# Four Colors al Fresco

A Roleplaying Game of Pulp-Style Super-heroes in an Alternate Renaissance

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# Four Colors al Fresco

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The Impossible Dream

𝔉our 𝔊olors al 𝔉resco is a roleplaying game of pulp-style adventure, set in an alternate Renaissance. But you've already read the cover, or you wouldn't be here, so we'd better explain what all of that means. For the moment, we're going to skip "roleplaying game", and cover the rest of it. The basic setting is Renaissance Italy – as it might have been. Had there been fantastic, pre-industrial advanced technologies in the hands of a few. Had the Black Death never come. Had the remnants of highly-advanced civilizations been scattered around the world. Had reality been governed by mystical Forces instead of scientific laws. Had there been maniacal geniuses constantly plotting to take over the world. And, most importantly, had there been superheroes to thwart them.

But these are not the superheroes of our times, or even our parents' times – these are the superheroes of our grandparents' times, the action heroes of the pulps. Before the term "superhero" was coined. Before spandex[1] costumes. When a man with a maniacal laugh, a pair of six-shooters, and the sole power to "cloud men's minds" had the power to send villains scurrying for their holes. Pulp heroes are only slightly better than the rest of us, not the breed apart of the modern superhero. They may laugh in the face of an armed man, but it is not because they are unthreatened. They may operate outside the law, but only because the authorities have chosen to allow it. And they rarely have the luxury of existing outside the norms of society for more than an evening at a time. In short, while they have exceptional powers, pulp heroes are not so powerful that they may ignore the rest of society.

The style of this roleplaying game is one of action and adventure in a morally-clear world. The villains are Evil, and the heroes are Good, and rarely is there any doubt as to which is which. Doing good doesn't result in unintended bad consequences, and the bad guys are not just misunderstood or misguided. Your characters are the heroes of this world, people gifted with extraordinary gifts and driven by moral principles.

The world, as well as all those within it, is governed by five mystical Forces, the interactions of which determine everything that happens and exists. Much as our own world is governed by the forces of electricity, magnetism, gravity, and the nuclear forces, which together can explain why everything is the way it is, and why everything happens the way it does, the world of 𝔉our 𝔊olors al 𝔉resco is governed by five Forces. Dynamic, Static, Lost, Known, and Passion are the Forces that govern the existences and interactions of this world. Every action, every happening, every thing in the world is caused by the interactions of these 5 forces, but, generally, one or two of the forces so strongly govern a particular activity that the rest are overshadowed. When the Dynamic Force holds sway, the rock falls. When the Static Force holds sway, it stays put. Throughout most of the world, they provide a sort of balance – some things and situations are governed more by one Force or another, but on a broad scale everything balances out. But a few exceptional individuals are not in harmony with the world. The Forces do not pay equal attention to them. Some of the Forces pay them more heed, while others seem to give them short shrift, and still others apparently just overlook them on occaision. These are the Omegas[2], individuals who have been forgotten by one of the Forces, and thus defy the normal laws of nature in some small[3] way. It is these Omegas that are the villains and heroes of this world.

### What is a Roleplaying Game?

So, you've probably noticed that we still have yet to get back to those two little words in the title. Even if you know the answer to that question, you may want to read this section, because 𝔉our 𝔊olors al 𝔉resco may be different than you are expecting. A

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[1] or painted-on, as most of the women's appear to be

[2] **Omega (Ω):** Someone who is "out of the sight of" one of the Planets, and therefore not limited to the normal rules of the Force it governs. As a result, they have what we would call superpowers, and are often capable of feats well beyond human norms.

[3] or not-so-small. But always specific.

roleplaying game (RPG)[4] is very different from most other sorts of games out there. In many ways, RPGs are not much like other games[5], and much more like storytelling. You can not win an RPG, and the rules are meant to be altered and broken as you go. In fact, most RPGs refer to their rules as "guidelines" at some point, and encourage you to change them as you see fit. Rather than the rules, the important part of an RPG is the roleplaying itself. The point is not to win, but to have fun along the way. Specifically, the idea is to collaboratively tell a good story[6] featuring characters of your creation. The rules are there to provide the "game" part of the equation, and hopefully to make the whole thing more fun than just sitting around telling stories.

Another difference from many games is that not everyone has the same role in the game. Most of the participants will be the players[7]. They will each take on the role of a single character. These characters are much like the central characters in a book, movie, or comic book – they are the ones around whom the action revolves, though there are often other important characters present, and they themselves may not be present for every scene. For each Issue[8], one of the characters will take on the role of the Storyguide[9]. As the name implies, it is her job to guide the unfolding story that you will tell. She must assume the roles of all of the charac-

ters that the other players are not playing, define the world around the characters, adjudicate the characters actions, and often provide the scenario.

Together, the Storyguide and players create a participative, collaborative, extemporary, storytelling amusement. That is, the point of the game is to enjoy yourselves while together creating a story off the top of your heads. Everyone has a say in how this story unfolds – the players manage the Main characters and the Storyguide everything else – and nobody really knows ahead of time how the story will turn out.

### Organization

This work is divided into several chapters which give you the rules and the setting of the game, followed by several appendices with play aids and additional information. Chapter 2 walks you through character creation, and has everything you should need for that. Chapters 3 and 4 go over the basics of how to be a player and Storyguide, while chapters 5 through 8 actually give you all the rules. Finally, chapters 9 and 10 describe the world of Italia and its surroundings. For the most part, it should make the most sense to read it in order, possibly referencing the glossary (Appendix 1) and example Descriptors (Appendix 2) for additional clarification. The back of the book has several play aids, including character sheets, a character-creation worksheet, and dice layout guides. You may want to take a look at these when you get to a point that deals with them. Finally, the last two appendices contain a copy of the October Open Game License and design notes, for those of you who like to know why we did what we did. Unlike in many RPGs, there is really nothing in this work that is for the Storyguide's eyes only. People who are absolutely certain that they will never be storyguiding may want to skip the section of the chapter on Italia which talks about major villains, but that's about it.

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[4] A few terms in the roleplaying world are standardly abbreviated with acronyms, because they're long and come up frequently. We'll be using "RPG" instead of "roleplaying game" for the rest of this work.

[5] And, for you sticklers in the audience, RPGs are not, strictly speaking, games at all. According to game theory, a game has victory conditions, while RPGs do not. That is, there's no way to "win" an RPG. Of course, your characters can win in a particular scenario, but that is unrelated to winning at the game as a whole. At best, you can win by enjoying yourselves–and about the only way you can lose is to fail to enjoy yourselves.

[6] Throughout this work, we will make many recommendations as to what a "good story" is, and provide rules that we hope achieve this. However, this is ultimately a very subjective issue, and only you and those you play with can really decide what you want out of this game, and thus what to do to achieve it.

[7] **Players:** while all of the participants of most games are referred to as players, here the term has a slightly more specific meaning. The player are all of the participants except the Storyguide.

[8] **Issue:** a given session of play.

[9] **Storyguide (SG):** the Storyguide is the participant who currently isn't a regular player. It is her job to detail the setting, play all of the extra characters, provide a scenario, and adjudicate actions.

The first thing that needs to be done to play a game of *Four Colors al Fresco* is the creation of characters. Everyone in the group should create a character. It is important that these characters be able to work together, at least some of the time. So they should not have any inherent incompatibilities (one can only breathe under water, while another can't breathe under water) nor any unresolvable differences (a fanatical Catholic witch-hunter and a Church-hating witch).

It is assumed that the characters are heroes, rather than villains. Not all heroes need be a shining example of truth and purity, however. Heroes with a shadowy past are perfectly in-genre, as are heroes with a strong moral code that is somewhat at odds with the dominant religion or law. Vigilantes are acceptable[10], but they push the edge of the envelope, and care should be taken not to let the game slip into the grays of moral ambiguity. While the details are up for debate, on a broad scale this is a world of absolute morality, where the good are Good and the evil are Evil, and only very rarely can someone find a place between those two extremes. Heroes do not kill or allow innocents to die – not even for the "greater good".

Ideally, the characters should share some sort of unifying group or experience (a team that serves the Cardinal; they all have been repeatedly bested by

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**The Forces**

**Known**: Governed by Mercury, Patron of Discovery, the Known is the Force of science and deduction and the rational world.
**Passion**: Governed by Venus, Goddess of Passion, Passion is the Force of emotion and feeling.
**Dynamic**: Governed by Mars, God of War, Dynamic is the Force of motion and action and change.
**Static**: Governed by Jupiter, the Eternal Ruler, Static is the Force of stability and the status quo.
**Lost**: Governed by Saturn, the Mystic, the Lost is the Force of faith, the mystical and magical, and the forgotten.

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the Seven Deadly Sins). This group is what will form the basis of the Main Title[11] for the game. Not all of the Issues will take place within this Title, nor will they all include all of the characters, but you will generally want to include most of the characters (generally, all but 1) in most of the Issues, and this provides an excellent way to explain their companionship. Other methods can of course bring the characters together – friendship, common threat, or coincidence – and the nature of the pulp universe is such that such contrivances need not impinge upon suspension of disbelief[12].

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**Which Force for my Power?**

There are a lot of possibilities for representing a particular Power in terms of the Forces. Which Force you pick will have an effect on the nature of the Power, however. As an example, let's say we want an Omega who can create and manipulate fire.

**Dynamic**: the Omega can vibrate herself so fast that anything around her, including the very air, bursts into flames.
**Static**: the Omega can eliminate the inertial tendency of objects that are not aflame to stay that way, allowing them to burn at will
**Lost**: the Omega has learned the esoteric power of burning things with her mind – she is essentially a "firestarter".
**Known**: the Omega is unfettered by the normal laws of science, which require you to use heat or friction to start a fire, and can instead do so by releasing the phlogiston trapped in all objects
**Passion**: the Omega can convert the force of her emotions into heat, using her anger (or passion) to cause things to burst into flames.

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*After tossing around some ideas, Kim, Caitlin, Tanya, and Darrell decide that they really like the idea of including Leonardo da Vinci in their game somehow, and come up with the idea of a group of heroes created and employed by him. They name this group the Daring Davincis, and figure that will double as their Title, unless they come up with something better. Each of the heroes will have a spe-*

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[10] And in many places, *all* of the heroic Omegas are technically vigilantes, since the law does not formally recognize their authority, but merely turns a blind eye to most of their activities.

[11] **Main Title:** The exploits of the characters are organized in a number of ways. One of those is the concept of Title. The Main Title is the Title that includes all of the characters as Main Characters.

[12] Suspension of disbelief is an ability we all have. It is the willingness to ignore, forgive, or accept happenings in a fictional world that would be unbelievable in the real world.

*cial suit constructed by da Vinci. Kim wants a character who can fly, Darrell really likes the idea of someone who can take and deal out a lot of punishment, and the other two aren't decided yet.*

## Ω

The common quality that all Omegas have is their fundamentally unbalanced nature. Most people are balanced in their interactions with the world – the Forces of the world all affect them equally. What makes Omegas special is that something has happened to upset this balance. The Forces of the world no longer affect them in equal measure. They may have greater affinity for the ruling actions of some forces, and they defy the normal laws of at least one of the Forces. In the process, they gain what the rest of the world see as superpowers.

The first step in creating your character is to come up with a superhero concept. This should revolve around a power, or, very rarely, Powers. Once you have the Omega's Power in mind, you should figure out which Force this Power violates, and thus which Planet she has Ωed. It is also very important at this point to come up with the Omega's name. Once you have a name and Power, and a good idea of which Force the Power violates, you are ready to begin determining the character's game representation.

> *After more discussion, they all agree that insect-themed names and powers fit da Vinci and his interest in the natural world very well. Kim's character becomes Dragonfly, Caitlin's becomes Pillbug, and Darrell and Tanya settle on Firefly and Spider. Dragonfly's power is flight, Pillbug has an armored exoskeleton, Firefly can generate light, and Spider has giant mechanical spider legs.*

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### I Want More Power!

Sometimes, you will come up with a character concept that clearly has more than one distinct power, and there is no way to shoehorn them into a single Power with Power Stunts or other Traits. Or, you may have an idea for a character that is somehow removed from reality in areas governed by more than one Force. In general, you should probably rethink your concept. But, with SG permission, you may also choose to Ω more than one Planet. The more Forces that an Omega is out of the sight of, the more freakish that Omega will be. Generally, anybody with 2 or more Ωed Planets will be unable to pass for normal in any but the most casual of circumstances – random strangers walking down the street will identify your character as an Omega at a glance.

A character with multiple Ωed Planets uses the same Descriptors chart as everyone else: for each Ωed Planet, she gets one Power, one Weakness, and one Quirk, instead of any Traits.

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*They want the powers to be special to the characters, though, so they come up with the idea that da Vinci has "serum-bonded" each of them to their apparatus, enhancing them with modified versions of the super-soldier serum that created Captain Italia, which just enhance those capabilities that are necessary to operate and use the apparati. Also, Darrell decides that rather than an apparatus being the basis of Firefly's powers, her light generation should come directly from da Vinci's alchemy. Just for the fun of it, they decide that, because all of them get their powers from da Vinci's knowledge of applied science, they will all have Mercury (The Known) Omegaed.*

### The Planets

The first mechanical step is assigning the Planets. One of the Planet's ratings you will have already decided. For the Planet of the Force that the Omega's Power stems from, you assign an Ω. Because that Force does not govern the character normally, she is "out of the sight of" that Planet, and the degree to which it governs her can not be represented numerically like the other Forces.

Next, you should consider the Omega's nature in other ways, and assign the rest of the Planet ratings. For each Planet, you will assign a die type, normally from d4[13] to d20. This is the die that you will roll for that Planet when using the dice to resolve actions. A smaller die type means that that Force governs the character's actions more strongly.

