scenes, a small percentage of members are dedicated to making a bigger difference by fighting villainy and injustice more directly. These Retainers work secretly to fight the Shadows and to find and mentor young Spirits as they grow into their powers.

Without the support of the Retainers, the Century Club would fall apart completely. This is especially true in the early years of each century—as in the *Young Centurions* game. The previous Centurions are fading and the new ones are children, and the Retainers must quickly locate and train the next generation of heroes. Each century teeters on a balance between good and evil, and it's up to the Retainers to make sure the Century Club is prepared to win that battle.

Sadly, Retainers don't share the century-born powers of the Spirits. However, their birth date—the first day of each decade—does gives them unique skills, including divination, which makes them perfectly suited to find new Centurions. Numerology is particularly popular, but other types of divination can also be seen in chapter houses around the world. Various Retainers read Ogham runes, tea leaves, and tarot, searching for clues to the next conjunction where the fate of the century will be tested once again.

One of the most important jobs of the Retainers is finding and mentoring young Spirits. Spirits are giant trouble magnets—things just happen when they're around. Generally speaking, their innate abilities are more than enough to solve the problem, but they're still learning. They're still young. Sometimes they make mistakes, and those mistakes have consequences. It's the mentor's job to protect their young charges from the worst of those consequences until the Spirits are ready to stand alone. It's also helpful to have an adult on hand to help explain that no, Johnny doesn't need to be taken in by the truancy officer, because he's on a day trip with his "uncle."

At the time of *Young Centurions*, finding and recruiting new Spirits is the highest priority of the Century Club, which means that the Retainers are very busy indeed.

#### RETAINERS AS MENTORS

Retainers have a lot of jobs. They run the Century Club, scour the world for evidence of Shadow activity, and locate new Centurions. Some Retainers act as mentors to young Centurions, teaching them everything they need to know to function in this new world. Mentors play an important part in *Young Centurions* adventures—see page 123 for details on how to make this vital role a part of the game rules.

#### Amandine Laclerque, Century Retainer:

On any given night, hundreds of thousands of people listen to Amandine Laclerque's music on gramophones. Laclerque is one of the most famous singers of the early 1900s, and the Frenchwoman travels all around the world, performing in concerts and even making an appearance or two in moving pictures. Little does the general public know that she's actually a highly ranked Retainer with unmatched skills in ornithomancy—divination based on the songs and flights of birds. Laclerque travels with a pair of songbirds—and an assistant whose only job is to care for them—and she's located many Young Centurions based on the guidance her birds provide.



## The Recruitment Process

Not all Spirits are recruited to the Century Club. It's rare, but it happens, so if you'd just like to make characters and send them off to adventure without fooling with all this Century Club stuff, go for it! But if the idea of inducting your young heroes into a secret society with seemingly unlimited resources and a secret agenda sounds like fun, we're right there with you. The Century Club training process provides a terrific story hook to get a group of very different Spirits together and give them a common goal.

If you're interested in playing that out in your game, you have lots of options. First, someone from the organization needs to locate the characters. How could that happen in a game setting? Here are a few possibilities to get you started:

- The characters might be in the newspaper for doing something amazing like taking down the local crime lord. The Century Club scours the papers and sends investigators out to look into potential recruits.
- The characters have run away from home, looking for adventure or fleeing bad situations. The Century Club keeps a close eye on locations that might attract kids on the run, like street gangs, traveling circuses, or trains. A group of Spirits might converge on one of these locations only to be recruited.
- The Century Club sometimes sponsors contests to help locate Spirits, and the player characters won! Their essays/inventions/drawings got them invited to the city to claim their prizes, only to find that this is actually a recruitment effort.
- A Retainer from the Century Club has located the characters using divination. But numerology and other divinatory abilities aren't very specific, so they've come to town looking for kids born on the right day. And someone who does that might seem awfully suspicious...

Once a Spirit or group of Spirits is identified, the Century Club dispatches a new mentor to confirm their abilities, introduce them to the Century Club, and attempt to recruit them. These mentors must work fast, because unmentored Centurions can get into trouble even faster. Fate is already leading them into danger, and they lack the understanding and support necessary to survive it. They might also run into resistance from parents who don't understand what's happening with their suddenly rebellious kids. The Century Club can help kids deal with that transition, so the quicker the better when it comes to recruitment!



So how does the recruitment process work? There are many possibilities, and each experience is different. Here are a few examples from the files of the Century Club:

- Sally Slick's mother was concerned when her daughter started getting tangled up in dangerous adventures. Ma Slick contacted the Jade Lotus, a Chicago crime fighting organization that had helped the Slick family in the past. They provided a mentor for Sally and her friend, Jet Black. Their transition into the Century Club was an easy one since their families supported them.
- Nadya Petulengro was in Prague, working for a traveling circus, when she realized that the same dark-suited man had been at her last five shows. He'd noticed the way people—even enemy soldiers—confided in her. A long and dangerous chase throughout Europe ended with the man saving her life...and recruiting her as both a Centurion and an Allied spy.
- Mack Silver got pulled into the Century Club when he fell into an adventure with Sally Slick and Jet Black. In this case, his fellow Centurions recognized the spark in him and recruited him themselves.
- Mitzy Powers, daughter of a newspaper editor, was always getting into trouble by butting in on her father's stories. When the famous singer Amandine Laclerque came to town and agreed to an interview, Mitzy tagged along as usual. Mitzy was surprised to find that the diva was even more interested in interviewing her! Amandine hired Mitzy as a maid and personal attendant for the summer, but the experience turned out to be an introduction to the world of the Century Club.

### FALSE POSITIVES!

It's rare, but sometimes a Shadow (page 25) triggers a Retainer's divination. In 1901, birth records just aren't that accurate, even in developed countries, so if a baby is born near midnight, who knows if the clock is a little fast or a little slow? The child's birthdate might get recorded inaccurately. And that's to say nothing of places where written birth records aren't regularly kept!

In those cases, the Retainer doing the divination can't be absolutely certain that the young Spirit they're looking after really is a Spirit—they might be a Shadow!

Getting recruited for the Century Club can be an adventure in and of itself, and it can happen anywhere. Century Club mentors can pose as regular townspeople, taking jobs as school teachers, mail carriers, or even the creepy guy who looks after the town dump. Or they can be shadowy figures watching from afar as in Nadya's story.

The 1910s certainly weren't as cautious as we are today, but as you can imagine, strange people popping up suddenly and asking questions about the neighborhood children still causes plenty of rumors. The Century Club carefully selects and trains their field agents, but that doesn't mean that slipups never happen. There's always at least one barrister on staff at the larger chapter houses whose sole duty is to protect the field agents and bail them out of jail if necessary...if the Spirits don't get there to save him first!

The Spirits themselves might get a little nervous too. When the strange new caretaker at the neighborhood dump starts following you and your friends around, it can get scary. When first meeting a future mentor, the Spirit might be intrigued, suspicious, frightened, wary...or any combination thereof. It's tough to admit your deepest secrets to a stranger, and the age difference only makes things worse. But as these relationships develop, the Spirit usually begins to trust this strange adult, and then their training can truly begin as they learn about the presence of Shadows and the ongoing work of the Century Club.

Once the introduction has been made, the mentor slowly begins to introduce his charges to the world of the Century Club. Imagine how exciting it would be to learn that there's a secret society dedicated to fighting evil... and they want you to join! This situation can also make for some fun storylines such as:

- The young Spirits are in trouble for some reason. Their family situations might be bad, or they might be living on the streets or running with a gang. For whatever reason, they move immediately into a Century Club chapter house. These buildings might seem normal on the outside, but they conceal secret labs, hidden aeroplane hangars, and plenty of crazy gadgets guaranteed to get a group of curious kids into a whole new kind of trouble!
- The kids are eager and willing to train, but their exploits have attracted attention. Small time criminals, local bullies, or even the police are determined to make them stop adventuring, and there's no time for book learning or careful explanations. They're under attack, and the mentor must teach even as they're fighting for their lives, safety, or freedom.
- Something isn't right at the local Century Club house. Things keep going missing, and some of the equipment has been sabotaged. People have even gotten hurt. Suspicion falls on the kids since they're new to the facility, and it's up to them to find the real culprit and clear their names.

Regardless of how their recruitment goes, most kids take to the organization like a duck to water. Finally, here are people who understand them, who don't talk down to them, and who take their crazy-sounding theories and plans seriously. Not only that, but the Century Club is willing to provide financial support, including a bed, food, and training. This is the opportunity to follow their dreams, and most Spirits jump at it. The rare ones that aren't suited to life in the Club—usually loners who aren't comfortable working in groups for whatever reason—are returned to their homes; but unbeknownst to them, they'll remain under surveillance for the rest of their lives just to make sure they don't leak secrets to the other side.

A small number of Spirits remain at the chapter house permanently usually the aforementioned street children, orphans, and other unfortunate situations—but many Spirits return home, and knowing other Spirits who live close by is an invaluable resource. Mentors often return to town with their young charges, training in secret and providing additional security and backup, until the Spirit is ready to leave home, usually sometime between the ages of 16 and 18. Once they've recruited someone, the Century Club doesn't take a chance with them.

Once they're old enough to leave home, most new Spirits choose to move in to their local chapter house, which gives them a "job" and specialized training to help them stand against the Shadows. Depending on their interests, a new Spirit might learn to fly aeroplanes, translate dead languages, or pick locks. And when danger threatens, they'll be on the front lines, putting those new skills to the test.

**Barbados Chapter House:** Located in the British West Indies, the Barbados chapter house is small but very active. The island itself is tiny—less than 200 square miles. But it provides services to the entire West Indies, sometimes to the local sugarcane farmers or to the tourists that are beginning to visit via ship or aeroplane. Local Spirits and their mentors might be called out one day to investigate accusations of voudoun witchcraft among the locals and the next day to a cruise ship mired on a mysterious coral reef that seemed to appear out of nowhere...

The chapter house poses as a small private residential school that offers scholarships to students based on merit, and recruits who live at the Barbados chapter house receive a basic education. Spirits aren't permitted to go out on missions unless they have decent grades, and no one wants to miss out on an opportunity to drive the boat! Because of their oceanic environment and the lack of sufficient airfields, the Barbados chapter house has three watercraft of varying sizes ready to set sail at a moment's notice. The senior mentor, Frederick Mulroney, is an experienced sailor who requires all of his Spirits to study watercraft. All in all, they do what they can to cover a vast area with a small number of staff, but increased pirate activity has recently made this work particularly difficult. Luckily, as a British colony, they keep in close contact with the London chapter house and can call in assistance if necessary.





Spirits tend to be annoyingly healthy; they're the ones bounding around the house while the rest of the family has the flu. As you might imagine, this really irritates their relatives, but it also means that Centurions tend to live abnormally long lives and remain in very good physical condition as they age.

That's a good thing for the new crop of Young Centurions, because it's hard to learn how to be a hero without someone to teach you. Of course the mentors help, but they come with a different skill set—often the information gathering, support systemy kind—and it isn't quite the same thing. Luckily, with each generation of Spirits, a few manage to survive long enough to pass their knowledge on to the Centurions who follow them. These Spirits aren't much into adventuring any more, but they're good for stories of the "good old days" and readily serve as mentors for their young protégés.

#### SPIRIT MENTORS

Two Centurions actively serving as mentors in the early 1900s are Master Lingyu of Chicago and the Grey Ghost of London.

Master Lingyu is the leader of the Jade Lotus, a network of elders nestled deep in Chicago's Chinatown, dedicated to fighting the menace of the criminal tong gangs. His skills as a Spirit of Balance have helped to neutralize many simmering confrontations and promote safety on the often-dangerous streets of Chinatown.

The Grey Ghost, Spirit of the Forsaken, pops in and out of the main London chapter house without warning, wearing his customary grey mask. The few people who have seen his face say that he's only in his teens, but his style of speech and his knowledge mark him as someone who has had a long association with the Century Club. He holds a place of prominence in the organization's leadership, but something still doesn't sit right about him. Perhaps it's the scars that line his neck underneath the edge of his mask. People don't survive wounds like that...



## CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS WHAT'S A SHADOW?

If the Spirits were the only powers at play, the world would be a much nicer place. But their good works are opposed at every turn by the actions of the **Shadow Centurions**. Born on the last day of the previous century, these December 31st babies seem to carry the weight of all the previous century's evils on their shoulders. If the Spirits are the embodiments of all that's great about each century, the Shadows are the previous century's death rattle. Calamity and strife follow them everywhere; they grow stronger the more they feed their darker natures.

Shadows are the opposite side of the coin from Spirits, and as such they share a lot of the same characteristics. Not every child born on the last day of the century is a Shadow, and Shadows seemingly appear at random around the world on that date. Like Spirits, Shadows represent a characteristic of their age, only this time it's a negative. A Shadow might represent a vice, like the Shadow of Corruption, or they might embody the negative aspects of a virtue gone out of control. For example, the Shadow of Progress might represent all the bad things about rampant, uncontrolled progress, obliterating everything in its path and consuming without heed for the future.

Shadows tend to be drawn to the criminal underworld, where they find plenty of people who share their interests. But it's a mistake to assume that their activities are limited to darkened alleys and criminal syndicates. Shadows aren't always obviously bad guys, especially when they're young. That little girl with the starched pinafore and blonde ringlets might look like an angel, but she could be pinching the other kids as soon as the grownups' backs are turned...or worse.

As with Spirits, Shadows have their own particular brand of bad that they're drawn to, and their skill sets tend to follow suit. The Shadow of Leadership isn't going to be a thick-necked goon; he's the kid who leads the street gang terrorizing downtown, and it's practically impossible to resist his invitation to join. He might grow up to become the leader of the local crime syndicate. He might also grow up to become the mayor.

Some Spirits and Shadows share the same virtue, only the Shadow turns it on its ear, revealing the darker side. Often, those that share the same virtue find themselves in direct opposition. If there's a Spirit of Leadership in the same town, she's destined to find herself in the direct path of that aforementioned gang and its leader, the Shadow of Leadership. Often, the outcome of that confrontation affects the city as a whole...for good or for evil. As the struggle between Spirit and Shadow progresses, it carries the fate of the century along with it.

All in all, Shadows aren't villains in the traditional sense. They don't spend most of their time building giant ray guns and dry washing their hands, although they could if they wanted to. They're just the kind of people who enjoy sowing discord, and unfortunately, they're particularly good at it. And as with Spirits, the strands of fate twist around them, putting them into the ideal places and times to spread the most mayhem. Confrontation between the two is unavoidable, and it's at those times that the fate of the century is determined.



## Hunting Shadows

As you might imagine, it's in the Century Club's best interest to predict the appearance of Shadows just as much as it is to find the new generation of Spirits. These villains-in-the-making could be redeemed or, if necessary, imprisoned before they cause serious harm if only the numerologists could find them first. Unfortunately, even the most talented diviners can't seem to get a read on these illusive figures. It's almost as if their very fates are shadowed and obscured from sight.

Every once in a while, a Shadow triggers a Century Club Retainer's divination abilities. In those cases, there's no way the Retainer can know for sure if the youth in question is a Spirit or a Shadow—birth records are notoriously unreliable, and being a Spirit or a Shadow is an inclination rather than an unchangeable destiny. Years of careful observation are required to determine what steps the Retainer should take.

**Margaret May, Shadow:** Margaret May appears to be a perfect cherub. Her father, an oil baron, often brings her to dinner parties and society events, and on the surface, she's nothing more than a well-bred debutante in training. But underneath lies the heart of a Shadow of Prosperity, the kind of girl who values material success above everything else and will stop at nothing to ensure it. The overnight success

of May Petroleum Corporation is a hot topic among businessmen, but none of them would ever believe the truth—that the company has grown so rapidly not because of Mr. May's business sense, but because his teenage daughter isn't above a little sabotage and blackmail...or a lot of it.

## Yup, They're Kids Too

As with the Spirits, it's important to remember that the Shadows are also kids, and they deal with the same things that regular kids do. They fight with their siblings and refuse to eat their lima beans and do their homework. They might love their families and learn sewing on Ma's lap or help Pa with the chores. Being a Shadow doesn't mean they don't have any redeeming characteristics any more than being a Spirit means a kid is perfect. Sometimes, that love for their family is what drives the Shadow to make the wrong choices, to the heartbreak of everyone around them.

Particularly at the younger ages found in *Young Centurions*, Shadows won't command the respect necessary to function in large scale crime or to influence local politics. Instead, their influence is often felt on the smaller scale, growing larger as they mature and their reach extends. At twelve, these are the kids who seem to poison every interaction, turn virtue to vice in everyone around them, and leave tears in their wake. At eighteen, in most cases they've honed those skills and are beginning to accumulate followers intent on capitalizing on their success.

## Shadow Organizations, or Lack Thereof

There's no Shadow equivalent of the Century Club. Some Century Club scholars have theorized that Shadows repel each other, almost like magnets with similar poles. But Shadows have been known to work together, so that can't be true. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that Spirits tend to be more attracted to peace and order, whereas Shadows tend to thrive on chaos and discord—not exactly the kind of environment that breeds long standing relationships.

So while there isn't much of a central organization for all Shadows—no chapter houses or leadership body—young Shadows do work together in small groups or one-on-one relationships to achieve a common goal. At this point, they're still developing their skills of deception and chicanery and learning how to lead. As the century progresses, they'll become more organized, but right now that process is only beginning. That's a good thing. A street gang boasting one Shadow member is dangerous. Two is even more so. A gang full of Shadows would be an apocalypse in the making.

Without an organization like the Century Club and the training it provides, most Shadows don't even realize there's anything atypical about themselves, especially at a young age. They find their own corner of influence and exploit it, and may live their entire lives never hearing the word "Shadow" applied to anything besides that thing they cast on the ground when the sun's out. But, just like Spirits, particularly promising young Shadows are frequently picked up and groomed for success by mentors.



### Shadow Mentors

Young Shadows who develop a significant level of influence often find themselves at the center of attention in certain circles. While there's no Evil Century Club, there are still less scrupulous numerologists who, for whatever reason, don't see eye to eye with the Century Club and strike out on their own. Some of them seek out Shadows to train. Although they don't have titles (since they don't belong to any organization), they're colloquially referred to as **Negatives**. Negatives have the same divinatory abilities as their Century Club counterparts, and they tend to serve as mentors for young Shadows, moving into a sidekick or assistant status once the Shadow is strong enough, like Alfred to a Shadow Batman. A strong Shadow/Negative pairing is more than a match for a group of Spirit Centurions, and it's wise to beware of them.

Other lucky young Shadows might be mentored by one of the few 1800s Shadows still around. Most of the elder generation is already gone, but a few remain. Doctor Methuselah, the Shadow of Forever and a master of mathemagic, was the undisputed leader of the 1800s Shadows, but this new crop of kids in the early 1900s isn't so interested in bowing down before him. In this era of opportunity, there are too many chances for them to strike out on their own. This hasn't stopped him from continued recruitment attempts, even donning disguises in an effort to recruit young Spirits and corrupt them before they're able to fully come into their abilities.

William Petoskey, Negative: William Petoskey is a churchgoing man who kisses his wife and children before heading off to work in his chemist's shop each day. Portly, kind-faced, and balding, he certainly doesn't look like one of the world's most skilled numerologists, an opium dealer, or an amateur alchemist, but he's all of those things. Delivery boys leave his shop at all hours with bicarbonate of soda for stomach upsets, opium deliveries for drug dens, and sometimes the results of his latest alchemical experiments. He hasn't managed to find the secret of immortality yet, but that doesn't stop him from trying. But his numerological skills suggest he's on the right track, and he has a never-ending supply of delivery boys to practice his concoctions on...



### Switching Sides

It's pretty tough to cross lines when the date of your birth so strongly influences your attraction to good or evil, but that doesn't mean all Spirits are trustworthy and all Shadows are malicious. Spirits can make mistakes; they can be proud or willful. They can be led astray. And those kinds of actions make it tough for the Century Club to trust them. Such is the case with Rocket Red. By her birth date, this daughter of Soviet farmers should be a Spirit Centurion, if the sparse and haphazard birth records can be trusted. But difficult circumstances due to extreme poverty, combined with some traumatic WWI experiences, have affected her badly...and toward the end of the era covered by Young Centurions, the Century Club is watching her closely, trying to determine where her loyalties lie. Fiercely independent, she owes allegiance to neither side and trusts no one.

The opposite can also be true. Some young Shadows really try to be good people, but no matter what their choices are, the outcomes end up twisted and negative. It's a hard life, and it's usually only a matter of time before that young idealist becomes a jaded Shadow adult and a seriously tragic character.

Some Centurions are simply undiscovered by either side. In the early years of the time of Young Centurions, this is often the case. There are many factors at play and many Spirits for the Century Club to track down. In 1913, less than half of the estimated total number of Spirits has been identified, and about 15% are tentatively aligned with the Century Club. But towards 1918, about 75% have been located, and about 50% are Century Club members.



## CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS OTHER GOOD & BAD GUYS

Spirits and Shadows aren't the only ones involved in the struggle between good and evil. Regular people get caught up in these adventures too. Some are just lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time (or unlucky enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, as the case may be). Others might work in law enforcement or on the other side of the law. Either way, the chances are very good that our young heroes will end up working with non-powered individuals. It's a mistake to underestimate them, particularly at this stage when non-powered adults have authority over the Spirits and Shadows in development. All the fighting skills in the world won't help when the schoolmistress calls your parents in for a talk.

This situation can lead to a lot of complications for the growing heroes, because by and large, the adults in their lives don't believe their stories. Imagine what would happen if Sally Slick told her teacher she missed school because she was vanquishing a criminal mastermind. Would the teacher believe her? Of course not! The teacher doesn't understand, nor do her parents. They'd assume Sally was lying, and on top of worrying about retaliation from the criminal's buddies, now she'd also have to contend with extra chores around the farm. And that includes watching her baby brother, so when the bad guys arrive, she has to keep him safe.

In short, the everyday things can take the wildest adventure from bad to worse. This means that family members, friends, townspeople, and school acquaintances can be just as important in a game of *Young Centurions* as the people with the fun stunts. But there are also some interesting non-Centurion groups that populate this world, and their influence can make or break a Century Club mission. These groups may have one or two Spirit or Shadow members, but they're controlled by regular people. A few of the key groups include:

**Ars Scientia:** Every year, scientists flock to Sweden for the announcement of the Nobel Prize winners, but not the members of the Ars Scientia. These scientists are dedicated to sciences not commonly accepted by the general public. They converge on Geneva to share their findings in areas such as numerology, alchemy, studies of lost civilizations like Atlantis, xenoarchaeology (study of aliens and alien civilizations), and other weird sciences. This can make for an interesting meeting, because many Retainers and Negatives are members of the society, and avoiding each other is impossible. Towards the end of the *Young Centurions* timeline, they may also bring along their young protégés, almost ensuring a confrontation when Spirits meet Shadows. When they're not attending the yearly conference, members of the Ars Scientia may be found in their home laboratories, searching for and sometimes making astonishing scientific breakthroughs, often well in advance of their release to the general public.



### FAMOUS FIGURES YOU MIGHT MEET

Depending on their location, it's entirely possible that the player characters might meet someone destined for fame, or someone already famous. Centurions do attract influential people, after all. Why not give one of these historical figures a cameo in your game, or even make them an NPC?

