# NIGHTWATCH

Quick Start

ABOUT THIS QUICKSTART GUIDE

This free guide previews NIGHTWATCH: The Steampunk Role-playing Game, including core rule elements like the Fortune System. A premade Investigation and five example characters. It includes everything you'll need to play a session or two of the game with the investigation.

You can taste the game and the kinds of stories it can tell! These rules are still conceptual and will be updated in the run-up to the final version. If you have feedback, please provide it using the form here: [link]
These rules might make more sense to those familiar
With RPGs, they are designed to be usable by anyone.

If you have any questions, you can head on over
to our Discord server.

WHAT IS NIGHTWATCH

NIGHTWATCH is a role-playing game based on The Association of Ishtar, a universe of steampunk adventure and cosmic mystery. This section will contain all the information you need to get started on the quick start.

HOW TO PLAY

At its core, playing NIGHTWATCH is simply conversing with your fellow players. You'll roll dice now and then or check your character sheet for guidance, but the heart of a role-playing game is an engaging, free-flowing act between friends.

You'll ask questions, share ideas, and see where the story takes you. Sometimes, you'll sit back and enjoy the unfolding narrative like an audience, while other times, you'll jump in to shape the adventure yourself. You might interject, laugh, gasp, or even applaud—but no matter what, you're all creating something unforgettable together.

WHAT DO PLAYERS NEED?

NIGHTWATCH can be enjoyed as a print-and-play system, meaning you can print your own game components like character sheets, playing cards, and miniatures.

Players need a full range of gaming dice, from the four-sided D4 dice to twenty-sided D20 dice, and at least one additional D6 that serves as a "BOON DIE." NIGHTWATCH offers the "Fortune System" that uses Fortune Cards to enhance the combat experience. These can be bought in boosters or downloaded as printable PDFs. The same goes for character sheets, where the players record their characters' traits, skills, and equipment. The sheets can be downloaded freely from WWW.ASSOCIATIONOFISHTAR.COM.

USING MINIATURES AND GRIDS

The goal of NIGHTWATCH is to create a system that can be enjoyed both as a pen-and-paper RPG and a board game. This is why the Fortune Card System is included, but not essential. There are also 3D printable files for dedicated Associate and enemy miniatures. Players can use any grid to play by assuming that each inch or tile equals one foot of distance in the game.

THE CONCEPT

The central premise of "The Association of Ishtar" series (AoI) is "What happens if the rift causes an influx of technological innovations and alien threats?" How you answer that question is up to you. In our Discord community, you can propose your ideas to be included in the grand canon of the setting.

Ever since, "Rifts" have been appearing around the world. They are two-way portals that allow humans to explore the worlds beyond, which are usually parallel versions of Earth. Most contain primitive civilizations, if any. However, some of these anomalies led to far more advanced societies than the Victorians imagined.

But here's the catch. Objects cannot be transferred between worlds without consequence. Ideas, however, can. This led to a clandestine market in futuristic technologies. The most outlandish of these designs are called "Wyrd Tech."

Besides technological innovations, there is an influx of philosophical and religious ideas competing with traditional beliefs and viewpoints. These are not always, but often, promoting the importance of the anomalies and how we should welcome "Outsiders"—lifeforms from beyond the rifts.

Players take on the role of an asset of the Association of Ishtar—a clandestine organization on an ongoing quest to protect the world from unspecified threats, be it humans playing with forces they do not understand, or malicious actors from beyond the rifts. All too often, they are in league with one another. Despite being members of an association, every Associate acts independently and collaborates with the law and those in power out of courtesy. A group of Associates might team up in a temporary assembly called an association or a circle. Long-lasting teams might organize in a committee that specializes in combating specific threats or are on extended investigations.

THE SETTING: HOW ADVANCED IS THE WORLD OF ATLAS?

The Association of Ishtar is an Alternate History Steampunk setting. When you doubt how to build a setting for your games, we recommend using history as your inspiration. For this edition, 1869 was specifically chosen because it takes place before the books and the Franco-Prussian War, which ended in a French victory and prevented the unification of Germany.
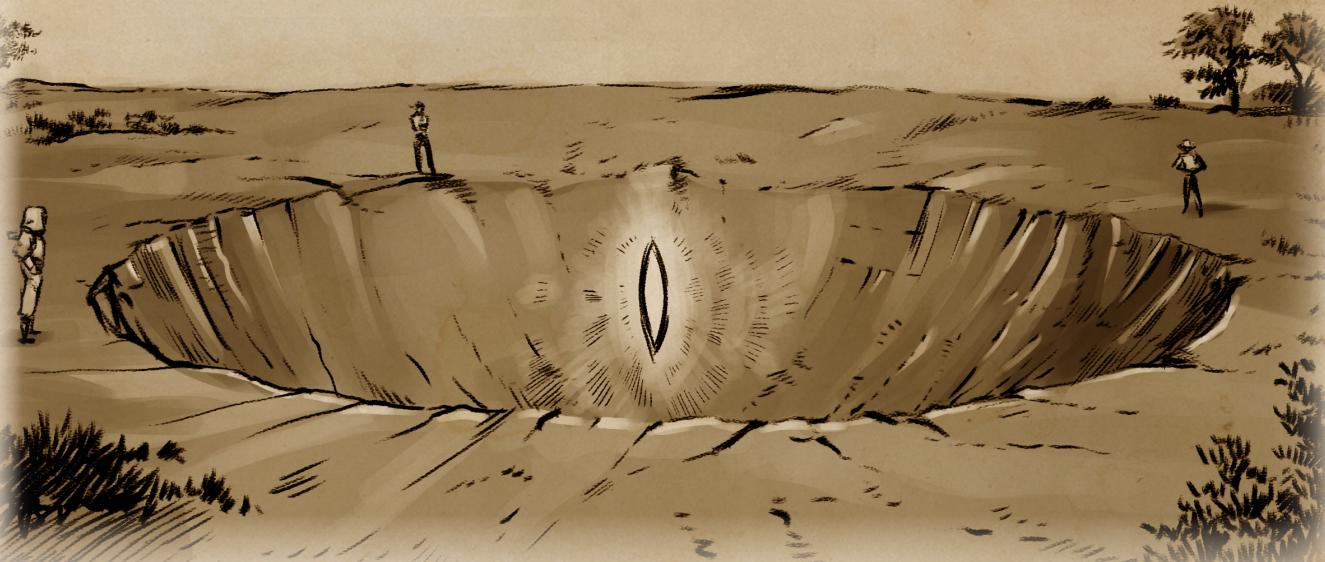
You can make the World of Atlas as advanced as you want for your own games, which might be the best way to introduce players to the setting or who have little knowledge of the 19th century.

Canonically, 1869 cities are still much like the 19th century. Overall, AoI uses 80%-20%, meaning 80% historical and 20% Science Fiction (for 1869) regarding aesthetics and era-appropriate technology. The SF elements include electric lighting, radios, both battery-powered and combustion-powered cars, and even more exotic engines.

The biggest hurdle to the availability of these innovations is a need for more natural resources, schooled personnel, logistical networks, and industrial facilities capable of mass-producing all these inventions. Yet, have you ever pondered the origins of these modern comforts? There is a dark secret at the heart of this progress.

ANOMALIES AND YOU

As we speak, novelists are putting to paper adventures involving intrepid explorers finding fame and fortune on the other side. However, there are many risks involved. We're not talking about the natives, whether human or otherwise. Rifts are poorly understood anomalies, and many physicians warn of the potential long-term effects on the human constitution. There have even been cases of travelers who have never emerged on the other end or those who returned after a long time…different.

Then there is "interplanar entropy," better known as "traveler's disease" or "traveler's decay". There is talk of bringing resources or futuristic technologies from the other side. But this would be a fruitless endeavor. Anything that departs its plane of origin starts to decay, leaving a fine anthracite ash in its wake. This effect is not directly evident, but it's there.

For anything organic, this is mostly fine. For material objects, this is a problem because they can't regenerate before breaking down into a pile of dark powder. There is no science behind this process, but as a rule of thumb, it is assumed anything or anyone can remain outside their world of origin for about 35 days before becoming inoperable or meeting a nightmarish end due to traveler's decay. Once you return within that time, you'll be fine—hypothetically. Objects, on the other hand… I wouldn't bring any family heirlooms if I were you.

If you insist on stepping through the anomaly regardless, know you are on borrowed time. Anything physical you bring back will inevitably malfunction before crumbling to dust. This is the most tremendous boon and potentially the greatest threat to human progress. Any outsiders entering our world suffer from the same condition. If it weren't for traveler's decay, the Atlas would have been doomed long ago. That is why they use subversion and deceit to find accomplices by offering them gifts they won't refuse. Blueprints, reverse engineering, wyrd philosophies, and mysticism are the most lucrative products on the black market today. It's what the powers that be both crave and fear.