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[13] Dice in this game will be referred to with the now-traditional shorthand of $X$d$Y$. This means to roll $X$ dice with $Y$ sides on each die. The *d* is an abbreviation of *dice*, and the X is generally left out if it is 1. In some games, you would sum the dice if you were rolling more than one. In this game, if you are asked to roll more than one die for a given Force or Planet, you will take the lowest one, and ignore the others. One further point of confusion: not all dice with a given number of sides actually have that many sides. "Three-sided" dice are actually traditional 6-faced (cubic) dice, with the faces numbered 1 to 3, twice. Likewise, 5-sided dice are doubly-numbered 10-faced polyhedrons. Ten-sided dice can be found as both 10-faced polyhedrons and doubly-numbered 20-faced polyhedrons.

**But I'm Well-Balanced!**

Not all of the people in this world are Omegas. In fact, most of them are not. If you read closely, you may be wondering what a "balanced" person looks like, since the Omegas are described as "fundamentally unbalanced". This is where the concept of "Diceless characters" comes in. The vast majority of characters in the world are balanced in relation to the Forces. What this means in game terms is that they not only have no Ωed Planets, but all of their Planets are equal. Specifically, they are seen to be in a state of constant balance, so there is no variation, and thus no need to roll dice. Thus, their description does not include Planet scores, and they are Diceless. Diceless characters will still have Traits. Usually, they are played by the SG, so there is no need for Storypath Cards, but if one is under the control of a player, she should use Storypath Cards under the usual rules.

As guidelines, the following list gives Trait numbers for Diceless characters. These are by no means hard-and-fast numbers, but are just meant as a guideline. It is quite conceivable, and perfectly acceptable, that you could have a significant Supporting character in one of your Titles who only has 2 or 3 Traits. And don't let the fact that someone is only intended to be a Walk-on prevent you from giving them 8 Traits if it's appropriate for the character. If someone wants to play a Diceless character, they should use the maximal value for a Major character (15 Traits), and start with 5 Storypath Cards. There is no need to worry about which Force governs a Trait when creating Diceless characters

**Extra**: 0 Traits (though an entire group of Extras might, collectively, have a Trait)
**Walk-on**: 1-5 Traits
**Recurring**: 3-10 Traits
**Supporting**: 6-12 Traits
**Major**: 12-15 Traits

However, all that really matters is the relative sizes of the dice for a character, not their absolute size. When attempting an action, all of the Planets will be rolled, and the results ordered from least to greatest, so the larger the die, the less likely it will be near the top of the Hierarchy.[14] However, the smaller the die size, the less variable the results

> *Someone with d20 Dynamic, d10 Static, d10 Passion, and d10 Known would find Static besting Dynamic roughly as often as someone with d12 Dynamic, d6 Static, d6 Passion, and d6 Known. However, the person with the d6 Planet scores would find them tying much more often than the person with three d10s.*

Also, some other aspects of character creation and action resolution favor, slightly, smaller dice. So, within your character concept, it is generally better to take the smaller dice types, if there is no particular reason not to.

Remember that these Planet scores reflect how luck and chance around the character deviate from random chance. They describe how reality is warped in relation to the character, and are thus not descriptive of the character herself. In short, they are external, not internal. During character creation, they will decide how many Traits you get and, to some degree, of what types, but once the character is in play they have essentially no effect on play except when the Descriptors do not apply. But even this limited influence (during character creation) is only over the number of Traits, not their nature. So, for example, someone could have a very large Mars (Dynamic) die, and thus only have 1 positive Dynamic Trait, but that Trait could in some way describe the character as being extremely dynamic – Lightning Reflexes, perhaps.

> *Caitlin has a very strong idea about her character, and wants the world to react around him in certain ways to explain why he's turned out the way he has. So she assigns a d6 to Pillbug's Mars (Dynamic) and a d4 to Jupiter (Static), to reflect that physical things have been the focus of his life. She similarly gives him a d20 for Saturn (The Lost), as she*

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[14] **Hierarchy:** The ordering of the dice, and thus their corresponding Forces, when they are rolled. It is the Hierarchy that determines the outcome of an in-question action. The smaller the number on the die, the higher it is in the Hierarchy. The top position (lowest number), which may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Dominant. The next highest position, or highest if the lowest number is tied, is labeled Major. The lowest position, which again may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Weak. The final position, above Weak and below Major, is labeled Minor. The Dominant and Major positions are favorable, and indicate success if Favored Forces fall into them. The Weak position is unfavorable, and indicates failure if a Favored Force falls into it.

*doesn't see that having had much impact on his luck. Finally, she decides to give him a middling score for Passion (Venus), because she doesn't envision it as being extremely influential or insignificant.*

*Darrell is also fairly certain as to what Planet scores to give Firefly. The most prominent forces in her life should have been The Lost (Saturn) and Passion (Venus), as those would explain why she was chosen by da Vinci for the particular powers he gave her. He figures Dynamic (Mars) is also significant, and Static (Jupiter) isn't. He ends up with d6 Venus, d8 Mars, d12 Jupiter, and d6 Saturn.*

| Die | Descriptors |
| --- | --- |
| *d3\** | *5 Traits* |
| **d4** | 4 Traits |
| *d5* | *4 Traits* |
| **d6** | 3 Traits |
| *d7* | *3 Traits* |
| **d8** | 3 Traits |
| **d10** | 2 Traits |
| **d12** | 3 Traits; at least 1 Flaw |
| **d16** | 4 Traits; at least 2 Flaws |
| **d20** | 3 Traits; at least 2 Flaws |
| *d24\** | *3 Traits; at least 2 Flaws; no Power Stunts* |
| **d30\*** | 2 Flaws |
| *d34\** | *3 Flaws* |
| Ω | 1 Power, 1 Weakness, & 1 Quirk |

*Kim decides to work from a different point of view, thinking in terms of the Traits that will be garnered. He knows he's going to need lots of dynamic Traits to realize Dragonfly, so he assigns a d6 to Mars. Similarly, he assigns d12s to Jupiter and Saturn, because he thinks Dragonfly should have weaknesses that relate to Static and Lost. Finally, he chooses a d10 for Venus (Passion) because he doesn't want many Traits of that sort, and doesn't want to saddle him with any flaws of that sort.*

*Tanya, finally, has a much less well-developed vision for Spider at this point. She knows that he's going to have serious social problems, and decides to characterize these with Passion Flaw Traits. But she doesn't know whether Passion is a significant force in his life. Other than that, she's undecided – the Planet scores aren't a major part of her concept. She wants to define Spider primarily by his Descriptors, and doesn't care how fate treats him. So, other than her Omegaed Mercury, she leaves all of her Planets blank. Once she has decided on her Traits, she will pick Planet scores that match the numbers of Traits she ends up with.*

## Power and Weakness

Once you have assigned the dice to your Planets, the next step is to detail your Power, Weakness,

and Quirk. The character has one Power, one Weakness, and one Quirk for each Ωed Planet (normally only one). All three of these must tie directly into the nature of the Force in question. Powers, Weaknesses, and Quirks fall outside the normal bounds of reality. They should be somehow exceptional, either in nature or degree, which is why they are not normal Traits. The Power is, as the name implies, an advantage to the character. Many Weaknesses tie in to the Omega's Power in some way, limiting it, negating it under some circumstances, or defining a counter to the Power. But this is not necessary, and many viable Weaknesses are merely related to the Omega's Power, while some have nothing to do with it. The Quirk is a supernatural Descriptor of the Omega that is, on the whole, neither advantageous nor disadvantageous.

*Time to decide exactly what the Powers are. Here, it's Tanya who leads the way. She comes up with "Serum-bonded to da Vinci's Spider Apparatus" for her Power, and everyone likes it so much they follow suit. so Dragonfly's is "Serum-bonded to da Vinci's Flight Apparatus", Pillbug's is "Serum-bonded to da Vinci's Pillbug Apparatus" and Firefly's is "Serum-derived Psychic Light Manipulation". Their Weaknesses are a little trickier. Tanya decides that Spider's apparatus has mechanisms that are particularly susceptible to water, so his Weakness is "Shrivels when wetted". For a Quirk, she decides that as a side-effect of the serum, Spider now has insect-like compound eyes under his lids. This is intended to have no real positive effect, but is likewise subtle enough that it should rarely have a negative effect, either.*

*Darrell, meanwhile, is thinking very differently for Firefly. Since she doesn't have an apparatus to be vulnerable, he figures that he'd like the sort of weakness that limits her power's effects, rather than preventing them com-*

Dice on the Descriptor Chart marked by an asterisk are recommended only for Guest character use, as they tend to produce characters that are very extreme. The d3 will almost always show up at the top of any Hierarchy, and the dice larger than d20 will rarely get far from the bottom of the Hierarchy. However, there may be character concepts that call for such huge variances of affect; if you feel you need to use one of them, consider carefully whether a d4 or d20 really is not sufficiently dominating/minor. Alternately, a character for which you are considering such an extreme die for a Planet might be better off with that Planet Ωed.

Italic die sizes are not recommended for use because they produce unneeded extra steps; there is really very little need to have something between a d6 and a d8 – due to the nature of the die-rolling, the step-difference between, say, d8 and d7, is somewhat closer than between, say, d12 and d10. However, they are on the list because some may want to have some Planets very close mechanically, yet different in what they connote (so you could have two Planets that behave almost the same when rolled, but one is still greater than the other). The group should decide ahead of time whether or not these intermediate steps will be allowed.

*pletely. He decides that, since her power is an extension of her natural psychic abilities and is in large part about affecting others' feelings[15] she is unable to affect those whose Venus is Omegaed. This is a bit of an unusual Weakness, but the rest of the group likes it, and thinks it's fair, so they accept it. For a Quirk, Firefly is Constantly Glowing, at least slightly – she is unable to completely stop generating light, just as normal people are unable to completely stop thinking. At first glance, this looks too negative (making her constantly obvious), but they decide that the fact she doesn't have to concentrate to generate light partially offsets this, and since the Daring Davincis are full-time heroes, well known to the public and without secret lives, being unable to easily hide her power isn't such a big drawback after all.*

*Kim doesn't have any better ideas, so he copies Tanya in saying that Dragonfly's apparatus has a particular vulnerability, in this case Electricity Prevents Flight. For a Quirk, however, he thinks it would be interesting if Dragonfly is so used to flying that he always does it: Never Touches the Ground. They all agree that this is a really cool Quirk, which might lean a bit to the positive side, but can certainly have drawbacks, socially at least.*

*Caitlin thinks a cool Quirk for Pillbug would be Fastidiously Clean. Everyone agrees that the downside of taking the time to clean up, and possibly avoiding dirtiness in the first place, is a good balance for sometimes avoiding dangers inadvertently, but Darrell objects because this isn't supernatural at all, and doesn't even have anything obvious to do with Pillbug's Power. So Tanya suggests that if his*

*Weakness is related – bridging the gap between the Power and Quirk, as it were – it would make more sense, and Darrell is satisfied with this. Caitlin starts thinking about his Weakness, and decides that the chitin-like substance that Pillbug's armor is made out of is very porous, and provides no protection from liquids. Thus, it would make sense for Pillbug to be slightly paranoid about getting dirty, since he could have had bad experiences in the past with stuff oozing through his armor. Everyone is satisfied.*

### Traits

Once the Planets are assigned and the Descriptors stemming from the Ωed Planet are detailed, the next step is to determine the rest of the character's Descriptors, called Traits. For every non-Ωed Planet, the character will get a number of Traits as determined from the Descriptors Chart on this page. Traits may be anything the player desires, but they should all relate to the Planet that they are derived from. It is up to the SG to determine if a Trait is appropriate for the Planet in question, and if it is too powerful or too limited.

Not all Traits are created equal. In particular, there are two special kinds of Traits; Flaws and Power Stunts. A Power Stunt is a special use of a Power that governs something that is neither clearly outside of nor clearly within the purview of the Power. By devoting a Trait to it, the player assures that her character can use the Power in that way. A Flaw is a Trait that is a hindrance to the character in some way. Except as the Descriptor Chart dictates, as

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[15] Note that the fact that her power has emotional, as well as visual, effects is not something that had been previously decided. There will be even more ways to make an Omega's Power more detailed when you get to the Traits.

many or as few of your Traits may be Flaws or Power Stunts as you wish. With some die sizes, you are required to have one or more of your Traits be Flaws.

When recording Traits on your character sheet, do not make any indication of the Planet they were derived from. The Planet is only a tool for character creation, and has no bearing on the Trait in play.

> *Caitlin has known right from the start that Pillbug is a former wrestling champion, and is very flamboyant and likes to be the center of attention. He wrestled as much to entertain*

## Designing Traits

So what makes a good Trait? It should be evocatively named, if possible. Much more important is to consider what it encompasses. If a Trait is gained from Mercury, it should be about knowledge or learning or education. If a similar Trait is gained from Saturn, it should be about ancient secrets or forbidden research. As you can see, there is a great deal of flexibility in what Planet a Trait falls under, and you are encouraged to exploit that flexibility. Oftentimes, the "obvious" Planet for a Trait is one that the character has Ωed. Consider what, exactly, you are trying to say about the character. There is usually a way to adjust the definition of the Trait to make it fit a different Planet, while still maintaining its importance to the character concept.

Most Traits do not provide just one type of information about the character. While some of them (especially Power Stunts), will only encompass her knowledge or skill or inherent attributes (probably the three most common sorts of Traits), there are many other elements for Traits to detail. Personality, possessions, background/upbringing, station in life, family & friends, allies or enemies, vows – all make excellent fodder for Traits. In fact, the ideal Trait would touch upon all of these, either explicitly or implicitly, wrapping them into a single quality of the character, and with a catchy, evocative, or poetic name.