- Sigmund Freud (born 1856, scientist)
- Henri Matisse (born 1869, painter)
- Harry Houdini (born 1874, magician)
- Gertrude Stein (born 1874, author)
- Mata Hari (born 1876, criminal)
- Pancho Villa (born 1878, bandit)
- Helen Keller (born 1880, activist)
- Bela Lugosi (born 1882, actor)
- Benito Mussolini (born 1883, politician)
- Bessie Smith (born 1894, blues singer)
- Babe Ruth (born 1895, baseball player)
- Amelia Earhart (born 1897, pilot)
- Alfred Hitchcock (born 1899, filmmaker)
- Al Capone (born 1899, gangster)
- Walt Disney (born 1901, filmmaker)
- Louis Armstrong (born 1901, jazz musician)
- Chuck Taylor (born 1901, basketball player, shoe endorser)
- Carlo Gambino (born 1902, organized crime Boss of Bosses)

The Jade Lotus: Chinatowns across the US have a seedy reputation—sadly, many people associate them with shady deals in darkened corners. It's true that the criminal tongs are a constant threat, but the Jade Lotus keeps them in check. This loose-knit organization is comprised of Chinese elders who follow the Way of the Lotus, a lost Buddhist martial art. The Way of the Lotus stresses balance among all living things, and its followers serve as peacekeepers and unofficial police for their neighborhoods. They help shut down drug dens, neutralize street gangs, and keep the sidewalks safe at night. They also protect the people of Chinatown from the prejudice of the local authorities when necessary. Most members of the Jade Lotus are old holdouts from the 1800s, although a few new initiates do exist. Very few of them are Spirits; Master Lingyu, the leader of the Jade Lotus in Chicago, is an exception. He occasionally coordinates with the Century Club, and sometimes mentors young Spirits.



**Organized crime:** In the 1910s, organized crime isn't so organized, at least not on a worldwide scale. The American Mafia doesn't really come into power until Prohibition in the 1920s. Instead, street gangs such as the Black Hand or the Bowery Boys hold power over a small geographic area. This creates a prime opportunity for young criminals looking to solidify their power, and many Shadows are attracted to these gangs. The United Kingdom is in a similar state, with the crime scene dominated by gang activity, particularly in Liverpool and Glasgow. The Bombay Underground in India won't be organized for another decade or so. The Sicilian Mafia is still relatively small and known for cattle theft and fraud. The one exception is the Yakuza. Their long history reaches all the way to the 17th century, and they've had plenty of time to grow. At the time of *Young Centurions*, they're entering a period of power, led by Isokichi Yoshida from his power base on Kyushu Island.

## Other Strange Creatures

Young Centurions is a pulp game, and that means it's a world that sometimes strains the limits of reality. This is a world populated by angry shopkeepers and strict schoolmistresses and neighborhood bullies, but it's also a world where you just might meet a ghost, alien, or robot servant. Strange things can and do happen, and when they do, they're always game-changers. Although most people aren't aware, there are some strange groups working in the shadows, such as:

**The Creep:** The Creep is an oddity even among oddities. Assassinated by the Steel Don, he remained on earth as a ghost in an effort to protect his family. Thanks to the efforts of Sally Slick, his ghost took over the body of a primitive robot. The Creep, once a famous thief who could sneak in and out of any building, now patrols the streets of big cities on a quest against the growing crime families. He's particularly sensitive to crimes against children and women, since they remind him of the family he's had to leave behind. His glowing purple eyes seem to miss nothing, and his body, while not up to Sally's best design standards, is more powerful than ten humans put together. The Creep is more than a match for any bad guy, and an incredible ally to have under any circumstances.

**Gorilla Khan and his conqueror apes:** Gorilla Khan is a creation of Doctor Methuselah, who used his powers of mathemagic to build up an army of intelligent apes in the wilds of Africa. But after a while, Gorilla Khan wasn't content to follow Methuselah's orders, and he revolted. Strangely, Methuselah simply gave his creation freedom, surrendering the troops and leaving the area. Gorilla Khan wasn't content to stay at home, though, and he's started wandering the globe in a search for new regions to conquer. For some reason, he's very obsessed with the idea of Atlantis and puts most of his efforts toward rediscovering the lost continent. But he maintains a strong disdain toward humans and likes to capture them and use them as slave labor. What Methuselah thinks of this is anyone's guess.



Le Monstre Aux Yeux Verts: Le Monstre is a Parisian crime lord known for his brutal retaliation against anyone rash enough to oppose him. Gambling, drug trafficking, and black market goods are only some of his criminal enterprises, and nothing happens in Paris without his say-so. The time of Young Centurions is his heyday, but sometime around 1918, one young Spirit will stand up to him, and by 1920 le Monstre will acquire a metal face of his own.

**The Steel Don:** The Steel Don wears a mask of living metal covering his entire face. He was once in service to a powerful 1800s Shadow scientist, Dr. Dorottya Balogh. Balogh conducted hundreds of experiments, not always on willing victims. In fact, she idolized Victor Frankenstein from Mary Shelley's book, and wanted nothing more than to replicate those experiments. After an explosion in her laboratory maimed the Don, Dr. Balogh took the opportunity to experiment once again. Sadly, the agony of the ordeal (both the explosion and the surgery afterwards) robbed him of his sanity. Dr. Balogh's health is now waning, which has left the Don free to pursue his own goals, searching for a scientist who will build him an army of steel servants with which to take over the world.



## CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS OVERVIEW OF THE WORLD IN THE 19105

The world of *Young Centurions* is an alternate history, which means that most of the things that appear in our history books also happen in this world, with some minor Spirit and Shadow related differences. The following is a taste of the most exciting bits that happened from 1912-1918, along with some story ideas that suggest how the Century Club and/or the Shadows might have been involved. Use or ignore these suggestions in your game to your heart's content. And certainly, if you have a group full of history buffs, don't stop with these ideas! Any historical event can be an inspiration for a *Young Centurions* scenario, not to mention a fun way to memorize details for your next history exam.

Overall, the 1910s were full of political upheaval, possibly due to the lack of mature Spirits to help stabilize things. World War I is the most obvious example, and you can read more about that on page 35. But this is a time of change all over the world, not just in Europe and Asia. Here's a small sampling of important political events of this decade:

- The establishment of the Republic of China in 1912
- The foundation of the African National Congress, also in 1912
- The Mexican Revolution, from 1910 to 1920
- The Easter Rising in Ireland in 1916
- The Bolshevik Revolution and Russian Civil War in 1917

But all is not political maneuvering and fighting over things; this is an era of terrific progress in the sciences. Niels Bohr created the first model of the atomic nucleus in 1913. The Panama Canal, an architectural wonder, opened in 1914. And in 1915, Typhoid Mary was quarantined, leading to advances in our understanding of how diseases are transmitted.

That progress trickled out to the populace very slowly. In the early 1900s, you might have seen motorcars on the road side-by-side with mail carriers on horseback. Rich folk would electrify a small area near their home, but electricity hadn't quite caught on yet and wouldn't really take off until the 1930s. This was particularly true of rural areas—most farms weren't electrified until much later. It's a very interesting time, particularly for young kids who dreamt of all kinds of astonishing inventions and adventures that suddenly seemed like they just might be possible.

But it's also a time that's home to some uncomfortable truths. Racism and sexism were rampant. The Civil Rights Movements hadn't happened yet, and the Women's Rights Movement was still underway. Prejudice was widespread on both small and large scales. And a lot of things considered
### CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS



perfectly acceptable back then would make us wince now. You just didn't talk about the fact that Mr. Wilson got a little crazy with his fists when he drank, not to mention the fact that he used all the money for booze so there wasn't money to buy shoes for the kids.

As with any bit of history, we encourage you to choose whatever is best for your group and their comfort levels. If you just want a fun, fluffy game, go for it! Dump all the ugly bits by the wayside and head straight for the adventure. If you want to go more realistic, do that too. Just make sure that your group comes to this decision together and is comfortable with it. It's no fun for anyone if the GM surprises the players with a boatload of prejudice when they were expecting a carefree quest story.

### World War I

The Great War dominated this decade, beginning in July of 1914 and ending in November of 1918. It's a huge, complex, interesting topic—this first world war really changed how wars were fought. New technologies such as tanks, poison gas, flamethrowers, submarines, and fixed wing aircraft changed the face of battle forever. And not only were there changes on the battlefield, but at home as well. The scope of the war was so great that it made permanent changes in the workplace as large numbers of women took on jobs outside the home for the first time, picking up the duties men left behind. The war also bred widespread mistrust throughout Europe and America, with neighbors accusing neighbors of having Red sympathies. In some places, the Red Scare became something close to a witch hunt, driven by fear.

There are tons of story opportunities in which young heroes might make a difference in the context of the war, provided that your gaming group is mature enough to handle these topics and themes. (Advice on handling more serious topics while gaming with kids can be found on page 118.) If you plan to tackle a war-related campaign, it's definitely worth reading up on the history of the war—we recommend *The First World War* by John Keegan for a thorough overview with plenty of photographs to help inspire your campaign. Or head online to read the Spartacus Educational First World War encyclopedia (*http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWW.htm*) for a thorough summary of the war and descriptions of the various battles to inspire you.

The Shadows have many opportunities to benefit from the Great War and are almost certainly behind the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand as well as many of the Central Power triumphs. Most of these plots are assumed to be the work of Negatives or senior Shadows such as Doctor Methuselah at the onset of the war, but towards the end of the conflict, the young Shadows begin to take a larger part in the action, their actions always opposed by the efforts of the new Spirits.



### CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS

### America in the 1910s

The United States was in a somewhat unique position compared to the rest of the Allied nations. It was geographically removed from the war, and in fact didn't officially enter the conflict until near its end. The US sided with the Allies after the Germans sank the RMS *Lusitania* in 1915, but they didn't send troops to fight until 1917. So, if you're looking to steer away from a WWI plot or subplot for your campaign, the USA presents a good opportunity to do this.

And there's plenty of interesting material here to fuel stories! Like the rest of the world, the United States was also developing at high speed. Right at the beginning of the century, we saw two new states added to the union (New Mexico and Arizona, both in 1912), constitutional ratifications to establish the income tax and election of senators (both in 1913), and the establishment of the Federal Reserve (also in 1913). The government was still being developed, and that left a lot of opportunities for people to influence the future of the country both for good and for evil.

The overall population was changing too. The first half of the decade saw a lot of immigration as Europeans fled their war-torn homes, and they suffered persecution and sometimes imprisonment during the Red Scare. Women's rights were on the rise as they were called to the workplace just like women in Europe. Although women weren't able to vote in the US until 1920, the wheels were already in motion. In 1916, Jeannette Rankin became the first woman elected to Congress.

The 1910s were also a time of progress within the US. There were projects such as the construction of Grand Central Station, secretly funded by the Century Club. The train station opened in 1913, setting the stage for Spirits to travel more easily across the country to deal with threats. The Century Club also supported the construction of Henry Ford's first assembly line in 1913, setting the stage for automobiles to be more accessible, again in an effort to allow their young Spirits to expand their geographic influence.



### Story Ideas Based on Historical Events

Stuck for ideas? Consider using a historical event as a jumping off point for your campaign, as we did in the following examples:

**The** *Titanic*: The *Titanic* sank in 1912. Everyone knows it hit an iceberg, but what they don't know is that said iceberg was actually Gorilla Khan's floating arctic fortress. Khan is a hyperintelligent creation of Doctor Methuselah with visions of world domination, and yes, he's a primate. The conqueror ape is searching for Atlantis, and he's not going to let anything stand in his way, not even an unsinkable ship. To date, his quest remains unsuccessful, and he's widening his search area. Now, the floating fortress is approaching land. A team of scientists, unaware that the peaceful ice floes are hiding hordes of hostile ape men, set out to investigate, leaving their kids behind at base camp. When their parents are captured, it's up to the kids to rescue them...before it's too late and those scientists end up getting turned into ape chow.





### CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS

**The Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand:** Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated in 1914. The whole thing was plotted by Serbian military officials in their quest for independence from Austria-Hungary, accidentally setting into action a chain of events leading to the Great War... or so we've been told. In reality, the Archduke was only one of two intended targets. The bombs set off in the motorcade, which missed the Archduke's car, were actually targeting a young girl in the first car. This Young Centurion spy, Annaliese Feiersinger, had just reported to the Century Club that she had important information vital to world peace. But it's suspected that Shadow agents, possibly under the direction of Doctor Methuselah, got to her first. What had Feiersinger discovered? It's up to her classmates at the Academy of the Sacred Heart to find out. Unfortunately, their headmistress may be playing for the other side, and opposes them at every turn. Will they succeed in discovering the sensitive military information and getting it into the right hands before the Headmistress locks them away for good?

**One Last Golden Summer:** It's June 1918, and the young Spirits know that come fall they'll have two choices: be drafted into the army and go fight in the trenches in France, or sign on with the Century Club as full Centurions, with all the grown-up dangers that means. They have the summer to wrap up all their loose ends here at home—time to expose the corrupt sheriff, take down the 18th Street Gang, give that bully what he's had coming to him for the past four years, and get a smooch from that pretty girl or boy at school.

**Grand Central Station Turf War:** Grand Central Station opened in 1913 and quickly became a hub of activity, with travelers and commuters coming and going at all hours. Two rival gangs are trying to take control of this prime bit of real estate, and a small group of Spirit kids (newsies, street kids, children of shop keepers, etc.) are stuck in the middle. When the bad guys are fighting each other, it's bad enough, but then a silver-tongued Shadow emerges to unite them. The combined gang is getting powerful...and fast. It's up to the Spirits to sabotage their efforts, turn the toughs against each other, and save the station. But there's a mighty powerful Shadow standing in the way, and he isn't about to give up control without a fight.

### Coming of Age in the 1910s

Back in the olden days, we used to have to walk to school *barefoot* and *uphill both ways*... Just kidding. But seriously, this is a book about kids and teenagers about a hundred years ago, and they led very different lives from ours today. Probably the most obvious difference is that whole technology thing. It's hard for us to contemplate being a kid in a world without gaming systems, computers, the internet, cell phones, or televisions. Radios didn't even become popular in households until around 1919. This meant that kids had to come up with their own entertainments and spent most of their time away from home—particularly away from parents and any chores they might hand out.

Without all the electronic gadgets, kids made up their own games or played with some simple toys we still see in stores today. Tinker toys, dolls, jacks, and marbles were some of the most popular toys. Kids played tag, hopscotch, clapping games like Mary Mack and Pease Porridge Hot, or baseball. They collected baseball cards and Cracker Jack prizes and often spent their pocket money on penny candies such as Tootsie Rolls, chocolate buttons, and saltwater taffy at the local market or five-and-dime store.

But everything wasn't fun and games. New laws required kids to go to school until age 16, although they could work in addition to school, and some schools in farming communities actually closed down for the harvest since no one would show up. There was also a new minimum wage law and in 1916 a child labor law, which meant that factories couldn't employ children for pennies a day. Because of these developments, kids were more likely than ever to graduate from school with a basic education. But still, kids were often employed part time—helping out at their farm, in factories, as office couriers or runners, or selling papers as the infamous newsies.

Another major difference between kids' lives today and those of kids in the 1910s is supervision. Today, it's much less common to see kids out unsupervised. We live in an age of organized play dates, after school care, and nightly clubs and activities. But back then, kids were frequently sent out on their own. Mothers typically stayed at home (at least until the men left for war, and then they were much more likely to be working), but that didn't necessarily include direct supervision of the kids. After a quick postschool snack and any necessary chores, kids often left the house and didn't return until supper. They might roam the fields, play Capture the Flag at the local dump, or throw marbles in the city alleyways. Overall, they had a lot more freedom than modern kids do.

This is a time in history when it seemed like anything was possible. Pulp magazines such as *Adventure*, *Argosy*, *Blue Book*, and *Short Stories* were incredibly popular, with their tales of daring detectives and astonishing archeologists on exotic adventures. Many kids imagined themselves in the roles of their favorite fictional adventurers.



### CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF THE YOUNG CENTURIONS

### Technology in the Early 20th Century

A lot of the technological advancements we take for granted hadn't been invented at the time of *Young Centurions*. In game terms, you can stick with history if you like, or—if a certain gadget or gizmo is necessary for your plot—bring in a young Spirit with a knack for invention and let her go to town. Here's a brief listing of inventions and their official status in relation to the *Young Centurions* timeline:

Already invented: The steam engine, cars, telegraphs, incandescent light bulbs, sewing machines, steam ships, color photography, motion pictures

**Invented during** *Young Centurions*: Radio (in development throughout the early 1900s, but the first radio broadcast wasn't until 1920, so they weren't present in households), the zipper (1913), stainless steel (1916)

Invented later: Band-Aid, insulin, traffic signals, television, penicillin, jet engines



# CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER



### CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER READY TO GET STARTED?

Okay! Let's talk about what makes a character in Young Centurions.

The Young Centurion you play has three major parts you need to think about: **aspects**, **approaches**, and **stunts**. There are a couple of other little things too, but for now just think about these three big ones.

An **aspect** is a word, phrase, or sentence that describes something centrally important to your character. It can be a motto your character lives by, a personality quirk, a description of a relationship you have with another character, an important possession or bit of equipment, or any other part of your character that's vitally important. Aspects allow you to change the story in ways that tie in with your character's tendencies, skills, or problems.

Characters have six **approaches** that describe how good they are at solving problems and overcoming challenges. Each approach describes a way that you can overcome a challenge (Careful, Clever, Flashy, Forceful, Quick, or Sneaky) and is given a rating ranging from +0 to +3. These numbers are added to your dice rolls when you try to do something that might fail.

A **stunt** is a special trait that changes the way an approach works for your character. Generally, stunts give you a bonus (almost always +2) to a certain approach when used with a particular action under specific circumstances.



CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER



### CREATING CHARACTERS: THE 30-SECOND VERSION

- 1. Write two *aspects* (page 80): a high concept and a trouble.
- 2. Write another aspect.
- 3. Give your character a name and describe their appearance.
- 4. Choose approaches (page 63).
- 5. Set your refresh to 3.
- 6. You may write up to two more aspects and choose a *stunt* (page 88) if you wish, or you may do that during play.

### NEW STUFF FOR FATE ACCELERATED VETERANS!

If you've played *Fate Accelerated Edition* before, this section will seem pretty familiar to you; it should, because *Young Centurions* uses the FAE rules system. There are a few new additions; here's where to find them:

- Spirit Aspects (page 44): Your high concept should reflect your status as a Spirit, a Centurion in training.
- Initiative and Going First (page 72): Who goes first in a conflict depends on the action that led up to the conflict.
- **Boosts** (page 86): How boosts work has been changed slightly.
- Century Stunts (page 90): Young Centurions (and Shadows) get one stunt that's a bit more powerful than usual.
- Adjustable Difficulty and Story Impact (page 64-65): Your choice of approach may affect not only the difficulty of the task, but may have further impact on events.
- Mentors (page 123): Young Centurions have mentors who can help them out of a jam.
- Guns in *Young Centurions* (page 58): Guns frequently serve different roles in stories about kids.
- Campaign Ratings and Appropriate Consequences (page 118 and page 76): Keep your campaign's stories right for the age of the characters.
- **Expert Mooks (page 125):** GMs have the option of making some mook opponents particularly dangerous.



### CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER WRITE YOUR HIGH CONCEPT AND TROUBLE

The first step is to get an idea of what kind of character you want to play. Play a character that you think is interesting and cool; your excitement about your character will help everyone at the table have a good time, and that's the key to having a great game. You don't need to have a complicated and detailed description—start by describing your character in a single sentence or phrase. Once you've figured that out, you can write a couple of **aspects**: your **high concept** and **trouble**. This is where you start defining your character's basic nature, her strengths and weaknesses.

Your character's **high concept** neatly sums up your character, saying who you are, what you do, what your "deal" is. It should also reflect your status as an aspiring Centurion—choose an idea that you wish to embody, or make your life's purpose to protect or enhance. Sally Slick is the Spirit of Ingenuity. Her high concept aspect could be SPIRIT OF INGENUITY, or you might go for something that's a little more descriptive of how she expresses her ingenuity, such as INGENIOUS INVENTOR. As the Spirit of Courage, Jet Black could have a high concept of SPIRIT OF COURAGE, or maybe COURAGEOUS IN THE FACE OF DANGER sounds more appealing to you. Benjamin Hu's high concept might be SPIRIT OF MYSTERY OF ADVENTURING SCHOLAR OF THE MYSTERIOUS. Remember that more than one Spirit can embody the same ideal.

The game group sits down to create their characters together. Amanda, one of the players, thinks about the sort of character she'd like to play. "I'm thinking of an inventor," she says to everyone at the table. "A girl who can build almost anything with parts she finds in the barn."

Carrie, the gamemaster, wants to help clarify and refine the idea. "So, a mechanic? Someone who can fix anything?"

Amanda considers that. "Yeah, I'm sure she's the sort of person who can fix anything, but I want to emphasize building new stuff, or making old stuff better. She really shows off ingenuity, creativity with machines."

Carrie grins. "Sounds like you have your Spirit there. The Spirit of Ingenuity."

"Perfect!" Amanda says, and writes SPIRIT OF INGENUITY on her character sheet as the high concept.

Once you've created a high concept for yourself, decide on the thing that always gets you into **trouble**. It could be a personal weakness, or a recurring enemy, or an important obligation—anything that makes your life complicated. Examples like BULLY MAGNET; PUNCH FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER; GOTTA LOOK OUT FOR MY LITTLE BROTHER all create obligations, establish enemies, or suggest personality quirks that make things difficult for you sometimes.



### Why Would I Want Things to Be Difficult?

Why on earth would you want an aspect that makes things hard for you? That's a great question—it sure doesn't seem to make any sense, does it? Well, there are two big reasons you want to do this.

The first reason is that when you or the GM decides that something bad happens to you because of your trouble aspect (or any other aspect used in a negative way), you get a **fate point**. You can spend that fate point later to get a bonus on a roll or do other cool things (more about that on page 83). Fate points make you powerful—you probably want to collect a bunch.

The second reason is this: Have you ever read a book or seen a movie where everything went right for the hero all the time? If you have, it was probably a pretty boring story. It's when everything goes wrong that things get *exciting*. It's OK! Let it happen sometimes. It doesn't mean you've lost, or you screwed up—this is your chance to be awesome when you fix the problem.

Next, Amanda thinks about what's going to cause trouble for her Spirit of Ingenuity. "Maybe her inventions blow up all the time?" she suggests, hoping the rest of the group can come up with a better idea.

Carrie shrugs. "Yeah, that's trouble, but it's not going to drive stories. She has all these inventions that amaze people—what's something that could go wrong in a way that really changes the story?"

"What if people keep trying to steal her inventions?" Amanda says, excited about the possibilities. "Maybe people want to take them and sell them to the Kaiser's army, or use them to take over the world, or something?"

"Perfect," Carrie says. Amanda writes  $\ensuremath{\mathsf{Everyone}}$  Wants My Inventions on the trouble line of her character sheet.

### ANOTHER ASPECT

Next, compose another aspect. Think of something really important or interesting about your character. Are you THE STRONGEST KID IN MY HOMETOWN? Do you have DEADLY AIM WITH A SLINGSHOT? Do you TALK TOO MUCH? Are you FILTHY RICH? Get creative—what's something really cool about your character that sets them apart from other people?

If you like, you can use this aspect to establish that you have a **mentor**, an adult (maybe a Centurion from the 19th century or a Retainer from the Century Club) who can lend you a hand from time to time. MASTER LIU GUIDES ME and STUDENT OF THE GREY GHOST are great examples. Aside from the usual compels and invocations, this aspect allows you to use the rules about mentors taking consequences for you (page 78).



### CHAPTER Z: MAKING A CHARACTER

### But I Can't Think of Anything!

Here are some questions that might get your imagination going. Don't worry if you can't answer all of them—you just need a few ideas to get you started.

What things define your character?

- Is it where he grew up—on a farm, in the big city, traveling from place to place?
- Is it what she does with her time—a job, hobbies, school, social life?
- Is it his family—wealthy or poor, close or distant, large or small?
- Is it her future—her goals, dreams, or aspirations? What does she want to do or be when she grows up?

If you're still at a loss, see what ideas other people in the group have. Maybe your character is connected with one of theirs—a friend, a classmate, a sibling. That will give you a place to start.

If nothing is working for you, there are a few sample characters in *Chapter 10: Game Resources*. Feel free to use them as inspiration or play them as is!

Another player at Carrie and Amanda's table is Harry, who's thinking of playing a Spirit who has lots of courage but is always underestimating risks—so he gets in over his head all the time. Amanda asks, "Harry, how do our characters know each other?"

"What if they're best friends? Maybe my character is always hanging around your workshop," Harry suggests.

Amanda nods. "Good idea. If you're always getting in trouble, maybe I end up bailing you out a lot?"