THE ASSOCIATION OF ISHTAR

To the public, the Association seems like an excentric group like the Freemasons, with a passion for anything anomaly-related. Being the foremost authority on anoma-

lies, their associates use their unique insights to advise law enforcement agencies across the world on containing anomalies and whatever comes through.

Associates are known solely by their numbers—Associate 119, 189, etc. They appear as advisers and investigators in public but don't be fooled. In the shadows of this mad world of secret societies, unaccountable non-profits, mad men, and meddling outsiders, they maneuver with lethal precision against their adversaries, be they from within or without.

The Association is a clandestine, self-funding organization—meaning that it runs many questionable business practices, non-profits, shell companies, and research institutions. Some of these entities were formerly controlled by their adversaries and seized through hostile takeovers. You could be working in one of their offices without knowing it.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Associates do not follow orders—not even from the Chair. While the Chair can "request" an Associate to take on an assignment, acceptance is seen as a courtesy rather than an obligation.

Certain groups of Associates choose to work together consistently, forming Special Committees (SCs) to dedicate themselves to ongoing investigations and research. These committees specialize in various areas, such as the study of alien plant life, such as SC Hortus. Others have dedicated themselves to monitoring the Elysium Object, like SC Icarus, in anticipation of any activity.

ATLAS: AN ALTERNATE 19TH CENTURY

The Association is an extensive series of short stories and books. Even the PUPPET MASTER GUIDE expands on the world even further.

Here are some highlights of the setting's peculiarities.

• In a multiverse of possibilities, ATLAS is the code name for Plane 0. The Designation the Association uses to for their plane of origin.

• In the 19th century, anomalies called drifts were discovered, gateways to other worlds and timelines. These are responsible for an influx of technological innovations but also alien threats. The Association of Ishtar seeks to counter these alien infiltrators and the cults and collaborators who aid them.

•Through these two-way portals, "Travelers" have collected technologies from lost civilizations to be reverse-engineered with whatever components are available to them.

This is not as simple as it sounds, however. Anything, and anyone, who leaves their plane of origin for too long gets affected by something called Traveler's Decay; The affected item of an individual starts to shed a gray powder simply known as gray stuff. This process continues until the afflicted dies within in forty days. Therefore, Travelers have devised various means to gather, record, or copy information as quickly as possible.

•This influx of innovations led to most consumer goods developed up to our 1920s level of technology. Electrical appliances, like wireless radios called Wavecasters, and automobiles are pretty common in metropolitan areas.

•In the higher echelons of society, one could discover early digital computers, microchip-operated technology, and even battle mechs. However, by 1869, these were very rare and banned by international treaties.

•While the public, who view the rifts as curiosities on par with active volcanos, take all the innovations for granted, the powers that are seen, in particular advanced weapons, as a threat to stability and the balance of power.

•Countless organizations, cults, and cabals seek to use the rifts' potential for their own ends.

RULE SUMMERY

PASSING CHECK

A check is called a check when a player must roll to overcome a challenge. First, the PM calls the challenge, which is reflected by the Target Number (TN), TN5, by default. To pass the challenge, the player rolls two dice (see below). If one of the dice's results equals or exceeds the TN, the player succeeds and determines what happens. If not, the PM determines the outcome.

TRAIT CHECK = When passing an unskilled check, roll the die as the relevant trait states.
SKILL CHECK = When passing a check that requires a skill, use a Skill Die.

    0 skill dots=D4 | 1 dot=D6 | 2 dots=D8 | 3 dots=D10 | 4+ dots=D12

BOON DIE: When passing a Check, players roll an additional D6 simultaneously with a Trait Die. This D6 is called the "Boon Die." Boon Dice can "Surge."
SURGE: When rolling the highest possible result on a die roll, like a 6 on a D6, you may roll again and add that result to the total result.
DEBACLE: When rolling a 1 on both the Boon and the Trait Die, that's a debacle. Not only does the task fail, something goes horribly wrong. Debacles cannot be rerolled, not even with Resolve.

PHASE 1: DETERMINE INITIATIVE

(Skip this phase if you don't use the Fortune System. Instead, all players pass an Agility check like normal. The player with the highest result goes first. The PM may roll a die suitable to the difficulty of the opposing force.)

1.   Before the first Combat Round, **the PM compiles a Fortune Deck of ten cards with Initiative values 1 through 10**. There can be no card of equal value.
2.   **Draw cards equal to the number of players and one for the PM** and lay these face up on the table. This card pool is called the "Crystal Ball."
3.   Before the first round of combat, if the players have initiated the fight, they pick cards from the Crystal Ball first. Otherwise, the PM picks a card first. In subsequent rounds, the player, PM included, who had the highest Initiative number (for example, 10) in the last round gets to pick first.

PHASE 2: DECLARE ACTIONS

During combat, **Associates can perform up to three actions on their turn**. The number of actions must be declared at the start of the round.
For every action declared after the first, **that player received a +1TN penalty on all checks until the end of the Round.** *For example, if an Associate wants to shoot, reload, and move again on their turn, the Associates get a +2TN penalty on all three checks.*

PHASE 3: RESOLVE ACTIONS

    Players take turns, starting with Initiative 1, and count up. Now players can:
    a. Move up to 10 feet, meaning they can move that many inches or tiles on the tabletop.
    Characters who want to cover more ground can choose to "Run," adding an additional 10 feet to their movement for every additional action spent.
    b. Charge an enemy in movement range to perform an attack. This counts as one action.
    c. Resolve Fortune Card actions and apply bonuses. These are free actions.
    d. Perform attacks and actions. Apply multi-action modifiers on all checks! After passing a Combat Check apply damage right away and remove incapacitated characters.
    e. Any other action. PM decides how to resolve these.
    After everything is resolved, return the Fortune cards to the deck and reshuffle.

In this chapter, we explore in more depth what is listed in the rule summary on the previous page. During their investigations, Associates must perform various tasks and overcome challenges. These actions are referred to as 'Checks.' To pass a Check, characters rely on their abilities, which are represented by attributes called Traits. These values will be filled in on the players, which is discussed in the next chapter. It's essential to understand the role of various stats and how they are applied during investigations and combat. The most critical components are Traits and Perks, which determine a character's abilities. These are essential for performing actions and passing "Checks" that decide whether an action succeeds or fails.

TRAITS

Each Trait reflects a character's physical and mental capabilities and is rated on a die scale, rated D4 to D12, with D6 being average and D12 being world-class. For Starting Traits, see the Character Creation section. The individual traits and what they do are described in later chapters.

RESOLVE

Player characters start each game session with "Resolve" as noted on their character sheet. These tokens give the player a little extra agency over the game. The Puppet Master's Agents may have some Resolve tokens of their own as well. The PM should occasionally award a player a Resolve Token for role-playing his character's challenges, trying something heroic, telling an incredible story, or simply making everyone laugh.

SPENDING RESOLVE

Reroll a Trait: Reroll any check, keeping the best-rolled result. The only exception is if the reroll is a Debacle, which ends the attempt and must be accepted.
Soak Rolls: Resolve can be used to prevent Wounds. (See Soak Rolls below).
Replace a Fortune Card: After the first round of combat, a character can spend a Resolve to discard a card from the Crystal Ball and draw a new Fortune Action Card from the deck (see page x).
Influence the Story: This one is entirely up to the PM, who may allow a character to spend a Resolve to find an additional clue if they're stuck, come up with some mundane but needed item, or push an NPC into being a bit more agreeable.

PASSING CHECKS

To pass a task and challenge, an Associate must roll the dice, called "passing a check." The result determines if the Associate was successful or not. These can be "Trait-based" checks or "Skill-based" checks. When a check is required, the PM declares what Trait is relevant to the check.

TARGET NUMBER (TN)

When a player declares that their character is attempting a challenging task or action during an investigation, the PM may require the player to pass a Check to determine success or failure. The difficulty of the challenge is represented by the Target Number (TN).
The more challenging or complex the task, the higher the TN.

PASSING TRAITS CHECKS: When performing tasks that don't require training, players roll an unmodified Trait Die to pass a Trait Check.
For example: An Associate attempts to lift a heavy Boulder.
The PM calls for a Might Check.
If the Associate's Might is D10, they roll a D10. The standard Target Number (TN) for a basic check is 5 (TN5). This means the player must roll 5 or higher to succeed. If the result ≥ 5: Success, the door is kicked in. On a result of ≤ 4: Failure, the door resists.

SKILL CHECKS: Tasks that need training or merit require investment in the appropriate skills. During character creation, players get to invest an

agreed amount of Skill dots in the skills on their character sheet.

Skill dots do two things.

1. Perk Unlocks: Each dot allows players to purchase one related perk for their character. Each perk costs one dot. (See Character Creation for details.)

2. Die Size: The number of dots determines the maximum die size that can be rolled for a Skill Check up to the maximum of the related Trait. If a character has no dots invested in the skill relevant to a challenge, they must roll a D4, regardless of their Traits.