Certain kinds of Traits should be avoided. Flaw Traits about a relationship with others are generally bad. Enemies, Wanted by the Law, and so forth, tend to have two problems. First, they affect all of the characters, in practice (an enemy isn't likely to take much trouble to avoid inconveniencing the non-hated characters, nor are the other characters likely to just stand by and watch the enemy beat up their friend). Second, these are the sorts of things that are assumed to be true about *all* Ωs, as part of the genre, so there's really no point in spending a Trait on them.

and get attention as to win or improve himself – sort of a preindustrial professional wrestler. Looking at the Descriptor Chart, she sees that his d10 Venus grants her 2 Passion Traits of any kind. Similarly, she needs to come up with 3 Dynamic Traits and 4 Static Traits. His d20 Saturn also means 3 Traits, but at least two of them must be Flaw Traits. Right away, Caitlin knows two of his Traits, though she's not certain which Planet to assign them to: Champion Wrestler and Elaborate Combat Maneuvers. Tentatively, she thinks they might both be Dynamic, though she can see Champion Wrestler as being equally appropriate for Dynamic or Static. For now, she leaves it undecided and goes on to figure out the rest of his Traits. She decides that she wants a bit more control over defining the specifics of his Power – right now, all that's definite is that it's a "pillbug apparatus" and that he's "serum-bonded" to it. She decides she can leave the latter part alone for now, but she thinks the apparatus itself needs to be better defined. As it stands, it's ambiguous just what it's like, so the Storyguide might rule against her being able to do things that she thought were a given. To start with, it couldn't very well be a pillbug apparatus without a shell that can roll into a ball. But she wants to be able to do better than just lie there – Pillbug's not only a superhero, but an attention-lover, so a purely defensive maneuver just isn't acceptable. She comes up with a Dynamic Trait: Human Bowling Ball, a Power Stunt. Pillbug can not only roll his armor up into an impenetrable shell, but he can bowl people over and bash into things like that. She wants Pillbug to be stronger, too, just as insects are phenomenally strong compared to their scale. So she further defines the powers of the apparatus with a Static Power Stunt: Exoskeleton Armor. Now we know that the apparatus boosts his strength, as well as protecting him. She's satisfied with the vision of his Power that these provide, and is ready to move on to other areas of Pillbug. She decides that, complementing his Elaborate Combat Maneuvers he is the Center of Attention (a Static Trait) and a Favorite of the Ladies (Passion Trait). At this point, she decides that his name before becoming Pillbug was Dante "the Dashing". Finally, she wants to emphasize his over-the-top comic-book nature, so she decides that he has the habit of narrating his combats, describing the elaborate move he's using or about to use. She gets a little help naming this from the other players, and they come up with His Own Commentator (Dynamic Trait).

So far, she has 1 Passion Trait, 2 Dynamic

Traits, 2 Static Traits, and 2 that she hasn't decided the best place for. Looking at the numbers she needs (from her Planet scores), she decides to make Champion Wrestler Static and Elaborate Combat Maneuvers Dynamic. To flesh out his identity as an entertainer, she gives him the Static Flaw Trait Trained Exclusively in Nonlethal Combat. But she still doesn't have any ideas for Lost Traits, and she needs 3 of them. Kim suggests that perhaps something to do with the alchemical nature of the serum would work, and Tanya points out that having strength linked to mood is a very common trait among super-strong superheroes. Working with those ideas, they come up with a pair of Traits, both Lost: Feel the Rage! and Feedback-dependent Adrenaline Boost. The latter is a Flaw Trait, and means that he needs to have someone to entertain for maximal effectiveness – basically, he's so used to having an audience, that without one he's at a loss. Caitlin at first thinks this is a bit of a severe hindrance, but then decides that there will almost always be both opponents and allies that he's not directly engaged with, so it shouldn't come up too often, and it does fit his concept very well. To balance it, she decides that Feel the Rage! isn't just a psychological effect (it is a Lost Trait, after all), but is a very real benefit, stemming from the interaction of the serum and his body, so she decides it's a Power Stunt. Final-

ly, at a loss for a better idea, she decides that he has the Lost Flaw Doesn't Deal Well with the Mystical. She's not entirely certain what all that entails, but figures it fits with his grounding in the easily-understood world of entertainment.

This leaves her in need of only one Passion Trait. Just as she's about to ask the rest of the group for suggestions for this, Kim comes up with the Dynamic Trait Extensive Playbook for Dragonfly. He defines this as a group of shared and practiced maneuvers and strategies that the team has developed. He suggests that everyone take this Trait, enabling the players to make plans in the middle of combat and other stressful situations, even if the Davincis can't communicate or don't have time, or the plans rely on the opponents not knowing what's coming, the idea being that the Davincis would have practiced for common, and even some uncommon, situations, as part of being an established, long-standing, and practiced team. Caitlin likes that idea, but she already has all his Dynamic Traits. She doesn't want to change his Mars score (she wants him to be more Static than Dynamic, and 2 d4s seems a bit excessive, in any case), so the only options are to either move or eliminate a Trait. Since she still hadn't come up with his second Passion Trait, she decides to see if she can justify moving a Trait (or 3) in

## Power Stunts and Powers

Finally, something needs to be said about Powers vs. Power Stunt Traits. The line between the two is not at all absolute. Something that is "merely" a Power Stunt for one character, an aspect of her Power, may be the entire Power for another Omega. That ties into the whole question of power level, and is something that each Troupe must decide for itself. But here are some suggestions for when to take a Power Stunt, and when it isn't needed. First of all, remember that a Power Stunt isn't intended to allow the Omega to do something that the basic Power couldn't. So a Power of Wings of the Eagle wouldn't allow the Power Stunt Unharmed by Swords. But sometimes, you can work around this, by finding one thing that unites disparate elements in your conception of the character's powers. In the previous example, you might change the Power to Angelic Form, or even Angel on the Mortal Plane – whatever best fit – and then take Wings of the Eagle and Unharmed by Swords as Power Stunts. That example illustrates the perfect use for a Power Stunt: Angel on the Mortal Plane is a fairly vague, unclear Power. This isn't bad, in and of itself, but if the player wants a bit more say in what that actually means in play, she's going to have to devote a couple Power Stunts to fleshing things out. Otherwise, when it comes right down to it, the SG could quite legitimately rule that being on the mortal plane renders an angel flightless, while the player had in mind that flying was a significant element of her hero. By taking Wings of the Eagle – something that could easily be a given for an angel on Earth, but could just as easily not – she assures that element of her character.

The other extreme to avoid is unnecessary Power Stunts. You don't need a Power Stunt for anything that is clearly within the bounds of your Power. So, the angel above almost certainly doesn't need Has No Soul, as that's part of what makes an angel an angel (though it depends a bit on the Troupe, which is why it's good to create your characters in a group, and talk about these things as you go). Likewise, someone with the Power of Human Torch doesn't need the Power Stunt Burn at a Touch – unless that enables her to burn non-flammable objects. But Light On, Light Off (enabling her to turn her flame on and off at will) might be useful, depending on whether or not the Troupe assumes that Human Torch automatically includes the ability to turn the flame off.

order to make room for the new Dynamic Trait. She suggests that Elaborate Combat Maneuvers could be an expression of his innate flair for the dramatic, and the others agree that that makes it an acceptable Passion Trait.

Meanwhile, the other 3 players go through roughly the same process. Kim and Darrell have a fairly straightforward time of fleshing out the Traits of Dragonfly and Firefly, respectively, with the group as a whole helping out again. In particular, after Darrell suggests that Dragonfly be a Painter (Passion Trait), they decide that all of the Davincis, as well as being superheroes, are famous members of the art and entertainment community, and that is where da Vinci originally met them. Pillbug was a wrestler, Firefly is a glassworker, Dragonfly is a painter, and Spider is a circus acrobat. It is important to note that since the Force has no relationship to the Trait except during character generation, as long as the Trait somehow falls into the purview of the Planet, it's ok if the connection is a bit tenuous. For example, Firefly ends up with Field Commander as a Dynamic Trait, because exercising it most often involves action and interaction, both very Dynamic activities. Likewise, Power Stunt: Prismatic Manipulation, which involves her using displays of light to bend people's wills is a Dynamic Trait for the change it brings about, though it could have been a Passion Trait for affecting people's moods and state of mind. Glassworker ends up a Lost Trait, justified because it is a "lost" art, learned through a very secretive guild, and because art, as the antithesis of science, is in some ways a Lost activity, in general. Also, since her Mercury is Omegaed, if Darrell wants to give her any knowledge-related Traits, he is forced to somehow slant them so that they can be associated with a different Force, since she has no Known Traits. The only Trait that ends up on Dragonfly's sheet that is worth commenting on is Pulls Up at the Very Last Moment, which is a Passion Trait, rather than, say, Dynamic. Kim explains that it's more an expression of his personality than a commentary on his physical abilities – though, of course, it's both.

Spider is, of course, also being created by Tanya at the same time. Since she hasn't decided on his Planet scores, she's free to come up with pretty much whatever Traits she

**Saving Some For Later**

If you're really having trouble coming up with enough Traits, or if you're not quite sure what your character is like, you may save a few Traits for later. You probably should decide most of your Traits before you start playing the character, but if a you're a couple short it won't present a problem. One Trait per Planet left undecided wouldn't be too many. If you want to, and the Troupe is comfortable with it, you could leave many or even most of your Traits unknown at the start of play, intending to fill them in later. Even if you go this route, at a bare minimum, you should have at least one Trait for each Planet decided.

For undecided Traits, just make a note on the character sheet, so that you remember what they are. I.e., "[Dynamic Trait]" or somesuch.

In addition to the obvious benefit of expediting play if someone is stumped for one or two more ideas, this system can be used for those who are simply more comfortable concretizing their character after she has been played for a while. When creating characters via develop-in-play in this way, it is still good to have as much of a handle on the character before you begin as possible. You may not be sure of specific Traits, but you should know at least general aspects of the character, and can thus make a note of them. If the character is being primarily developed in play, with very few Traits decided ahead of time, the Troupe may demand justification for new Traits as they are decided, especially if they don't seem to fit together. Don't be concerned about overly-useful Traits suddenly appearing – pulp stories are full of fortuitous coincidences. And they'll be no more useful than anybody else's in the next Issue, in any case.

In both cases, this only applies to Traits, not the other Descriptors. You must decide your Power before play begins, and can only leave the Weakness or Quirk undecided if the Troupe agrees to it.

wants. She still needs to decide what Force they stem from so that she can pick Planet scores that match up. She starts with what is, for her, the easy part: deciding on his personality. She decides that he is Cold and Calculating and Reluctant to Play with Others, both of which are Passion Flaw Traits. He is also a Devoted Stoic, which is a Lost Trait because it refers to the religious sect, but further emphasizes his detached nature. Finally, she decides he is an Extensive Planner (Passion Trait), constantly working out solutions to hypothetical situations, and thus often prepared for what others find unexpected (she originally called it Compulsive Planner, but wants this to be a positive Trait so renamed it). She comes up with two Power Stunts, Giant Spider Legs and Net Launcher, the former Dynamic, the latter undecided, to clarify the capabilities of his apparatus. Finally, she decides that he moonlighted while an acrobat, and is a Former Cat Burglar. She wants to emphasize this side of him, so he has Incredible Bal-

*ance (Static Trait), but is Scrawny (Static Flaw Trait). Since there is no way to only have one Trait with any Planet score, she needs to adjust at least one of her undecided Traits to be a Lost Trait. She finally decides that the only one she can at all justify is Power Stunt: Net Launcher, and she does so by saying that it's part of the apparatus, activated without physical movement, and that it weaves the net as it launches it. It's tenuous, but good enough for the rest of the group. That only leaves Former Cat Burglar unassigned. While it could easily be a Dynamic Trait, she thinks that he already has plenty of those. If he had Known Traits, she might assign it there, to signify it as a knowledge skill, as well as a physical ability, and possibly because of the personal contacts it also potentially represents. She finally decides that making it a Static Trait is the best choice for her Planet scores, and justifies it by pointing out that it's an element of his past that he no longer explores, so it is unchanging. So she has 3 Passion Traits, 2 of which are Flaws; 3 Dynamic, one of which is a Power Stunt; 3 Static, one of which is a Flaw; and 2 Lost Traits, one of which is a Power Stunt. Saturn (the Lost) is the easiest – a d10 is the only die that results in 2 Traits. For the others, she has several choices. D6, d8, d12, and d20 all give 3 Traits. A d12 demands that at least one be a Flaw Trait, and a d20 demands two, so his Venus is the only Planet for which she has all of these choices, but his Jupiter could be a d12. Since he's made his way in life up until now as an acrobat and cat burglar, she decides that he has to have a high Mars (Dynamic), and makes it a d6, as high as it can be. But it won't actually be high unless his other Planets are lower than it, so she rules out a d6 for the rest of them. She reasons that his fortune clearly does not favor Passion – he ended up becoming a Stoic, after all – so she decides on a very low Venus (Passion), going with the d20. Rarely will Passion color his life when chance comes into play. That leaves only Jupiter (Static), and for similar reasons – it doesn't appear to have had a significant effect on his life – she chooses to make it as low as possible, in this case a d12.*

### Finishing Touches

Once you have decided upon all of your Traits, and recorded them on the character sheet, there are only a couple of finishing touches to completing your character. First you should draw your initial Storypath Cards from the deck, and record them. All Omegas begin play with as many Storypath

Cards as they have non-Ωed Planets. If you are going to be using the same dice all of the time, it's a good idea to record the color of each die next to the Planet, especially if you have more than one Planet of the same die type. Finally, you can come up with your Omega's Title. Often, this is the same as her name, but it needn't be.

You will notice that the Ω's origin isn't mentioned above. If you wish, you may decide how your Ω got her Powers, but it is very common for that to only be revealed (and thus decided) at a later date, usually as a pivotal point of a Miniseries. On a related note, anything that is not detailed at this point is not part of your character. All that is known about the character is encapsulated by the Name, Title, and Descriptors (and, to a certain extent, the Planets) – everything else is in flux, and will only be solidified later.