Carrie, the gamemaster, loves that idea. "That's a great way to get everyone involved in the adventure," she says. "Amanda, what if your third aspect is about that?"

Amanda pencils  ${\sf H}_{\sf ARRY'S}$  IN  ${\sf T}_{\sf ROUBLE}!$  on her character sheet. "I'll replace 'Harry' with your character's name, once you think of it," she tells Harry.

That leaves two aspects blank, which Amanda decides she'll fill in during play.



### NAME AND APPEARANCE

Describe your character's appearance and give them a name. Remember that Spirits come in all shapes, sizes, and colors—your hero doesn't have to look like you do in real life, and sometimes it's more interesting if they don't! Be adventurous!

Give them a memorable name—you're not going to play a boring character, are you? Then don't give them a boring name. Don't worry if it's a little corny. These are pulp heroes we're talking about. Think of something that suggests action! Thrills! Danger!

True story! The original character of Sally Slick was created by a player in the very first *Spirit of the Century* game ever played, back in the early 2000s. A player thought of her grandmother, a smart, loving, and loyal woman with a great sense of humor and the best pulp name ever—Sally Slick—and named her player character after her.

### APPROACHES

Now you get to choose the bonuses for your **approaches**. Approaches are descriptions of *how* you accomplish tasks. Everyone has the same six approaches:



Each approach is rated with a bonus. Choose one at Good (+3), two at Fair (+2), two at Average (+1), and one at Mediocre (+0). You can improve these later. We talk about what each approach means and how you use them in *Chapter 3: Playing Young Centurions* (page 54).

### THE LADDER

In Young Centurions, we use a set of adjectives and numbers, called the **ladder**, to rate a character's approaches, the result of a roll, difficulty ratings for simple checks, etc.

- +8 Legendary
- +7 Epic
- +6 Fantastic
- +5 Superb
- +4 Great
- +3 Good
- +2 Fair
- +1 Average
- 0 Mediocre
  - -1 Poor
- -2 Terrible



### CHAPTER Z: MAKING A CHARACTER

Your approaches can say a lot about who you are, especially the approaches you rate highest (+3) and lowest (+0). Here are some examples:

- The Brute: Forceful +3, Careful and Flashy +2, Sneaky and Quick +1, Clever +0
- **The All-Star:** Quick +3, Forceful and Flashy +2, Clever and Careful +1, Sneaky +0
- The Trickster: Clever +3, Sneaky and Flashy +2, Forceful and Quick +1, Careful +0
- The Guardian: Careful +3, Forceful and Clever +2, Sneaky and Quick +1, Flashy +0
- The Thief: Sneaky +3, Careful and Quick +2, Clever and Flashy +1, Forceful +0
- The Swashbuckler: Flashy +3, Quick and Clever +2, Forceful and Sneaky +1, Careful +0

Amanda thinks about how Sally approaches problems. She figures that, as an inventor, she's always looking for the clever solution, so she writes +3 next to "Clever." Next, she thinks about what Sally's greatest weakness might be. Sally's personality is already taking shape in Amanda's mind, and she decides that Sally would avoid sneaking around and being deceitful. She's a straightforward person who tackles challenges head-on. So she writes +0 next to "Sneaky," reflecting that Sally is out of her element in those situations.

Next, Amanda decides that Sally prefers Flashy and Quick to being Forceful and Careful, so she puts +2 next to Flashy and Quick, and gives Forceful and Careful +1.

### STUNTS AND REFRESH

A **stunt** is a special trait that changes the way an approach works for your character. Generally, stunts give you a bonus (almost always +2) to a certain approach when used with a particular action under specific circumstances. We'll talk more about stunts in *Chapter 7: Stunts* (page 88), including the special Century stunt that Spirits and Shadows are entitled to choose. Choose one stunt to start, or you can wait and add a stunt during the game. Later, when your character advances, you can choose more.

Your **refresh** is the number of fate points you begin each game session with—unless you ended the previous session with more unspent fate points than your refresh, in which case you start with the number you had left last time. By default, your refresh starts at three and is reduced by one for each stunt *after* the first three you choose—essentially, your first three stunts are free! As your character grows and changes, you'll get opportunities to add to your refresh. Your refresh may never go below one.

#### CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER



### How Many Stunts?

By default, Young Centurions suggests choosing one stunt to start with.

If this is your first time playing a game based on the Fate system, you might find it easier to pick your first stunt after you've played a bit so you have a chance to figure out a good one. Write your stunt on your character sheet during or after your first game session.

On the other hand, if you're an experienced Fate gamer, you might notice that your character is entitled to three free stunts before it starts costing you refresh. In that case, let the least experienced member of your game group be your guide; if someone is new to the game and only takes one to start with, that's what everyone should do. If you're all experienced and you want to start with more powerful characters, just take all three to start and off you go.

The game group together decides that each player should choose one stunt now, at character creation. Amanda thinks about a cool way to demonstrate Sally's tinkering. "I imagine that she's the sort of person who always has a gizmo or gadget on hand. She always has just the right thing to get her out of a jam," she says.

"How about a stunt that gives you something that gets rid of a situation aspect (page 81)," Harry suggests. "What kind of gizmo would do that?"

"We don't have to decide that now," Carrie says. "It can be any sort of device that makes sense at the time. Once per game session, you can get rid of a situation aspect because you happen to have just the right doodad on hand. Tell us what it is when it comes into play."

"Oh, good idea," Amanda says. "How about if I make it my Century stunt (page 90) and I can invoke it twice per game session?"

"Works for me," Carrie says. Amanda names the stunt "Wonderful Toys," and describes how it works on her character sheet. She makes a note that Sally's refresh is 3.



### CHAPTER 2: MAKING A CHARACTER ANIMAL COMPANIONS AND ROBOT FRIENDS

If you see your character as having a faithful dog, or a crow that always hangs around her, or a steam-powered mechanical man can help out in a pinch, there are several ways you can represent this in the rules.

### Aspect

You can represent your furry/ferrous friend by using one of your aspect slots to declare her. It works, of course, just like any other aspect. Examples could include LADY, MY TRUSTY BLACK LAB OF GEARS IS MY MECHANICAL HELPER.

### Stunt

Compose a stunt that describes how your pet helps you. This could include things like this:

**Lady's Nose:** Because Lady my black lab has such a good nose, I gain +2 to Clever attempts to overcome obstacles and create advantages when I'm tracking my opponents by scent.

**Trusty Steed:** Because Trigger is my trusty pinto, once per session I can declare that he arrives at my location just in the nick of time, as long as I'm outdoors and can whistle.

**Fetch, Marvin!:** Because Marvin the crow loves shiny things, once per session I can send him to fetch a small item that I can see but can't reach—provided a bird could get to it.

**Shielding Gears:** Because Gears the Robot is made of metal, once per scene when he is in my zone he can add +2 to my defend roll by getting in the way of something attacking me.

### CHAPTER Z: MAKING A CHARACTER



### CHARACTER COMPLETE!

And that's it! You're ready to start your life of adventure! If you haven't done it yet, talk with the GM and the other players about what sort of exciting adventures you'd like to tackle. Finally showing the school bully that picking on the smaller kids isn't going to happen anymore? Rescuing your best friend's mom and dad from the big city crime boss? Investigating what dangerous contraption the inventor down the road is building in his barn late at night when he thinks nobody can hear him?

### Completing the Picture

Having a sense of what your character looks like can help you and the other players more vividly imagine the stories you tell. Here are some totally optional but fun ideas for getting into character:

- Draw a picture of your character by hand or on a computer.
- Put together a LEGO minifig that represents your character.
- Find a photo of a character from a movie or TV show that looks like your character.
- Pick the actor you'd want to play your character if your game was a TV show or movie.
- Pick a theme song that you imagine playing in the background as your character swings into action.





### CENTURY STUHT

WONDERFUL TOYS: BECAUSE I AM SUCH A SKILLED INVENTOR, TWICE PER GAME SESSION I CAN PRODUCE A DEVICE THAT ELIMINATES A SITUATION ASPECT WITHOUT ROLLING.

### OTHER STUHTS

I CAN BUILD THAT! BECAUSE I AM AN INTUITIVE INVENTOR, I GAIN +2 TO QUICKLY YURY-RIG A DEVICE TO CREATE AN ADVANTAGE.

LITTLE MISS FIX-IT: BECAUSE I'M MECHANICALLY INCLINED, I GAIN +2 TO CLEVERLY OVERCOME OBSTACLES IN REPAIRING ANY DEVICE.

### STRESS



CONSEQUENCES

4		
4 <sup>Moderate</sup>		
<b>C</b> Severe	 	





Now it's time to start doing something. You have to leap from one moving train car to another. You must to search the entire library for that information you desperately need. You've got to distract the guard so you can sneak into the building. How do you figure out what happens? (Do you learn better by seeing things in action? There's an extended example of play starting on page 106 that demonstrates the rules and concepts.)

First you narrate what your character is trying to do. Your character's own aspects provide a good guide for what you *can* do. If your aspects describe you as a swordsman, draw that blade and have at it. If your aspects say you're an ace mechanic, get in the workshop and make with the fixing. These story details don't have additional mechanical impact. You don't get a bonus from your workshop or your sword, unless you choose to spend a fate point to **invoke** an appropriate aspect (page 82). Often, the ability to use an aspect to make something true in the story is bonus enough.

How do you know if you're successful? Often, you just succeed, because the action isn't hard and nobody's trying to stop you. But if failure provides an interesting twist in the story, or if something unpredictable could happen, you need to break out the dice.

### TAKING ACTION: THE 30-SECOND VERSION

- 1. Describe what you want your character to do. See if someone or something can stop you.
- 2. Decide what action you're taking: *create an advantage, overcome, attack*, or *defend*.
- 3. Decide on your approach.
- 4. Roll dice and add your approach's bonus.
- 5. Decide whether to modify your roll with aspects.
- 6. Figure out your outcome.

### Telling Stories Together

In *Young Centurions*, all the people at the table, GM and players alike, are responsible for telling the story. When you make a decision for your character (or for one of the NPCs, if you're the GM), think about two things.

First, put yourself in your character's shoes and think hard about what they would do—even if you can tell it's not a good idea. People sometimes make poor decisions. Don't be afraid to make a poor decision for them on purpose.

Second—and this is really important—think about the story that's being told. Think about the choice that would make that story even better: more interesting, more exciting, funnier. Would a certain choice give another player's character a chance to be awesome? Strongly consider making that choice.

That's how you tell great stories *together*—by not being afraid for your character to make mistakes, and by making choices that make the story more interesting for everyone at the table—not just you.

### DICE OR CARDS

Part of determining your outcome is generating a random number, which is usually done in one of two ways: rolling four Fate Dice, or drawing a card from a Deck of Fate.

**Fate Dice:** Fate Dice (sometimes called Fudge dice, after the game they were originally designed for) are one way to determine outcomes. You always roll Fate Dice in a set of four. Each die will come up as , , or , or , and you add them together to get the total of the roll. For example:







If you don't have Fate Dice, see "Not Gonna Buy New Dice" (page 9) for how to use regular six-sided dice instead.

**Deck of Fate:** The Deck of Fate is a deck of cards that copies the statistical spread of Fate Dice. You can choose to use them instead of dice—either one works great.

The rules for *Young Centurions* are written with the assumption that you're rolling Fate Dice, but use whichever one your group prefers. Anytime you're told to roll dice, that also means you can draw from the Deck of Fate instead.





### ACTIONS & OUTCOMES: THE 30-SECOND VERSION

#### Create an advantage when creating or discovering aspects:

- Fail: Don't create or discover, or you do but your opponent (not you) gets a free invocation.
- Tie: Get a boost if creating new, or treat as success if looking for existing.
- **1** Succeed: Create or discover the aspect, get a free invocation on it.
- **Succeed with Style:** Create or discover the aspect, get two free invocations on it.

#### Create an advantage on an aspect you already know about:

- **Fail:** No additional benefit.
- **Tie:** Generate one free invocation on the aspect.
- **Succeed:** Generate one free invocation on the aspect.
- **Succeed with Style:** Generate two free invocations on the aspect.

#### **Overcome:**

- **Fail:** Fail, or succeed at a serious cost.
- rightarrow Tie: Succeed at minor cost.
- **Succeed:** You accomplish your goal.
- **Succeed with Style:** You accomplish your goal and generate a boost

#### Attack:

- **Fail:** No effect.
- ≒ Tie: Attack doesn't harm the target, but you gain a boost.
- **Succeed:** Attack hits and causes damage.
- **Succeed with Style:** Attack hits and causes damage. May reduce damage by one to generate a boost.

#### Defend:

- **Fail:** You suffer the consequences of your opponent's success.
- ← Tie: Look at your opponent's action to see what happens.
- **Succeed:** Your opponent doesn't get what they want.
- Succeed with Style: Your opponent doesn't get what they want, and you get a boost.



### OUTCOMES

Once you roll your dice, add your approach bonus (we'll talk about that in a moment) and any bonuses from aspects or stunts. Compare the total to a target number, which is either a fixed difficulty (page 122) or the result of the GM's roll for an NPC. Based on that comparison, determine your outcome:

- ↓ You **fail** if your total is *less than* your opponent's total.
- $\stackrel{\leftarrow}{\rightarrow}$  It's a **tie** if your total is *equal to* your opponent's total.
- 1 You **succeed** if your total is *greater than* your opponent's total.
- 11 You **succeed with style** if your total is at least *three greater than* your opponent's total.

Now that we've covered outcomes, we can talk about actions and how the outcomes work with them.



### guns in young centurions

What's more dangerous than a bad guy? A bad guy with a gun. It's a staple in all sorts of adventure fiction for the antagonist to pull a gun and start shooting at some point in the story. But in *Young Centurions* stories, the heroes are kids—teenagers, but still not adults. *Young Centurions* is not intended to be a game where kids get shot. Your game is your own, but we encourage you not to use it that way. As several people said in *Sally Slick and the Steel Syndicate*, you don't shoot kids.

Let's be perfectly clear that we're talking about stories here. Real life does not care one little bit about script immunity or narrative convention. Getting hit by real-life bullets will leave you maimed or dead. But in stories, guns do more things—and more *interesting* things—than just inflicting harm on people. We can still make use of them, so let's talk about what guns represent in stories.

First, when someone pulls a gun, it's a signal that they *mean business*. Playtime is over. Things just got real. Whatever you want to call it. It's a way to signal to your players that big, serious things are about to happen—and somebody better do something! It looks like he's about to shoot that guy, what do you do?! You can't just wait to see what happens; you need to act right now. Doktor Proktor's ray gun in *Sally Slick and the Steel Syndicate* is a great example of this—when he tried to use it on Sally on the train, it sparked the other train passengers to action.

Second, they represent power. This can be an equalizing or defensive power in the hands of a protagonist, or an oppressive, even evil power in the hands of a bad guy. The person with the gun quite literally calls the shots, you defy them at your peril.

Third, science-fictiony ray guns can represent unknown technology or mystery. What will that thing do—is it a freeze ray? A magnetizing gun? Guns like this can be used more freely than regular firearms, because their effects are more fantastical and appropriate to the sort of adventure story that *Young Centurions* is designed to create.

So how do you apply these ideas to your game? Let's talk mechanics.



We suggest that you don't use consequences (special aspects that represent injuries or other ways you've been harmed by conflict, see page 75) related to gunshot wounds. As we said before, *Young Centurions* is not intended for making stories about kids getting shot. (Consider bending this a little as the heroes approach adulthood, especially if the Great War is important in your game.) The simple solution to this is that you just don't allow guns to be used to make direct attack actions. Instead, they can be used to create an advantage, to overcome an obstacle, and, in limited circumstances, in defend actions.

- **Create an Advantage:** Simply pulling a gun introduces a situation aspect like LOOK OUT! HE HAS A GUN!, or something similar. Additionally, you might use a gun to create advantages like HELD AT GUNPOINT, COVERING FIRE, or HAIL OF BULLETS. Super science ray guns might apply aspects like FROZEN, MODIFIED MEMORY, or STUNNED. If someone really wants to make an attack by shooting at someone, let them try with the understanding that success will act like creating an advantage.
- **Overcome an Obstacle:** You could overcome an obstacle by shooting out a lock, cutting a rope from across a room, or setting off a stack of TNT across a field.
- Defend: This probably won't come up all that much, but if you get creative you can do things like stop someone from running through a door, forcing them to overcome an obstacle against your defend action if you spray bullets at the doorway.
- Attack: Yes, yes, we just said you shouldn't do this. But you might have a creative player want to do something like shooting a chain that holds up a chandelier, dropping it on a target; that's an attack, but not one where the bullets cause the damage.



### ACTIONS

So you've narrated what your PC is trying to do, and you've established that there's a chance you could fail. Next, figure out what **action** best describes what you're trying to do. There are four basic actions that cover anything you do in the game.

### 🚱 Create an Advantage

**Creating an advantage** is anything you do to try to help yourself or one of your friends—in fact, creating a useful advantage is the main way characters help one another. Taking a moment to very carefully aim your experimental lightning gun, spending several hours doing research in the school library, or tripping the bully who's about to punch your friend—these all count as creating an advantage. The target of your action may get a chance to use the defend action to stop you. The advantage you create lets you do one of the following three things:

- Create a new situation aspect.
- Discover an existing situation aspect or another character's aspect that you didn't know about.
- Take advantage of an existing aspect.

For more on aspects, see page 80.

#### If you're creating a new aspect or discovering an existing one:

- ↓ If you fail: Either you don't create or discover the aspect at all, or you create or discover it but an *opponent* gets to invoke the aspect for free. The second option works best if the aspect you create or discover is something that other people could take advantage of (like ROUGH TERRAIN). You may have to reword the aspect to show that it benefits the other character instead of you—work it out in whatever way makes the most sense with the player who gets the free invocation. You can still invoke the aspect if you'd like, but it'll cost you a fate point.
- If you tie: If you're creating a new aspect, you get a boost (page 86). Name it and invoke it once for free—after that, the boost goes away. If you're trying to discover an existing aspect, treat this as a success (see below).
- **1 If you succeed:** You create or discover the aspect, and you or an ally may invoke it once for free. Write the aspect on an index card or sticky note and place it on the table.
- **If you succeed with style:** You create or discover the aspect, and you or an ally may invoke it *twice* for free.



#### If you're trying to take advantage of an aspect you already know about:

- ↓ **If you fail:** You don't get any additional benefit from the aspect. You can still invoke it in the future if you'd like, at the cost of a fate point.
- If you tie or ↑ succeed: You get one free invocation on the aspect for you or an ally to use later. You might want to draw a circle or a box on the aspect's note card, and check it off when that invocation is used.
- **If you succeed with style:** You get *two* free invocations on the aspect, which you can let an ally use, if you wish.

### Overcome

You use the **overcome** action when you have to get past something that's between you and a particular goal—picking a lock, escaping from handcuffs, leaping across a chasm, flying a biplane through a thunderstorm. Taking some action to eliminate or change an inconvenient situation aspect is usually an overcome action; we'll talk more about that in *Chapter 6: Aspects and Fate Points* (page 80). The target of your action may get a chance to use the defend action to stop you.

- ↓ **If you fail:** You have a tough choice to make. You can simply fail—the door is still locked, the mook still stands between you and the exit, the enemy fighter plane is still ON YOUR TAIL. Or you can succeed, but at a serious cost—maybe you drop something vital you were carrying, maybe you suffer harm. The GM helps you figure out an appropriate cost.
- If you tie: You attain your goal, but at some minor cost. The GM could introduce a complication, or present you with a tough choice (you can rescue one of your friends, but not the other), or some other twist. See "Succeed at a Cost" on page 189 of Fate Core System for more ideas.
- **1 If you succeed:** You accomplish what you were trying to do. The lock springs open, you duck around the mook blocking the door, you manage to lose the alien spaceship on your tail.
- If you succeed with style: As success (above), but you also gain a boost (page 86).



### Attack

Use an **attack** when you try to hurt someone, whether physically or mentally—throwing a punch, shooting a tranquilizer gun, or yelling a blistering insult with the intent to hurt your target. (We'll talk about this in *Chapter 5: Ouch! Damage, Stress, and Consequences* on page 74, but the important thing is: If someone gets hurt too badly, they're knocked out of the scene.) The target of your attack gets a chance to use the defend action to stop you.

- ↓ **If you fail:** Your attack doesn't connect. The target parries your sword, your shot misses, your target laughs off your insult.
- ➡ If you tie: Your attack doesn't connect strongly enough to cause any harm, but you gain a boost.
- **1** If you succeed: Your attack hits and you do damage. See *Chapter 5: Ouch! Damage, Stress, and Consequences* (page 74).
- **If you succeed with style:** You hit and do damage, plus you have the option to reduce the damage your hit causes by one and gain a boost.

### 🗊 Defend

Use **defend** when you're actively trying to stop someone from doing any of the other three actions—you're parrying a sword strike, trying to stay on your feet, blocking a doorway, and the like. Usually this action is performed on *someone else's turn*, reacting to their attempt to attack, overcome, or create an advantage.

- ↓ **If you fail:** You're on the receiving end of whatever your opponent's success gives them.
- If you tie or ↑ succeed: Things don't work out too badly for you; look at the description of your opponent's action to see what happens.
- If you succeed with style: Your opponent doesn't get what they want, plus you gain a boost.

As we mentioned in *Chapter 2: Making a Character* (page 42), there are six **approaches** that describe how you perform actions.

- **Careful:** A Careful action is when you pay close attention to detail and take your time to do the job right. Lining up a long-range arrow shot. Attentively standing watch. Disarming a bank's alarm system.
- Clever: A Clever action requires that you think fast, solve problems, or account for complex variables. Finding the weakness in an enemy swordsman's style. Finding the weak point in a fortress wall. Fixing a clockwork robot.
- Flashy: A Flashy action draws attention to you; it's full of style and panache. Delivering an inspiring speech to your army. Embarrassing your opponent in a duel. Producing a magical fireworks display.
- Forceful: A Forceful action isn't subtle—it's brute strength. Wrestling a bear. Staring down a bully. Casting a big, powerful magic spell.
- **Quick:** A Quick action requires that you move quickly and with dexterity. Dodging an arrow. Getting in the first punch. Disarming a bomb as it ticks 3... 2... 1...
- Sneaky: A Sneaky action is done with an emphasis on misdirection, stealth, or deceit. Talking your way out of getting arrested. Picking a pocket. Feinting in a sword fight.

Each character has each approach rated with a bonus from +0 to +3. Add the bonus to your dice roll to determine how well your PC performs the action you described.

So your first instinct is probably to pick the action that gives you the greatest bonus, right? But it doesn't work like that. *You have to choose the approach that matches how you described your action*. You can't describe an action that doesn't make any sense.

Would you creep through a dark room, hiding from the guards, while being Flashy? No, that's being Sneaky. Would you Quickly push that big rock out of the way of the car? No, that's being Forceful. *The GM should disallow the use of any approach that doesn't make sense.* 



### BUT I CAN TOTALLY BUILD AN IMPROVISED AIRPLANE WITH FORCEFUL!

Sometimes players, especially persuasive players, will be tempted to look for ways to use their best approach in every situation, even when it doesn't make much sense.

Some of the time, this isn't a problem. Of course characters would look for ways to apply their best approaches; that's what we all do every day in real life. But FAE works to its best potential if you resist that urge. Let the story you're telling be your guide. It's OK to make a roll with a less than optimal bonus some of the time.

### Different Difficulty for Different Approaches

At the GM's judgment, the difficulty of an action can go up if the approach you use isn't well suited to the thing you're doing—adding a +2 to the difficulty for non-ideal approaches, and +4 for downright inappropriate ones. The GM may even declare that it's impossible to use a particular approach in some situations. Can you Forcefully move a huge stone? Well, yes, but that's doing it the hard way, so the GM will add +2. But if you get a board to use as a lever (being Clever, in other words) it sure would be easier—no penalty for that. Using Flashy, if your GM is very nice, is likely at a +4 penalty, while Sneaky is probably out of the question.



### Impact of Your Approach on the Story

Sometimes how your character solves a problem is interesting in ways that go beyond that immediate problem. How you do something can make *other* things easier, or can make them harder.