For example, a character comes across a reinforced door that can't be forced; thus, lock picking or a key is required. Lock Picking is a learned skill and requires some dots in Subterfuge to purchase the "Locksmith Perk." The PM decides that, to pick the lock, the player has to resolve a Subterfuge Check using Agility of TN6 to open the lock. The character's Agility is D10. However, the Associate only has 2 dots in Subterfuge, thus getting to roll a D8 Trait Die. (PS, the PM is not obligated to announce the TN to the players.)

WHICH TRAIT TO USE?
Every Skill Category has a wide range of perks, some of which require perks from other skills as prerequisites. Therefore, let the players suggest what Trait they find suitable for each check. *For example, persuasion usually requires Charisma, but there could be causes for which Intellect might be more suitable. Even a mechanic might have to fix a technical problem using brute force. If two traits are applicable for a check, we recommend using the highest.*

OVERQUALIFIED?
In some cases, characters might be so overqualified for a task that there is no point in making a check. Either skip the check, or make a check just to see if the player rolls a Debacle.

SURGE:
Skill checks in NIGHTWATCH are "open-ended." When rolling, the highest number possible on a die (a 6 on a D6, an 8 on a D8, etc.). This is called a "Surge." When rolling a Surge, the player has two options. The first option is to roll the surging die again and add its result to the total. —you can keep rolling and adding as long as you Surge!

The second option is to trigger a Perk ability if those are available. For example, Perks like 'Fencing' allows the character to make a free attack action when Surging.

THE BOON DIE:
For each check, Associates roll an additional D6 called a "Boon Die" together with the Trait Die. If the result of the Boon Die is higher than the Trait Die, use the result of the Boon Die instead. Boon dice can Surge. Any modifiers, such as Bonus Dice, apply to the highest result.

Note: Boon Die can Surge. If both the Trait Die and Boon Die surge, roll both again, and pick the best result as normal.

OVERKILL:
A roll's result that's double the Skill Checks' TN or higher is called "overkill." For example, if an associate rolls a 10 on a TN5 check, this success is an overkill. The PM declares the beneficial effects of the overkill, such as clearing twice the climb distance. A result of three times the TN would add another benefit, and so on.

DEBACLE:
A result of 1 on both the Trait Die and Boon Die (see above) is a Debacle. The roll automatically fails, and something bad may happen, depending on the situation. Debacles cannot be rerolled, even with Resolve (see below).

BONUS DIE:
Some perks or weapon traits might add a D4 or D6, called a "Bonus Die", to a check's result. Roll the bonus die after determining the best result on the Boon or Trait Die. Bonus dice do not get a Boon Die, Surge or cause Debacles.

TOOLS AND CHECKS
Hand tools, like saws and hand drills, provide a "Power Die," like +D6 or +D8, that works the same as a Bonus Die. Mechanical tools provide a numerical "Power Bonus," like +1 or +4, to represent their consistency.

DISTRACTED
When characters are performing a complex task, or enjoying a performance, **they have the**

Distracted Condition, meaning they are only paying attention to what they're doing and overlook what might be obvious in other situations. <u>Only loud noises, smells, or touch could disrupt this condition.</u>

In case of doubt, the Associate could pass a Perception Check to become aware of approaching danger with a +2TN penalty, including Combat and Defense Checks. *(Note: the Alertness Perk negates this condition.)*

OPPOSING ROLLS: Some checks are "opposed" by an opponent. A character telling a lie might be opposed by the target's Intellect, for example. In these cases, the acting character gets his total first, followed by whoever is opposing him. The highest total wins. A basic success (TN5) is still required for success, and every multiple of the target's unmodified stat (for example, a result of 12+ or 18+ against D6 Intellect) is overkill.

AGENTS

Your Associate (a player character) and unique enemies are collectively called "Agents." These can be "named" characters important to the plot, or heralds of the dark forces threatening this world. They are generally more powerful than unnamed extras. When drawing from the "Crystal Ball," draw an additional card from the Fortune Deck for every Agent the PM controls (See Combat). When an associate is passing Defense Checks or other opposed checks, the PM may add +D4 or +D6 to that check's TN.

PLAYER VERSUS PLAYER

When one player challenges another player's character is trying to persuade or attack them, both players roll dice using the relevant traits or skills, just like other checks, including any applicable Boon Dice. The player with the highest result wins the confrontation. If the players roll

a draw, the result is inconclusive. The PM calls if the challenger may try again, or not.

For example, Jean-Paul von Tickerpun tries to convince Associate 68 that the Earth is hollow. Jean-Paul rolls for Charisma (plus a Boon Die), resulting in a 6 on a D8. The PM decides that Associate 68 can resist using either Intellect or Charisma. Rolling a D8, 68 rolls an 8, successfully resisting Jean-Paul's argument and avoiding becoming a Hollow-Earther.

COMBAT

NIGHTWATCH's combat system is intended to keep the action furious and fun. For combat, it uses its own Fortune System, which allows the PM to add narrative elements to combat and bring the environment to life. However, it also gives the Associates control over the narrative and the challenges they'll face. The hostiles the Associates engage in combat are called "Pawns," while allies and other characters are referred to as NPCs.

COMBAT DIFFICULTY: Combat is intended to be lethal but fair. Even basic weapons are powerful, but carelessness can get an Associate killed, so the players are always on the edge of their seats. To lessen the lethality, the PM can award the players 2 or 4 maximum Hit Points at the start of the campaign.

INITIATING COMBAT: Players can initiate combat any time. For more rules, see the Fortune System.

AMBUSHES: The PM can initiate combat in the narrative, just like the players. The PM can also ambush the players in which case the pawns have a big advantage that can cause a lot of damage. In the spirit of fairness, the players should get a chance to detect an ambush using Perception.

COMBAT ROUNDS

When combat breaks out, the game changes to combat rounds.

ROUND: A "Round" is an entire countdown of Fortune Cards, from Initiative 10 to 1.

TURN: A character's "turn" occurs when his Initiative number comes up in the countdown. The next player takes his turn when that card comes up in the round.

ACTIONS: Associates perform up to three basic "actions" on their turn. An Associate can move and perform a regular action at any point in their movement, attacking, throwing, and so on.

THE FORTUNE DECK

Fortune Cards are a unique feature to NIGHTWATCH that adds random narrative events to combat, adding excitement to the most basic combat encounters. We don't recommend using these cards for every combat situation. However, it encourages Associates in larger engagements to take actions that are usually outside of their skill set.

STACKING THE DECK: Before every Round, the PM may determine the draw order of the deck for narrative effect.

INITIATIVE NUMBER: In the lower right corner of each card, is the initiative value that determines the order of play. The deck must always have ten cards numbered 1 to 10.

FORTUNE: The "Fortune", in the upper section of the card, is intended for Associates and other Agents. (See Declare Actions.)

MISFORTUNE

The Misfortune, in the lower section of the card, is the card option for the PM, and its effects have a great impact on the combat round.

I DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS! In case an Associate is individually targeted by the PM's Misfortune, instead of suffering its effects, <u>the Associate can spend two actions and become "Distracted" to ignore its effects as if they didn't happen.</u>
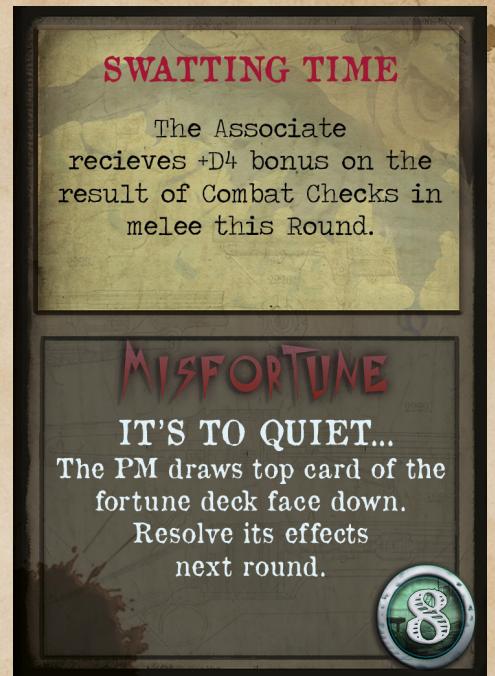
USING THE FORTUNE SYSTEM

When combat is initiated, the PM compiles a Fortune Deck (see below). Not only do these cards offer bonuses and penalties, they also reflect narrative events during combat, offering an opportunity to role-play. Therefore, we encourage players to make their own cards and develop new story elements to include in their games.

PHASE 1: DETERMINE INITIATIVE

(Skip this phase if you don't use the Fortune System. Instead, all players pass an Agility check like normal. The player with the highest result goes first. The PM may roll a die suitable to the difficulty of the opposing force.)

1. Before the first Combat Round, the PM compiles a Fortune Deck of ten cards with Initiative values 1 through 10. There can be no card of equal value.
2. Draw cards equal to the number of players and one for the PM and lay these face up on the table. This card pool is called the "Crystal Ball."
3. Before the first round of combat, if the players have initiated the fight, they pick cards from the Crystal Ball first. Otherwise, the PM picks a card first. In subsequent rounds, the player, PM included, who had the highest Initiative number (for example, 10) in the last round gets to pick first.