*They all copy their Traits over to their character sheets. Since there is no point in grouping them by Force any more, or even in recording what the Force they stem from is [16] , they simply list all of the Power Stunts first, and put the Flaws in a separate area. The Title for all of them is simply The Daring Davincis, as agreed upon right from the start. Dice colors are a simple matter – they have enough dice of the right colors that everyone can use the suggested colors (black for Lost, white for Known, red for Dynamic, green for Static, and blue for Passion), so they simply record those colors on their character sheets as a mnemonic. For Storypath cards, they decide that rather than draw and record them, they'll simply wait until the beginning of their first session of play to draw them. Complete finished descriptions of all 7 of the Daring Davincis (Firefly, Dragonfly, Pillbug, and Spider are just the founding members; more joined later), as well as two villainous former members, appear in the Omegas chapter.*

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[16] Remember, in play what determines the Forces is the action and the circumstances, not any sort of "inherent nature" that a Trait might possess. Besides, most of the time if a Trait comes into play, the dice don't, and vice versa, so that particular correlation matters very rarely in any case.

As the name of the game implies, the principle point is to play a role. But there is more to a roleplaying game than just this, or it would simply be improvisational theater. As one of the players, your job is multi-faceted. You have two sets of priorities, the meta-game, and the in-game. The meta-game level is the one most like what you are familiar with from other games – it is the level of playing the game as a game, and is most like storytelling. The in-game level is more like theater, and carries with it responsibilities much like acting.

On an in-game level, you want to assume a role – your Main character – and attempt to get into the mindset of that character. At every point, as your character, you are looking at the situation and responding as she would. At the same time, on the meta-game level, you want to do and say what will make for the most enjoyable story. Often, these two aspects to playing the game are referred to as the character and the player, emphasizing their primary points of view. As may be apparent, it is easy for these two points of view to come into conflict. Luckily, there are a number of tricks and techniques that help to mesh them.

### Being a Hero

First, especially since this is a larger-than-life, super-heroic, black-and-white story, you need to start by building a character that fits that mold. If your character's ideals and beliefs are carefully constructed, you will often find yourself choosing, as your character, the path most interesting – without any need to step back and consider things from the detached player perspective. Likewise, when you play the character, you can then more easily do what will make for an interesting story, without compromising the integrity of the character. So, there are several general principles that will usually help in constructing a character. First, the character should be a hero. That is, not only should she be good, but she should be *actively* good, going out of her way to confront evil, injustice, or wrongdoing. And she should not, generally, spend too much

effort considering the wisdom of her choices, at least not in terms of immediate ramifications. This is not to say that wise characters are discouraged (just the opposite, in fact), but a true superhero does not hesitate to fight the villain – or track her to her lair, or thwart her nefarious plot – just because it might be dangerous or difficult. She will, of course, be cautious if there is a risk of collateral damage to innocent people, or if she is not certain that she has the right person, or if there is some other reason that direct, immediate action is ill-advised. Just usually not because charging headlong into combat against superior foes is suicidal.

### Schtick

An equally important consideration when designing your character is niche: each character should be unique. In a group of characters, each character should be clearly the best (among the group members) in some area. This makes it much easier for the SG to give your character spotlight time. This unique niche often stems from the character's schtick, but it could be secondary to it. Most, though not all, superheroes have a "schtick". Your schtick is a very short (usually just a few words) summary of who your character is, as a superhero. The easiest sort of schtick is being best at something, or at least exceptional. Strongest, fastest, smartest, cleverest, most faithful – these are the sorts of schticks that many superheroes' superness stem from. In modern comics, superheroes are often complex, and not easily shoehorned into a simple schtick. But in the world of Four Colors al Fresco, heroes should be simpler, like the pre-comic heroes of the pulps. Generally, a single schtick *will* be sufficient, though most character should have at least a few Descriptors that go beyond this. Even some Omegas that have more than one Omegaed Planet will still fit into a simple schtick.

> "Vengeful master sleuth and inventor"; "super-human man from another planet"; "blind martial artist"; "super-fast"; "the physique of a human-sized spider"; "millionaire inventor".

Notice how many of these schticks are somewhat

complex, conveying more than one idea. There is no requirement that a schtick be one-dimensional. Of course, there isn't even any requirement that you have one; it's just a useful tool for envisioning an appropriate character for the genre.

### Grommets

Schticks help you all have fun by keeping the characters sufficiently different that you all get a chance to shine. Grommets have a similar role for player-Storyguide interactions. A grommet is something that a hook hooks into, in this case, the hooks for the Storyguide's plots. Like a schtick, grommets are not explicitly part of the game mechanics, but tend to be hidden among the Descriptors. It is your job to create a character with at least one grommet, preferably several.

Grommets are what keep the characters interested in the stories. In the early superhero genre, they are relatively unimportant. Most superheroes have one grommet that is sufficiently generic to fit just about any story – usually, "feels obligated to use extraordinary powers for Good", or something similar. In other words, they're heroes just because they are. This is a perfectly acceptable grommet, but a bit bland – everyone in the group probably shares it. So, as part of the pulp feel, make your characters more interesting by making them more interested in things. Every time you pick a Descriptor that somehow ties your character to the rest of the world, you're adding grommets. The most obvious of these are ones that talk about the character's relationship to another person, but anything that delineates or implies a personality trait helps, too. Because if she has a personality, then there are things that she will react to. Hot-button issues are a great help for the Storyguide. If she can count on your character to respond passionately when a particular topic comes up, it makes it easy for her to get you involved in plots.

### Get Carried Away

It terms of actually roleplaying, the best advice is: more is better. The more you get into the head of your character, the more fun everyone will have. Try and look at things as your character would[17] and react as she would. Related to this is originality. Especially when creating your character, get carried away and creative. Come up with the most unique, interesting character you can. Why have wings when you can fly by draining the phlogiston from unburned objects?

When you have the opportunity, invent new details about your character. And remember that that creative power extends to other elements of the world that touch your character. If the SG doesn't, invent a name for the cobbler you're talking to. In fact, in general, don't ask when you can state. That is, don't ask the SG if there's a night table in the bedroom you're searching, just say "I search the night table." If you overreach, the SG, or perhaps the rest of the Troupe, will let you know, or demand that you play a Storypath card to make it so. Better to overreach a bit and be curbed than to surrender your creative input to the Storyguide.

### The Perfect Player

There are also aspects of just playing the game that are very important. First of all, forget all notions you have from other games about winning and cheating. You can't win an RPG, and the only thing you'll accomplish by cheating is spoiling your own fun. The point of an RPG is the telling of a collaborative story, so there is nothing to win, and "cheating" with the mechanics either has no effect, or undermines the tension of the storytelling. For that matter, many of the actions that would be considered cheating in other games, here aren't – changing your mind on an action, even after you know the results; acting on information that your character wouldn't have (provided it furthers the story).

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[17] remembering that your character lives in a larger-than life world, where Fate-like Forces govern everything, and she is an exception to the very laws of reality

# Four Colors al Fresco

In addition to contributing to the unfolding story, it is your job as a player to pay attention so you know what's going on, and to know the rules so that you don't hold up the game. The rules of Four Colors al Fresco are relatively simple, and intended to be easily internalized, with the character sheets effectively summarizing, or at least giving mnemonic clues, to all of them. On the flip side, however, don't get hung up on the rules. If your Troupe is amenable, making a suggestion to the SG is perfectly acceptable, but if you don't like the SG's ruling, don't waste time arguing about it. All you'll do is get everyone upset, even if you succeed in persuading her. Instead, make a note to yourself, and bring it up to the group as a whole, either at the end of the session, or before you start the next time. It won't change that situation (generally – with retcon[18] , anything is possible), but maybe they'll agree that it should be handled differently in the future.

Which leads to the final directive of the player: don't make the Storyguide do all the work. Along with helping the creation, the players' job is to help steer the story. Think of it as mental armwrestling – the players should be gently "fighting" the SG when it comes to the direction of the story, helping to build it through this tension. Two heads really are better than one in this case, and six are even better than that. Rather than the SG feeling like she's unfolding a pre-planned plot, and the players are merely choosing which branch of it to follow, she should feel like she's holding the reins of a team of wild horses, the plot just barely under her control (principally via the villains' actions), while the players lead it to where it will be most satisfying for all. Use your Storypath cards to make the plot more interesting, and give creative input. The resulting game will be all the more fun for the interweaving of several people's ideas.

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[18] **Retcon**: Retroactive Continuity. Claiming that something was always true, and that history is now the way it would have been, had it been true. One method of altering something (usually a character) and maintaining consistency.

As stated previously, one of the participants in a roleplaying game has a special role to play. She will take on the role of Storyguide (SG). Who this is can vary from Issue to Issue, though often one person will continue being Storyguide for an entire Miniseries.

It is the Storyguide's job to guide the story. She is not telling a story for the amusement of the other participants, but is just providing the framework within which the story occurs. Her role is different, perhaps greater than, but not more important than, that of the players. Her primary responsibility is to play all of the other people that the characters meet, and describe the world around them. Often, she will also be responsible for setting up a scenario or at least providing the broad outlines of a plot – or, better yet, just a plot set-up.

Much of the time, one of the Main characters or the group's previous exploits will provide the hooks to get them involved in the Issue, making the set-up as simple as coming up with a recurring villain's next nefarious plot, or figuring out what someone important to the Main characters is doing now. Other Issues can come from considering the latest trends in the world around the Main characters – perhaps a change in the political or social winds will affect them.

### What To Do

There are a number of important aspects to SGing, but they all fall into two broad categories: in-game and meta-game. In-game aspects are the techniques and concerns as seen from the perspective of the characters involved in the game world. Meta-game aspects are those that take place on the level of the players, and are not directly perceivable to the characters. The Storyguide should strive to always guide the game in such a way that it is satisfying at the meta-game level, while also being sufficiently in-genre at the in-game level.

Meta-game concerns primarily revolve around using appropriate frameworks to guide the story, such as determining what constitute Panels and Pages, ensuring that the feel of the Issue is appropriate for the Title it takes place within, and attempting to guide the story to utilize appropriate literary conventions, such as cliffhangers, flashbacks, and dramatic irony. Also, Meta-game concerns include making sure the game is enjoyable, by making opponents and obstacles appropriate, by creating Issues that are thematically interesting to the players, and by adjudicating actions fairly. Another important meta-game concern is respecting the players' visions for their characters. While, strictly speaking, only what is on the character sheet is canon, it is very poor form to knowingly define an element of the character in a way that conflicts with the concept or background the player had in mind. The player, of course, is free to establish any element with a Storypath Card (via retcon if necessary), and players should be given greater latitude when adding details or Traits that conflict with established precedent.

> The Cardinal is played as an upstanding former clergyman, who has chosen to use his power to uphold justice and the Word of God. The SG should not, as a plot element, say that he knows an underworld crime boss due to his well-hidden shady past, as this infringes on the player's idea of The Cardinal as beyond reproach. She could, however, say that The Cardinal once took confession from this crime boss, back when she was just an amateur housebreaker. The player saying the first thing, however, would be allowed, since The Cardinal has no Descriptors that specifically contradict this.

Most in-game concerns have to do with upholding the genre conventions of 4-color superheroes. In their service, retroactive continuity (retcon) should be used in preference to being bound by a previous Issue; villains should frequently have Powers that address the heroes' Weaknesses (and vice versa); moral absolutism should guide the actions on all sides; and heroes and villains should reap what they sow.

## How Not to Storyguide

There are two fairly common pitfalls for Story-guides, especially as beginners.

The first is adversarial play. The SG shouldn't be playing "against" the players. The game is one of entertainment, not winning. Besides, the SG has almost total control over the world beyond the Main characters, so this style of play won't even provide the thrill it aims at – the SG can easily best the players' characters, just by creating much more powerful opponents or situations that they can't overcome, so the "winner" in such a game is a fore-gone conclusion. This is not to say that the players shouldn't have challenges. But a good SG tailors the challenges to the Main characters', and their players', abilities, so that triumph is never assured, but is possible.

The second common mistake is scripting too heavi-ly. Some SGs mistakenly attempt to craft an entire story, right up to and including the ending, when setting up the scenario. Such a SG doesn't allow the players enough input on the course of the story, and takes away their fun. If the players just wanted to hear a story, they'd find a storyteller. Much of the point of an RPG is participating in crafting the story, so be sure and leave plenty of room for the players to alter the story. And don't get upset if they don't do what you expected or hoped they would do; just go with the new twist in the plot. As you get more experienced, you'll figure out how to use these unexpected results to make a bet-ter game and a more interesting story than you would have come up with on your own.

### Action Resolution

Above and beyond all of these story and genre con-cerns, the Storyguide is responsible for adjudicating the characters' actions. The most basic way of do-ing this is through simple Descriptor comparison. Look at the relevant Descriptors on all sides, and decide what occurs. Remember that someone with a relevant Descriptor should always best someone without (though the Descriptor-less character is better off than the one with a Flaw Trait in that area), and that a Power should almost always best a Trait. Circumstances should of course be consid-ered, which may significantly alter these simple rules. If the results aren't clear from such a com-parison, then the Storyguide has the Planet scores to fall back on. For rules to help with that, see Chapter V.

### Genre

Don't forget that this is a four-color superhero game; this brings with it some specific considera-tions, in order to maintain the feel. First, obstacles, and especially opponents, should almost always be scaled to match the abilities of the Main charac-ters. The power level of the Main characters, rather than "realism", should be what determines the power level of challenges. Secondly, death is rare. Ομεγασ almost never need to be killed in order to be defeated – and a body is rarely found if they do die. Innocents should only die through the tragic error of the Main characters, and other Diceless characters should die only if they voluntarily serve the villains – and usually not even then.

On a meta-game level, you should try to always end an Issue with at least a minor cliffhanger. Even if it is the resolution of a major Miniseries, throw something into the end of the last Issue that opens up a new path or plot. Another meta-game concern is spotlight time. All of the Main charac-ters should be approximately equally important in the Issue. This rule can be relaxed somewhat in the case of an Issue in a Main character's Title, where any other Main characters are Crossovers. But, no matter how improbable, in every Issue each of the Main characters should be faced with an ob-stacle that only they can overcome.