GMs can use your choice of approach to throw wrinkles into the story. Sometimes it'll help you (players, feel free to suggest ideas!), but sometimes it'll be a complication that's a consequence of the approach you chose. Every approach has ways it can help or hurt. Here are some examples.

Being Careful means you avoid making careless mistakes, and you notice a lot of detail. However, taking care means taking time, and if you have people chasing you, they're probably going to catch up.

Clever is an extremely versatile approach, applicable to a lot of situations. If you're being clever, you've analyzed the problem thoroughly and aren't likely to be taken by surprise by something unexpected. But it might require some research or preparation, and if you fail a Clever action, that might mean you've completely misjudged the situation, and you could find yourself in some real hot water.

When you're being Flashy, you're attracting attention. People notice you. This describes both the good and the bad things about it—don't be Flashy unless you want to be noticed, but even then you can't guarantee all the attention will be the sort you want.

Being Forceful can be noisy and attract attention you don't want, but on the bright side successfully being big and tough in front of other opponents can frighten them into being more cooperative.

Sneaky actions are pretty much the opposite of Flashy—the whole idea is not to attract attention. You're being quiet, you're being subtle, and people won't notice. It's often slow going, however—if the clock is ticking, being Sneaky uses up a lot of those ticks, and you might run out.

When you're Quick you just react, you accomplish your task in a very short time, and it often leaves you ready to react to other, unexpected challenges. The problem is you're acting without thinking, which can lead to careless mistakes or lack of attention to detail.

Jet Black is trying to open a locked door. He throws his shoulder into it, rolls Forceful, and the GM describes it smashing off the hinges. Unfortunately, the GM also declares that as Jet stumbles into the room, he hears shouts in German coming from the next room—the bad guys heard him and are calling for reinforcements!



### CHAPTER 3: PLAYING YOUNG CENTURIONS ROLL THE DICE, ADD YOUR BONUS

Time to take up dice and roll. Take the bonus associated with the approach you've chosen and add it to the result on the dice. If you have a stunt that applies, add that too. That's your total. Compare it to what your opponent (usually the GM) has.

### DECIDE WHETHER TO MODIFY THE ROLL

Finally, decide whether you want to alter your roll by invoking aspects—we'll talk about this a lot in *Chapter 6: Aspects and Fate Points* (page 80).

### CHECK THE OUTCOME, AND GO!

Once you have your final result, compare it to your opposition's result, figure out your outcome, and the story moves on from there!

CHAPTER 4: CHALLENGES, CONTESTS, AND CONFLICTS



### CHAPTER 4: CHALLENGES, CONTESTS, AND CONFLICTS PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

We've talked about the four actions (create an advantage, overcome, attack, and defend) and the four outcomes (fail, tie, succeed, and succeed with style). But how do you pull those together? (If you want to see an example of how all of these things work together at the table, check out the example of play on page 106.)

Usually, when you want to do something straightforward—swim across a raging river, talk your way into an exclusive restaurant—all you need to do is make one overcome action against a difficulty level that the GM sets (page 122). You look at your outcome and go from there.

But sometimes things are a little more complex.

### CHALLENGES

A **challenge** is a series of overcome and create an advantage actions that you use to resolve an especially complicated situation. Each overcome action deals with one task or part of the situation, and you take the individual results together to figure out how the situation resolves.

To set up a challenge, decide what individual tasks or goals make up the situation, and treat each one as a separate overcome roll.

Depending on the situation, one character may be required to make several rolls, or multiple characters may be able to participate. GMs, you aren't obligated to announce all the stages in the challenge ahead of time—adjust the steps as the challenge unfolds to keep things exciting.

The PCs are on a ship caught in a storm. To press on and get to their destination despite the weather, the GM decides to present them with a challenge. Steps in resolving this challenge could be calming panicky passengers, securing loose cargo, and keeping the ship on the right heading.



CONTESTS

When two or more characters are competing against one another for the same goal, but not directly trying to hurt each other, you have a contest. Examples include a tractor race, a public debate, or a chase along a crowded city sidewalk.

A contest proceeds in a series of exchanges. In an exchange, every participant takes one overcome action to determine how well they do in that leg of the contest. Compare your result to everyone else's.

If you got the highest result, you win the exchange—you score a victory (which you can represent with a tally or check mark on scratch paper) and describe how you take the lead. If you succeed with style, you mark two victories.

If there's a tie, no one gets a victory, and an unexpected twist occurs. This could mean several things, depending on the situation—the terrain or environment shifts somehow, the parameters of the contest change, or an unanticipated variable shows up and affects all the participants. The GM creates a new situation aspect (page 81) reflecting this change and puts it into play.

The first participant to achieve three victories wins the contest.





## CHAPTER 4: CHALLENGES, CONTESTS, AND CONFLICTS

**Conflicts** are used to resolve situations where characters are trying to harm one another. It could be physical harm (a fist fight with the local bully, battling a giant stompy robot, a racing tractor demolition derby), but it could also be mental harm (a shouting match with your brothers, taunting a rival classmate, resisting the powers of a psychic magician). For some ideas on conflicts that don't involve punching, see "Even More Story Hooks that Don't Focus on Violence" on page 130.

### CONFLICTS: THE 30-SECOND VERSION

- 1. Set the scene.
- 2. Determine who goes first. The first player takes their turn and decides who goes next.
- 3. Repeat 2 until everyone has one turn.
- 4. Repeat 2 and 3 until only one side of the conflict has characters remaining.

### Setting the Scene

Establish what's going on, where everyone is, and what the environment is like. Who is the opposition? The GM should write a couple of situation aspects (page 81) on sticky notes or index cards and place them on the table. Players can suggest situation aspects, too.

The GM also establishes **zones**, loosely defined areas that tell you where characters are. You determine zones based on the scene and the following guidelines:

Generally, you can interact with other characters in the same zone—or in nearby zones if you can justify acting at a distance (for example, if you have a ranged weapon). You can move one zone for free. An action is required to move if there's an obstacle along the way, such as someone trying to stop you, or if you want to move two or more zones. It sometimes helps to sketch a quick map to illustrate zones.

Minions are attacking the characters in a house. The living room is one zone, the kitchen another, the front porch another, and the yard a fourth. People in the same zone can easily throw punches at each other. From the living room, you can throw things at people in the kitchen or move into the kitchen as a free action, unless the doorway is blocked. To get from the living room to the front porch or yard requires an action.




## Determine Who Goes First

Now that you've set the scene, it's time to act—but someone has to act first. The GM gets to say who goes first. To make this decision, she should think about a few important things.

First, think about who is causing the action. Is there a particular person who's triggering it—someone who throws the first punch, someone who hits the gas and sends the car zooming ahead? This might be a PC, or it might be an NPC controlled by the GM. (When the GM goes, she acts for all the NPCs at once, rather than each NPC getting an individual turn of their own!)

If there's no obvious single character initiating the action (such as when escaping a fire or taking shelter from falling meteors), the GM can declare that the character with the highest Quick approach goes first, using Careful as a tiebreaker.

Some characters might have an aspect (such as FASTEST COWPOKE IN OKLAHOMA) that suggests that they're particularly fast. If so, that character's player may spend a fate point and go first. Other characters might have a stunt that allows them to go first in conflicts a number of times per session. If more than one character has aspects or stunts that suggest they go ahead of everyone else, make sure all those players have a chance to go first—if not in this conflict, then in the next one.

## Who Goes Next

Once the first player takes their turn, that player (which might be the GM!) decides who goes next. That player takes their turn, and they decide who goes after them. It goes around like this until every player, including NPCs controlled by the GM, has had a turn. This is the end of the first round, and a new round begins. The player who went last in the previous round decides who goes first in the next round (yes, they're allowed to pick themselves! Players tempted to force the GM to go last in the round may wish to keep this fact in mind.)

#### INTERRUPTING THE ACTION

When a player is choosing who goes next, if the GM hasn't had a turn yet this round, she may interrupt the order and declare that she's going next by giving a fate point to the player who would have gone next. The GM takes actions for all NPCs under her control, decides who goes next, and play continues on from there.

### Rounds Continue

Rounds continue happening until only one side has characters still in the conflict because everyone else has conceded or been taken out (page 77).





## CHAPTER 5: OLICH! DAMAGE, STRESS, AND CONSEQUENCES

'M HIT!

When you're hit by an attack, the severity of the hit is the difference between the attack roll and your defend roll; we measure that in **shifts**. For instance, if your opponent gets +5 on their attack and you get a +3 on your defense, the attack deals a 2-shift hit (5 - 3 = 2).

Then, one of two things happens:

- You suffer stress and/or consequences, but you stay in the fight.
- Vou get **taken out**, which means you're out of the action for a little while.

### STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES: THE 30-SECOND VERSION

- Each character starts with three stress boxes.
- Severity of hit (in shifts) = Attack Roll Defend Roll
- When you take a hit, you need to account for how that hit damages you. One way to absorb the damage is to take stress; you can check one stress box to handle some or all of a single hit. You can absorb a number of shifts equal to the number of the box you check: one for Box 1, two for Box 2, three for Box 3.
- You may also take one or more consequences to deal with the hit, by marking off one or more consequence slots and writing a new aspect for each one. Mild consequence = 2 shifts; moderate = 4 shifts; severe = 6 shifts.
- If you can't (or decide not to) handle the entire hit, you're taken out. Your opponent decides what happens to you.
- Giving in before your opponent's roll allows you to control how you exit the scene. You also get one or more fate points for doing this!
- Stress and mild consequences vanish at the end of the scene, provided you get a chance to rest. Other consequences take longer.



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### CONSEQUENCES

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## CHAPTER 5: OLICH! DAMAGE, STRESS, AND CONSEQUENCES WHAT 15 STRESS?

If you get hit and don't want to be taken out, you can choose to take stress. Stress represents you getting tired or annoyed, bumps and bruises, scrapes and mildly hurt feelings—anything that stings at first but you forget about after a few minutes. To measure stress, your character sheet has a **stress track**, a row of three boxes. When you take a hit and check a stress box, the box absorbs a number of shifts equal to its number: one shift for Box 1, two for Box 2, or three for Box 3.

You can only check one stress box for any single hit, but you *can* check a stress box and take one or more consequences at the same time. You can't check a stress box that already has a check mark in it.

## WHAT ARE CONSEQUENCES?

Consequences are new aspects that you take to reflect being more seriously hurt in some way. Your character sheet has three slots where you can write consequences. Each one is labeled with a number: 2 (mild consequence), 4 (moderate consequence), or 6 (severe consequence). This represents the number of shifts of the hit the consequence absorbs. You can mark off as many of these as you like to handle a single hit, but only if that slot was blank to start with. If you already have a moderate consequence written down, you can't take another one until you do something to make the first one go away.

A major downside of consequences is that each consequence is a new aspect that your opponents can invoke against you. The more you take, the more vulnerable you are. And just like situation aspects, the character that creates it (in this case, the character that hurt you) gets one free invocation on that consequence. They can choose to let one of their allies use the free invocation.

Let's say that you take a really hard 4-shift hit. You check Box 2 on your stress track, which leaves you with 2 shifts to deal with. If you can't, you're taken out, so it's time for a consequence. You can choose to write a new aspect in the consequence slot labeled 2—say, SPRAINED ANKLE. Those final 2 shifts are taken care of and you can keep fighting!

If you're unable to absorb all of a hit's shifts—by checking a stress box, taking consequences, or both—you're taken out.



## CHAPTER 5: OUCH! DAMAGE, STRESS, AND CONSEQUENCES CAMPAIGN RATINGS AND APPROPRIATE CONSEQUENCES

When you compose a consequence, pay attention to the campaign rating (page 118) you've decided on for your campaign. We've outlined a few suggestions below in two lists, younger and older: G-rated games probably want to stick to the younger list, PG-13-rated games the older list. PG-rated games work well choosing from either list, as you need to. Of course, you're free to use these as inspiration and compose your own.

### EXAMPLE CONSEQUENCES

#### YOUNGER, MILD:

- I'm Embarrassed
- I'M Angry
- Everyone's Laughing at Me
- KEPT AFTER SCHOOL TO Clap the Erasers
- BUMPS & BRUISES
- STUBBED TOE/ JAMMED FINGER
- Exhausted

#### YOUNGER, MODERATE:

- My Friends Are Furious at Me
- GROUNDED
- Extra Chores
- Sore Ankle
- BLOODY NOSE

#### YOUNGER, SEVERE:

- Lost My Parents' Trust
- CLASSMATES SPREADING RUMORS
- Cops Have Their Eye on Me
- SEEING STARS
- BROKEN ARM
- Terrified

#### OLDER, MILD:

- GROUNDED
- **Embarrassed**
- JEALOUS
- CONFUSED
- Parents are Angry at Me
- Winded
- BLOODY NOSE

#### OLDER, MODERATE:

- ANXIETY A
- NASTY RUMORS
- Parents Are Furious
- FROSTBITE
- MINOR CONCUSSION

#### OLDER, SEVERE:

- SEVERE ANXIETY
- CRIMINAL RECORD
- INTENSE PHOBIA
- Crushing Headaches
- Fractured Leg
- Heartbroken

## CHAPTER 5: OUCH! DAMAGE, STRESS, AND CONSEQUENCES WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I GET TAKEN OUT?

If you get taken out, you can no longer act in the scene. Whoever takes you out narrates what happens to you. It should make sense based on how you got taken out—maybe you run from the room in shame, or maybe you get knocked unconscious.

## diving in

If things look grim for you, you can **give in** (or **concede** the fight)—but you have to say that's what you're going to do *before* your opponent rolls their dice.

This is different from being taken out, because you get a say in what happens to you. Your opponent gets some major concession from you—talk about what makes sense in your situation—but it beats getting taken out and having no say at all.

Additionally, you get one fate point for conceding, and one fate point for each consequence you have when you give in. This is your chance to say, "You win this round, but I'll get you next time!" and get a tall stack of fate points to back it up.

## GETTING BETTER: RECOVERING FROM STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

At the end of each scene, clear all of your stress boxes. Recovery from a consequence is a bit more complicated; you need to explain how you recover from it—whether that's a hospital visit, taking a walk to calm down, apologizing to your parents and accepting the punishment they deal out, or whatever makes sense with the consequence. You also need to wait an appropriate length of time.

- Mild consequence: Clear it at end of the scene, provided you get a chance to rest.
- Moderate consequence: Clear it at the end of the next session, provided it makes sense within the story.
- Severe consequence: Clear it at the end of the scenario (page 121), provided it makes sense within the story.

### Renaming Moderate and Severe Consequences

Moderate and severe consequences stick around for a while. Therefore, at some point you may want to change the name of the aspect to better fit what's going on in the story. For instance, after you get some medical help, PAINFUL BROKEN LEG might make more sense if you change it to HOBBLING ON CRUTCHES.

## MENTOR5: TAKING ONE FOR THE TEAM

The wise mentor is an important part of adventure fiction about teenagers. They do a lot of different things to help their young apprentices—they teach, they offer opportunities, they provide resources that the youngster wouldn't otherwise have. One of the most important things they can do is to help deal with the consequences when things don't go the Young Centurions' way.

Let's say you have a mentor (you, or someone in your party, has an aspect or a stunt that declares that they have one) in the same scene with your Young Centurion. Now let's say that you take a consequence—a ceiling beam in a burning building falls and hits you, dealing you a moderate consequence. You can instead declare that your mentor takes the consequence for you, subject to a few restrictions:

- The players have to narrate how the mentor takes the consequence in a believable way that fits the fiction ("My mentor dives above me, letting the beam hit her in the back!")
- ♦ The consequence is stepped up by one category. Mild→Moderate, Moderate→Severe, Severe→Taken out. ("That would be a moderate consequence for me, so it's a severe for her. Ouch!")
- The mentor has the same consequence slots as any other character; so if, say, a moderate consequence slot is already full, they can't take another moderate. Also, a mentor's consequences go away the same way a player character's do. ("My mentor does have her severe consequence slot free, but this is going to take a long time to heal.")
- Each mentor can only do this once per session.

You can also do this after the fact, provided it makes sense. Let's say you get in a little trouble with the cops, and breaking & entering charges are forthcoming. Maybe a mentor could have a little chat with the district attorney and make the charges go away. But, now your mentor has a consequence of I Owe THE DA A BIG FAVOR.



## CHAPTER 6: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS

CHAPTER 6: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS



## WHAT ARE ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS?

An **aspect** is a word or phrase that describes something special about a person, place, thing, situation, or group. Almost anything you can think of can have aspects. A person might be the FASTEST MECHANIC IN NEW YORK. A room might be ON FIRE after you knock over an oil lamp. After a time-travel encounter with a dinosaur, you might be TERRIFIED. Aspects let you change the story in ways that go along with your character's tendencies, skills, or problems.

You **spend fate points**—which you keep track of with pennies or glass beads or poker chips or some other tokens—to unlock the power of aspects and make them help you. You **earn** fate points by letting an aspect be used against you to complicate the situation or make your life harder. Be sure to keep track of the fate points you have left at the end of the session—if you have more than your refresh (page 48), you start the next session with the fate points you ended this session with.

You earned a lot of fate points during your game session, ending the day with five fate points. Your refresh is 2, so you'll start with five fate points the next time you play (because 5 is more than your refresh). But another player ends the same session with just one fate point. His refresh is 3, so he'll begin the next session with 3 fate points, rather than just the one he had left over.

### How Many Fate Points Does the GM Get?

As GM, you don't need to track fate points for each individual NPC. As a guideline, you can start each scene with one fate point per PC in the scene. As the players spend fate points, those tokens go into your supply for the scene, giving you more flexibility.



## WHAT KINDS OF ASPECTS ARE THERE?

There's an endless variety of aspects, but no matter what they're called they all work pretty much the same way. The main difference is how long they stick around before going away.

**Character Aspects:** These aspects are on your character sheet, such as your high concept and trouble (page 44). They describe personality traits, important details about your past, relationships you have with others, important items or titles you possess, problems you're dealing with or goals you're working toward, or reputations and obligations you carry. These aspects only change under very unusual circumstances; most never will.

Spirit of Ingenuity; On the Run from the Cops; Attention to Detail; I Must Protect My Brother

**Situation Aspects:** These aspects describe the surroundings that the action is taking place in. This includes aspects you create or discover using the create an advantage action (page 60). A situation aspect usually vanishes at the end of the scene it was part of, or when someone takes some action that would change or get rid of it. Essentially, they last only as long as the situational element they represent lasts.

ON FIRE; HIDDEN GUARDS; CROWD OF ANGRY PEOPLE; KNOCKED TO THE GROUND

**Consequences:** These aspects represent injuries or other lasting trauma that happen when you get hit by attacks. They go away slowly, as described in *Chapter 5: Ouch! Damage, Stress, and Consequences* (page 77).

SPRAINED ANKLE; FEAR OF SPIDERS; CONCUSSION; SELF-DOUBT



## CHAPTER 6: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS WHAT DO YOU DO WITH ASPECTS?

There are three big things you can do with aspects: **invoke** aspects, **compel** aspects, and use aspects to **establish facts**.

## Invoking Aspects

You **invoke** an aspect to give yourself a bonus or make things a bit harder for your opponent. You can invoke any aspect that you a) know about, and b) can explain how you use it to your advantage—including aspects on other characters or on the situation. Normally, invoking an aspect costs you a fate point—hand one of your fate points to the GM (or to another player, if you're in conflict against them). To invoke an aspect, you need to describe how that aspect helps you in your current situation.

I attack the robot with my baseball bat. This robot is  $\mathsf{S}_{\mathsf{LUGGISH}}$  , so that should help me.

I really want to scare this guy. I've heard he's SCARED OF MICE, so I'll release a mouse in his bedroom.

Now that the guard's DISTRACTED, I should be able to sneak right by him.

This airplane is in really bad shape—but since I'm a HOTSHOT PILOT, I bet I can land it.





What does invoking the aspect get you? Choose one of the following effects:

- **Add +2 bonus to your total.** This costs a fate point.
- Reroll the dice. This option is best if you rolled really lousy (usually a -3 or -4 showing on the dice). This costs a fate point.
- Confront an opponent with the aspect. You use this option when your opponent is trying something and you think an existing aspect would make it harder for them. For instance, an alien goon wants to draw his blaster pistol, but he's BURIED IN DEBRIS; you spend a fate point to invoke that aspect, and now your opponent's level of difficulty is increased by +2. The GM can do this too, invoking the SLIPPERY ICE to make your sprint to safety harder!
- Justify taking action. Aspects declare things about you that are always true, and can sometimes give you justification for taking action you otherwise might not be able to take. Because I'm NEVER CAUGHT NAPPING, I'd have a chance to notice the ninjas sneaking up on us. Because I'm TOUGH AS OLD TREE ROOTS, I think I can try to shake off this snake venom. Because I can SWIM LIKE A DOLPHIN, I think I have a chance to get across this raging river. Since you're asking for a chance to roll the dice instead of declaring that you succeed, you don't need to spend a fate point to do this.
- Help an ally with the aspect. Use this option when a friend could use some help and you think an existing aspect would make it easier for them. You spend a fate point to invoke the aspect, and now your friend gets +2 on their roll.

**Important:** You can only invoke any aspect once on a given dice roll; you can't spend a stack of fate points on one aspect and get a huge bonus from it. (Exception: You *can* use more than one free invocation on the same aspect on the same roll. Freebies are powerful.) You can invoke several *different* aspects on the same roll, spending a fate point for each one.

If you're invoking an aspect to add a bonus or reroll your dice, wait until *after* you've rolled to do it. No sense spending a fate point if you don't need to!

#### FREE INVOCATIONS

Sometimes you can invoke an aspect for free, without paying a fate point. If you create or discover an aspect through the create an advantage action, the first invocation on it (by you or an ally) is free; if you succeeded with style—page 57—you get *two* freebies. If you cause a consequence through an attack, you or an ally can invoke it once for free. A **boost** (page 86) is a special kind of aspect that grants one free invocation, then it vanishes.



### CHAPTER 6: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS

## Compelling Aspects

If you're in a situation where having or being around a certain aspect means your character's life is more dramatic or complicated, anyone else at the table (but usually the GM) can **compel** the aspect. Compels are the most common way for players to earn more fate points.

There are two types of compels.

**Decision compels:** This sort of compel suggests that trouble might arise because of a decision your character makes. A good decision compel suggests a decision your character has to make, and some trouble or bad outcome that happens because of it. They tend to follow this template:

You have \_\_\_\_\_ aspect in \_\_\_\_\_ situation, so it makes sense that you'd decide to \_\_\_\_\_. This goes wrong when \_\_\_\_\_ happens.

If your character is IN CHARGE OF MY BABY BROTHER, for example, you may need to stay to protect the house from thieves rather than fleeing to safety—and this gets you in over your head when trying to drive the thieves off. If you have a DEFIANT STREAK A MILE WIDE, maybe you can't help but mouth off to the police detective when she questions you, so you get taken home in the back of a police wagon and now you're *really* going to get it from your parents—or maybe even spend a night in the county lockup if you're 16 or 17 years old.

**Event compels:** Other times a compel reflects something happening that makes life more complicated for you, using the template:

You have \_\_\_\_\_ aspect and are in \_\_\_\_\_ situation, so it makes sense that, unfortunately, \_\_\_\_\_ would happen to you. Dagnabbit!

If you have STRANGE LUCK, of course that invention you're working on accidentally sets the garage on fire. If you OWE MY COUSIN A FAVOR, then your cousin shows up and demands that you do him that favor just when it's least convenient.

In any case, when an aspect is compelled against you, the person compelling it offers you a fate point and suggests that the aspect has a certain effect—that you'll make a certain decision or that a particular event will occur. You can discuss it back and forth, proposing tweaks or changes to the suggested compel. Then you need to decide whether to accept the compel. If you agree, you take the fate point and your character makes the suggested decision or the event happens. If you refuse, you must *pay* a fate point from your own supply and, if appropriate, explain how you avoid the negative consequences suggested by the compel. Yes, this means that if you don't have any fate points, you can't refuse a compel!