PHASE 2: DECLARE ACTIONS

4. **FORTUNE ACTIONS:** Fortune actions are free unless stated otherwise. Unless stated otherwise on the Fortune Card, declare Fortune and Misfortune effects.
5. **Movement & Actions:** At the start of the Round, players must declare the number of actions, up to three, they want to perfrom that Round. A character may perform multiple actions at different points in his movement as he wishes.
    For every action declared after the first, that player received a +1TN penalty on all checks until the end of the Round. For example, if an Associate wants to shoot, reload, and move again their turn, the Associates get a +2TN penalty on all three checks. Penalties remain, even if the declared action won't be performed. *For example, if an Associate wants to shoot, reload, and move again on their turn, the Associates get a +2TN penalty on all three*

SWATTING TIME
The Associate recieves +D4 bonus on the result of Combat Checks in melee this Round.

MISFORTUNE
IT'S TO QUIET...
The PM draws top card of the fortune deck face down. Resolve its effects next round.

Assist an Attack: Outside of their own turn, an Associate can spend a remaining action and ammunition to assist an ally's attack on an enemy target within attack range, including in melee. This is called "Assisting" and adds a +D6 bonus to the result of that Combat Check.

Free Actions: Multi-Action penalties do not apply to "free actions." Speaking a short sentence or two, moving up to the character's full movement, falling prone, or dropping an item are all free actions.

All Pawns under the control of the PM move in the same Turn. Pawns have one movement action and one attack action by default. Some Pawns can perform multiple attacks—this is shown with a multiplier in front of their Melee or Ranged stat (for example, 2x6TN means two attacks with TN6). Pawns can't move freely after declaring a ranged attack or charge.

PHASE 3: RESOLVE ACTIONS

6.   After all multi-actions have been declared, resolve the actions, starting with the player with initiative 1 counting up to 10.

Players spent their remaining on:

a. <u>Moveing up to 10 feet</u>, meaning they can move that many inches or tiles on the tabletop.
Characters who want to cover more ground can choose to "Run", adding an additional 10 feet to their movement for every additional action spent.

b. Perform attacks. Apply multi-action modifiers on all checks! After passing a Combat
Check apply damage right away and remove incapacitated characters. (See page 13)

c. Charge an enemy in movement range to perform an attack. This counts as one action.

c. Resolve Fortune Card actions and apply bonuses. These are free actions.

e. Any other action. PM decides how to resolve these.

After everything is resolved, return the Fortune cards to the deck and reshuffle.

7.   After everything is resolved, return the Fortune cards to the deck and reshuffle.
Optional: The PM may switch out cards in the deck with cards with the same initiative value (See Stacking the Deck below).

DEFENSE CHECKS

When being attacked by an opponent, an Associate can resist the assault. Unlike most RPGs, Pawns don't roll dice when attacking. Instead, Associates must pass a "Defense Check". Unlike a Combat Check, this is a Trait-based check whose TN is determined by the attack opponent's Ranged or Melee stat, including modifiers. For every attack, a character must pass a separate check against the modified TN using either Hardiness or Agility, rolling a Boon Die as normal.
ARMOR: Associates can wear gear that provides a level of protection. When relying on Hardiness, add +1 to the result of a Defense Check for each point of armor.

Using Hardiness implies the Associate is using his bulk to overcome the attack.
Using Agility implies that the Associate is attempting to evade the attack. In this case, don't add the armor value to the result, but apply any penalties for wearing armor.
For players, cover provides an armor bonus added to the result of a Defense Check against ranged attacks. Light Cover provided +1 cover bonus to Defense Checks, Medium +2, and Heavy +3. Be sure to inform the player what counts as what type of cover before any checks are announced.

PASSING DEFENSE CHECKS: If the modified result of the check is equal to or higher than the modified TN, the character successfully defended himself and nothing happens.
Example: The Associate in an expedition suit (armor 2) gets attacked by a cyborg with Melee 6. Assuming the Associate has no special perks, the Associate decides to make a Defense Check using Hardiness. He rolls a 5, making it a total of 7. Hence, he successfully defended himself.
FAILURE: <u>When the modified result of the Defense Check is lower than the TN, the Associate suffers a wound</u>. On top of that, he suffers an additional wound when the TN is double the modified result, just like with Overkill.
DEBACLE: When rolling a Debacle on a Defense Check, the Associate takes an additional wound, and something bad might happen. This result cannot be rerolled.

COMBATING MULTIPLE OPPONENTS: Some of the wyrd beasts are aggressive pack hunters that will attack Associates simultaneously. This is called **"flanking."** *(Note: When using a grid, only models adjacent to an Associate can flank.)*
Instead of every pawn making separate attacks, determine the pawn with the highest attack stat, then make a single attack, adding +2TN to the Defense Check for every other attacking pawn. *For example, the Associate is being attacked by three wyrd beasts, each with a Melee of 6. Instead of making three separate Defense Checks, she must make one Defense Check against TN10 (=6+2+2). She tries to make an agility check but fails by throwing a 5. Not only is it a hit, but the strength of the attack is double the result, making her suffer an additional wound.*
BARRAGE: The ranged variant of Flanking is a Barrage. When pawns target one Associate with multiple ranged attacks, instead of every pawn making a separate attack, determine the pawn with the highest attack stat. Then make a single ranged attack, adding +2TN to the Defense Check for every other pawn. If multiple Associates are in range, divide pawns' attacks among Associates unless there is a Commander nearby who can coordinate their fire on a single target.

MELEE ATTACKS

A character may make one melee attack per action. All Combat Checks are skill based, whose TN are determined by the Pawn's Dodge (See Chapter 6). **To pass a Combat Check, roll Melee + a Boon Die.** If the result is equal or higher than the modified Pawn's Dodge, the character scores a Wound on the target. For every Overkilll, add an additional Wound for that strike as well.

UNSKILLED, & IMPROVISED COMBAT
When a character has no combat skills, is un-

armed, is unfamiliar with their weapon, or is using improvised weapons, use a D4 instead of their Trait Die to pass Combat Checks. (Note. players still get a D6 Boon Die.)

ATTACKING TARGETS: During a Combat Round players can target an adjacent opponent in melee, or a target in the weapons range and field of view. When the attack has been declared, the PM announces the TN and attacks get resolved. (See below.)

WITHDRAWING: Whenever a character is alone in a melee and retreats, adjacent opponents get one immediate free attack—no more. Apply flanking rules and modifiers as normal.

GRAPPLE: Once per round, a character may spent an action to grapple an adjacent opponent that is equal or smaller in size. During the resolution, pass a Might Check versus the targets Melee. On a success, the opponent is Restrained for the rest of the Round (See Conditions below.). On a failure, nothing happens. On a Debacle, the grappling character gets Restrained instead. To keep a hold on an opponent for subsequent rounds, another Might check has to be passed for each round. To resist a grapple, pass a Defense Check as normal.

RANGED ATTACK ACTIONS

When making a normal ranged attack roll,
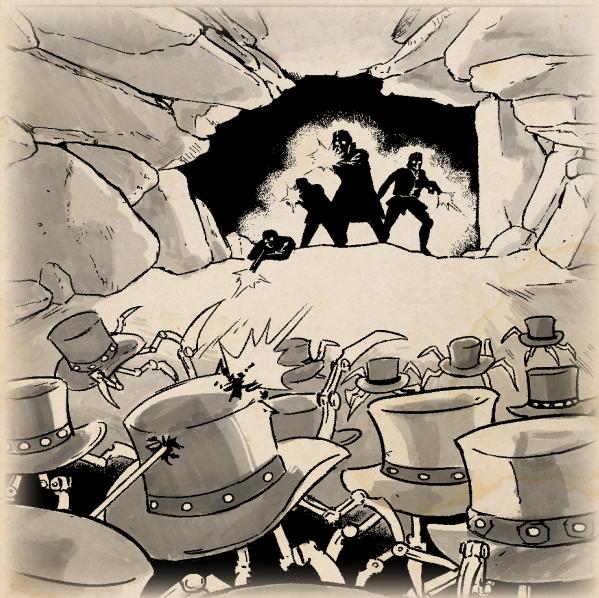
make one combat check per action at the expense of a single bullet. Some weapons allow a higher rate of fire, at the expense of more bullets.

Note that in this Quickplay guide, we have not included the full range of attack possibilities, like weapon specific attacks.

NORMAL ATTACK: Per action, spend 1 ammo to perform one Combat Check.

RELOAD: To perform an attack with a ranged weapon, the weapon needs to be loaded with sufficient ammunition. Every type of weapon has different rules for reloading. (See Chapter 9 on Weapons).

CALLED SHOT: Spent 3 actions and 1 ammo to gain +1D6 Bonus Die to a Combat Check. If the check is successful, choose one option: either inflict an additional Wound, cripple a limb, or destroy a component. The PM decides the effect.