### Switching Storyguides

A final concern of Storyguiding is switching Story-guides. Only one person should Storyguide for a given Issue, in order to maintain a consistent tone. You may decide for yourselves, either as a blanket rule or on a case-by-case basis, whether you want to maintain one Storyguide for an entire Miniseries. Another option would be to always use a particular Storyguide for the Main Title. But whatever you de-cide, you will eventually have to switch Story-guides.

There are a number of ways to pass on the role of Storyguide. The current Storyguide may have her character show up at the end of an Issue, thus sig-

**Between Issues**

There are a couple of concerns for between Issues. The first of these, and the most obvious, is the question of changing characters as a result of changing Storyguides. Sometimes, of course, the changeover will occur between Miniseries, and then there is really no problem. If you are also changing Titles, the change of heroes is pretty much just part of the changeover. But other times, you'll be switching Storyguides between Issues of the same Miniseries, usually without switching Titles, either. In that case, you need to explain where the new character came from, and where the old one went. You may have explained at least one of those when you ended the last Issue, but that usually leaves at least one of those still needing explanation. Common ways a new character can show up are calling for help (if the heroes have any way of doing that) or the new character finding out they are in trouble (through Powers); the new character having found out some time ago that they were doing this, but only just now catching up to/locating them; the new character stumbling upon them, having pursued the same villainy from different starting evidence; the new character escaping from having been previously captured. Common ways to remove a character include capture, incapacitation, a more-pressing personal encounter (such as a family member in trouble), or seeing a way to be of more help to the group by going off separately for a while.

When a new character shows up, some explanation should be made not only of how and why she has just now appeared, but also of what she has been doing since last seen, especially in the case of Main characters. Don't take too much time for this, but the former SG can take this opportunity to effectively write a short issue of her character's personal Title, involving just her, of course. In more egalitarian Troupes, this can be an opportunity for the player to make significant, SG-like contributions to the background of the world and/or story.

Finally, the specific techniques of segueing between Issues deserve some mention. You need not simply pick up where you left of at the end of the previous Issue. Not only can a Miniseries begin *in media res*, but so can an Issue. In fact, with the addition of a cliffhanger ending the previous Issue, there are two narrative tricks that can be employed. The first is the false cliffhanger. The SG simply, and quickly, resolves the cliffhanger, usually in an anti-climactic fashion, and then moves events forward some amount, filling in the events of the intervening time to a varying degree. The second is the cliffhanger replay. The SG takes the cliffhanger as portrayed at the end of the last issue as having been just a point of view, rather than the absolute facts of the matter. Perhaps the other characters escaped the ship with a hold full of gunpowder, but Renaissance Man was still trapped aboard, and the next thing they saw was the ship blowing up. The SG would start the new session at the point where the other characters left the ship, and play through the events leading up to the explosion, giving Renaissance Man a chance to escape, within the constraints of what has already been established. In other words, assuming he succeeds, what the others saw did happen, they just didn't see that Renaissance Man had turned back into Guglielmo, and thus slipped free of his bonds and fallen over the far side of the ship before it exploded.

nifying that she does not intend to run the next Issue. She may likewise (temporarily) remove one of the players' characters from the scenario[19], thus signifying that it is that person's turn to be Storyguide next time. Especially in the latter case, you should make sure it's acceptable to the other players before turning over the reins. Ideally, everybody should take approximately equal time at being Storyguide, but if everyone is ok with it, there's nothing inherently wrong with some of the players rarely or never Storyguiding[20].

A couple of tricks while you are Storyguiding will help to make the transition between SGs less jarring. First, if you define a new element of the world, whether a setting, a new Diceless or Guest character, or something else, make some notes. It is important that you write down everything that you have definitely decided, even if it wasn't revealed to the players during the Issue. Be sure and mark what the Main characters know of this. Normally, you will hand these notes over to the next SG if she requests them (she may be planning on an Issue for which they don't matter).

However, there's nothing wrong with having elements of the world exclusively under your control.

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[19] By capture, incapacitation, an emergency summons, or whatever.

[20] In which case, you should never attempt to force them into the role of SG by removing their character.

If you want to keep the secret of one of the villain's Powers to yourself, just make sure that the notes you hand over note that that detail is decided, but you're not revealing it. There are two advantages to doing this. First, it can make the game more enjoyable for the players, as they don't have to work as hard to separate player and character knowledge, and they can be genuinely surprised by something. Second, it tends to make the world seem more alive and real if *everything* isn't interconnected. By having several SGs with plots and/or plot elements that aren't shared, they weave intersecting but not interconnected Issues. It's only imperative that you don't have accidentally-conflicting ideas about the world. It's always acceptable to deliberately alter something after the fact – "retcon" was, after all, invented to describe comic books. As a matter of manners, however, you should try not to retcon other SG's material too often – it may take away from their feeling of contribution to the shared stories.

Another tool for aiding in the interleaving of Issues from different Titles and with different Storyguides is to drop deliberately unused clues and tidbits. Make it a practice to increase the level of detail in your descriptions, and even to throw in minor occurrences that have no significance. One of the players will often mistake these for something important, and, upon learning (from looking at your notes when they SG) that you have not fleshed them out, use them as hooks for their own plots when they next SG. After all, if they are interesting enough to catch the player's attention, they are interesting enough to matter. Also, chances are that they will have already come up with an explanation or back story (which was, at the time, "wrong") while playing, so this also cuts down on inspirational effort. As an added bonus, these sorts of details often provide hooks or inspiration for the use of Storypath Cards (see the next section) during the current Issue. And, on that note, don't forget to use the additions of Storypath cards (both your own and others') when next you Storyguide.

## Villains

As Storyguide, one of your duties is to come up with opponents for the heroes. A special sort of opponent is the Nemesis[21]. As the game goes on, and the heroes face different threats and villains, sometimes a villain will prove a particularly appropriate foil to one of the Main characters. Due to issues of motivation and/or powers (preferably both), this villain may become a Nemesis for one or more of the characters. Generally, a Nemesis either selects one hero, or the entire group. Perhaps, if there is a special group of heroes within the group[22], the Nemesis might focus on them, rather than the group as a whole.

Another special sort of villain is the Mastermind. Masterminds are the villains that really run things in the underworld, usually behind the scenes. They are the villains that rarely confront the Main characters, instead having a small horde of lesser villains to do their bidding. While these lesser villains are often defeated or captured, a Mastermind can always find new lackeys to serve her, at least by the next Miniseries. While the Main characters rarely get to confront the Mastermind, other heroes often do, so that they can get captured, bring back tales of how undefeatable the Mastermind is, provide the Main characters with a vital clue or bit of inside information, or, very rarely, get killed.

In order to balance things out, making the Mastermind the feared opponent that she should be, here are a couple of tricks for you to employ. First of all, you will notice a special character sheet for them. It has two significant changes from the standard character sheet. First, the Forces are given a fixed Hierarchy, rather than dice to roll. This helps to make the Mastermind a more-consistent threat. If you can count on the Mastermind to react a certain way when it comes to chance, you can make their plans more concrete. Secondly, a space for

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[21] **Nemesis:** a villain who has a particular interest in defeating a hero or group of heroes, and who is often of particular interest to the hero(es) in return.

[22] A good rule of thumb is: do they have their own Title? If they exist as a group in a Title, then they can be selected by a Nemesis.

Mastermind Traits[23] has been added to the sheet. These are special, powerful Descriptors, used somewhat like Storypath cards. Only the players have Storypath cards, because the whole point of them is to shift some of the power from Storyguide to player. After all, the Story guide can get away with whatever she wants all the time[24], with no need for mechanical aid. But in the case of Masterminds, it may be useful to have something to provide some structure to that fudging. Not to lessen it, but to give it a consistent feel. A Mastermind Trait should be something that relates particularly to how the Mastermind thwarts the heroes. They often characterize an "ace up the sleeve" that the Mastermind has to enable her to escape or survive or do one more thing before being incapacitated.

### Traps

A staple of the pulp genre is the villain's elaborate trap. When a villain defeats a hero or group of heroes, she never kills the heroes outright, and only rarely does something sensible like take away all their equipment and wall them into a deep cave. Instead, they wake to find themselves in some Rube-Goldberg-esque contraption designed to kill them slowly, and usually messily. The villain will gloat over them a bit, set the trap in motion, and leave them to their "certain deaths". This works great in literature, but is a bit harder to set up in an RPG. If you make escape too easy, it's no fun. If you make escape too hard, the characters either don't escape (and death isn't much fun, either, except perhaps martyrdom), or you have to give the players a hint, which undermines the enjoyment of triumphing over the trap.

The solution is to make the proper escape technique dependent on the players' actions, rather than the trap. There are two ways to do this. The first is to pick a specific number of distinct attempts that must be made before success is achieved. Usually 2 or 3, but you could demand more for a par-

ticularly fiendish trap. The idea is that, whatever the players come up with, no matter how good or appropriate, for some reason the first attempt does not succeed. And, usually, neither does the 2nd. But the 3rd attempt, again, no matter how outlandish it is, does, generally just in the nick of time. Another way to do this is to accept that the players come up with the proper general technique the first time around, but that some element of it needs to be changed in order to work. Perhaps using acid to melt through the lock is the right technique, but it'll never eat through the hasp in time; instead, they need to poor it into the mechanism. If you alternate between these two techniques, vary the number of attempts required with the first technique, and sometimes have a specific solution that the players must figure out, you can maintain dramatic tension quite effectively, and the players won't feel cheated, because they won't know whether they outsmarted you, or just ran down the clock.

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[23] **Mastermind Trait:** a special Descriptor that only Mastermind Villains possess. It is used somewhat like a Storypath card, to make drastic alterations in the plot line, but is reusable.
[24] Just be careful not to abuse that power, for it is easy to make the game not fun for the rest of the group in this way

In general, play proceeds by the Storyguide and the players narrating what occurs. The players have absolute control over their characters, and use their Descriptors to affect other parts of the world. The Storyguide not only has authority over the rest of the world (including all of the Guest and Diceless characters), but over reality itself. She is allowed to decide what happens in any contested situation, which means she effectively has veto power over even a player's use of her character's Descriptors.

Doesn't sound very fair, does it?

Well, if your SG is fair-minded, and concerned primarily with everyone having a good time, it'll work out just fine. For the most part. But, this is supposed to be a collaborative storytelling game, and giving one person final say over almost everything doesn't really aid collaboration. So, there is a tool for giving the players more control over the story, beyond their characters. Each of the players has some Storypath Cards (initially equal to the number of diced Planets).

### Playing Cards

If the Storyguide declares a result that you dislike, you may overrule it with the use of a Storypath Card. They may be used to alter any part of the story, regardless of whether or not the player's character could have affected the change, or is even involved. In effect, the play of a card gives the player (almost) complete authorial control over a small portion of the story, just as the SG generally has.

How a Storypath card is used is completely up to the player. The suggestions on them may be used or ignored, and the title may be taken literally or metaphorically (or both) – though the title or primary meaning of the card does need to be used. There are only a couple of concrete rules governing their use. First, any player gets veto power over a card used directly on her character. She doesn't need a reason, and is encouraged to veto card plays that would violate the spirit of her character. Second, the SG gets final veto over all card plays, though she is advised not to use that power unless absolutely necessary. Third, the player of the card gets complete authorial control over the outcome. Others may contribute suggestions, but, except for veto of undesired effects on their characters, the player is not required to use those suggestions. Likewise, the SG shouldn't rewrite a use of a card, but should instead veto its use and give the player a chance to do the rewrite herself; the whole point is to give the player authorial control.

### Gaining and Losing Cards

Every player starts out with as many cards as her character has diced Planets. When a card is spent, the SG should look at how it was spent. If it is, on balance, to the detriment of that player's character, the player gets to immediately draw another card. If it is, on balance, to the advantage of the character, the card is not replaced. Cards are maintained from session to session, until spent. In addition to replacing cards spent as a detriment, the SG may hand out more cards as rewards for success and/or good roleplaying.

In addition to players having Storypath Cards, Titles also can have Storypath cards. Any Main character of that Title can spend these cards, but only during an Issue that takes place in that Title. The section on Titles and Issues has more on the rules governing this use of Storypath cards.

### New Traits

There is one further use for Storypath cards. Blank cards, as you might guess, function as a "wild card" – the player may use them to do whatever she wishes. However, a blank card can also be used in a special way. If the player so desires, a blank Storypath card may be played to give a character (usually her own) a new Trait. This new Trait may be explained either with retcon or as a newly-acquired Trait, depending on what works the best for the story.

**Finding Storypath Cards**

There are any number of ways to come up with your Storypath Cards. There are very few absolute parameters in what they contain. First, pay attention to how many blank cards vs. total cards you have. The rules for gaining new Traits are based on the fact that Storypath Cards have 2 blank cards out of a total of 84; if whatever you use has a significantly different ratio, you might want to alter the Trait-gaining rules to compensate. Second, Storypath Cards really shouldn't have anything to say about other game mechanics (such as the Descriptors or Planets) – they're meant to work on more of a meta-game level, and aren't tied to the character very much at all.

We have used Storypath Cards, by Three Guys Gaming, for play and in any examples. If you can find these, we heartily recommend them. They are a good mix of concretely mundane (Itch, Overheard Conversation), action-related (Unexpected Problem, Success!), and plot-oriented (Lost Hope, Shadowy Figure). If there is any flaw in these, it is that a few too many of the cards are mundane, and not enough are plot-oriented, so their affects tend to be less significant than you might desire.

If you can find them, Whimsy Cards, long out of print from Lion Rampant, would probably make another excellent choice. The cards are a bit more "powerful", with almost all of them being explicitly a significant plot twist. This might actually be preferable, giving the game a more heroic feel and dramatic feel. Almost all of them are of the plot-oriented sort, though a few are more action-related.