## Establishing Facts

The final thing that aspects can do is **establish facts** in the game. You don't have to spend any fate points, roll dice, or anything to make this happen—just by virtue of having the aspect RUDDY DUCK'S PILOT, you've established that your character is a pilot and that you fly a plane named the *Ruddy Duck*. Having the aspect MORTAL ENEMY: THE RED NINJAS establishes that the setting has an organization called the Red Ninjas and that they're after you for some reason.

When you establish facts of the setting this way, make sure you do it in cooperation with other players. If most people want to play in a setting without magic, you shouldn't unilaterally bring magic into it through an aspect. Make sure that the facts you establish through your aspects make the game fun for everyone.

## COMPOSING GOOD ASPECTS

When you need to think of a good aspect (we're mainly talking about character and situation aspects here), think about two things:

How the aspect might help you—when you'd invoke it.

How it might hurt you—when it would be compelled against you.

#### For example:

I'LL GET THE STEEL DON SOMEDAY.

**Invoke** this to improve your chances when acting against the Steel Don.

**Get a fate point** when your dislike for the Steel Don makes you do something foolish to try to get him.

HAIR TRIGGER NERVES

Invoke this when being extra vigilant and careful would help you.

Get a fate point when this causes you to be jumpy and be distracted by threats that aren't really there.

Obviously, your trouble aspect is supposed to cause problems—and thereby make your character's life more interesting and get you fate points—so it's okay if that one's a little more one-dimensional, but other character and situation aspects should be double-edged.



#### CHAPTER 6: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS

## 3005T5

Boosts act a bit like aspects, but don't have all the characteristics of aspects. They're temporary free invocations that happen when you get a momentary benefit that isn't lasting enough to be an aspect. You get a boost when you're trying to create an advantage but don't succeed well enough, or as an added benefit to succeeding especially well at an action (notably defending). You invoke boosts just like you would a free invocation on an aspect—for the +2 bonus, reroll, or another effect that requires an invocation. As with aspect invocations, you need to describe what's happening that makes that boost relevant to your action.

Once you invoke the boost, it goes away. They go away on their own fairly quickly—usually after the next action when you could use them—so use them as soon as possible! If you want, you can allow another character to invoke your boost, though it needs to be relevant to their action and something that could help them out.

Fighting off a bunch of goons, you grab a GLASS ROOT BEER BOTTLE that will survive one hit upside a goon's head. If you can toss that bottle to your buddy, you could allow your buddy to invoke the boost. Otherwise, it might apply only to you.

## Naming a Boost

When you earn a boost, give it a name like you would an aspect to help you remember where the boost came from and how you can use it. Don't dwell on coming up with something clever, since it doesn't last long. If you're struggling to name a boost, let it be unnamed and continue playing—boosts aren't worth stopping play to name. However, you still have to keep track of the situation that created the boost, which some people find difficult to remember without a name.

IN MY SIGHTS; DISTRACTED; UNSTABLE FOOTING; GOT YOU SURROUNDED

### Remember that Boosts Are Not Aspects

Unlike aspects, you cannot compel a boost or pay a fate point to invoke a boost (including invoking it against its owner—see "Having Your Aspects Invoked Against You" in *Fate Core System*, page 81) or do other things that manipulate aspects or that aspects affect. Any other rules that require an aspect to exist or be used don't count for boosts. Don't let the fact that they're often given names mislead you.



# CHAPTER 7: STUHTS



# WHAT ARE STUNTS?

**Stunts** are tricks, maneuvers, or techniques your character has that change how an approach (page 63) works for your character. Generally this means you get a bonus in certain situations, but sometimes it gives you some other ability or characteristic. A stunt can also reflect specialized, high-quality, or exotic equipment that your character has access to that gives them a frequent edge over other characters.

## CREATING STUNTS

There's no definitive list of stunts that you pick from; much like aspects, everyone composes their own stunts. There are two basic templates to guide you in composing your stunts, so you do have something to work from.

The first type of stunt gives you a +2 bonus in a certain situation when you use a particular approach. Use this template:

Because I [describe some way that you are exceptional, have a cool bit of gear, or are otherwise awesome], I get +2 when I [pick one: attack, defend, create advantages, overcome] when [describe a circumstance] and I'm being [pick an approach].

You can rearrange the wording in the stunt, of course, as long as all the important bits of information are there: the way you're exceptional, the action, the circumstance, and the approach.

For example:

- Smooth Talker: Because I am a Smooth Talker, I get +2 when I create advantages when I'm in conversation with someone and I'm being Sneaky.
- Lover of Puzzles: Because I am a Lover of Puzzles, I get +2 when I overcome obstacles when I am presented with a puzzle, riddle, or similar conundrum and I'm being Clever.
- World-Class Duelist: Because I am a World-Class Duelist, I get +2 when I attack when engaged in a one-on-one swordfight and I'm being Flashy.
- Bullet Proof Vest: Because | have an experimental Bullet Proof Vest, | get +2 when | defend when attacked by gunfire and I'm being Forceful.

Sometimes, if the circumstance is especially restrictive, you can apply the stunt to both the create an advantage action *and* the overcome action.

**Experimental Jet Pack:** When I use my Experimental Jet Pack, I gain +2 to Quickly create an advantage or overcome an obstacle if flying is both possible and helpful.



The second type of stunt lets you make something true, do something cool, or otherwise ignore the usual rules in some way. Use this template:

Because I [describe some way that you are exceptional, have a cool bit of gear, or are otherwise awesome], once per game session I can [describe something cool you can do].

For example:

- Well Connected: Because I am Well Connected, once per game session I can find a helpful ally in just the right place.
- **Quick on the Draw:** Because I **am Quick on the Draw**, once per game session I can **choose to go first in a physical conflict**.
- Speed of a Horse: Because I have the Speed of a Horse, once per game session I can show up anywhere I want to, provided I could run there, no matter where I started.

These templates are intended to give you an idea of how stunts should be constructed, but don't feel constrained to follow them exactly if you have a good idea. If you'd like to read more about the construction of stunts, see *Skills and Stunts* on page 85 of *Fate Core System*.



## CHAPTER 7: STUNTS CENTURY STUNTS

Century stunts are special stunts with a bit more "oomph" than regular stunts. All Young Centurions may take one as one of their first three stunts. (Remember, GMs, that Shadows also get Century stunts.) The stunt you write should have a thematic connection to your Centurion's Spirit, which should be part of your high concept aspect (page 44). If you're the Spirit of Silence, don't take a Century stunt that gives you a bonus to Flashy actions; Sneaky or maybe Careful would be more appropriate.

Century stunts fall into one of the same two categories as ordinary stunts. The first type provides a bonus, but instead of providing a bonus of +2 it provides a bonus of +3. The second type allows you to do something cool more often, or more powerfully, than a similar ordinary stunt would. For example:

**Wonderful Toys:** Because she is such a skilled and innovative inventor and tinker, Sally Slick usually has a useful device that can help her out of a jam. Twice per game session, she can use this stunt to eliminate a situation aspect.

**Oh, No You Don't:** Because he thinks of others before himself, Jet Black gains +3 to any overcome and defend actions when he's being Quick and an ally or bystander (rather than himself) immediately benefits from the action.

Wait, I've Read Something About This: Because he is so well read in mysterious histories, twice per game session Benjamin Hu may declare that he knows an obscure but helpful fact while searching ancient ruins, exploring underground tunnels, or researching a curious volume of forgotten lore.

**Haymaker:** Because she is a formidable pugilist, Amelia Stone gains +3 to attack actions made with her hands or feet against living, unarmored targets, while she's being Forceful.

**What Was That Again?:** Because Mitzy Powers is such a natural at talking circles around people, she often leaves them flummoxed and confused. She gains +3 to defend and overcome actions when she's being Flashy and verbally sparring with someone.

**Prescience:** Because I can sometimes see a short time into the future, once per session, at the end of my turn, I may declare that my turn was a premonition. Everything that happened during my turn did not really happen, and I can take a different action instead. Any fate points spent during that turn are returned to their original owners, boosts and free invokes spent are restored, etc.

## STUNT PACKAGES

So you have a general idea of what kind of Young Centurion you want to play, but you don't know how to pick stunts to represent her. Not to worry, we've cooked up some examples for you!

## The Athlete

You're a champion athlete, maybe a football player or a hopeful to attend the new Olympic Games or a shortstop who's piqued the interest of scouts for the New York Yankees. Or maybe you excel outside of school—you could be a scrappy boxer who fights at an L.A. gym, or a free diver from the Bahamas, or any other sort of physically gifted youth.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Strongman/Strongwoman:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle when you need to break through a physical barrier while you're being Forceful.

**Gridiron Reflexes:** Gain +2 to defend actions when you're being Quick and you can leap out of the way of an attack.

**Stole Their Playbook:** Gain +2 to attack actions when you're being Clever and you have inside knowledge of your target's tendencies and habits.

**Playmaker:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Careful and you can make a plan and put it into action.

**Head Fake:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Sneaky and can physically feint your opponent.

**Last Minute Heroics:** Gain +2 to attacks when you or an ally only has one consequence slot remaining and you're being Flashy.



### CHAPTER 7: STUNTS



## The Inventor

Lots of people can build things. Some people can build clever things. A few can build incredible things under impossible circumstances—that's you, the inventor. Whether it's constructing a functional gasoline engine from a pile of scrap you find in an old barn, or sneaking into a university laboratory and constructing a functional galvanic calculation machine, you can build just about anything.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Blow It Up:** You have or can improvise a device that grants you +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle while you're being Forceful, provided explosives or hydraulics or some other sort of brute force would be useful.

**Made a Few Modifications:** You can make a fast modification to a vehicle you're riding in to gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage while you're being Quick.

**Calculation Devices:** Use a small calculation device of your own construction to gain +2 to overcome actions made while being Clever, involving solving puzzles or making scientific measurements.

**Optics:** You have a spyglass, binoculars, or some other device that grants you +2 to overcome or defend actions to spot hidden, sneaking, or faraway items.

**Dampers:** Your modifications grant you +2 to attempts to create an advantage while being Sneaky, provided you're in a vehicle or using some other machinery that you can quiet.

**Spring Boots:** You have spring-loaded boots that give you +2 bonus to attempts to overcome obstacles that can be surmounted by leaping, springing, or running while being Flashy.

**I Have Just the Thing:** One per session, as a free action, you may declare that you have a useful device that will completely eliminate a situation aspect.

### The Scholar

There's one in every class. The kid who reads not only the assigned chapter, but the whole book. And can cite which facts are less than accurate, and argues that in the original Greek it really meant something else. No matter what subject you're talking about, this kid's read something about it. That's you. The scholar.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**No, YOU Are Wrong:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Forceful and can browbeat someone with just how wrong they are (whether or not they really are wrong).

**Do the Math:** Gain +2 to defend actions when you can describe how you were being Quick and did a fast mental calculation to know the optimal moment and direction to dodge.

**It's Elementary:** Gain +2 to overcome actions when you're being Clever and must figure out a puzzle, solve a riddle, or otherwise reason your way out of a tight spot.

**Details Matter:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Careful and your deep knowledge of a subject reveals a detail that you can take advantage of.

**It's a Trap:** Gain +2 to attacks when you're being Sneaky and your knowledge of a particular environment can help you attack from a position of ambush or lay a trap.

**Q. E. D.:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage or overcome an obstacle when you're being Flashy and you publicly explain exactly why your idea, theory, or plan is correct.

**I've Read Something About This:** Once per session, you may declare that you know a convenient fact that helps you in whatever predicament you find yourself in. Talk with your GM about what that fact is.





## The Fighter

You've always been good in a scrap. Maybe you learned at the feet of a great master, or at the fists of your older siblings. Are you a tough pugilist, whether Queensbury rules or bareknuckle? Are you a practitioner of one of the martial arts from the Far East, little known in the West in the early 20th century? Or are you a street fighter, scrapping with a chain or a broken bottle or whatever else you can get your hands on?

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Haymaker:** Gain +2 to attacks made as a punch or a kick while being Forceful.

**Lightning Parry:** Gain +2 to Quick defend actions made in hand-to-hand combat.

**Leverage Is Everything:** Gain +2 to defend actions when you're being Clever and can use your opponent's hand-to-hand attack against them.

**Take Cover:** Gain +2 to defend actions against ranged attacks when you're being Careful and an aspect is present in the scene that declares that cover is available.

**Feint:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Sneaky and can fake or feint your opponent.

**Swashbuckler:** Gain +2 to attack actions made with a hand-to-hand weapon when you're being Flashy and do it with some sort of swashbuckling derring-do, such as swinging from a rope or leaping over a table.

I Can Take It: Gain an additional mild consequence slot.

#### CHAPTER 7: STUNTS

## The Well-Connected Kid

Your network of connections is impressive, and you know human nature well enough to make the most of those connections. Maybe your folks have money, power, connections, or all of the above—and you know how to take advantage of those resources. Maybe you survived your childhood in the streets by learning what makes people tick, and you can talk almost anyone into helping you out.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Don't Mess With Me:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage by intimidating someone while being Forceful.

**First Impressions:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage by acting Quickly and making a positive first impression on someone.

**Dry Wit:** Gain +2 to attacks when you're being Clever and you make your target look foolish; if you succeed with style, the target may not even realize that you insulted them.

**Cold Read:** Gain +2 to Careful attempts to create an advantage when you try to assess another character's aspects by observing them.

**Silver Tongue:** Gain +2 to Sneaky attempts to overcome an obstacle by using lies and deceit.

**Hey Did I Ever Tell You About...:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Flashy and you try to distract or confuse someone with irrelevant nonsense.

**Call in a Favor:** Once per session, you may declare that someone owes you a favor. You can call that favor in to get some secret information, or a meeting with an important person who wouldn't otherwise give you the time of day, or some other interesting and useful effect.

#### CHAPTER 7: STUNTS



You've been living a life of crime. Maybe you've been pickpocketing, maybe committing petty burglary to survive. You're gotten very good at staying hidden and getting into places you're not supposed to be, which are skills the Century Club finds useful—provided you use your powers for good.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Bend Bars, Lift Gates:** Gain +2 to Forceful attempts to overcome an obstacle when you need to remove a physical impediment in your way.

**Quick Draw:** Gain +2 to attacks made when you're acting Quickly in the first round of any conflict.

**Casing the Joint:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when you're being Careful and assessing the aspects of a building, ruins, or some other area that you intend to investigate.

**Trapfinder:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle when being Careful and avoiding or deactivating traps, snares, alarms, or other security systems.

**Pickpocket:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle when being Sneaky and attempting to surreptitiously relieve another character of a small item on their person.

**Cat Burglar:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage related to hiding, skulking, or being stealthy while being Sneaky.

**Snake Oil Salesperson:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle when pulling a public con while being Flashy.

I Know Someone Who Has One of Those: Once per session, you may declare that you know of just the right location to rob or just the right less-thanhonest person to talk to in order to get a bit of information or an item you're looking for.

## The Country Kid

Maybe you grew up in the backwoods, hunting deer through the forests and across the hills. Maybe you grew up on the farm, working hard outdoors every day and taking care of livestock. You know how to get along outside.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Raised on the Farm:** Gain +2 to overcome obstacles when you need to move or lift heavy objects and you're being Forceful.

**Ears of the Fox:** Gain +2 to defend actions when you're being Quick and you're ambushed or attacked by an unseen attacker.

**Tracker:** Gain +2 to overcome actions when you're being Clever and you track your quarry through woods, fields, or other wild areas.

**Eyes of the Hawk:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome obstacles or defend actions to spot skulking or hidden targets when you're being Careful.

**Camouflage:** Gain +2 to Sneaky attempts to create an advantage related to hiding, skulking, or being stealthy.

**Alpha Wolf:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage by cowing or intimidating animals when you're being Flashy.

**Outdoorsman/woman:** Once per session, your skill at outdoor survival lets you shield yourself and your allies from situation aspects that come from some routine environmental challenge (such as BAKING SUN, FREEZING WIND, LOST IN THE FOREST). It doesn't eliminate that aspect, so you can invoke it against your enemies if you have an idea how.





## The Psychic

It's rare, but in the world of the Century Club, some people are gifted with incredible mental abilities beyond what is easily explained by mundane science. Some can read people's emotions, some can see a few seconds into the future, some can accomplish even more amazing and spectacular psychic feats. Others are really good at faking it and have learned to use their five senses to make people *think* they have psychic abilities.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Iron Will:** Gain +2 to defend actions against non-physical attacks while you're being Forceful.

**Sixth Sense:** Gain +2 to defend actions to stop attacks against allies while you're acting Quickly.

**Lie Detector:** Gain +2 to defend actions made to detect lies when you're being Clever.

**Divination:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage by reading signs and portents in the stars, or in tarot cards, or using some other divination practice, made while being Careful.

**Mind Trick:** Gain +2 to Sneaky attempts to overcome an obstacle by making someone believe something that isn't true.

**Stage Psychic:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage, made while being Flashy, when you make a show of predicting someone's fortune.

**The Cavalry:** Because you can sense when your friends are in trouble, once per session you can insert yourself into a scene in which an ally is in serious danger (unless you're in jail, stuck on Mars, or otherwise physically incapable of getting there).

## The Daredevil

Some people seem to have their sense of self-preservation removed at birth. That's you. Maybe you're a compulsive tree climber or a kid who builds and flies her own rudimentary airplanes or someone who cannot go fast enough, whether on horseback, in a motorcar, or downhill on skis.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**No Fear:** Gain +2 to Forceful hand-to-hand attacks made against someone clearly bigger and stronger than you are.

**Can't Catch Me:** Gain +2 to defend actions made while running and acting Quickly.

**Well Chosen Footholds:** Gain +2 to attempts to overcome obstacles while climbing or moving around at great heights and being Clever.

**Be Prepared:** Gain +2 to Careful attempts to overcome an obstacle that results when you or an ally *fails* an earlier action.

Like You Belong There: Gain +2 to attempts to overcome an obstacle when you're being Sneaky and trying to talk your way into a dangerous place you're not supposed to be.

**Follow Me:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage or overcome an obstacle when you lead the way and you're being Flashy.

We Few, We Happy Few: Once per session, you can give your allies a pep talk and remove all situation aspects and mild consequences from yourself and your allies that stem from fear.





### CHAPTER 7: STUNTS

### The Performer

Performers come in all shapes, sizes, and talents. Maybe you're a musician, trained in an elite conservatory or self-taught on your grandparents' back porch. You might be a performer traveling the world with Circus Europa or a Wild West show. Or perhaps you're an actor or dancer, born to the stage and to inspire emotions in your audience. Whatever your talent, you live for the spotlight.

### STUNT SUGGESTIONS

**Aerialist:** Because you're at home thirty feet above the ground, you get +2 to any Careful overcome action related to swinging on a rope or swing, balancing on a wire or ledge, or any other similar action.

**Virtuoso:** Because you're a once-in-a-generation musical talent, gain +2 to create advantage actions while being Flashy when you use your music to create a mood. (Choose a particular instrument—or your voice—as your area of expertise.)

**Trick Shot Artist:** Gain +2 to attempts to create an advantage when taking a Flashy shot at something that is *not* a living creature. (Choose the tool of your trade: rifle, bow & arrow, throwing knives, shuriken, slingshots, etc.)

**Dancer's Rhythm:** Gain +2 to any Careful overcome action where perfect timing is essential: roping a boat bobbing in a storm, leaping aboard a moving train, throwing a package to an ally swinging on a rope.

**Thespian:** Because you're a consummate actor, you have no penalty when you attempt to impersonate someone much older than you, much taller or shorter than you, with a radically different accent than you have, or the like.

**Raconteur:** Because you're a storyteller, gain +2 to Flashy attempts to create an advantage by telling a tale: create sympathy through a sob story, gain trust by telling a series of great jokes, or distract someone with a long story.

**Contortionist:** Gain +2 to Sneaky overcome actions when escaping from being tied up, squeezing through a tiny opening, hiding in a small space, etc.

**Stage Magician:** Gain +2 to Flashy overcome actions to palm objects, misdirect observers, make objects appear or disappear, and the like.

**Animal Trainer:** Because you're a lion tamer (or elephant trainer or poodle wrangler or what have you), gain +2 to Clever create an advantage or overcome actions when trying to get an animal to do what you want them to do.

**Trick Rider:** Gain +2 to Flashy overcome attempts when you're on horseback and you try to lasso something, jump a tall fence or a wide creek, stand on the saddle, mount a horse while it's running, grab an item (or person!) from the ground as you ride past, etc.



## CHAPTER 8: CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT



## CHAPTER 8: CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT GROWING UP

A Spirit's skills improve as they grow up and become more physically and mentally capable. Life experiences accumulate and shape your personality. *Young Centurions* reflects that with character advancement, which allows you to change your aspects, add or change stunts, and raise your approach bonuses. You do this when your character reaches a milestone.

## MILESTONES

Stories in TV shows, comic books, movies, and even video games usually continue from episode to episode, season to season. *Young Centurions* can tell those kinds of stories; you play many game sessions in a row using the same characters—this is often called a **campaign**—and the story builds on itself. But within these long stories, there are shorter story arcs, like single episodes of a TV show or single issues of a comic, where shorter stories are told and wrapped up. *Young Centurions* can do that too, even within a longer campaign.

In *Young Centurions*, we call those wrap-ups **milestones**—whether they're small ones for short stories, or really big ones at the end of many sessions of play. *Young Centurions* recognizes three types of milestones, and each one allows you to change your character in certain ways.

## Minor Milestones

A **minor milestone** usually occurs at the end of a session of play, or when one piece of a story has been resolved. Rather than making your character more powerful, this kind of milestone is more about changing your character, about adjusting in response to whatever's going on in the story if you need to. Sometimes it won't really make sense to take advantage of a minor milestone, but you always have the opportunity in case you need to.

After a minor milestone, you can choose to do one (and only one) of the following:

- Switch the ratings of any two approaches.
- Rename one aspect that isn't your high concept.
- Exchange one stunt for a different stunt.
- Choose a new stunt (and adjust your refresh, if you already have three stunts).

Also, if you have a moderate consequence, check to see if it's been around for two sessions. If so, you can clear it.



## Significant Milestones

A **significant milestone** usually occurs at the end of a scenario (page 121) or the conclusion of a big plot event (or, when in doubt, at the end of every two or three sessions). Unlike minor milestones, which are primarily about change, significant milestones are about learning new things—dealing with problems and challenges has made your character generally more capable at what they do.

In addition to the benefit of a minor milestone, you also gain *both* of the following:

- If you have a severe consequence that's been around for at least two sessions, you can clear it.
- Raise the bonus of one approach by one.

### RAISING APPROACH BONUSES

When you raise the bonus of an approach, there's only one rule you need to remember: you can't raise an approach bonus above Superb (+5).

## Major Milestones

**Major milestones** should only occur when something happens in the campaign that shakes it up a lot—the end of a big story arc, the final defeat of a main NPC villain, or any other large-scale change that reverberates around your game world.

These milestones are about gaining more power. The challenges of yesterday simply aren't sufficient to threaten these characters anymore, and the threats of tomorrow will need to be more adept, organized, and determined to stand against them. Achieving a major milestone confers the benefits of a significant milestone *and* a minor milestone. In addition, you may do *all* of the following:

- Take an additional point of refresh.
- Take an additional stunt (optional, costs a point of refresh if you already have three stunts).
- Rename your character's high concept (optional).









### EXAMPLE OF PLAY

It's the summer of 1915, and four young Centurions—Sally Slick, Jet Black, Nadya Petulengro, and Mack Silver—have been on the trail of a young inventor who they suspect is a Shadow. He's created a collection of automatic articulated walkers (we'd call them robots, but that word wasn't invented until 1920!). These machines can break down the sturdiest walls, and have been used to smash through vaults in three different banks this month. The young Centurions have tracked him down to a warehouse on the outskirts of Chicago, hoping to discover who he's working for.