THROWING: To throw objects like rocks up to 30', spent on action to declare its general direction. To hit a target, make an Agility Check +1TN for every 10' and -1TN for every dot on Athletics.

THROWING GRENADES: Grenades are inaccurate weapons that scatter before exploding. When declaring actions, an Associate can spend an action to declare their character is throwing a grenade; they indicate a distance up to 30 feet and a direction in which to throw. Before exploding, the grenade scatters in a random direction as follows. During the action phase, instead of making a Combat Check, roll Agility without a boon die. **The scatter is 10 minus the result in feet in a random direction**.

To determine the direction of the scatter, you can spin a pencil on the table. Or use a D8 with "1" being an being north for the PM and higher numbers moving clockwise around the target.

BLIND FIRE: Associates can fire at hidden or invisible enemies using any attack option open to them. (See Visibility above.)

RESOLVING DAMAGE

When a character fails a Defense Check, a character suffers a Wound. If the Wounds out-number a character's Hit Points, that character is incapacitated (out of the fight). Basic Pawns and NPCs only have one Hit Point. Most Agents have two or more Hit Points.

• Each Wound causes a +1TN cumulative penalty to all Checks (up to a maximum penalty of +3TN).

BLOODY MESS: In combat, people get maimed. But when a character is incapacitated with damage that reduces them to -3 Hit Points, which exceeds 1.5 times the character's unmodified Hit Points, you are left with a bloody mess. Not only can this upset nearby allies, who must pass a Discipline Check or be Startled, but any clues or knowledge that could have been derived from the carcass or missing body parts are likely destroyed.

SPECIAL DAMAGE TYPES

Special damage refers to wounds not caused by conventional attacks.

SPECIAL DAMAGE: Treat corrosive, electric, and fire damage as physical damage. Armor protects for half its value (rounded down) against Special Damage.

CATCHING FIRE: For every wound caused by fire damage, add one fire token to that target. During the Declaration Phase, one action must be spent performing a Hardiness or Melee Check to remove one fire token. For every remaining fire token, the character receives one Burn wound. Performing actions such as dousing oneself with water can also remove fire tokens.

SOAKING DAMAGE

Immediately after determining the wounds from a single attack, a character may spend Resolve to make a Hardiness Check. Each success and Overkill on the check reduces the number of wounds suffered from the attack by one. <u>Don't count the Wound modifiers you're about to suffer when making this check</u>—they didn't

happen! If the character Soaks all the Wounds, negate all of their effects.

INCAPACITATION RESULTS

Incapacitated Associates cannot perform actions but are still dealt Fortune Cards for the remainder of the encounter in case they recover or must roll for other effects such as Bleeding Out! (See Medical Conditions below.)

STUNNED CHARACTERS: Stunned characters run no risk of Bleeding Out. Instead, they make one attempt per Round to pass a Hardiness Check. If successful, they regain consciousness in a Dazed state. If not, they awaken in 2D6 x 15 minutes.

I'M NOT DEAD YET! When a character reaches 0 HP or lower, instead of becoming incapacitated, the Associate can choose a body part to be Maimed instead, with PMs approval. If so, the Associate hit points are restored up to 1 HP. Additionally, pass a Hardiness Check to regain an additional 1 HP. If the result is an overkill, gain an another HP and no more. (Note: Prosthetics should not be sacrificed this way, unless there is no alternative.)

RESTORING HIT POINTS

FIRST AID: In the field, characters can be stabilized and patched up. Once per day, spend 15 minutes to pass a "First Aid" or "Surgery" Check, to remove a wound for every success.

STABILIZING: After combat, or when not inside an appropriate facility, an incapacitated character can be stabilized with the First Aid or Surgeon perk to prevent him from Bleeding Out. Pass two Intellect or Agility Checks (TN5), with +1TN modifier for every excess wound below 0 HP. For every success, the character restores 1 hit point to a maximum of 1 HP. After a successful check, no further first aid can be applied on that character If their number of Hit Points is above 0 a character can move, but can perform no other actions. If 0 or below, the character remains Unconscious

until having rested for a full 24 hours.

NEGATIVE HIT POINTS: When incapacitated, an Associate can reach -7 HP without dying. However, After First Aid has been applied on a character, further negative wounds can only be healed by a Surgery Check (TN6) inside an appropriate facility.

BLEEDING OUT!

When incapacitated by lethal attacks, a character is bleeding. At the start of each Combat Round, she must make a Hardiness Check +1TN for every 2 negative HP (rounded down).
Failure: The character bleeds on, suffering another Wound. If a Character reaches -8 HP, the character dies.
Success: The character is no longer Bleeding Out, but remains unconscious or otherwise Incapacitated for 4D6 x 15 minutes.
Overkill: The character stabilizes and is Unconscious instead. See below.
Debacle: The character dies.

HEALING

To permanently restore Hit Points, make up to two Hardiness Checks per day. Heal one wound for every success. It takes a whole day of rest for this process to take effect. Debacles double the healing time. When healing stun wounds, reroll up to one failed check per day.
USING MEDICINE: Once per day, a character or NPC with the Medicine Skill can help the healing process by passing an Intellect Check. Each success heals one additional wound.
ENSNARED: When Ensnared, characters can't move, perform actions, or defend themselves. Unless the character has the Escape Artist perk, other characters need to remove this condition by destroying the restraints or crippling the ensnaring limb with a Called Shot.
INCAPACITATED: Incapacitated characters cannot perform actions but are still dealt Fortune Cards for the remainder of the encounter in case they recover or must roll for other effects such as Bleeding Out (below).

INTOXICATED: Bravery may come out of a bottle, but so does carelessness. Intoxicated characters may reroll Discipline checks once per attempt. However, for mild intoxication, any combination of 1s or 2s will trigger a Debacle. For moderate intoxication, 1s, 2s, and 3s trigger a Debacle and with severe intoxication Debacles trigger on 1s through 4s.
MAIMED: The body part has been amputated or otherwise rendered useless beyond recovery. Whenever a character loses a body part, he is Bleeding Out, just like an Incapacitated character, until First Aid has been applied or the wound stabilizes. Maimed limbs can only be saved with Surgery within 24 hours, or the limb is beyond saving. If the limb is not saved, the character gains the Maimed Limb Flaw (See Flaws below).
PARALYZED: A character that is paralyzed cannot move or take actions until passing a Discipline Check at the start of a Round as a free action.
UNCONSCIOUS: An Unconscious character cannot move, perceive, or take actions until First Aid has been applied. See Restoring Hit Points above.

DISCIPLINE CHECKS

During their missions, Associates can suffer mental trauma, be surprised, or get manipulated. Any attempts to resist being overwhelmed are called "Discipline Checks," and are made using Intellect or Charisma. The PM can call for Discipline Checks at any time and apply appropriate conditions to players for failing to pass. (See Conditions below.)

MENTAL CONDITIONS

Modern combat is stressful as it is. But a Wyrd beast's very presence can alter a character's state of mind. This is reflected by the various conditions listed below.
DAZED: Dazed characters can move but not perform more than one action per Round

until they pass a Hardiness Check at the start of a Round as a free action. Once passed, this condition is removed.

DEMORALIZED: Preternatural events or dread can demoralize characters. Demoralized characters can no longer Surge dice rolls until the condition has been removed. Demoralized NPCs will be unwilling to cooperate with Associates because they see no point.

DISTRACTED: Characters get Distracted when they are performing a complex task that demands their full attention, like lock-picking, watching a presentation, or performing experiments, or when they are being harassed by loud noises or a vile stench. When Distracted in Combat, the character must pass a perception check to become aware of approaching danger with a +2TN penalty. *(Note: The Alertness Perk negates this condition.)*

FEAR: At the start of a Combat Round, a character affected by Fear must pass an Intellect Check or flee for the nearest cover, or out of the enemy's field of view. On a Debacle, the character becomes 'Terrified'.

TERRIFIED: The character is terrified beyond the capacity for rational thought and cannot take any actions other then moving and running. To move, they must first pass a Discipline Check. On an Overkill, the character overcomes the Terrified condition. **If a Debacle, the character becomes Unconscious**.

NPCS & ANTAGONISTS

This section offers a variety of NPCs, including monsters and other opponents. Non-Player Characters (NPCs) are essential to bring the world to life and drive the plot for-ward. They act as allies, antagonists, informants, or mere passersby, each contributing to the experience and creating memorable encounters. The PM performs the role of all the NPCs: how they talk, how they appear, and of course, their motiva-tions. They can lie, cheat, and manipulate the Associates if that suits their ends. Players can use perks, such as Judge of Character, to ask the PM for more insights into an NPC's motivation or state of mind. Below we included some example enemies to give an impression. In the Puppetmaster Guide is for more information on NPCs and how to make feel unique.

ENEMY NPCS: PAWNS AND AGENTS

In NIGHTWATCH nameless enemies, who are not Agents, are referred to as Pawns that players can en-gage in combat with whenever they like. Whenever engaging in combat, the default TN for any Combat or Defense Checks is TN5. However, these are sug-gestions for specific NPCs and monsters below. The PM may change their stats and qualities however he sees fit if this benefits the story or challenge.