You can always make your own. Brainstorm a whole bunch of plot twists and types of results and surprises, and put them on note cards. Or use a Tarot deck, with the little interpretation guide that always comes with them.

### When To Use Storypath

The balance of power in this game is between the Storyguide, the players, and the Storypath Cards. Under normal circumstances, all of the participants have agreed to abide by the Storyguide's decisions, and the Storyguide has implicitly agreed to be as fair as possible, to both the players and the story. Usually, the gentle give and take of simple discussion will resolve any disagreements about the capabilities of a character or the outcome of an action – there will be no need to use anything beyond the Descriptors of a character and the circumstances she is in to decide the outcome. At worst, the player may have to explain to the SG how a Descriptor is relevant, or the SG may have to rule that a Descriptor isn't relevant in this situation. At no point should the Storyguide take away the players' control over their characters[25].

But sometimes a player may simply have a different vision of how to steer the story. That is why the Storypath Cards exist. Not as a means to trump or "beat" the Storyguide, but to have a mechanism to give the player authorial power without stepping on the SG's toes. By using the cards, you clearly delineate who is in charge when, eliminating arguments that stem from each side believing their decision should hold sway.

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[25] without a good, in-game reason, such as a villain with mind-control powers, or a Page that takes place within a dream. Even then, great care should be taken when treading upon the players' mental images of their characters

In *Four Colors al Fresco*, there are several units of time, all derived from the comic books that are its inspiration. The shortest of these is the Panel. A Page is usually longer, consisting of dozens of Panels strung together, but it may be as short as a Panel, or as long as an Issue. An Issue is an entire evening's play, while a Miniseries is a series of Issues that together comprise a single plot.

Binding all of this together are the Titles, which serve as an organizational scheme for all of the Issues and Miniseries.

### Panels

A Panel is the shortest unit of time in the game. It is the amount of time it takes to complete one simple action, such as punch the villain, lift the sinking ship, speak a line of dialog, sneak across the room, or witness a lightning strike. If an action is more complex, such as executing a complex martial arts kata or delivering a monologue, it requires multiple Panels. Likewise, the results of an action can take multiple Panels – while punching the villain might only take one panel, the villain could take several more Panels to fly across the room and smash through the wall. If in doubt, refer to this simple test: could it be reasonably illustrated in a single panel of a comic book?

There are no units of time shorter than the Panel. While a few characters (particularly super-fast $\Omega$s) will be able to take multiple actions during a single Panel, the game doesn't track time in units small enough to differentiate them. Also, you will notice that a Panel is not a fixed length. In relation to the world of the game, some variance will occur. As an extreme example, if you have two super-fast $\Omega$s fighting, and no other characters involved, a Panel might correspond to one of *their* actions. At the other extreme, if the only thing happening is an inventor working on a project, or a sneak searching an empty house, a Panel could encompass minutes, hours, or possibly even days.

The only time a Panel becomes anything like fixed is when multiple characters are involved. Even then, it may vary in length from Panel to Panel. But so long as anybody is engaged in a typical-speed action, the rest of the characters use that as their reference point for a Panel. So, if during a fight one of the characters is attempting to build an ornithopter, and another is sneaking out of the room to get the villain's secret plans, each of those actions would now take several Panels. In the meantime, the $\Omega$ with super-speed would be accomplishing several actions each Panel. It is in these situations that the Panel can be used to aid in conflict resolution. If two characters are trying to accomplish something where it matters which gets done first, consider their actions in terms of Panels. Whichever can be accomplished in the fewest number of Panels succeeds. Only if they take the same number of Panels (often 1) do you need to directly resolve the actions. Comparing Panels is particularly useful when two characters' actions interfere with one another, but they aren't in direct conflict.

Panels, in addition to not being of fixed duration, are not necessarily linear. If a large group of characters is engaged in an activity, it is impossible to try and keep track of all of them, and properly order their every action. So don't even try. Instead, use the conventions of the comic book: cut back and forth between the different characters. The best way to do this is to consider actions in terms of logical groupings, rather than duration, and then move back and forth among them whenever they logically intersect. This will often involve jumping around in time, playing through several Panels of one charac-

| One Panel: | More Than One Panel: |
|---|---|
| • Kicking open the door<br>• Punching someone<br>• Reading a note | • Battering down the door to a fortress<br>• Pummeling someone into unconsciousness<br>• Reading a book |

ter, then playing through the Panels of an ally, narrating actions that had to have occurred simultaneously. The only time you need to "synchronize" Panels is when one cluster of characters now wants to interact with another. Obviously, if one hero defeats the villain she's fighting and decides to go help a friend, that is a time catch that friend up. You also want to switch back and forth some, even when not necessary, just so that no player has to sit uninvolved for too long. Other clues as to when to switch point of view or bring two streams of Panels together are such actions as shouting for a comrade's help, deciding to wait for an action on the part of someone (friend or foe) the hero isn't currently engaged with, or withdrawing from the primary arena. While all of these techniques have many situations they may be applicable in, the two most common will be when the heroes split up and during combat.

> *The Cardinal and Renaissance Man are facing Chameleon and Mythic Beast, and must defeat them in order to save some hostages trapped in a cage dangling over a pool of sharks. The Cardinal charges at Mythic Beast, currently in the form of the Nemean Lion, so the Storyguide starts there. They play through the conflict between The Cardinal and Mythic Beast until the SG decides Renaissance Man's player has waited long enough. Then he switches over, segueing with "Meanwhile...", and they play for a similar amount of time, irrespective of whether they cover the same amount of game time as she did with The Cardinal. She switches back and forth like this a couple more times, always at dramatic points, until Renaissance Man defeats Chameleon. At this point, it might be necessary to bring the two heroes to the same point in time, but it turns out that Renaissance Man's player decides that The Cardinal will have to take care of himself, and saving the hostages is more important. He leaps to, but Chameleon, defeated but not out, uses a last bit of energy to throw the switch releasing the cage. Renaissance Man isn't going to be strong enough to catch the cage on his own, so obviously The Cardinal's player wants to help. The SG now has two possibilities. He can declare that the events played through to date have taken the same amount of time, and The Cardinal may react however he wishes. Or, he could declare that The Cardinal still has several Panels before the cage is dropped, and play through them, with his*

> *player now knowing what is going to happen, and having extra incentive to try and defeat, or at least disengage, Mythic Beast quickly. Note that the SG should not just declare that it "already happened", since dramatic moments like this are exactly the points where the hero should have a chance to have an impact. The only exception to this being if there is some reason the character could not have known about it. Whichever route is chosen, if The Cardinal and Renaissance Man end up working together, there will only be one stream of Panels, with no need to go back and forth, unless they were actually part of a larger fight, and there are still other little clusters engaged.*

### Pages

Pages are a very different sort of time unit. Rather than being designed to segregate actions, or otherwise aid in action resolution, Pages are intended to aid with story structure. A Page is everything that takes place at more-or-less one time, and in more-or-less one place, as an interconnected series of events. In other words, a scene. Pages are special to the game because a great many things are governed by them. Generally, Main characters remain injured or hindered only for the duration of the Page. Many Ωs have Powers that are limited to the Page – and, if in doubt, you can assume that Powers and so forth end with the Page.

### Issues

The Issue is an entire evening's (or afternoon's) play. It is a unit of time used mostly on the meta-game level, as an element of story. Ideally, the Issue should have a structure, most of which is consistent from Issue to Issue. The beginning of each Issue should set the scene and introduce the plot. If it is the 2nd or later part in a Miniseries, it should start with a brief recap of the Miniseries up to that point. If it is standing on its own, or is the first Issue of a Miniseries, it should get to the main plot as quickly as possible. You might even start it *in media res*, and then fill in the back story either through narration or played-out flashback. This is not to say that an Issue should never have a slow or mysterious start, just that such Issues should be the exception.

# Four Colors al Fresco

The ending of an Issue is similarly formulaic. Every Issue should end with at least some things unresolved. Most Issues should end with a blatant cliffhanger. Doubly so if they are part of a Miniseries (and not the final Issue). While the final Issue of a Miniseries should resolve the major plot, even there you should sow the seeds of something new – perhaps a hook for the next plot.

Something else that is normally part of an Issue's ending are meta-game awards. It is usually immediately after the end of an Issue that the Storyguide hands out any reward Storypath Cards.

The internal structure of an Issue is much more flexible. If your sessions are long enough, you should duplicate the structure of the Issue in miniature, and repeat. So if it's an action plot about breaking into the villain's lair and defeating him, you can build up to that final climax with several lesser climaxes, as the heroes overcome successively-tougher obstacles and/or henchmen. And if it's a mystery plot, they should start by uncovering a little mystery, which when "solved" leads to a bigger mystery, and so on.

### Miniseries

The next-larger unit of time is again one of the story, rather than the game. A Miniseries is any series of Issues which together tell one story. Oftentimes, a story spills over the bounds of a single Issue. As soon as you have a single plot stretching over two or more Issues, you have a Miniseries. The Issues that comprise a Miniseries may come from one or many Titles, and will often come from several different Titles if different Storyguides handled different Issues in the Miniseries.

### Titles

The Title is not a unit of time, but is nonetheless an organizational unit. A Title is all of the stories about a particular Ω or group of Ωs. In the case of individuals, it is often, but not always, the same as the Ω's name, or a close derivative thereof. The most important thing to know about a Title is which characters are the Main characters – the ones who appear in it almost without fail.

Each game of *Four Colors al Fresco* will probably involve several different Titles. At the very least, each character has a Title of her own. Usually, there is also a Main Title, within which all of the players' characters are Main characters. When someone is Storyguiding, her character will usually be absent. Unless she says otherwise, it is assumed her character is having adventures in her own Title, and she may detail what those are. Oftentimes in dialog once the character returns, when next that participant is a player. Whenever an Issue begins, part of the introduction should be the SG announcing which Title it takes place within. Usually, it will be the Main Title, but it may be in one of the characters' individual Titles, with the rest of the characters Crossing Over[26].

Each Title has Storypath Cards associated with it. Only the Main characters of that Title may use these Storypath cards, and only during an Issue of that Title. Playing them is just the same as usual – the Storyguide only has veto power, not editing power, but the player gets to try again in the event of a veto, and other players have to approve effects on their characters. However, the rules for replenishing these cards are significantly different from the ones the players hold. The Title starts out without any cards. Instead of a random draw or reward for play, the cards of the Title come directly from the Storyguide. Any time the SG fudges strongly against the favor of the players, she should place a Storypath card into the Title. This may be a randomly drawn card, or the SG could have a small stack of selected cards (generally the more "powerful", plot-oriented ones) reserved for precisely this use. Since the SG is constantly adjusting the story to make it a better experience for all involved, this is a fairly nebulous standard. A good rule of thumb is to look at these as "negative" Storypath cards – if the event in question is one that is a suffeciently major departure from the previously-estab-

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[26] **Crossing Over:** the act of an Ω, especially a Main character, appearing in a Title that they are not normally a part of.

lished direction of the story that the Troupe would only accept a player proposing it if she had a Storypath card to play, then the SG "owes" the players a card in return for the sudden twist. Similarly, if there is a Mastermind in the story, the SG must put a card into the Title any time a Mastermind Trait is invoked. Mostly, this judgement call is left up to the SG, since giving the players sufficient information to vette the decision would be detrimental to the game, but some Troupes may find it better to rely on a sort of majority-rules to decide when the SG must provide a card.

Unlike a character, a Title has a limited number of "slots" for Storypath Cards. If all of those slots are full, the SG may not employ the sorts of plot twists that would call for the play of a Storypath card until the players use one of the cards. Normally a Title has five slots, but for very large groups (more than 5 players) you may want to reduce this to four, or even three. Fewer slots than this tends to undermine the usefulness of the Title cards, because there aren't enough choices present for applicablitiy to be likely. With large groups, however, there is a counter-incentive, making it desirable to have as many or more card slots in the Title. Effectively, the more card slots the Title has, the more dire the situation the SG can put the characters into, and thus the more exciting the story and the more dramatic their comeback (in part because they have more extra cards to facillitate a comeback). And with a larger group of Omegas, it makes sense that they can recover from lower low point, and still triumph, because they have more abilities to draw upon. This points up another reason the Troupe may want to limit the number of Storypath slots in the Title: it limits the ability of the Storyguide to really get the characters into trouble (though not the players' ability to get themselves into trouble). If you prefer a more straight-forward plot to your Issues, you may want to limit the slots, even for a small group.

If you are unable to decide the outcome of something which the Main characters are involved in by considering Descriptors alone, or a conflict between characters is too close to call, you may resort to "rolling the Planets." This takes into account the Forces of the universe in order to resolve an action that, on the merits of those involved, alone, is unclear. Rolling the Planets may also be used to give the player a chance when her character doesn't have any relevant Descriptors, but the action is not completely impossible.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ⬟ (blue) | Dominant | Lowest Die |
| ⬟ (green) | Major | 2nd-lowest Die |
| ◆ (red) | Minor | 2nd-highest Die |
| ⬡ (black) | Weak | Highest Die |

ciated with the 1st (lowest) die is the Dominant Force. The highest result indicates the last position, and that Force is the Weak Force. The 2nd-lowest die is the Major Force, and whatever is left is the Minor Force. Position is the only thing that matters, not value. Results of 4,5,6,7 and 1,6,10,20 are identical (assuming those results correspond to the same Forces in the same order). In the case of ties, the extreme positions are lost first; there may only be one Force, and thus die, in the Dominant or Weak positions. If you are for some reason rolling more than four dice[27], the excess Forces will end up being of Minor influence, so you might have more than one die in the Minor position even though they don't tie. The following examples[28] of reading the Hierarchy should make it perfectly clear.