- **Carrie (the GM):** A clock tower somewhere in the distance rings out eight o'clock. You've crept up toward the warehouse. There's a door around the side.
- Amanda (playing Sally Slick): Are there any windows?
- Carrie (GM): Yes, but high enough up that you'd have to climb to look in.
- Harry (playing Jet Black): Sounds good to me; there's got to be something I could climb to get up there.
- Kit (playing Nadya Petulengro): Hang on a minute, let's take a look around. Is there any sign of a burglar alarm or anything? I'm going to take a look.
- **Carrie (GM):** Make a roll—sounds like you're being Careful.

Carrie knows there's a burglar alarm there, so she treats this like a **create an advantage** action (page 60) attempting to **discover an aspect** (page 81) of BURGLAR ALARM. If there wasn't an alarm, a successful create an advantage action would let the PCs know that.

Kit (Nadya): [rolls dice, adds her Careful bonus] I got a +3!

**Carrie (GM):** You succeed! You spot a wire attached to the window that runs to an iron bell—a burglar alarm.

Carrie writes BURGLAR ALARM ON WINDOW on a slip of paper and places it on the table.

Carrie (GM): You'll probably set it off if you climb up there.

- **Chuck (playing Mack Silver):** I'm tired of all this sneaking around. The alarm's not attached to the door? Perfect. Let's get in there and see what's what. I'm going to run over to the door. Is there a window in the door? Can I see what's happening?
- Carrie (GM): It's a solid wooden door. You'll have to open it to see anything.
- **Amanda (Sally):** Okay, Sally really doesn't want you to just charge in there, but *I* think it would be awesome.

Don't be afraid to make "bad" decisions that make things fun for everyone! (page 45)


**Chuck (Mack):** Oh yeah, in we go. I'm going to open that door and run in. Carrie, given that I'm FIERCELY INDEPENDENT, do you think this is worth a fate point?

For more on character aspects, see page 81.

Carrie (GM): Sure is!

Carrie hands Chuck a poker chip. This is a **compel** (page 84) of Mack's aspect FIERCELY INDEPENDENT, because he's playing one of his aspects in a way that's going to get them into trouble!]

Carrie (GM): Mack, you step into the warehouse.

Kit (Nadya): I'm right behind him.

- **Carrie (GM):** Okay. You're in an office. There's a drafting table with papers all over it. There's an office chair and a lit kerosene lamp and a couple of pencils and lots of other office stuff. A doorway leads out into the rest of the warehouse. A voice calls from the next room: "Who's there?"
- Chuck (Mack): Dang, he heard us.
- Harry (Jet): Like you didn't know that would happen.
- **Carrie (GM):** So what do you guys do? Nadya and Mack, you're in the office. Jet and Sally, are you coming in too?
- Amanda (Sally): I think we should hang back for a minute. Let's make sure this guy doesn't sneak out the back.
- Harry (Jet): Good idea. We'll run in if you need us.
- Kit (Nadya): I'm going to see if any papers look even vaguely interesting. One of 'em's gotta give us a clue who's sponsoring this little mad scientist.
- Harry (Jet): Good idea.
- **Chuck (Mack):** I'll go see who's doing all the yelling. I step out of the office, into the warehouse.
- **Carrie (GM):** Okay. Nadya, you pick up a bunch of papers, one of them looks like it has an address written on it. You don't have time to read the details, but at least you have it. Mack, you walk out into the warehouse and see a teenager standing over a workbench full of parts, equipment, and tools. He's holding a smoking acetylene torch and is pulling off a welding mask. In the corner of the room stands a six foot tall iron monstrosity, with two huge hydraulic legs—it's one of the articulated walking machines. "Who are you? What are you doing here?" he yells at you.
- Chuck (Mack): We're here to take you down! Uh... Nadya? Where are you?
- **Kit (Nadya):** In the office. Collecting the evidence. Remember? The evidence? What we came here for?
- Chuck (Mack): Oh, right.



- **Carrie (GM):** The young Shadow points at you, Mack. "Walker, take care of the intruder!" With a belch of steam, the hulking machine begins to walk toward you. It's much more nimble than you imagined it would be. It looks like it's planning to kick you through the wall. A **conflict** is starting [page 70]. Mack, we'll say you go first [**Initiative**, page 72]. What do you do?
- **Chuck (Mack):** Oh, crud. Nadya, in a little trouble here... I don't think I can take this thing on my own. I'll do my best to stay out of its way until I have some help.
- Carrie (GM): How?

Chuck (Mack): I guess I leap out of its way when it gets close. Is that Quick?

Descriptions of **approaches** are on page 63.

Carrie (GM): I think so. Make a roll.

Chuck (Mack): [Rolls dice, adds his Quick bonus] Aw yeah, I get +5.

Carrie (GM): Great! You succeed with style.

This is a create advantage attempt to create a **situation aspect** (page 81). Typically +2 is enough to succeed, but Chuck **succeeded with style** (page 57).

Chuck (Mack): Sweet.

Chuck writes NIMBLE DEFENSE on a slip of paper and adds two circles which represent the two free invocations you get when you succeed with style. He plans to use these to aid his defend rolls against the walking machine.

Chuck (Mack): Um... So I guess the walking machine would go next [Initiative, page 72].

Carrie (GM): Makes sense to me. The machine tries to kick at you.

Carrie rolls and adds the walking machine's Forceful.

Carrie (GM): This is an attack action [page 62]. I get +5. Give me a defend action [page 62]!

Chuck (Mack): Okay! I'll dive out of the way, I guess that's Quick—otherwise it wouldn't make sense for me to use that advantage I just created.

Chuck rolls the dice, adds his Quick.

**Chuck (Mack):** I only get +4. I'll use one of my **free invocations** [page 83] of NIMBLE DEFENSE, which adds +2, for +6.



Chuck crosses off one of the circles on the aspect.

Chuck (Mack): Mack dives out of the way!

- **Carrie (GM):** Okay. The young Shadow just observes, expecting the walker to pummel the stuffing out of you, Mack. Everyone in the conflict has had a turn, so a new round starts. Nadya, if you want in, I think you'd come in now, papers in hand.
- Kit (Nadya): Okay. This thing is pretty cumbersome, isn't it? I'm thinking my best bet is to trip it. I'm going to dart in and out and hope to be fast enough not to get clobbered.
- Carrie (GM): Cool. You're being Quick, right? Make your attack.
- Kit (Nadya): [Rolls dice, adds Quick bonus] I get +4 total.
- **Carrie (GM):** The walking machine relies on its Forceful to defend—it just tries to barrel through your trip. [Rolls dice] Oh, I rolled horribly. Only +2, even with the bonus.
- Kit (Nadya): Yes! That's a 2-shift hit—my +4 minus its +2.

Shifts are discussed on page 74.

Carrie (GM): Sure is.

Carrie checks off the second box on the walker's stress track.

- **Carrie (GM):** Okay, Nadya dives at the walker's legs, pulling at the delicate knee joint, and rolls out of the way. The walker teeters out of balance and clangs against the wall, knocking some of its copper tubing loose. Steam spews everywhere. Kit, who goes next? [**Initiative**, page 72.]
- Kit (Nadya): Mack, for sure.
- **Chuck (Mack):** Oh, I am going to rip this thing apart. Can I jump on top of it?
- Carrie (GM): You could try, but it's steam powered and lots of it is dangerously hot.
- **Chuck (Mack):** Okay, never mind that. I think Nadya has the right idea. I'll try to knock it down. It looks pretty top-heavy, right? I should be able to tip it over. Can I do that Quickly?
- **Carrie (GM):** That's a create an advantage action, but it sounds to me like you're being Clever.
- **Chuck (Mack):** Yeah, I can see that. [Chuck rolls dice, adds Clever bonus.] Ouch. I got a -1.
- **Carrie (GM):** The walker defends Forcefully—it can just kind of sit there and dare you to push it over. [Carrie rolls, adds Forceful bonus.] I get a +1. Sorry Mack, not enough. But you're only two away, if you could find an aspect to invoke you'd tie it...



**Chuck (Mack):** [Looks at meager stack of fate point chips] Hmm... Nah, I think I want to hang onto them for later.

Carrie (GM): Okay. Who goes next?

Chuck (Mack): Sally, Jet, you guys want in?

- **Amanda (Sally):** We'll continue covering the back door in case the Shadow makes a run for it.
- Chuck (Mack): Okay, then the walker goes.

**Carrie (GM):** The walker thinks Nadya is its biggest threat, and will try to stomp you. [Carrie rolls an attack.] I get a +6!

Kit (Nadya): I'll try to feint away from it. That's Sneaky, I think. [Rolls dice, adds Sneaky bonus.] Oh dear. That's a -2. Uh oh. An 8-shift hit? Ugh. No, I can't do this. I'll spend a fate point to reroll.

For what fate points can do, see page 80.

Carrie (GM): Which aspect are you invoking?

Kit (Nadya): [Kit looks over her character sheet.] Nadya's PAST MAKES HER CAUTIOUS. I don't think she'd walk into that kind of a blow.

- Carrie (GM): Yeah, that works.
- Kit (Nadya): [Rolls dice again.] Oh, no! It's a little better, but not good enough—I get a 0. That's a 6-shift hit. I need to take a **moderate consequence** (page 75), which knocks it down to a 2-shift hit. [Kit checks off the 2nd stress box on her stress track.] What should the consequence be?
- **Carrie (GM):** What if the machine kicked you right in the ribs? You're winded with BRUISED RIBS.
- Kit (Nadya): Okay. [Kit writes BRUISED RIBS as the moderate consequence on her sheet.] You know, I can't take another solid hit like that. How about I concede? I'll be out of the fight, trying to catch my breath.
- **Carrie (GM):** Hm... No, not enough. A concession has to hurt. How about you drop to the ground to catch your breath, while the papers you were holding go flying and the Shadow grabs the one with the address written on it?
- Kit (Nadya): Argh! Okay, I'll take it.

**Concessions** are on page 77. Carrie gives Kit two poker chips—one fate point for conceding, one for taking a consequence in this conflict.

- **Carrie (GM):** Great! So, the Shadow goes next. He grabs that paper and runs out the back door.
- Harry (Jet): Just what we were waiting for!



- **Carrie (GM):** Right. Inside, there's still the walking machine and Mack left—well, Nadya too, but she's safe because she conceded; the walking machine won't touch her.
- Chuck (Mack): I am so out of here.
- Kit (Nadya): Hey! Leaving me behind?
- **Carrie (GM):** No, the two of you can escape back through the office if you like. Sally and Jet deserve some spotlight for a bit. So, Sally and Jet, you're watching the back door, right?
- Amanda (Sally): Yup! Do we see the Shadow?
- **Carrie (GM):** You sure do. You're watching the back door, and hear some yelling from inside the warehouse, then some clanking and machinery noises. Suddenly the back door bursts open and a kid about your age comes sailing out. He's carrying a paper and heading down the alley at a full run. What do you do?
- Harry (Jet): Take off after him!
- Amanda (Sally): Heck yeah!
- **Carrie (GM):** Okay! This is a **contest** [page 69], so we'll all make **overcome actions** [page 61]. It's a flat out footrace, so I think that's Forceful for everyone.
- Harry (Jet): Why isn't that Quick?
- **Carrie (GM):** Because there isn't any nimbleness or agility or quick thinking needed here—this is raw leg power at first. Maybe you can think of a way to work Quick in next round.
- Harry (Jet): Gotcha—Forceful it is!
- **Carrie (GM):** Okay, Sally and Jet, let me know what you get. [Lots of dice are rolled.]
- Amanda (Sally): +2.
- Harry (Jet): Zero.
- **Carrie (GM):** +1 for the Shadow. That's one victory for Sally. Next exchange! You're in an alley, twisting and turning.
- **Amanda (Sally):** I'm going to duck into a side alley and try to head him off. I think that's Clever, right? [Rolls dice, adds Clever bonus.] +3!
- Harry (Jet): I'll try to cut a corner or two, trying to be as Quick as I can. [Rolls dice, adds Quick bonus.] +1. I think I need new dice.
- **Sally (GM):** I get a +1 also, so Sally wins again. That's two victories for her; one more and she catches him! Next exchange.
- Amanda (Sally): +2.
- Harry (Jet): +2 too. Heh.



**Carrie (GM):** I also get a +2. Which means nobody gets a victory, but a **twist** happens [page 69]. Let's see... Okay, as you chase the Shadow through an intersection, a policeman spots you. The Shadow yells, "Officer, help! They're trying to rob me!" And the policeman takes off after you.

Amanda (Sally): Uh oh.

- Carrie (GM): Next exchange! You're out of the alley, back into the street.
- Harry (Jet): No way I'm going to catch this guy. Can I do something to help Sally?
- Carrie (GM): Sure! What do you have in mind?
- **Harry (Jet):** I want to grab a big rock and throw it at the Shadow's feet. Is that a create an advantage action?
- **Carrie (GM):** Yes! Sounds like you're being Clever, too—so make a roll, try to get +2.

Guidelines for setting difficulties are on page 122.

Harry (Jet): [Harry rolls dice, adds Clever bonus] I get a +3!

**Carrie (GM):** Cool. Jet, you grab a stone from the ground and chuck it at the Shadow. It hits right at his feet, and I think he's STUMBLING. Sally, you can invoke that for free.

Create an advantage actions are discussed on page 60.

Amanda (Sally): +2, and if I invoke that aspect it's a +4!

Carrie (GM): Ouch! I get a zero. Sally, you catch him!

**Amanda (Sally):** Yes! I tackle him from behind, both of us tumbling to the street.

Harry (Jet): Can I grab the paper as I run up to them?

Carrie (GM): Sure can! But that's when the cop arrives...

And they continue to play out the scene, as they try to convince the cop that the Shadow is really the bad guy here. Will they succeed? Or will the cops take them home for the biggest punishments of their young lives? And will Nadya and Mack figure out what happened to them?





# THE GM'S JOBS

The GM has many responsibilities, such as presenting the conflict to the players, controlling NPCs, and helping everyone apply the rules to the situation in the game.

## WHAT DOES THE GM DO?

The GM has a variety of responsibilities, including:

- Set a Campaign Rating (page 118)
- Help Build Campaigns (page 121)
- Build Scenarios and Run Game Sessions (page 121)
- Play Mentor Characters (page 123)
- Play the Bad Guys (page 125)

Let's talk about the GM's jobs.



# CHAPTER 9: BEING THE GAMEMASTER RUNNING GAMES WITH KIDS

As we've said before, *Young Centurions* is intended to be a game that both kids and adults can play. And kids help create terrific, exciting, unexpected game sessions. If you're GMing for a group that includes young children (or

make the game more fun for everyone:Shorter is better: Keep scenes and games short and to the point, with

adults who haven't grown up yet!), there are a few tips and tricks that can

- Shorter is better: Keep scenes and games short and to the point, with plenty of action to keep young players engaged.
- Extra stuff to do is never a bad thing: Provide something small for young players to fiddle with other than their dice and notecards. This is particularly important when the action moves to another player.
- Break it up: Take frequent breaks for food, stretching, and running around in circles.
- Guide, don't railroad: Very young children can come up with ideas best suited for a slapstick cartoon. That's fine if your game is set in that world, but if not? It's up to you to help guide them to a more appropriate action. Use a lot of "what if" questions, such as, "What do you think will happen if you light the teacher's hair on fire with your new invention? Could she get hurt? What else could you do with it to make a distraction?"
- Show and tell: Any game can benefit from visual aids like maps, but these tools are particularly handy to help young kids picture the action of a large scale combat.
- Make failure interesting: It can be frustrating for anyone when the dice aren't cooperating, and it's easy to get discouraged. Kids in particular might need a little extra attention when they fail. Point out how their failure made the game more interesting: "If you hadn't triggered that trap, we never would have found the secret room. That information is worth a sprained ankle, don't you think?" Of course, this approach requires you to make sure that failure *is* interesting!

Those suggestions are handy for just about everyone, but particularly for youngsters. At the end of the day, gaming with young children is about being flexible and giving them a say in where the game goes. Often they'll take you to places you've never dreamed of!



## How Do Grown-ups Fit into This Game?

Ultimately, this is a game about kids, but adults still have an important role to play. Adult NPCs are an important tool for gamemasters. Eliminating them entirely from the game is a bad idea because then there are fewer possible consequences for the player characters. Giving them too much power isn't great either, because adults tend to take charge when kids are involved.

Regardless of how you choose to use them, remember that the adult NPCs are only the supporting characters. Whenever possible, the Young Centurions should be the ones with the power to make a difference. By making sure that their choices and actions impact the direction of the game, you can help keep them in the driver's seat (even if they aren't old enough for a license).

Here are a few thoughts on how to keep the balance:

#### ADULTS AS PARENTS

Obviously, parents are some of the most important people in a child's life. If the characters live at home, find a way to create some space for the kids to act without Mom and Dad breathing down their necks. Give the parents aspects like "Why Won'T THE BABY SLEEP?!" or LONG HOURS AT THE FARM to help keep them busy...and to create potential story complications later. That baby just might start crying at the wrong time, and Pa might be out on the South Field at the exact moment the smugglers try to use it as a landing strip.

If the characters don't live at home, does someone else care for them? Aspects can help define that relationship. A caregiver with "They Don't Pay Me Enough to Take Care of These Brats" will have a very different relationship with the characters than one with WILL GIVE ANYTHING TO THE ORPHANS OF SACRED HEART.

#### ADULTS AS NEUTRAL PARTIES

Neutral parties are particularly useful in keeping the violence level under control. The Steel Don's goons might be vicious killers, but they aren't likely to hurt a bunch of kids in front of a crowd because they don't want that kind of attention. And if they do anything menacing, the onlookers are likely to come to the rescue of a kid in trouble. If you're trying to keep the violence level down to G or PG (see page 118 for more on ratings for your game), consider setting your combat scenes within sight or earshot of potential onlookers to keep things in check.

Adult NPCs can also be used to make things a little harder on the Spirits. Grown-ups won't hesitate to interfere when they think kids are up to no good. If you need to make a task harder, complicate it with the presence of the neighborhood busybody or a cop walking his beat. Not only do the characters need to complete the task, but they need to do so without arousing suspicion of the adult in charge.



#### ADULTS AS ALLIES

Grown-up allies—including mentors and Retainers from the Century Club—can easily overbalance a game, so use them sparingly. The easiest way to limit their influence is to give them aspects that define other responsibilities they have to take care of. Master Lingyu might be powerful, but he has also taken a SOLEMN VOW TO KEEP THE STREETS OF CHINATOWN SAFE, and sometimes that promise might take him away from the characters. Amandine Laclerque has SO MANY STUDENTS SHE CAN'T REMEMBER ALL THEIR NAMES, and if two of them get in trouble at the same time, someone's going to have to deal with things on their own. This forces the characters to solve their own problems, with the mentor only popping up to help when he or she is needed.

#### ADULTS AS ADVERSARIES

In the real world, grown-ups tend to have more power than kids. They're usually physically stronger, more knowledgeable, and more independent than kids. They have resources—money and possessions—that children lack. When creating an adult bad guy, one of the first questions to ask is whether or not the kids can in fact defeat him. In stories that are rated G (and some PG—more on campaign ratings in the next section), the bad guy usually gets it in the end, which means making him somehow vulnerable to the young heroes. He might be WANTED BY THE POLICE or have ENEMIES IN THE SYNDICATE who are eager to oust him from power. Then it's up to the characters to discover these weaknesses and exploit them to bring the villain to justice.

But if the story is rated PG-13, the adversary just might escape. Doctor Methuselah in particular is famous for getting away scot-free almost every time. When facing him, the characters can still succeed by foiling his plans to sink Manhattan or by capturing some of his most trusted subordinates, but they're not likely to bring down the mastermind himself.



You can do a lot of different things with your *Young Centurions* game. Stories can range from simple, straightforward adventures in which good is good and evil isn't, or they can delve into complex narratives in which everything is painted in shades of grey and it's hard to know right from wrong. They can be gritty war stories, complete with guns, or small town dramas with more suspense than violence. You can paint a realistic picture of a time full of racism or rewrite history with an eye to equality. That's a lot of choices to make, but we've made it easy to tailor the game to your comfort level through a handy dandy **campaign rating** system. *Young Centurions* games can start as early as 1913, when all the young Spirits and Shadows aren't even teenagers, and can be set up through 1918, just before they all come of age. Depending on the maturity of your group and what you're looking to accomplish with your story, you can pick the age that best appeals to you.

## WHAT OUR RATING LETTERS MEAN

G: Suitable for children of all ages.
PG: Intended for older children not quite 13.
PG-13: Suitable for ages 13 and up.
R: Ages 17+ only, please.

The easiest way to do this is to pick the rating that will work best for your group of gamers. These ratings are just like the ones you'd see in the movies (in the USA, at least): G, PG, or PG-13. We don't offer an R rating as a matter of course, because we're talking about kid heroes here.

Once you've picked the rating for your game, there are some guidelines to help make that happen,

including suggestions on character age, game topics, and how to deal with issues like romance and violence.

What if you're interested in running a campaign based on a particular historical event that happens in 1913, and it definitely isn't rated G? Well, you've got a few options. You can play jiggery-pokey with the date and move it so your characters are older. You can skip or tone down the more mature bits so that it doesn't feel wrong to send your 12-year-old characters into the middle of them. Or you can decide that sometimes kids as young as 12 have to deal with things that kids their age shouldn't have to deal with. Likewise, if your young gamers want to play older characters, you might want to use the campaign rating that matches your youngest player's age instead of the age of the characters. In short, these aren't absolute rules. They're just a starting point to help you develop a story that will be appropriate for your gamers, particularly if you're playing with children. If these issues don't apply to you, then don't worry about the campaign rating!

# Choosing the Appropriate Rating

If you know anything about childhood development, you'll realize that we've really simplified things for *Young Centurions*. This guide is for setting the maturity rating of your game, not a study guide for your adolescent development class. In real life, kids tend to be a lot more varied; if you prefer, you can make adjustments to the campaign rating to make things a little more realistic.

## g rating

## Character Age: 12 or 13

Years in Game: 1913-1914

- **Teen Development:** Early stages of puberty complete with mood swings and rapid body changes. Feelings of invincibility. Can get frustrated by lack of independence but still listens to parents.
- **Romance:** Very little romance—characters are generally more interested in adventure than in dating. The opposite sex may still be "icky."
- Violence: Minimal violence such as fistfights or other non-fatal, minor damage encounters. Think cartoon violence—very little blood, most of the violent bits edited out or glossed over.
- **Story Suggestions:** Linear, fast-paced stories. Challenges can be large (Locate the missing idol!) or small (Figure out who stole the lunch money!). Bad guys are clearly bad and are ultimately brought to justice. Get the parents out of the way through work, travel, or illness. Mentors are very present/involved.

## pg rating

#### Character Age: 14 or 15 Years in Game: 1915-1916

- **Teen Development:** Begins to be more concerned with appearance, attractiveness, and reputation. Often looks for a mentor outside of the family. Rebels against parents and other authority figures.
- **Romance:** Budding, innocent romances might appear in the game. Think cases of puppy love or crushes, or maybe a first date.
- **Violence:** Characters get into situations in which serious injury is possible, but not usually life threatening. Think comic book violence.
- **Story Suggestions:** Morality starts getting a little murkier, and villains aren't so obvious (perhaps there's a figurehead or a red herring). More problem-solving for characters and choices of how to act. Parents may get in the way of action. Consider adding a subplot to the campaign.



## pg-13 rating

#### Character Age: 16 or 17

Years in Game: 1917-1918

- **Teen Development:** Begins to settle down emotionally as physical changes slow. Begins to rebel less and show more confidence. Shows concern and planning for future success.
- **Romance:** Might have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Goes to dances or on dates. Romantic interests may serve the story as hostages, allies, or villains.
- Violence: High stakes action in which damage can be done, and characters even risk death. Think action movie violence. Guns and other weaponry might appear (see "Guns in Young Centurions" on page 58 for advice on including guns in stories with young protagonists).
- **Story Suggestions:** Lots at stake in a complex, multi-layered story. Characters may be faced with tough choices in which there is no good option. Villains may escape or be untouchable. Parents may be a resource or ally for characters.