NPC TRAITS
Traits represent NPCs' abilities in combat and social situations. The Traits values are the TNs the players must match during checks against the NPC.
MELEE: Similar to Might, it represents their ability to hit the opponent in Melee.
RANGED: Similar to Perception, it represents their ability to hit the opponent with ranged attacks.
DODGE: Similar to Might or Agility, it is used to resist melee attacks.
EVASION: Similar to Agility, it is used to resist ranged attacks and conceal themselves from the Associates.
INTELLECT: Similar to Intellect or Charisma, Discipline represents the ability to overcome men-tal challenges and rally.
HIT POINTS: These are the amount of hits a the opponent can endure. WHen this reaches 0 they are removed from the scene.

ARMOR: When attacking an armored opponent, each point of Armor adds +1TN to Combat Checks.

NPC QUALITIES
Some npcs have special skills or preternatural abilities that give them an edge over the play-ers. Here are some examples

BITE: Instead of a normal attack, when failing a Defense Check, the Associate is re-strained and must pass a Might Check with a TN equal to the target's Melee. If the charac-ter wears a com-plete set of armor, the Asso-ciate gains a -2TN on this check.
CLEAVE: When performing an Attack, it strikes all adjacent targets, friend or foe. De-fense Checks are passed as normal.
FIRETEAM: When performing a Barrage, each pawn adds +3TN to the Defense Check, instead of +2TN.
PACK HUNTER: When Flanking, each pawn with this trait adds +3TN to DC, instead of +2.
UNDISCIPLINED: Due to a lack of training or being a plonker, this Pawn cannot Flank or par-take in Barrages.
Watchful: When attempting to sneak past this pawn, +2TN on Subterfuge Tasks.
TRANSMITTER: Any pawn with a transmit-ter can communicate and share information with any other with the Transmitter or Re-ceiver trait.

EXAMPLE NPCs & Pawns

Here is a small selection of NPCs for an impression of what players could encounter during their adventures. The Core Rule Book contains a full bestiary that provides the full context of factions.

Thug
Undisciplined
Movement: 10' Dodge: 5 Evasion: 5 Melee: 6 Ranged: 5 Intellect: 5 HP: 1 Armor: 0

Elite Guard
Fire Team, Watchful.
Movement: 10' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 5 Melee: 6 Ranged: 7 Intellect: 6 HP: 3 Armor: 2

Specialist
Movement: 10' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 6 Ranged: 6 Intellect: 6 HP: 1 Armor: 2

Guard Dog
Bite, pack hunters.
Movement: 16' Dodge: 4 Evasion: 6 Melee: 7 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 1 Armor: 0

Horse, trained
Stampede.
Movement: 20' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 5 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 2 Armor: 0

Bear
Bite, Stampede.
Movement: 6' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 8 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 3 Armor: 1

Rats
Bite.
Movement: 10' Dodge: 4 Evasion: 6 Melee: 6 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 1 Armor: 0

Wolf
Bite, pack hunter.
Movement: 8' Dodge: 4 Evasion: 6 Melee: 4 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 1 Armor: 0

Megasloth
Cleave
Movement: 12' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 4 Melee: 7 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 5 Armor: 2

Cyborg
Movement: 10' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 6 Ranged: 5 Intellect: 5 HP: 3 Armor: 0

Fascinator Drone
Trasmitter.
Movement: 8' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 5 Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 1 Armor: 0

Security Roterdrone
Automaton, flying drone.
Movement: 12' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 7 Melee: - Ranged: 5 Intellect: - HP: 1 Armor: 0

PERKS & SKILLS

On the premade character sheets there is a list of skills and perks the players have at their disposal. The items mentioned below are a sample of all the perks, background, career and temperment options listed in the rulebooks

BACKGROUNDS AND CAREERS : Represents a Characters formative years and professional career. In most cases these provide addition dots in partculair skills that are already provided on the premade character sheets.

TEMPERAMENT: An impression of the character's personalities. These usually provided a small bonus, or a large bonus with a downside.

FLAWS: Flaws represent diabilities of or dibilatating character traits that could hinder your missions

TRAITS

Each Trait reflects a character's physical and mental capabilities and is rated on a die scale, rated D4 to D12, with D6 being average and D12 being world-class. For Starting Traits, see the Character Creation section.

MIGHT: Reflects physical strength and melee combat ability.

AGILITY: Governs finesse, evasion, and precision.

HARDINESS: Represents physical resilience, endurance, and stamina.

PRECISION: Covers observation, situational awareness, and ranged combat skills.

INTELLECT: Relates to mental acquity, discipline, and willpower.

CHARISMA: Determines interpersonal skills, charm, appearance, and persuasiveness.

MOVEMENT: A character's base movement rate is 10 feet per Combat Round, equivalent to 4 miles per hour.

HIT POINTS: Represents the amount of damage a character can endure before being incapacitated. HP is determined by the character's Hardiness Trait (e.g., a D8 Hardiness equals 8 HP).

SKILLS

Skills represent a character's proficiency and knowledge in a certain area of expertise. This is represented by **skill dots.** Characters, depending on their experience, start with a number of dots and can be reward to players by the Puppetmaster for their adventures. Furthermore, **for each dot the player can buy a perk belonging to that respective skill group.** Perks either grant special actions, abilities, or knowledge the player might require to analyze a subject or construct machines. This is explained in detail in the Puppetmaster Manual and the Associates Guide. Below are only the perks listed that apply to the premade characters. Perks marked with "*"are simplified as these refer to more advanced rules.

ACROBATICS

People have applauded artistic feats of balance, agility, and motor coordination during public exhibitions for centuries. For others, such skills are part of the job.

GYMNASTICS: Through training gain -1TN bonus to all Agility non-skill related checks.

ATHLETICS

Athletics involves your proficiency in sports, physical exercise, and equipment used to operate in dangerous environments. Pass checks

using Hardiness or Agility.

CLIMBER: Through experience and upper body strength, scale the challenging surfaces. -2TN bonus on climbing-related challenges.

MARATHONER: Running long distances has built up this character's stamina. Receive a -2TN bonus on body and stamina-related checks.

MEN-AT-ARMS: Due to training, armor is like a second skin. *+1 Armor bonus on Defense Checks when wearing a full suit of armor.**

PHYSICALLY FIT: Rigorous training increases your overall strength. -1TN on physical activities.

RUGGED: Due to exposure to extreme environments, the character may reroll Hardiness Checks once per check without spending Resolve.

CRAFTING

Crafting is related to constructing and maintaining objects and structures. Pass checks using Intellect or Agility. To start advanced crafting projects, characters must have blueprints. To create new blueprints, use R&D perks.

PERCUSSIVE ENGINEERING: Sometimes, hitting the machine solves the problem. Pass a Might Check to fix a repairable malfunction. On a Debacle, the object is destroyed.

INVESTIGATION

Conduct inquiries and deduce what events transpired in locations such as crime scenes. Investigators have great insight into human behavior. Investigation can be used to create case files and reports from which characters can draw conclusions or use for inspiration to conduct experiments. Pass checks using Intellect or Perception.

DEDUCER: Use logic, creativity, and evidence to make connections between events, objects, and people that others might miss— no matter how unlikely they might appear. When invoked in the narrative, the PM can prove a useful hint to further the character's investigation.

FORENSICS: Use deduction and evidence to gain greater insights from crime scenes and reveal the suspect's attack Traits.

JUDGE OF CHARACTER: Through experience or study, ascertain a person's motivations or intent just by looking at them. Estimate the target's traits and gain -2TN when resisting their Persuasion Checks.

PALEOGRAPHY: Gain insight from written documents and writing styles by applying knowledge and deduction to gain insight from written documents and writing styles to get an estimation of a subject's Intellect, Discipline, and Agility.

INTIMIDATION

Use your physical presence to your advantage and coerce characters to do your bidding or give up information by threatening or asserting dominance. Pass checks using Hardiness, Might, or Intellect.

TAUNT: As an action, pass a Hardiness Check against the target opponent's Intelligence. On a success, force the target to attack you instead of anyone else.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership relates to commanding, managing, and administrating. Characters with high leadership skills can manage teams, businesses, and battalions. They can make their fellows more effective in what they do or resolve legal disputes. Pass checks using Intellect or Charisma.

HOUSEKEEPER: Use economic and domestic manage the daily activity in a household or facility.

SECRETARY: Proficient in a wide range of administrative and coordinating tasks.

SERGEANT: This character can lead up to 5 NPCs, who will share the 'Sergeant''s Initiative. Once during every two combat rounds, the character can spend two actions to give one ally an additional action. Additionally, NPCs the character controls share that character's initiative during combat.

MEDICINE

These perks relate to any form of medical intervention, personal hygiene, or body modification. Pass checks using Intellect or Agility.