## The Hierarchy

To roll your Planets, roll the appropriate die for each of your Planets (except the Ω Planet), and order them according to the results. It is probably easiest to have a different color die for each Planet, even if they are of different types. Line them up on the table with the lowest-resulting die at the top, and the highest at the bottom. The size of the die (number of sides) doesn't matter. The Force asso-
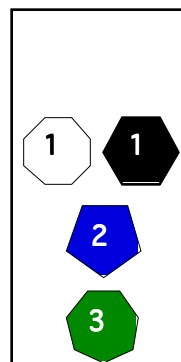
## Reading Four Planets

In case 1, each of the dice has come up with a different value, so the results are straightforward: Dynamic is Dominant, Passion is Major, Static is Minor, and Known is Weak.
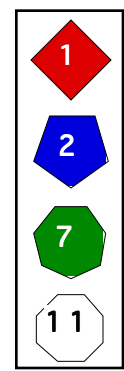
**1**

In case 2, the two lowest dice have tied. Since extreme results are the first ones lost, it is read as Known and Lost Major, Passion Minor, and Static Weak.

### Where Does He Get All Those Wonderful Dice?

Some of these dice are easier to get hold of than others. If you are new to RPGs, you may not have seen any but d6s (cubes) before. Even if you're an RPG veteran, the d3, d5, d7, d16, d24, and d34 may be news to you, and you may or may not own any d30s. Most of these dice can be faked with the next-larger die, rerolling when a too-large result occurs. The only loss when doing it this way is that you can't as easily identify dice, and you may have to re-roll occasionally, which slows things down slightly. D3 and d5 can also be rolled by rolling a d6 or d10 (respectively), and halving the result (round up).
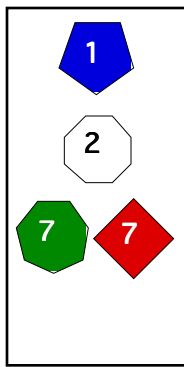
A d24 may be particularly hard to find. I've never seen one, but I've talked with people who swear they've seen, or used to own, a d24. None of the dice manufacturers will admit that they have ever made such a thing – but then, it took me 3 years before I found someone at any of the dice manufacturers who knew that they had once made the d16 or the d34.

**2**

[27] No character has 5 Planets – those without an Ωed Planet don't have dice at all – so ordering 5 or more dice is fairly uncommon.

[28] Throughout this work, Known is a white octagon, Passion is a blue pentagon, Dynamic is a red diamond, Static is a green heptagon, and Lost is a black hexagon. Circumstance dice are a brown triangle. Omega dice are a yellow square.

**3**

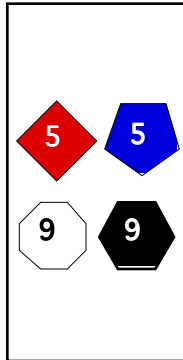Case 3 is essentially the inverse of case 2. Here, the highest two dice have tied, so no Force is Weak. It is read as Passion Dominant, Known Major, and Static and Dynamic are Minor.
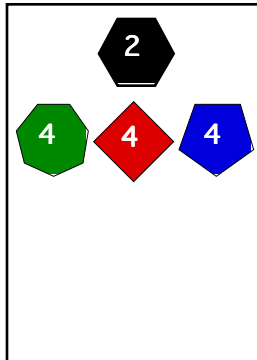
In case 4 we have a pair of ties. Since neither the lowest nor the highest rolls are unique, there are no Dominant *or* Weak Forces. This would be Dynamic and Passion Major, and Known and Lost Minor.
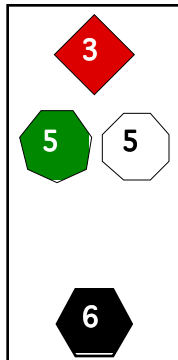
**4**

Case 5 shows a three-way tie with one low die. Lost is Dominant, and Static, Dynamic, and Passion all are Major.

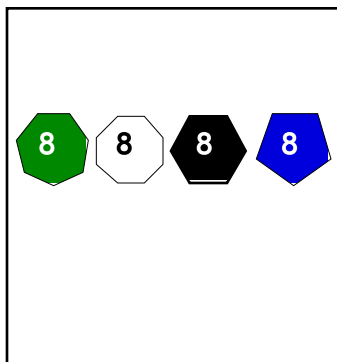In case 6 we see an internal tie. In this case, both the lowest and highest rolls are unique, so Dominant and Weak Forces are present. Since Major is favored over Minor, the tied dice are both read as Major. This would be read as Dynamic Dominant, Static and Known
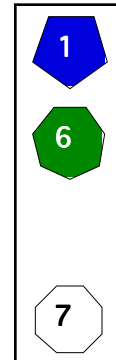
**5**

Major, and Lost Minor.

**6**

Finally, we have the least-extreme case in case 7. All four dice have come up with the same result. There are no unique rolls, so there can be no Dominant or Weak Forces, and since Major is favored over Minor, Static, Known, Lost, and Passion are all Major.

**7**

## Reading Fewer Planets

Some characters will have fewer than 4 Planets to roll, due to having more than one Ωed Planet. In those cases, the dice must be read slightly differently. The same basic principles apply, remembering that Minor is the least-important position to consider. Cases 8-11 illustrate the character with 2 Ωed Planets, while cases 12 and 13 are for someone with 3 Ωed Planets.
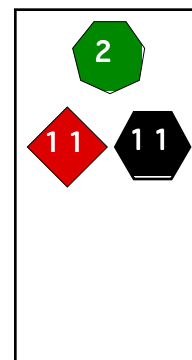
In the basic case (case 8), the character with only three Planets to roll produces a regular result, but without a Minor Force. So this would be read as Passion Dominant, Static Major, and Known Weak.

In the case of a tie, it will be either two Major and a Weak, or a Dominant and two Major. Case 9 is Dynamic and Lost Major, and Passion Weak.

**8**

**9**
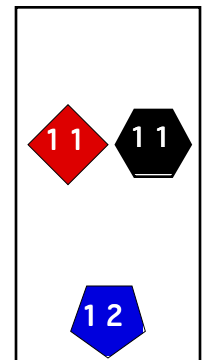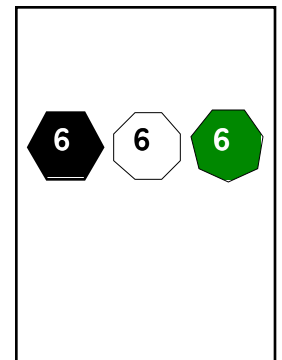
Case 10 shows the other possible tie. This is Static Dominant, and Dynamic and Lost Major.

**10**

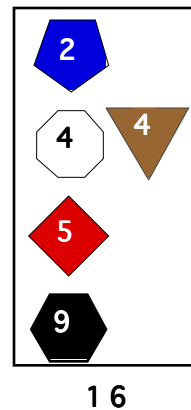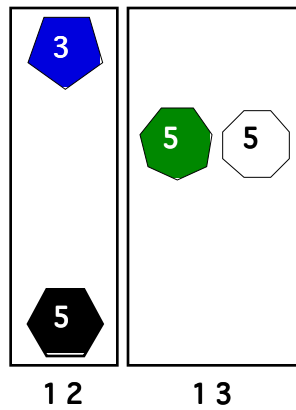Like a 4-way tie for a regular character, a 3-way tie means all Forces are Major. So in case 11, Lost, Known, and Static are all Major.

**11**

# Four Colors al Fresco

There are only two possible results for the character with 3 Ωed Planets. Either the dice tie, or they don't. Case 12 shows Passion Dominant and The Lost Weak, while case 13 shows Static and Known both Major.
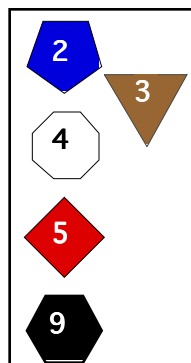
**1 2**   **1 3**

## Circumstance Dice

There are three complications to the die rolls. The first is the Circumstance die. Circumstance dice normally sit outside the Hierarchy. While they do not disturb the Hierarchy, it is important to know how they relate to it. Set up the Hierarchy normally, and then put the Circumstance die alongside it, according to its result. Cases 14 through 17 show 4 possible results, depending on the result on a Circumstance die. They range from stronger than the Dominant to weaker than the Weak.
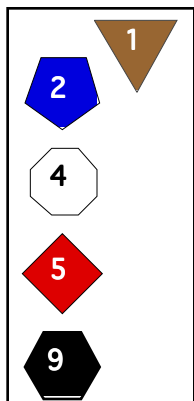
If a Circumstance die falls above the Dominant position (or above the Major, if there is no Dominant), as in case 14, it has a very strong influence, stronger than any of the Planets. A Major Circumstance die would rule the situation and, while a Minor Circumstance die would not change the degree of the outcome, it would strongly color its nature.

**1 4**

Cases 15 and 16 show some of the possibilities of the more-common results of a Circumstance die falling somewhere within the hierarchy, sometimes tying one of the Planet dice. When it ties a Planet, treat it as having the same position as the Planet – Major in case 16. If it falls between steps of the Hierarchy, consider it just before the Planet with the next-lowest score. So if it

**1 5**

is between the Dominant and Major positions, as in case 15, treat it as slightly more important than the Major Planet. If it is between the Minor and Weak, it is slightly more important than the Weak Planet, and if it is between the Major and Minor positions it is essentially the same as the Minor position – which is to say almost no impact.

**1 6**

If a Circumstance die falls below the Weak position (or below the Minor, if there is no Weak), it has no impact[29]. In any case, remember that a Minor Circumstance die can not determine results, only color them. Even if it is the lowest die in the roll, it well not cause success or failure, only determine the why of it. A Major Circumstance die, however, *can* determine success or failure. In that case, consider it positionally just as above, but before the Planet in the position it is "above".
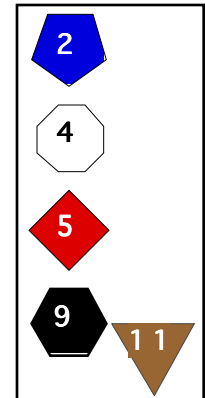
**1 7**

> *The Cardinal is trying to move a boulder to block a cave entrance, and the SG has ruled that it is too heavy for him to move easily, so he has to fall back on the Planets. Additionally, he is being swarmed with biting spiders, which is why he wants to block the cave in the first place. The SG rules this is a d6 Minor Hindrance die – it is very likely to have an impact, but not likely to prevent him from succeeding. The Favored Forces are Passion and Dynamic, and the Opposed Force is Static. The Cardinal's player rolls her dice, and comes up with Known: 5, Dynamic: 2, Static: 4, Lost: 12, and Minor Hindrance: 3. This would be read as Dynamic Dominant, Static Major, Known Minor, and Lost Weak, Hindrance better-than-Major, which is a success. For purposes of how much influence it has, the Hindrance die is considered to be slightly more influential than the Major Force. Had the Hindrance die been Major, it still would not have caused a failure, because it shows up after the Dominant and Weak positions (though before the Major), and success is determined in this case at the Dominant position (which is Favored), so the rest would never*

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[29] less, even, than the Minor position

*have been checked.*

### The Omega Die

The second complication to the basic roll is the Omega die. You've undoubtedly noticed that, with the simple roll the character's Ωed Planet has essentially no impact on the results. At most, a Favored or Opposed Force is removed from the equation, altering the odds from the outset, but not having any further impact. The Omega die is a way to give the Force that an Omega's powers stem from a bit more impact in random situations. Any time the SG calls for a roll and does *not* declare the character's Ωed Planet as one of the Favored or Opposed Forces, you may apply an Omega die to the roll. To do so, before you actually roll your Planets (or any Circumstance dice), decide on a value for the Omega die, and thus the Force it represents. It may not be less than 1 nor more than the largest value that one of your other Planets can obtain. The best way to do this is to place a die with the appropriate face up. Then roll the rest of the dice, and arrange all 5 into a standard Hierarchy. The usual rules apply: Dominant and Weak must be unique, any extra dice end up in the Minor position. Then read the results as usual. It is good form, but not required, to explain within the context of the world what this die represents.

*The Cardinal (Mercury d8, Venus Ω, Mars d6, Jupiter d6, Saturn d20) has found what he believes to be the resting place of the One True Grail. He suspects that the passage will have tests, both mental and physical, to prove one's worth (the Grail itself is a sufficient spiritual test), so his player declares that he is being very cautious in his explorations. The SG has decided that there is a trap, but that the Cardinal's learning and physique are not sufficient to necessarily avoid it, though the odds are in his favor. So she calls for a roll of the Planets, declaring both Lost and Known Favored – either sort of knowledge might provide the clue he needs to avert disaster – and Static Opposed – his real obstacles are refusing to be open to the new possibilities and being unaware of his surroundings, and being too laid-back physically, not reacting quickly enough. Since The Cardinal has a very low Saturn, and his Jupiter is very high, his player decides to use the Omega die (Passion) to try*

*and help the odds. She decides that the odds of either Mercury or Mars beating out, or at least tying, Jupiter are pretty good, so Static probably won't end up Dominant, but she doesn't like the odds with her low Saturn. So she assigns her Omega die a 20, explaining that The Cardinal is fervent about his faith, and thus paying especially close attention. Since the Weak position must be unique, she's guaranteed that Lost won't come up Weak – it will either tie, and both Lost and Passion will be Minor, or it will be less than 20, and Minor.*
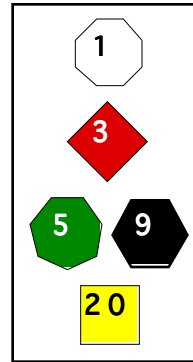


18

*She rolls the dice, and comes up with Known: 1, Dynamic: 3, Static: 5, Lost: 9. Combining that with her Passion: 20 (the Omega die), she reads the Hierarchy as follows: Known Dominant, Dynamic Major, Static & Lost Minor, and Passion Weak, as in Example 18. With a Favored Force in the Dominant position, it is a success.*

*She could have applied the inverse logic, assigning the Omega die a 1 to prevent Static from being Dominant, and then the Dominant position would either be empty, or occupied by Passion, which doesn't matter to this roll – but not Static, in any case. But since you check the Weak position before the Major, and The Cardinal's Saturn is so much lower than all his other dice, it is very likely that it would have ended up in the Weak position, leading to failure. She decided it's better to gamble on the small dice, hoping that at least one of the other two (one of which is Favored) keeps Static out of the Dominant position, than to gamble on Static not being Weak on its own. Had the roll been the same as above, going this route would have resulted in Passion & Known Major, Dynamic & Static Minor, and Lost Weak – a failure (see Example 19).*
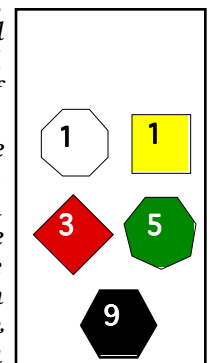


19

### Combined Rolls

The third complication is the combined roll. When two Omegas are both working on the same task, their Planets interact. Both are governed equally strongly by a Force, except where they are Ωed. To represent this in game terms, the dice of their Planets are combined, so that you only roll one die for

each Force, which then applies to both characters. Both characters' Hierarchies are then read from this set of dice, with each character ignoring any Ωed Planets. There are two instances of this, depending on whether the Omegas are opposed or co-ordinating. In both cases, for each Force compare the Planet scores of the two characters, and select only one of them. If the characters are working against one another, results get less predictable, so roll the larger die of the two. This is referred to as an opposed roll.