## MORE RESOURCES FOR LEARNING HOW TO BE A GM

Being a GM and running games can seem intimidating and difficult at first. It's a skill that takes some practice to master, so don't worry you'll get better the more you do it. If you'd like to read more about the art of GMing Fate, there are several chapters in the *Fate Core System* that you should check out; *Running the Game* (page 177), *Scenes, Sessions, and Scenarios* (page 225), and *The Long Game* (page 251) are particularly helpful.

# HELP BUILD CAMPAIGNS

A **campaign** is a series of games you play with the same characters, where the story builds on what happened in earlier sessions. All the players should collaborate with the GM to plan how the campaign will work. Usually this is a conversation among all of you to decide what sort of heroes you want to play, what sort of world you live in, and what sorts of bad guys you'll encounter. Talk about how serious you want the game to be and how long you want it to last.

# BUILD SCENARIOS AND RUN GAME SESSIONS

A **scenario** is one short story arc, the sort of thing you might see wrapped up in one or two episodes of an adventure television show, even if it's a smaller part of a bigger story. Usually you can wrap up a scenario in one to three game sessions, assuming you play for three or four hours at a time. But what is a scenario, and how do you build one?

# Scenarios

A scenario needs two things: A bad guy with a goal, and a reason the PCs can't ignore it.

- **Bad guy with a goal:** You've probably figured this out already. The campaign's main opposition, or one of his allies, is probably your bad guy.
- Something the PCs can't ignore: Now you have to give the PCs a reason to care. Make sure the bad guy's goal is up in the PCs' faces, where they need to do something about it or bad things will happen to them, or to people or things they value.



## Running Game Sessions

Now that your bad guy is doing something the PCs will pay attention to, it's time to start them off. Sometimes the best way to do that, especially for the first session of a new story arc, is to put them right in the action. Once the PCs know why they should care about what's going on, you just get out of the way and let them take care of it.

That said, there are a bunch of tasks the GM needs to perform to run the session:

- Run scenes. A session is made up of individual scenes. Decide where the scene begins, who's there, and what's going on. Decide when all the interesting things have played out and the scene's over.
- Adjudicate the rules. When some question comes up about how to apply the rules, you get final say.
- **Set difficulties.** You decide how difficult tasks should be, and whether some approaches can't be used at all in some circumstances.
- Play the NPCs. Each player controls their own character, but you control all the rest, including the bad guys.
- Keep things moving. If the players don't know what to do next, it's your job to give them a nudge. Never let things get too bogged down with indecision or because they don't have enough information—do something to shake things up.
- Make sure everyone has a chance to be awesome. Your goal isn't to defeat the players, but to challenge them. Make sure every PC gets a chance to be the star once in a while, from the big bad warrior to the little sneaky thief.

#### SETTING DIFFICULTY LEVELS

When another character is opposing a PC, their rolls provide the opposition in a conflict, contest, or challenge. But if there's no active opposition, you have to decide how hard the task is.

Low difficulties are best when you want to give the PCs a chance to show off and be awesome. Difficulties near their approach ratings are best when you want to provide tension but not overwhelm them. High difficulties are best when you want to emphasize how dire or unusual the circumstances are and make them pull out all the stops.

#### **Difficulty Guidelines:**

- If the task isn't very tough at all, give it a Mediocre (+0)—or just tell the player they succeed without a roll.
- Fair (+2).
- If the task is **extremely difficult**, pick Great (+4).
- If the task is impossibly difficult, go as high as you think makes sense. The PC will need to drop some fate points and get lots of help to succeed, but that's fine.



### OPTIONAL RULE: APPROACH-RELATED TARGET NUMBERS

Some challenges don't lend themselves to using certain approaches. A big, heavy door will resist attempts to smash through it Forcefully or Quickly. Sneaking through a dark room doesn't lend itself to acting Quickly (and you really can't be Forceful or Flashy at all). When trying to gain control of a runaway cart headed toward a cliff, you don't have time to be Careful. These challenges are **resistant** to those approaches. If a character tries to use one of those approaches to overcome it, add +2 or more to the difficulty level. See *"Different Difficulty for Different Approaches"* on page 64 for more.

You might think that the reverse situation is also true—a dull-witted guard could be easily outsmarted by a Clever approach, meaning the difficulty should be lower, right? That situation is already handled by letting the PCs discover the aspect DULL-WITTED on the guard, and invoke it for +2 to their roll if it's relevant.

# PLAY MENTOR CHARACTERS

One or more of the PCs may have an aspect or a stunt that declares that they have a mentor. If they do, talk with those PCs' players about what sort of character they have in mind for their mentors. Is it a wise old Centurion from the previous century, like Grey Ghost or Master Liu from *Sally Slick and the Steel Syndicate*? Is it a protective parent, or maybe an older sibling? A Retainer or other important member of the Century Club?

# The Roles that Mentors Fulfill

The relationship the mentor has with the PCs affects how they do these things, but mentors play three primary roles in *Young Centurions* stories:

- Mentors provide information and advice. Mentor characters are an important source of information for young Spirits, especially when they're new to the Century Club. Mentors might have access to the Century Club's considerable resources (libraries, connections to knowledgeable people, etc.) as well as their own life experience. When one of the PCs doesn't know what to do, a talk with their mentor can clarify things.
- Mentors come to the rescue. When the PCs get in trouble, mentors can help. Sometimes this comes in the form of a PC spending a fate point to declare that their mentor lends a hand. Sometimes it's when the mentor takes a consequence for the PC (page 78).
- Mentors give a nudge. Sometimes in roleplaying games, the players don't know what to do next. This is when a mentor can come along and give them a firm nudge in the right direction to get the action moving. Maybe this comes in the form of information or advice, like we talked about earlier—but maybe the mentor gets into trouble, and the PCs have to act fast to bail them out.





## Retainer Divination

Century Club Retainers frequently serve as mentors for young Spirits. Most Retainers can read signs, omens, or patterns to help answer questions or predict the future. Since Retainers are non-player characters, their divination ability primarily serves a narrative role in *Young Centurions* games. Here are some guidelines for integrating it into your game to move the story forward.

Primarily, divination is a way for you to get mentors to the right place at the right time. If the mentor hangs around all the time, being all grown-up and in charge, the characters never have a chance to be independent. But there are times when the characters might need the mentor to appear in the nick of time to help out (and maybe acquire a consequence in the process). Divination provides a handy way to make that happen.

Divination can also help to move the story along when the characters are stuck. You can use it to provide an essential piece of information or to present a puzzle. However, the answers received aren't always clear. Sometimes they're riddles. Sometimes they're flat out wrong. Sometimes no pattern appears, indicating that the future is too uncertain to be foreseen. Mixing up the quality of the answers will keep the characters from relying on this ability too much.

While most Retainers are numerologists, there are many types of divination you could use in your games. Here are just a few:

- **Capnomancy:** reading signs in smoke
- Cleromancy: drawing or casting of lots, Ogham runes, dice, etc.
- Scrying: gazing into reflective objects like crystal balls
- **Taromancy:** reading Tarot cards
- Theriomancy: interpreting animal behavior
- **Uranomancy:** reading the sky



When you make a bad guy, you can stat them out exactly like the PCs, with approaches, aspects, stress, and consequences. You should do this for **important or recurring bad guys** who are intended to give the PCs some real difficulties, but you shouldn't need more than one or two of these in a scenario.

# Mooks

Other bad guys are **mooks**—unnamed toughs or monsters or goons whose purpose is to make the PCs' day a little more difficult, but they're designed to be more or less easily swept aside, especially by powerful PCs. Here's how you create their stats:

- 1. Make a list of what this mook is skilled at. They get +2 to all rolls dealing with these things.
- 2. Make a list of what this mook is bad at. They get -2 to all rolls dealing with these things.
- 3. Some mooks are **experts**. If this one is, think of one thing this mook is an expert at; they get +4 to that action.
- 4. Everything else gets +0 when rolled.
- 5. Give the mook an aspect or two to reinforce what they're good and bad at, or if they have a particular strength or vulnerability. It's okay if a mook's aspects are really simple.
- 6. Mooks have zero, one, or two boxes in their stress track, depending on how tough you imagine them to be.
- 7. Mooks can't take consequences. If they run out of stress boxes (or don't have any), the next hit takes them down.

## Groups of Mooks

If you have a lot of low-level bad guys facing the PCs, you can make your job easier by treating them as a group—or maybe a few groups. Instead of tracking a dozen bad guys, you track three groups of four bad guys each. Each of these groups acts like a single character and has a set of stats just like a single mook would:

- 1. Choose a couple of things they're skilled at. You might designate "ganging up" as one of the things the group is good at.
- 2. Choose a couple of things they're not so good at.
- 3. Give them an aspect.
- 4. Give them one stress box for every two individuals in the group.

Fate Core has a way of handling this, called mobs (*Fate Core System*, page 216); feel free to use that option if you prefer. Note that it may lead to very strong mobs, unless you start with extremely weak mooks—if you want to give your PCs a serious challenge, this could be one way to do it.





## SCHOOLYARD BULLY

BULLY; COWARDLY WITHOUT BACKUP Skilled (+2) at: Frightening other students, weaseling out of trouble, breaking things Bad (-2) at: Planning, studying Stress: None (first hit takes them out)

## FLYING ACE

SWAGGERING SELF-CONFIDENCE; MY BRIGHT RED TRIPLANE Expert (+4) at: Flying Skilled (+2) at: Spotting faraway objects Bad (-2) at: Resisting being goaded and baited Stress:

## HOMICIDAL ALIEN ROBOT

EXTERMINATE; LIMITED POWER SUPPLY Skilled (+2) at: Exterminating Bad (-2) at: Everything else Stress:

## GANG OF GOONS

Axe HANDLES & CROWBARS Skilled (+2) at: Ganging up, scaring innocent people Bad (-2) at: Thinking ahead, fighting when outnumbered Stress: []] (4 goons)

## FLYING MONKEY SQUADRON

FLY, MY PRETTIES, FLY; MONKEY BUSINESS Skilled (+2) at: Flying, making a horrible mess Bad (-2) at: Doing things monkeys can't do Stress: []] (6 flying monkeys)





# HELLLLP!

Do you want to play but don't have the prep time? We've got your back. Need some story ideas to get you started? We've got your back. Do you want to skip that whole character generation thing and play? WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK. This section is full of materials you can use to leap into an adventure right now, with a minimum of prep time.

# STORY HOOKS

First, let's plot like a supervillain on steroids! Here are some story ideas that you can pop right into your campaign.

## The Apothecary Murders Campaign Rating: PG-13

The characters are employees at the Daily Globe newspaper for the summer when they start hearing reports of masked teenagers becoming murderously violent before collapsing with seizures. The cub reporters decide to investigate. They learn that some of the teens have muttered "Petoskey" before falling unconscious. The characters can get involved in the action by tagging along to interview witnesses (or sneaking off to interview them on their own), researching the word "Petoskey," and by visiting some of the teens in the hospital. There are various ways that the characters could learn that "Petoskey" refers to Petoskey's Apothecary and Sundries where all of the teens have worked as delivery boys. Investigation of the shop shows all manner of boys entering and exiting at all times of the day, which is normal, but many of the boys don't look well. Who's employing these kids? What's making the teens turn violent? What dire schemes might be at work?

#### KEY LOCATIONS

#### The Daily Globe offices

Aspects: Reporters Everywhere; Hustle and Bustle; Dim Lighting; Slippery Tile Floors

#### Petoskey's Apothecary and Sundries

Aspects: Traps!; Dangerous Chemicals; Clutter Galore; Shelves of Glassware

#### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

#### William Petoskey

- **Approaches:** Careful: Good (+3), Clever and Sneaky: Fair (+2), Flashy and Quick: Average (+1), Forceful: Mediocre (+0)
- Aspects: All in the Name of Science; Closet Alchemist; Proper on the Outside



## Upstairs/Downstairs Campaign Rating: PG

The May Mansion appears to be the ideal place to work as a maid or a stable hand or a chauffeur-easy work, lavish surroundings, and a master who's barely home to make a mess. The Young Centurions are somehow tied to the downstairs employees-they could be an employee-in-training, related to an employee, or perhaps they work as a delivery person. The Mays frequently throw lavish parties, but something always goes wrong. A guest's jewelry is stolen, scandalous secrets are revealed, incriminating letters go astray. Margaret May, Mr. May's only daughter, is preparing for her debutante ball, which promises to be the most elaborate party the Mays have yet thrown. Already things have started to go wrong. The horses escape and trample the gardens; a fire breaks out in the piano conservatory. Owen Jones, the son of the former butler who was dismissed in disgrace, is behind the current mischief. He's out for revenge, convinced that Margaret committed the previous crimes and framed his father. Now the real question becomes which one of them is the villain and which one is the victim? Someone should be turned in, but who? And will the authorities believe the word of a few lowly servant kids?

#### **KEY LOCATIONS**

#### **May Mansion Upstairs**

Aspects: Opulent; Immaculate Housekeeping; Spacious Rooms

#### May Mansion Downstairs

Aspects: Not Enough Space; Secondhand Furniture; Servant Bells Everywhere

#### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Margaret May (character stats on page 141)

#### **Owen Jones**

**Approaches:** Clever: Good (+3), Careful and Sneaky: Fair (+2), Flashy and Forceful: Average (+1), Quick: Mediocre (+0)

**Aspects:** Vengeance for My Father; My Middle Name Is Charming; Sucker for a Pretty Face



## Old Man Jenkins Campaign Rating: G

When Old Man Jenkins moves to the PCs' small town, tongues start wagging. The guy is just *weird*. He lives in the junkyard in a ramshackle shack made out of old tin sheeting, he smells like he hasn't showered in years, and he has a habit of constantly muttering to himself. The neighborhood kids immediately latch onto him, making him the butt of pranks and dares, and the ultimate dare is to enter the shack and take something that belongs to the strange old man. But when one of the player characters takes the dare, Old Man Jenkins catches him or her, and he doesn't seem as crazy as people make him out to be. When a trio of men with a fancy automobile and swanky suits arrive in town, looking for an escaped convict by the name of Herbert Jenkins, it seems impossible that it could be the same person. When the men discover Old Man Jenkins' shack, they blow it up. It turns out that the seemingly crazy old man is actually a scientist, and they want his latest invention. Can the Young Centurions hide him and throw the bad guys off his trail?

#### **KEY LOCATIONS**

#### The junkyard

Aspects: Rickety Piles; Jumbled Mess of Stuff; Smelly; Dangerous Objects

#### Old Man Jenkins's shack

Aspects: Ramshackle Construction; What's All this Stuff?; Smells Like Wet Dog

#### NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS:

#### Old Man Jenkins

**Approaches:** Clever (good +3), Careful and Forceful (Fair +2), Sneaky and Quick (Average +1), Flashy (Fair +0)

Aspects: "My Inventions Are Only for Good!"; Lives in His Own Head; "Eureka!"

# Even More Story Hooks that Pon't Focus on Violence

It's easy to default to story lines that lend themselves to violent solutions just look at most TV shows and movies. Here are some plot ideas that might require a different approach.



**Mysteries to be solved:** Perhaps someone is stealing carburetor technology at the tractor races, and the characters uncover a nefarious plot to build some kind of dangerous device. Or the prize money for Best Garden is missing, and people suspect the PCs—how do they clear their names when they're under suspicion? What if the city council is corrupt, and it's up to the PCs to figure out what they're up to and expose them? Or even worse, what if someone spiked the punch at the community dance WITH MIND CONTROL POWDER?

**Environmental dangers:** The PCs could be faced with a burning building, and they're the only ones on the spot to get people out safely. Or an animal from the zoo or the circus might be on the loose. What if the grownups are all sick, and the PCs have to get the Spanish flu serum from the city in time to save everyone? Perhaps you could tell a survival story where resources are scarce—maybe the PCs live on the street or there's a food shortage. Or the danger could be more personal if the new railroad is expected to go right through the PCs' secret hangout in the woods.

**Friends and family need help:** Many stories begin with a friend in need. Perhaps they're facing eviction from their home. Or maybe a new immigrant, fleeing from the war, needs a home, immigration papers, or a job. There could be a big exam at school that *everyone* must pass, and the PCs need to make sure everyone gets the grade they need, or bad things will happen.

# SAMPLE PLAYER CHARACTERS

Sometimes you just want to get to the game, or maybe you want to base your campaign off of one of the ideas presented above. Either way, if you're not interested in creating characters, feel free to take any of the following and use them as player characters.

## YOUNG CENTURIONS ABROAD

There are Centurions (and evil to fight) across the globe, so there's no reason to restrict yourself to games set in the United States. Nadya Petulengro (page 135), who tours the world with the Circus Europa, can fit in games in many places. Amelia Stone (page 137) calls Paris home, while Benjamin Hu (page 138) misspent his youth in Hong Kong.



# Sally Slick, Scrappy Inventor

Sally, the Spirit of Ingenuity, is the only girl in a household of six boys, so she's learned to be tough. With her best friend and next-door neighbor Jet Black, she spends most of her free time building devices in her workshop. Her prized invention? Calamity the racing tractor. It's never been beaten, a fact that really bothers her brothers. Sally's no stranger to adventure after an altercation with the Steel Syndicate in 1914. Sally is fiercely protective of her family and friends and will go to any lengths to help them. She also tends to be very confident when it comes to her inventions, which can sometimes get her into trouble. After all, they don't always work as planned...



High Concept: Spirit of Ingenuity Trouble: Everyone Wants My Inventions: Other Aspects: "Jet's in Trouble!"; In the Nick of Time; The Grey Ghost Is My Mentor

#### **APPROACHES**

Careful: Average (+1) Clever: Good (+3) Flashy: Fair (+2) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Mediocre (+0)

#### STUNTS

- **Wonderful Toys (Century stunt):** Because I am such a skilled and innovative inventor and tinker, I usually have a useful device that can help me out of a jam. Twice per game session, I can use this stunt to eliminate a situation aspect.
- I Can Build THAT!: Because I am an intuitive inventor, I gain +2 to Quickly jury-rig a device to create an advantage.
- Little Miss Fix-It: Because I'm mechanically inclined, I gain +2 to Cleverly overcome obstacles in repairing any device.

#### STRESS

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):

REFRESH: 3

# 133 2

# Mark Silver, Black Sheep

You know that saying "born with a silver spoon in his mouth"? That saying might be based on Mack Silver, the Spirit of Freedom. He was born into money and all the privileges that come with it, but due to his wild ways, he never quite fit in with his family's high society crowd. After he ruined one of his mother's garden parties by falling through the roof of the conservatory, there was a huge row, and teenage Mack left home without looking back. He fell in with a traveling performance troupe, using his natural charm and swagger to bring people to their shows, all the while saving up his wages for his dream purchase—an aeroplane. With a plane of his own, he wouldn't need to jump off buildings in order to fly...

## MACK SILVER

High Concept: Spirit of Freedom Trouble: Gotta Prove Myself to the Silvers Other Aspects: Girl Magnet;

FIERCELY INDEPENDENT; HEART OF GOLD

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Mediocre (+0) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Fair (+2) Forceful: Good (+3) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

**Escape Artist (Century stunt):** Because I'm always looking for a way out, I always have an escape plan in mind. Twice per game session, I can use this stunt to create an advantage to help me get out of a sticky situation.

Fast Friends: Because I'm so charming, I gain +2 to create an advantage when I meet someone for the first time.

Scrapper Extraordinaire: Because I'm determined to protect myself, I gain +2 when I Forcefully attack in a fistfight.

STRESS

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4):

Severe (6):

REFRESH: 3





# Jet Black, Underdog

Jet Black, Spirit of Courage, has always been an underdog. He's smaller than the other boys, and his infatuation with magazine action heroes makes him a bit of a misfit. But Jet's always had what some people might call an overdeveloped sense of justice, and he doesn't really care what the odds are. He's the first one to stand up for what he thinks is right. When his best friend Sally Slick gets into a bit of trouble, he's right there with her, and he doesn't hesitate to strap her latest invention to his back to aid their escape. During that first flight with a prototype jetpack, Jet discovers one place where his size doesn't matter-the sky. Later, when he moves to the big city and eventually joins the Allied Forces, Jet never forgets where he came from, and he always stands up for those smaller than him.



## JET BLACK

High Concept: Spirit of Courage Trouble: CAN'T BACK DOWN FROM WHAT'S RIGHT Other Aspects: AMAZING JETPACKI; SALLY'S MY BEST FRIEND; CALM UNDER PRESSURE

#### **APPROACHES**

**Careful:** Average (+1) **Forceful:** Mediocre (+0) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Fair (+2)

Quick: Good (+3) **Sneaky:** Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

Oh, No You Don't! (Century stunt): Because I always think of others before myself, I gain +3 to any Quick action to overcome or defend when an ally or bystander immediately benefits from the action.

Skilled Aerialist: Because I practice so much, I gain +2 to overcome obstacles while performing Flashy aerial stunts with my amazing jetpack.

Unstoppable: Because I'm so agile, I gain +2 to Quick defense moves while running or fleeing.

#### STRESS

# Nadya Petulengro, Romani Traveler

The Romani travel throughout Europe, rarely settling in one place for long. This is the ideal situation for a spy, and the Century Club has provided one in Nadya Petulengro. Nadya, a Spirit of Charisma, can charm just about anyone. Even the most reserved people eventually give way to her ready smile and friendly chatter, and she makes friends wherever she goes. Nadya usually travels around with the Circus Europa, since her family is gone. She won't say what happened to them, but based on her reaction whenever they're brought up, it can't have been good.

## NADYA PETULENGRO

High Concept: Spirit of Charisma Trouble: Shady Family History Other Aspects: There Are No Strangers, Only Friends I Haven't Met Yet; My Past Makes Me Cautious; Well Traveled Girl

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Fair (+2) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Good (+3) Forceful: Mediocre (+0) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

**Do Me a Favor (Century stunt):** Because I'm so good at getting people to like me, I gain a +3 to Cleverly overcome obstacles when I'm asking for a favor.

I Know a Fellow: Because I'm so friendly and well-traveled, I automatically have a contact in any city or town.

**Cult of Personality:** Because I'm such a people person, I gain +2 to create an advantage when I make a Flashy attempt to sway a crowd.

STRESS

#### CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):

**REFRESH: 3** 

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## Mitzy Powers, Wannabe Investigator

Most young kids ask questions, but they're nothing compared to Mitzy Powers. This Spirit of Truth has been asking non-stop questions ever since she learned to talk, and her summers spent with her dad, the editor of the Daily Globe, have only made things worse. Mitzy knows she's ready to write her own stories and interrogate witnesses and everything, if only her dad would let her go. But he keeps sending her to the typist's room instead, telling her that's the appropriate place for a lady. If only she could get her dad to listen, but he's the one person she can't seem to communicate with. Rebellion is the only option, but it risks her relationship with the person whose respect she values most.

## MITZY POWERS

High Concept: Spirit of Truth Trouble: Curiosity Killed the Cat Other Aspects: Like a Dog with a Bone; "I'll Prove It to You, Dad."; Amandine Laclerque Is My Mentor

#### **APPROACHES**

Careful: Fair (+2) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Mediocre (+0) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Good (+3)

#### STUNTS

What Was That Again? (Century stunt): Because I'm such a natural at talking circles around people, I often leave them flummoxed and confused. I gain +3 to defend and overcome actions when I'm being Flashy and verbally sparring with someone.

**Eagle-Eyed:** Because I have good attention to detail, I gain +2 when I Carefully overcome obstacles searching an area.

**Think It Through:** Because I'm logical to the core, I gain +2 to Cleverly overcome obstacles when faced with a logical problem.

#### STRESS

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):

**REFRESH: 3** 

# Amelia Stone, Parisian Pugilist

Amelia, the Spirit of Justice, is the daughter of an African opera singer and a disowned American banker. She and her parents live in Paris in near poverty among other impoverished artistic freethinkers. Her neighborhood, Montmartre, is ruled with an iron fist by le Monstre. After a terrifying run-in with him, Amelia has been learning the art of *Savate* so she will be better prepared to defend herself and those she loves when le Monstre strikes again. Young Amelia is romantic and idealistic, but by her late teens, she's already lost everything and is determined to protect others from the same heartbreak.