FIRST AID: Stabilize an Incapacitated character. For every success, remove a wound to a maximum of one hit point. Once per day, spend one time block to use First Aid to negate a wound for every success; the penalties from these wounds can be ignored, but the wounds still need to be healed through resting and medicine.

MELEE

The Melee Skill relates to any martial arts and fencing across a wide range of melee weapons and disciplines. Every dot in Melee represents the character's overall skill and renown. Pass checks using Might.

BRAWLER: Excel at fighting indoors. Gain -1TN on Combat Checks in confined and interior spaces.

SAVATE: When trained in martial arts, negate penalties for unarmed combat.

STREET FIGHTER: By fighting dirty, this character's unarmed attacks have +1 bonus on combat checks.*

WRESTLER: Through experience in the ring, gain -1TN on Combat Checks to grapple.

PERFORMANCE

Artistic ability, public performance, or deceit. The skill has the added benefit that, when giving a performance, a character may pass a Charisma Check to give onlookers the Distracted Condition. Pass checks using Charisma or Agility.

The dots invested in an artistic skill, including free dots, also reflect their level of fame and renown:

1 dot = Your performances are good enough to please the townspeople.

2 dot = Your performances are good enough to get some local attention, and you might have supported a larger production.

3 dots = You can land a lead role or support a national production.

4 dots = You are a star who has been heard in many households around the country.

5 dots = You are an international celebrity.

ACTOR: Perform stage plays and audio plays.

MAKEUP ARTIST: Do anything with makeup, including modifying a character's HEAT and reputation.

SINGER: The character can sing with or without musical accompaniment.

PILOTING

Operating and driving a range of vehicles and controlling drones. Pass checks using Agility.

CASKET GIRL: Pilot a Chassis d'Battaille (CBs) and similar automatons.

LICENSED DRIVER: Perform complex maneuvers with most wheeled vehicles.

DECKHAND: Proficient in performing all the routine jobs aboard a ship.

TRACTION CONTROL: Drive tracked vehicles through hazardous terrain and fix caterpillar tracks.

PERSUASION

Use charm, rhetoric, and negotiation ability to influence other parties. Pass checks using Charisma or Intellect.

VOICE FOR RADIO: A speaking voice that comes over loud and clear across radio speakers. May count as 2 HEAT for interpersonal checks and to 'distract' listeners.

PILOTING

Operating and driving a range of vehicles and controlling drones. Pass checks using Agility.

DECKHAND: Proficient in performing all the routine jobs aboard a ship.

HELMSMAN: Command and control of small and medium-sized boats. (Req. Deckhand)

LICENSED DRIVER: Perform complex maneuvers with most wheeled vehicles.

TRACTION CONTROL: Drive tracked vehicles through hazardous terrain and fix caterpillar tracks.

RANGED

These perks relate to the use of any ranged weapon, from bows to rifles. This also includes vehicle weapon systems. Pass checks using Agility or Perception.

CHAMBER LOADER: At the start of combat, the character's firearm with an internal magazine has one additional bullet in the chamber.

FUTURE TROOPER: Use Lv5 ranged weapons like self-reloading rifles, and receive -2TN Bonus on Troubleshooting Checks when using such weapons.

GUN SLINGER: Be skilled with pistols, including carbines. Reloading a full revolver counts as a single action, and you receive a -2TN bonus on Troubleshooting Checks. The character can also use the "Fanning" attack action.

HEAVY GUNNER: Wield a light machine gun as if it were a normal rifle.

RAT HUNTER: Negate size modifiers when shooting smaller targets.

RIFLEMAN: Use bolt-action rifles. Reloading a bolt-action rifle with a full magazine counts as a single action and gains a -2TN bonus on Troubleshooting Checks.

SNAPSHOT: Instead of a normal attack, perform a Called Shot action for only one action, with a +2TN penalty on Combat Checks.

SECURITY

Entering and securing areas and protecting VIPs, using brute force or otherwise. Pass checks using Intellect, Perception, Agility, or Hardiness.

BODYGUARD: At any time when an ally within movement range must make a Defense Check, this character can sacrifice all remaining actions to move adjacent to the ally and add either a Hardiness or Agility die to the ally's Defense Check. If the Check succeeds, the bodyguard must make a Defense Check as if he were the target of that attack. If this check is a failure, both characters are hit, and the damage is resolved as normal.

BREACHER: Breach secured doors using explosive force and fight whatever awaits on the other side. Gain -1TN on Defense Checks when fighting indoors and in confined spaces.

LOCKSMITH: Open and secure locks using appropriate tools.

SNEAK: Use coordination and guile to move quietly and unseen.

SUBTERFUGE

Deception, trickery, or stealth to achieve a goal. Pass checks using Perception, Charisma, or Agility.

DISGUISE: Use guile and creativity to disguise oneself to move in public unnoticed.

MASTER OF DISGUISE: You are the master of the masquerade and can disguise yourself as specific individuals. (Req. Disguise and Actor.)

SHANK: Conceal small weapons, like a knife or holdout pistol, on one's person.

SLEIGHT OF HAND: Through guile and coordination this character mastered the art of unnoticed movements. Very useful for card tricks or gaining access to somebody's pockets.

SURVIVAL

These skill perks are related to anything involving working outdoors, self-sufficiency, and survival. Every dot in this skill represents the character's ability to survive with limited means. Pass checks using Intellect, Might, or Perception.

COOKING: Prepare food for safe consumption in the wilds to prevent disease.

FORAGER: Use knowledge of nature to gather edibles from the environment.

GREEN THUMBS: Grow crops, even in the wild.

ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE: "THE NIGHT MARKET"

"Esteemed Associate,
A situation has emerged in the city of [Redacted]. A smuggler, known to be in league with various wyrd merchants and brokers we shadowed, was recently taken into custody. However, a letter was delivered to the police station after his arrest, containing a warning. Whoever the smuggler is protecting took his estranged daughter. Apparently, he's been paying her mother for the child's schooling. At present, he refuses to reveal his clients, until we can ensure the girl's safety.
We request your assistance in securing his daughter. She is presumably held at a location known as the Night Market. Would the child be harmed, ensure he can find closure, or what ever is necessary to make him reveal his clients.

We'll meet at the usual location.
-140

ADVENTURE HOOKS
1. **Disappearance:** "A key witness' daughter been kidnapped. We believe she's been taken by one of his clients who have a stall at the Night Market. Unfortunately, he refuses to divulge his identity."

2. **Contraband:** "The Associates have yet to infiltrate the Night Market, so we have no idea what business is being conducted there. Although it's tempting to deal a decisive blow. The Chair, however, has advices to wait until every connection to that market has been identified. In time, the Association will deal with them, one, by one. Do not reveal your presence!"

3. **Unrest:** "During investigations, rumors of unrest at the Market have reached the ears of our Associates. Rumors of infighting and internal strife among the various elements at the market. These events could be related and, perhaps, you could use this to your advantage."

ACT 1: ARRIVAL AND EXPLORATION
Setting the Scene: "The Night Market is located in a factories warehouse inside an obsolete industrial area, guarded by a group of enforcers. The Associates arrive to find a bustling bazaar attended by a broad audience consisting of cultists, witch doctors, and Bohemian eccentrics. The stalls selling everything from alien flora, wyrd beast cadavers, to odd relics. Most visitors' sole interest is to fill their curios cabinets or gather interesting ingredients to serve at the next brunch. Few, however, are well aware of this market's true potential.

KEY LOCATIONS:
The Night Market: Where the bulk of the stalls are located. Here, the Associates can gather information, witness shady dealings, and meet key NPCs.
The Attic: On the second floor of the warehouse reside the more exclusive establishments. Access to the area is restricted, and its patrons influential. Here the higher end deals and illicit trades are made.
Zephyra's Emporium: A prominent stall run by an enigmatic figure named Madame Zephyra, who sells rare artifacts, alien herbs and wyrd beast parts that allegedly have healing or "magic" properties. She is known for her knowledge of market gossip.

The Fortune Teller's Tent: Run by an old woman named Seraphine, who can provide cryptic clues and prophecies about the night's events.

ENCOUNTERS AND CLUES

Urchin: A young pickpocket attempts to steal from one of the Associates. If caught, he pleads for his life and offers information about strange occurrences in the market.

Argument at a Stall: The Associates come across a heated argument between a merchant and a patron complaining about Cyborgs.

Whispers: Patrons speak in hushed tones about a series of a recent reckoning. A shady merchant hints that the missing people were last seen near a mysterious stall that vanished shortly thereafter.

Madame Zephyra: She knows that something got many of the people that frequent the Attic spooked. If convinced, she says there are more cyborgs than usual. She heard rumors they hang out at the Far End of the Market.

ACT 2: UNCOVERING THE MYSTERY

Investigating the Far End: At the back of the market, by the wall that separates the warehouse from the factory floor, The Associates may choose to investigate the quieter parts of the market. They could find:

A hooded figure: A hooded figure that seems to move between stalls, watching the character with the highest HEAT. Upon confrontation, it turns out to be a cyborg spying on them.