## AMELIA STONE

High Concept: Spirit OF JUSTICE

Trouble: Can't Abandon a Person in Trouble Other Aspects: FISTS OF STONE; "I'LL GET YOU, le Monstre!"; My 1911 Indian Motorcycle

#### **APPROACHES**

**Careful:** Mediocre (+0) **Forceful:** Good (+3) **Clever:** Average (+1) Flashy: Fair (+2)

Quick: Fair (+2) **Sneaky:** Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

Haymaker (Century stunt): Because I am a formidable pugilist, I gain +3 to attack actions made with my hands or feet against living, unarmored targets, while I'm being Forceful.

Two Wheel Artist: Because I am a motorcycle ace, I gain +2 to overcome obstacles while I'm being Flashy on a bike.

I'll Save You: Because I can't stand seeing people helpless, once per session I may perform some daring action that automatically removes a situation aspect when I'm trying to rescue someone.

#### STRESS

#### CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):

**REFRESH: 3** 



# Benjamin Hu, Boy of Mystery

Benjamin Hu has always been a curious and adventuresome lad, the kind that constantly gets into trouble and runs afoul of secret societies. Benjamin became involved with the occult as a former errand boy for the Three Harmonies Society of Hong Kong, but he fled when he discovered their evil intentions, taking half of their library in his knapsack. Since then, he's been on the road, trying desperately to disappear, and they're trying just as desperately to get him back. After all, he knows too much, and that knowledge has only fueled his thirst for more.

## BENJAMIN HU

High Concept: Spirit of Mystery Trouble: Dangerously Curious Other Aspects: Arcane Library in My Knapsack; Always Thinking Ahead; Hunted by the Three

## Harmonies Society

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Good (+3) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Average (+1) Forceful: Mediocre (+0) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

#### STUNTS

Wait, I've Read Something About This (Century stunt): Because I'm so well read in mysterious histories, twice per game session I may declare that I know an obscure but helpful fact while searching ancient ruins, exploring underground tunnels, or researching a curious volume of forgotten lore.

Alertness Is My Middle Name: Because I'm always paying attention, I can never be surprised by an attack. I act first in any physical or mental conflict.

**Code Breaker:** Because I'm so good at reading patterns, I get +2 to Cleverly overcome obstacles presented by codes and puzzles.

#### STRESS



# SAMPLE NPCS

Whether you need mentors, young Shadows, or full villains, here are some characters to get you started.

## The Grey Ghost, Spirit Mentor

The Grey Ghost is a mysterious figure who almost literally haunts the London chapter house, wearing a grey mask to hide his features. This Spirit of the Forsaken appeared at the house in 1912—a young kid sporting a scar on his neck that seemed like it should have been fatal. But this kid knew things about the Century Club that no one but the innermost circle knows, and after a lengthy interrogation, the Club was forced to consider his claim that he has memories of a life spent in service to the Century Club...in the 1800s. He remembers few details about who he was—or at least that's what he says—but he remembers many useful things that help him train the next generation of Spirits. Still, he's plagued by paranoia and uncertainty and has begun to insist on wearing a mask at all times, convinced that he's been reincarnated for some reason and fearful that one of his old enemies might recognize his face.

## THE GREY GHOST

High Concept: Spirit of the Forsaken

Trouble: KHAN CAN'T KNOW I'M STILL ALIVE

Other Aspects: Works in the Shadows; Surfacing Memories of Yore; Loner to the Core

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Good (+3) Clever: Average (+1) Flashy: Mediocre (+0) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

#### STUNTS

- In the Nick of Time (Century stunt): Because I have vowed that the young Spirits under my care will never be abandoned as I was, I keep a close eye on them. Twice per game session, I can arrive just in time to help a Spirit who has taken me as his or her mentor.
- Unseen Shadows: Because I naturally avoid people, I gain +2 to create advantages when Sneakily arriving or leaving a scene.
- **Impossible to Trap:** Because I always Carefully plan my escape, I gain +2 to overcome any attempts to trap or restrain me.

#### STRESS



# Clara Belle, Ringmaster of the Circus Europa

Clara Belle is a rarity—a female ringmaster of a traveling circus. She's worked hard to get where she is, and it shows in her workaholic tendencies. Ringmaster Belle works harder than any other member of the circus, and no job is too dirty for her to pitch a hand. She's fiercely protective of her circus and its people, and the resulting family environment attracts the best performers in their fields. But there's more at stake here than roasted peanuts and dancing bears. Clara Belle secretly works for the Century Club. She's a recruiter and mentor for young Spirits who are attracted by the adventure and excitement offered by the circus. And woe betide the Shadow who tries to mess with her young charges.



## CLARA BELLE

High Concept: CIRCUS RINGMASTER Trouble: ALL WORK, NO PLAY Other Aspects: THE CENTURY CLUB HAS MY BACK; No One Messes with the Circus Europa; Secret Cleromancer

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Mediocre (+0) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Good (+3) Forceful: Fair (+2) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Average (+1)

STUNTS

- **Dice Are Nice:** Because I'm a natural at reading the dice, I get +2 to create advantages by Cleverly reading the future when I'm throwing my bone dice.
- **Back, Foul Beast!:** Because I spent years taming the circus animals, I get +2 to defend with my whip while being Flashy.
- **The Show Must Go On:** Because I am determined to keep the circus up and running, I get +2 to Forcefully overcome obstacles that will interfere with an ongoing performance.

#### 

# 1412

# Margaret May, Ruthless Debutante

Margaret May, daughter of an oil magnate, has it all. This Shadow of Prosperity wouldn't have it any other way. Her family's success—and her subsequent status in high society—means everything to her. Refined, soft-spoken, and polite to a fault, she doesn't seem like the kind of girl who would be interested in more than ballroom dancing and tea room etiquette, but she has a mind for business and a ruthless streak a mile long. Her father's biggest rival for a lucrative land deal dropped out of the bidding unexpectedly, and no one knows that's because prim and proper Margaret blackmailed him. The offices of a rival of May Chemical unexpectedly burnt down thanks to her scheming. She can be a generous and thoughtful friend, but it's not wise to cross her.

## MARGARET MAY

High Concept: Shadow of Prosperity Trouble: Without May Chemical, I'm Nothing Other Aspects: Backstabber; Appearances Are Everything; Apple of Daddy's Eye

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Fair (+2) Clever: Good (+3) Flashy: Average (+1) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Mediocre (+0) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

#### STUNTS

- I Always Get My Way! (Century stunt): Because I'm so bent on getting my way, I'm difficult to sway when it comes to something I really want. Twice per game session, I can automatically overcome an obstacle of Good (+3) or lower using sheer willpower.
- **Softly Spoken Threats:** Because I'm not afraid to exploit my status in secret, I gain +2 to create advantages when I Carefully threaten someone one-on-one.
- Manipulate the Numbers: I might be young, but I've spent years learning finances at my daddy's knee. I gain +2 to overcome a numerical or geometric problem.

## 

#### CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4):

Severe (6): REFRESH: 3



# Charlie Smith, Gang Leader

Living on the streets of a big city isn't easy, unless you're Charlie Smith. He ran away from home at nine years old, and instead of starving or freezing like so many runaways, this Shadow of Leadership walked right into the territory of the most ruthless gang in town, the Black Hand, and took over before anyone quite realized what was happening. Under his direction, the Black Hand went from being mere nuisances to complete terrors. Local businesses pay them to go away, and woe to the business owner who refuses to pay up. The Hand also runs dog fights and betting rings, and they make good money off of them. In fact, they're so successful that they've attracted the attention of some grown up crime organizations. But Charlie is nothing if not shrewd, and he won't give up control of his boys to anybody. Because he knows all too well that you can't trust anyone but yourself.

## CHARLIE SMITH

High Concept: Shadow of Leadership Trouble: Wanted by the Law Other Aspects: Just Me and My Boys; Racket Runner; Vicious in a Crunch

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Mediocre (+0) Clever: Fair (+2) Flashy: Average (+1) Forceful: Good (+3) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

Home Turf Advantage (Century stunt): Because I'm so well prepared, it's tough to catch me off guard when I'm in my element. Twice per game session, I can automatically create an advantage if I'm within my gang's turf.

- Well-oiled Machine: Because my boys and I work so well together, I gain +2 to attack or defend maneuvers when in a combat with members of my gang.
- Not Me, Officer!: Because I've had plenty of practice lying, I've gotten very good at proclaiming my innocence. I gain +2 to overcome obstacles when trying to escape blame or punishment.

#### STRESS
# 143 2

# Jared Brain, Kid Psychic

Jared Brain did not grow up in a happy home. His life as the only black boy in a small Southern town was full of bullying, prejudice, and loneliness. To make things worse, his parents resented his bad lungs, poor overall health, and habit of pulling their worst thoughts from their head and using them to get what he wanted. When he ran away, they didn't even try to follow him. Jared joined the circus, hoping to find other true psychics who might teach him control over his unreliable psychic abilities, but what he found was something completely unexpected. Something that would lead him down a dark, dark path indeed...

## JARED BRAIN

High Concept: Shadow of Truth Trouble: My Mind Is Strong, But My Body Weak Other Aspects: Unreliable Psychic Abilities; Driven to Success at All Costs; The Only One I Trust Is Me

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Fair (+2) Clever: Good (+3) Flashy: Average (+1) Forceful: Mediocre (+0) Quick: Average (+1) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

### STUNTS

Flash of Insight (Century stunt): Because my psychic powers are powerful but intermittent, twice per session I can discover an aspect by reading the mind of another character.

The Best Way to Win a Fight Is to Avoid It: Because I'm always alert to danger, I get +2 to Carefully create an advantage allowing me to escape a confrontation.

Liar, Liar: Because I have a natural poker face, I get +2 to Clever attempts to overcome obstacles by telling an untruth.

### 

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6): REFRESH: 3



# Poctor Methuselah, Master Mathemagician

Little is known about Doctor Methuselah, and all of the information that is known is suspect. Methuselah is a master of mathemagic, the secret equations that rule the universe, and as such he has some mastery over time. Certainly, he doesn't seem to age, and records of his activities go back as far as the 1700s. He claims to be even older—thousands of years old, in fact. Methuselah pops in and out of society at random points, sometimes in disguise, pursuing goals that seem completely unrelated. In recent years, he's created Gorilla Khan, conqueror ape, and set him loose to conquer the wild lands of Africa. Perhaps he believed the secret to the Eternity Equation could be found in those lands. With that equation and true immortality in his hands, he would be unstoppable.

We've deliberately left Doctor Methuselah unstatted except for some aspects, because he's Doctor Bleeping Methuselah! There are no limits to what he can do, which is rather scary when you think about it.





## Gorilla Khan, Conqueror Ape

Gorilla Khan was created by Doctor Methuselah in an Antarctic laboratory—he is the Doctor's first and greatest triumph in giving human intelligence to apes. Khan was intended to be a tool of the Doctor's own plans for world (and time) domination, but eventually they had a falling out. Reports vary as to whether the Doctor simply abandoned Khan and his ape army, or if they rose up and overthrew him. Khan has occupied Atlantis at various times in its history, and has also been known to launch operations out of the old Antarctic base where he was created. Because he's an ape, Khan's allies and enemies frequently underestimate what he's capable of. Khan has demonstrated a surprising capacity for installing his ape agents across the globe; they've shown up as mafia-men, soldiers, crooks, revolutionaries, and more. Only the lowest-ranking ones end up "undercover" with traveling circuses.

## GORILLA KHAN

High Concept: Conqueror Ape Trouble: Those Meddling Kids! Other Aspects: In Rage I Find Strength; Countless Minions; Underestimated by All

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Average (+1) Clever: Good (+3) Flashy: Good (+3) Forceful: Great (+4) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

#### STUNTS

Unconquerable Khan: Because the Conqueror may not be conquered, once per session I can throw off all attackers near me, pushing them back one zone and removing one situation aspect they've placed on me.

**Undefeatable Khan:** Because I am the Undefeatable Khan, once per session I may ignore all the stress dealt by a single attack.

**Cunning of a Beast:** Because I have the cunning of a beast, I get +2 to Cleverly create advantages based on my established plans.

More Than Just an Ape: Because I am more than just an ape, once per session I may invoke my UNDERESTIMATED BY ALL aspect for free by describing how my foe has misjudged my capabilities or intentions.

#### STRESS

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4):

Severe (6):



## Le Monstre, the Green-eyed Monster

In Paris lives a beautiful green-eyed man who is a patron of the arts, a connoisseur of the opera, a charming and flirtatious gentleman who loves the finer things in life. And yet he is also the criminal mastermind whose name strikes fear into the hearts of all who hear it: *le Monstre aux Yeux Verts*. He is currently perfecting his Distillations of Emotion—pure liquefied emotions drained from unwilling or unknowing donors—which enable him to manipulate and control the emotions of anyone sprayed with the distillation.

He is obsessed with Amelia Stone, and by 1920 the burns on his beautiful face are hidden by a pig iron mask.

## LE MONSTRE

High Concept: Paris' Monstrous Criminal Mastermind Trouble: My Mask Hides a Wounded Heart Other Aspects: My Contingencies Have Contingencies;

CORRUPTER OF THE INNOCENT; DEEP POCKETS IN DARK PLACES

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Good (+3) Clever: Great (+4) Flashy: Fair (+2) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Good (+3)

#### STUNTS

- Three Steps Ahead: Because I am three steps ahead of everyone else, once per session I may create two situation aspects with free invokes because I have prepared for just this contingency.
- Master of the Underground: Because the tunnels under Paris are my domain, twice per session I can disappear when in Paris without a trace—unseen and untrackable—if I successfully create an advantage while being Sneaky.
- **Distillations of Emotion:** When I Cleverly attack using my Distillations of Emotion, I get +2 to the attack; on a successful attack, the target gains an aspect reflecting the emotion I imposed on them.
- Le Monstre aux Yeux Verts: Because the name *le Monstre* strikes terror in hearts throughout Paris, I get +2 to Forcefully overcome obstacles by instilling fear.

#### STRESS

## CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):

# (147 2)

# The Steel Don, Metal-faced Mobster

The Steel Don is the leader of the Steel Syndicate of Chicago. But this is no ordinary mob gang in the making—the Steel Don has been taking advantage of the inventions of Doktor Proktor. Between Proktor's new "robots" and the living metal that makes up the left half of his face, the Steel Don has taken the city by storm. His megalomania—and his need for revenge against anyone he imagines has wronged him—make him a formidable opponent. It's not wise to refuse one of his recruitment pitches, and he's more than willing to recruit youngsters. He has a tendency to order everyone around—not just people who work for him—and they have a tendency to listen, because everyone knows not to cross the leader of the Steel Syndicate.

## THE STEEL DON

High Concept: Leader of the Steel Syndicate Trouble: Anger Makes Me Craaaazy! Other Aspects: Frankie Ratchet Is My Right-

hand Man; Robot Army at My Service; My Face Is Living Metal

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Mediocre (+0) Clever: Average (+1) Flashy: Fair (+2) Forceful: Good (+3) Quick: Fair (+2) Sneaky: Average (+1)

#### STUNTS

**Steely-eyed Glare:** Because my metal face is so menacing, I get +2 to Forcefully create an advantage through intimidation.

- I Know Your Price: Because I'm so good at reading people's weaknesses, I get +2 to Cleverly overcome obstacles when trying to bribe or coerce.
- **Toys of the Doktor:** Because Doktor Proktor supplies my gadgets, once per session I may attack using Doktor Proktor's Clever approach of Great (+4).

### STRESS

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):



# Poktor Proktor, Crime-world Inventor

Doktor Proktor is well known throughout the criminal underworld as the man to go to for strange devices and weird creations. His robot army took the Steel Syndicate from small-fry gang to Chicago's most prominent crime network. His ray guns are the stuff of science-fiction fantasies. The good Doktor doesn't seem to care what his inventions are used for, only that he has the funding and freedom to pursue whatever projects he likes. No one knows where he came from or how old he is. But sometimes he shows signs of power and cunning beyond that of a simple mad scientist—there's been some speculation that he's a Shadow of Ingenuity. But that's impossible. Isn't it? At any rate, there's more to this villain than meets the eye.

## DOKTOR PROKTOR

High Concept: MAD SCIENTIST Trouble: NO SOCIAL SKILLS Other Aspects: HIDDEN PAST, MYSTERIOUS FUTURE; UNBURDENED BY MORALS; ARCANE CREATIONS ARE MY SPECIALTY

#### APPROACHES

Careful: Fair (+2) Clever: Great (+4) Flashy: Good (+3) Forceful: Average (+1) Quick: Good (+3) Sneaky: Fair (+2)

#### STUNTS

**Out-of-the-Box Inventions:** Because I'm a natural at weird science, I get +2 to Cleverly create an advantage by jury-rigging a device to give it arcane abilities.

**Fixer Upper:** Because I can easily see how machines work, I get +2 to Quickly overcome obstacles while repairing a device.

Science Is Dangerous: Because I have a knack with weird mechanical weaponry, I get +2 to Flashy attacks made with my inventions.

**Doddering Fool:** Because I'm good at playing dumb, I get +2 to defend by being Sneaky while being questioned by the authorities.

### 

CONSEQUENCES Mild (2): Moderate (4): Severe (6):



# SOME FINAL INSPIRATION

Need a little more inspiration to get into the right mindset for *Young Centurions*? Have some young gamers who aren't quite grasping the differences between life in the 1910s and today? Check out one of the books or movies listed below! Some are set during the early 1910s, some were written during that time period, and others just have that awesome pulpy adventure feel that characterizes the game.

# Books for Young Readers

- *Sally Slick and the Steel Syndicate* by Carrie Harris
- *Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld
- *The Secret Garden* by Francis Hodgson Burnett
- *Peter Pan* by JM Barrie
- *Hattie Big Sky* by Kirby Larson
- *Moon Over Manifest* by Clare Vanderpool
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbit
- Johnny Graphic and the Etheric Bomb by D.R. Martin

## Books for Mature Readers

- *The Dinocalypse Trilogy* by Chuck Wendig and Carrie Harris
- *Khan of Mars* by Stephen Blackmoore
- *King Khan* by Harry Connolly
- *Stone's Throe* by C.E. Murphy
- *The Pharaoh of Hong Kong* by Matthew Cody and Brian Clevinger
- *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque
- *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak
- *Tarzan of the Apes* by Edward Rice Burroughs
- *The Shadow* by Walter B. Gibson
- *Doc Savage* by Lester Dent
- The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Volume III by Alan Moore

# Movies for Young Fans

- Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
- 🕴 Young Indiana Jones
- A Little Princess
- 🖡 Mary Poppins
- 🕨 Pollyanna
- 🕨 Three Amigos
- 🕨 The Goonies



# Movies for Mature Fans

- *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
- 🕨 Bolero
- 🕨 East of Eden
- Finding Neverland
- 🕨 Flyboys
- 🕨 King Solomon's Mines
- Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow
- 🕨 The Mummy

Wherever your inspiration comes from, we hope your visit to the world of *Young Centurions* is full of pulp-tastic, kid-centric, world-saving fun!

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# Dice Results

- Result = Dice Roll + Approach Bonus
  - + Bonuses from Stunts
  - + Bonuses from Invoked Aspects

# Outcomes

#### Versus Opponent's Result or Target Number:

- ↓ Fail: Your result is lower
- **≒ Tie:** Your result is equal
- **Succeed:** Your result is higher by 1 or 2
- 11 Succeed with Style: Your result is higher by 3 or more

## Setting Target Numbers

- Easy Task: Mediocre (+0)—or success without a roll.
- Moderately Difficult: Fair (+2).
- Extremely Difficult: Great (+4).
- **Impossibly Difficult:** Go as high as you think makes sense. The PC will need to drop some fate points and get lots of help to succeed, but that's fine.

# Turn Order

- GM decides based on the narrative who goes first.
- If nothing is obvious, use the character with the highest Quick approach, with Careful as tiebreaker; also check aspects and stunts.
- Then each player chooses who goes after their turn until everyone has had a turn.
- All NPCs go on the GM's turn.

# Approaches

- **Careful:** When you pay close attention to detail and take your time to do the job right.
- **Clever:** When you think fast, solve problems, or account for complex variables.
- **Flashy:** When you act with style and panache.
- **Forceful:** When you use brute strength.
- **Quick:** When you move quickly and with dexterity.
- **Sneaky:** When you use misdirection, stealth, or deceit.

## The Ladder



# Types of Aspects

#### **Character Aspects**

- Written when you create your character.
- May be changed when you reach a milestone.

#### Situation Aspects

- Established at the beginning of a scene.
- May be created by using the create an advantage action.
- May be eliminated by using the overcome action.
- Vanish when the situation ends.

#### Boosts

- May be invoked once (for free), then they vanish.
- May be eliminated by an opponent using an overcome action.
- Unused boosts vanish at the end of the scene.

#### Consequences

- Used to absorb shifts from successful attacks.
- May be invoked by your opponents as if they were situation aspects.

# Actions

Create an advantage when creating or discovering aspects:

- Fail: Don't create or discover, or you do but your opponent (not you) gets a free invocation.
- ➡ Tie: Get a boost if creating new, or treat as success if looking for existing.
- 1 **Succeed:** Create or discover the aspect, get a free invocation on it.
- 11 Succeed with Style: Create or discover the aspect, get two free invocations on it.

# Create an advantage on an aspect you already know about:

- ↓ **Fail:** No additional benefit.
- **Tie:** Generate one free invocation on the aspect.
- 1 **Succeed:** Generate one free invocation on the aspect.
- 11 Succeed with Style: Generate two free invocations on the aspect.

## Overcome:

- ↓ **Fail:** Fail, or succeed at a serious cost.
- **≒ Tie:** Succeed at a minor cost.
- 1 **Succeed:** You accomplish your goal.
- 11 Succeed with Style: You accomplish your goal and generate a boost.

## Attack:

- ↓ Fail: No effect.
- ➡ Tie: Attack doesn't harm the target, but you gain a boost.
- 1 **Succeed:** Attack hits and causes damage.
- 11 Succeed with Style: Attack hits and causes damage. May reduce damage by one to generate a boost.

## Defend:

- Fail: You suffer the consequences of your opponent's success.
- Tie: Look at your opponent's action to see what happens.
- 1 **Succeed:** Your opponent doesn't get what they want.
- 11 Succeed with Style: Your opponent doesn't get what they want, and you get a boost.

# Aspect Use

- **Invoke:** Spend a fate point to get a +2 or a reroll for yourself, or to increase difficulty for a foe by 2.
- **Compel:** Receive a fate point when an aspect complicates your life.
- Establish facts: Aspects are true. Use them to affirm details about you and the world.

# Stress & Consequences

- Severity of hit (in shifts)
  = Attack Roll Defense Roll
- Stress Boxes: You can check one stress box to handle some or all of the shifts of a single hit. You can absorb a number of shifts equal to the number of the box you check: one for Box 1, two for Box 2, three for Box 3.
- Consequences: You many take one or more consequences to deal with the hit, by marking off one or more available consequence slots and writing a new aspect for each one marked.
  - Mild = 2 shifts
  - Moderate = 4 shifts
  - Severe = 6 shifts
- Recovering from Consequences:
  - Mild consequence: Clear it at the end of the scene.
  - Moderate consequence: Clear it at the end of the next session.
  - Severe consequence: Clear it at the end of the scenario.
- **Taken Out:** If you can't (or decide not to) handle the entire hit, you're taken out and your opponent decides what happens to you.
- **Giving In:** Give in before your opponent's roll and you can control how you exit the scene. You earn one or more fate points for giving in.

# Mentor Consequences

- There must be narrative justification for a mentor to take a consequence for a PC.
- The consequence taken is one level higher—if it would be mild, the mentor takes a moderate consequence.
- A mentor can only do this once per session.

		YOUNG
Name		CERTERODS
Age & Description		Refresh Current Fate Points
APPROACH	ES	ASPECTS
CAREFUL		High Concept
CLEVER		Trouble
FLASHY		
FORCEFUL		
QUICK		
SHEAKY		
CENTURY ST	THI	
other stu	ATS	





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## CONSEQUENCES