The Disguised Threat: The Associates eventually encounter another bohemian shack in the far corner of the warehouse. The stall is run by a woman named Ashcroft, and her accomplishes, who have been attempting to smuggle crates filled with C-44 Fascinator drones.

Unfortunately for hem, their smuggler was captured.

Combat Encounter: When confronted, Cecilia Ashcroft summons her cyborg boydguards to attack the Associates while she attempts to escape deeper into the factory. The Associates must either chase her or defeat the minions first.

Sneaking into the Factory: If the Associates manage to find a way into the factory, they'll find the girl in a secluded corner of a maze of crates and other illicit goods. Nearby is a reinforced containing, containing racks with numerous C-44 Drones. Cyborgs are guarding the girl and a control panel.
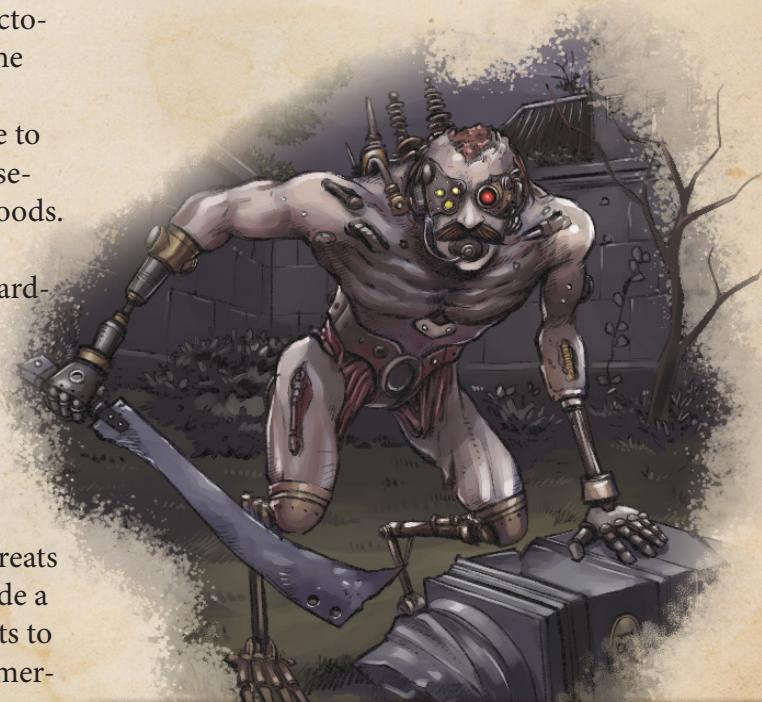
ACT 3: THE FINAL CONFRONTATION

Release the Drones! Inside the factory, Ashcroft retreats between a labyrinth of crates and stored items. Inside a container, a supply of C-44 Fascinator Drones awaits to be activated. Here, the Associates find the missing merchant's daughter gagged and tied to a chair.

The drones do not activate simultaneously. At the start of a Round, spawn more C-44s adjacent to the container. To stop the spawns, destroy the container. The C-44s

Cyborg Bodyguard
Cyborg, Watchful
Movement: 6' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 6
Ranged: 5 Intellect: 5 HP: 3 armor: 0

are essential fire and forget drones, so destroying the controls won't work.

BOSS BATTLE
The Associates can capture Cecilia Ashcroft. She'll use the C-44's and her Cyborg bodyguards as a distraction to escape.
Saving the Victim: The Associates must also contend with rescuing the victim tied to a chair. As combat commences, C-44 drones will attempt to infect the victim. Once infected, she'll be turned into a C44-1.

CONCLUSION
Capturing Ashcroft: If the Associates manage to capture Ashcroft, many of the criminals with abandon the Night Market, until it eventually ceases to be. As a result, the Association will lose track of the criminals.
 If they kill Ashcroft, there is a chance to blame the killing on another party, so the Association's operation is not endangered. If they fail to capture or kill Ashcroft, she escapes into the city.
Saving the Victim: Saving the victim will make the Smuggler more cooperative, and give away various n ames of important figures related to the Night Market.

Fascinator Drone
Automaton lv6, tiny, swarmer, hivemind, transmitter,
Movement: 5' Dodge: 4(6) Evasion: 4(6) Melee: 5
Ranged: - Intellect: 5 HP: 1 armor: 0

AFTERMATH
If the Associates are caught, the Night Market, aware of the Association's presence and begins to disperse. The Associates will have to explain their carelessness to their coordinator.

Celina Ashcroft
Cyborg, Agent
Movement: 6' Dodge: 6 Evasion: 6 Melee: 6
Ranged: 6 Intellect: 7 HP: 4 armor: 1

REWARDS
Beyond the gratitude of the rescued, the Associates may acquire something of value among Ashcroft's b elongings. They also gain valuable experience in dealing with automatons, cyborgs, and other threats.

POSSIBLE TWISTS
1. Ashcroft's Escape: If the trader escapes, she becomes a recurring villain, plotting revenge against the Associates.
2. The Smuggler exposes the names of various criminals, leading into the next investigation.
3. Market Repercussions: The Associates' actions may lead to power struggles on the Night Market or cities underworld, turning the Associates in a potential mark for hitmen.
4. If the container was activated and not destroyed, the C-44 might spread across the Night Market, infecting its patrons.

Want to Learn more?

Does this guide make you curious about the books that inspired it? There are various novels, anthologies, comics and even videos. Many of of which are freely available online. Check out the small selection below or visit us at www.associationofishtar.com.

The Wrench in the Machine

The book is the first in the series. Written as a proof of concept, the story follow the traisl and tribulations of Inspector David Ol'Barrow who has to confront a transhumanist cult.

321'S NOTEBOOK & THE ARKOLOGY COMPANION

The Association of Ishtar started as a short story series published online that, in turn, inspired the first novels - It only made sense to publish anthologies as companion books. Each story is a separate investigation into one of the many anomalies, aliens and factions the Associates encounter. For immersion, all the stories in these two anthologies are formatted as files that Puppet Masters can hand over to their players.

The Casket Girls

Do you like military sci-fi, big stompy robots, and steampunk? Then The Casket Girls might be for you. This mini-series of novelettes follows the adventures of Marie and Toinette, who are mecha pilots in the International Penal Legion, fighting Wyrd Beasts to earn an early release.

This is just a sample of the current publications, and many more factions, alien creatures, and worlds are in the works. The goal of the series is to create a community of creators and world-builders to take on this creative endeavor. Visit www.associationofishtar.com to learn more and join the community.
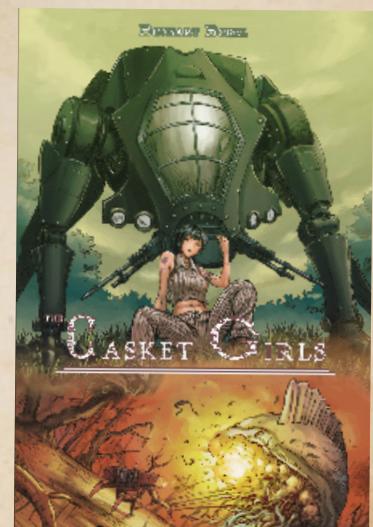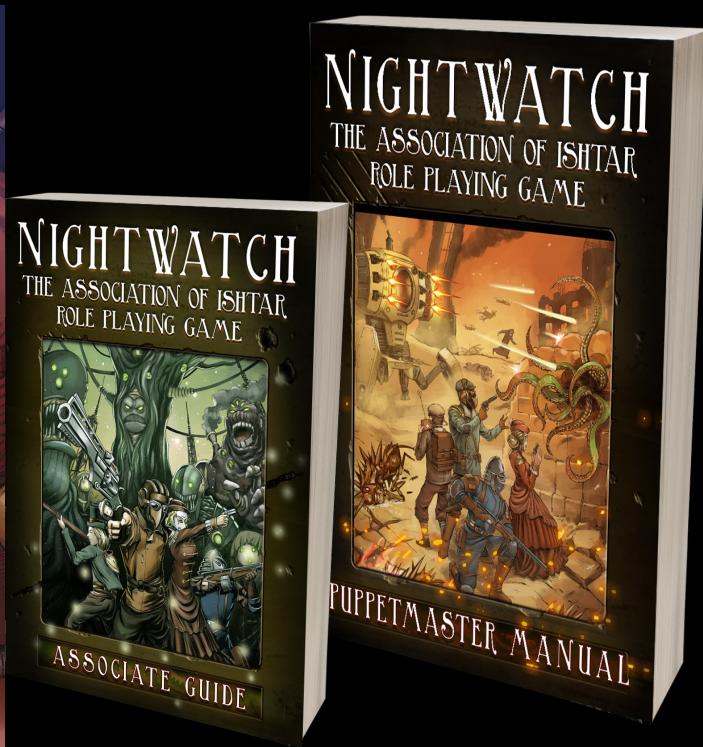
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