> *The Cardinal (Mercury d8, Venus Ω, Mars d6, Jupiter d6, Saturn d20) and Renaissance Man (Mercury d4, Venus d8, Mars d4, Jupiter Ω, Saturn d10) are arm wrestling. You would roll d8 for Known, d8 for Passion, d6 for Dynamic, d6 for Static, and d20 for Lost. The results are Known: 1, Passion: 3, Dynamic: 3, Static: 4, Lost: 5, and are laid out as in Example 20. The Cardinal would have a result of Known Dominant, Dynamic Major, Static Minor, and Lost Weak, while Renaissance Man's result would be Known Dominant, Dynamic and Passion tied for Major, and Lost Weak.*
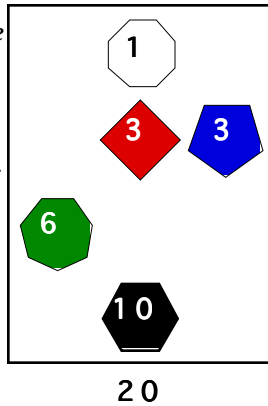
A combined roll is also used for characters acting in concert, this time referred to as a coordinating roll. The same procedure is followed, but when characters work together, results become more predictable, so the players may select which Planet die to use for each Force. If either character has a Planet Ωed, that die may be omitted. The Storyguide should tell the players which Forces are Favored and Opposed before they select their dice. Then order all of the dice into a single Hierarchy[30] to determine the results of the action.

> *So if The Cardinal and Renaissance Man, as above, were working together to lift a heavy stone, the SG might decide that Dynamic and Passion were Favored, while Static was Opposed. The players might then choose to roll d8 Known, d8 Passion, d4 Dynamic, and d20 Lost. They chose large dice for the Forces that didn't matter, and small dice for those that were Favored. If the results were Known: 4,*

> *Passion: 2, Dynamic: 2, and Lost: 9, the result would be Dynamic and Passion Major, Known Minor, and Lost Weak, as in Example 21.*

> *They chose not to roll a Static Planet at all, because the only choice was small enough that it probably would have landed high in the Hierarchy. If they'd had a large Jupiter to roll (d12 or greater), they probably would have, because an Opposed Force in the Weak position would help them. If they'd been stuck with a small Static die, they probably would have used the smaller dice for Known and Lost, risking bumping Passion, in order to try and keep Static out of the upper positions.*
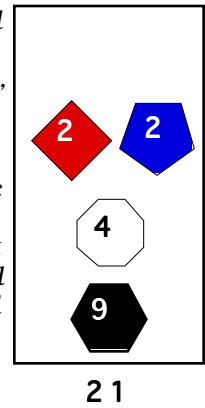
If the characters are not in direct opposition nor working directly together, but merely engaged in actions that will impact one another, you may choose to use a simple roll for each of them, rather than a combined roll. Generally, direct conflict, where one can succeed only in direct proportion to the other losing (wrestling), is best handled with a combined roll, while indirect conflict, where both can do well (footrace) is best handled by simple rolls for all participants.

In any case, all three of these complications (Circumstance dice, Omega die, combined rolls) are certainly optional, and are not at all necessary to the game. Like Degree of Success[31] , they are intended to add a bit more flexibility to Rolling the Planets, but since the entire dice mechanic is intended to be just a fall-back, an aid for when the outcome can't otherwise be determined, you may feel that that extra detail is wasted, or not worth the trouble.

### Four Basic Steps

Now that you know how to read the Hierarchy, using the Planets to resolve actions just involves understanding the Forces. The basic die-rolling procedure is as follows:

**1** The SG sets the Difficulty for the action, and picks the Favored and Opposed Forces.

**1a** If the player's Ωed Planet is not one of the Fa-

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[30] remember that extra dice end up in the Minor position

[31] see next chapter

The Lord (Unicode for Gothic text):

vored or Opposed Forces, she may decide to assign it a value, before the roll.

**2** The SG decides whether or not a Benefit or Hindrance (or both) applies, and if so, assigns the die or dice.

**3** The player rolls her character's Planets, and orders the dice according to the results, from lowest to highest.

**3a** The player also rolls any Circumstance dice, and compares them to the Hierarchy of the Planets.

**4** The SG determines whether or not the action is successful, based on the Hierarchy of the Planets.

| Difficulty | Forces |
|---|---|
| Automatic | 3 Favored |
| Simple | 3 Favored, 1 Opposed |
| Easy | 2 Favored, 1 Opposed |
| Moderate | # Favored = # Opposed |
| Challenging | 1 Favored, 2 Opposed |
| Hard | 1 Favored, 3 Opposed |
| Impossible | 3 Opposed |

### 1: Forces

Taking each of the steps in turn, we'll begin with an in-depth look at step 1, picking the Forces. There are two aspects to picking the Forces: how many, and which ones. Generally, we recommend that you start by assigning a Difficulty to the task, and then picking a number of Forces to match that Difficulty. You may, however, just choose the Favored and Opposed Forces, and allow the Difficulty to fall where it may, thus providing the Difficulty "naturally". In general, we discourage this method, as almost any Force can be described as governing almost any action, so it will tend to produce the Difficulty you want it to – thus leading back to the first method.

The basic difficulty for a task that requires a roll is Moderate. If you are considering using the Automatic or Impossible Difficulty levels, reconsider. In many situations, they are identical to the Simple and Hard Difficulties[32]. If what you want is a particularly easy or difficult task, assign a less-extreme Difficulty, and apply a fairly small Circumstance Die. If the action really should be automatic or impossible, declare it such, and don't roll. About the only time when those Difficulties are appropriate is in a case of opposed action, when the action would normally be simplistic or futile, but you want some chance for the opponent to succeed or fail, respectively.

Once you have a Difficulty in mind, the first question is which Forces are Favored for an action. These are the Forces that are in alignment with the action and likely to come into play for a successful outcome. The Opposed Forces are those which are most likely to come into play if the action fails. All actions should have at least one neutral Force, a Force which is neither Opposed nor Favored, and thus is given no consideration when interpreting the results. Remember that these Forces are picked with reference to the task being accomplished, and with no regard for the character accomplishing them.

Once the SG has decided, she should tell the player what Forces are Favored and Opposed. At this point, it is the player's responsibility to let the SG know if she has overlooked any mitigating circumstances that would alter the relevant Forces. The player may argue for different Forces, but the SG has final say. Generally, the only reason the SG should change the Forces picked is if she has forgotten a relevant Descriptor of the character, or the character changes strategies (presumably to play to her strengths). Ideally, the player will have already taken her character's strengths into account when choosing a course of action, and so the SG's choice of Forces will be well-tuned. Whether or not the SG accepts any of the player's suggestions, the Favored and Opposed Forces should be settled upon before the roll is made. It is too late once the dice have been rolled.

### 1a: Omega Die

If you are using the Omega die rule, now is a good time for a player to declare that she's using an Omega die (only if that Force is neither Opposed nor Favored, of course). She can either assign its value immediately, or wait and see what Circumstance dice (if any) are going to be applied. Either way, the Omega die must have a value assigned to it before any of the other dice are rolled.

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[32] due to Ωed Planets altering the odds for a particular character

### 2: Circumstances

The other element that should be decided upon before the roll is the application of any Circumstance (Benefit or Hindrance) dice. Circumstance dice are used for two different purposes. A Minor Circumstance die is applied for circumstances that affect the nature of the outcome, but won't actually help or prevent it, such as wounds, special tools, distractions, and extreme cleverness. When a result is read that includes a Minor Modifier die, the outcome is determined normally from the Planets, but the placement of the Circumstance die is used to help explain the outcome. Remember that Diceless characters can't roll for themselves, so allies and opponents are often translated into a Benefit or Hindrance die, respectively, for the Main characters.

A Major Circumstance die is used for those cases where the actual outcome could be affected. Again, the Planets are rolled normally, and the Circumstance die is placed with regards to the Hierarchy. But if a Major Circumstance die is stronger than (has a smaller value than) all of the Planets, it instead rules, causing failure or success, respectively. At the SG's discretion, it may also rule the situation with other placements, depending on the rest of the Hierarchy. Major Circumstance dice should be used for particularly amazing stunts, very significant Diceless opposing or allied forces, or other major impacts on the possible outcomes.

In any case, the size and type of Circumstance die should be left up to the SG, with player input, of course. Most Circum-

stance dice should be Minor, and you should mostly stick to the d20 to d4 range. Consider carefully before assigning a Major Circumstance die, because you are lessening the player's impact on the story by putting a factor outside her control into the Hierarchy. A character may have both a Hindrance and a Benefit die at the same time, but only 1 of each (whether each is Minor or Major doesn't matter).

### 3: Roll the Dice

Once you have the Forces and Circumstances determined, roll the dice. There are two types of rolls, a basic roll and a combined roll. A combined roll is only used when two characters with dice (i.e., Planet scores) are involved in the same action, either in concert or opposition. A basic roll is used in all other circumstances, even when the character is in conflict with another (Diceless) character.

For a basic roll, roll all of the character's Planets, and order the dice (and thus the Forces they represent) according to their results, from lowest to highest – die type doesn't matter for this ordering. To expedite this, it is a good idea to have a different color for each Planet die, even if they are of different types. Consult the die-rolling examples if you're not sure how to deal with ties and other complications. If you have any Circumstance dice, you can either roll them along with the other dice (provided they are of different colors, so you can keep them separated), or afterwards. Alternately, you could roll Major Circumstance dice along

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**I've Got a Secret**

Those of you familiar with other RPGs (and probably some of you who are not) will perhaps have noticed that there is no mention of "hidden" or "secret" rolls. That's not an oversight. In those games, hidden rolls are used when you don't want the player to know whether or not the character succeeded, either to maintain the challenge or enhance enjoyment.

But those are rolls that involve the character's capabilities, generally in areas where ascertaining one's own success is uncertain (such as interrogating someone). In this game, the dice don't say anything about the character's capabilities – if you could determine the results based on the Descriptors, you wouldn't be rolling the dice. Rather, the dice reflect the Forces of the world around the character, the Fates or random chance, depending on who you believe.

But there's still the question of the player knowing something her character doesn't know. In this game, the character never knows the minds of the Fates, yet the player knows how the dice turn up all the time. Part of the enjoyment is the authorial level, where you behave as a third-party observer. So rolls of the Planets to resolve something completely out of the character's control or awareness are nothing special.

with the Planets, since they are necessary for determining success, and roll Minor Circumstance dice separately, since they only flavor the result.

For a combined roll, you need to figure out which dice to roll. If the characters are working against each other, it's an opposed roll, and you simply select the larger die for each Planet (or the only die where one of them is Ωed). You should end up with a die for each Planet that either character has, and that die should be the larger of the two if both characters have it. Roll the dice together and order them, pulling any Ωed results to the side, away from that character. Then determine the Hierarchy for each character, using only dice that are not Ωed for that character. If the characters are working together, it's a coordinating roll, and the players may choose which die to roll for each Planet – including choosing not to roll a die for any Planet that is Wed. Roll the chosen dice, and make a single Hierarchy out of them.

### 4: Success or Failure

The final step is to determine the success or failure. This is done by checking the Hierarchy in a particular order. First the Dominant die is checked. If it is one of the Favored Forces, the action succeeds, and if it is one of the Opposed Forces, the action fails. If it is neither, or there is no Dominant die, proceed to the Weak. If that die is an Opposed Force the action succeeds, and if it is a Favored Force the action fails. If it, too, is neutral or non-existent, look to the Major die. Once again, a Favored Force means success, while an Opposed Force means failure. If, after checking the Major position, there still is not a result, the action is considered to have been unproductive; there has been no change in the situation. In most cases, this means that nothing happened (the arm wrestlers are at a standoff, with neither having made any

**Circumstances Can Be Everything**

So, you know you want to use Circumstance dice, but you're not sure what dice to use. It really boils down to "do what feels right", but here are a few guidelines to get you started.

A d30 is a really minor factor, and will almost never come into play. Only use it as such, and start with a d20 or probably d12 if you want it to actually have some impact. If you feel the need for a smaller Circumstance die than a d4, you can roll multiple dice and take the smallest one. By the time you get to "smaller" than 2d4 with a Major Circumstance, however, you may just want to declare an action Impossible or Automatic.

There are several ways to combine Circumstance dice. One way is to "add" them: Consider the size dice you had in mind, and look at how many steps from the bottom they are. Add those up, and count that many steps from the bottom to find your new Circumstance die. Similarly, if you'd rather not have Benefit and Hindrance dice in the same roll, you can "subtract" the larger from the smaller, to get the "net" Benefit or Hindrance. For both of these techniques, we recommend that you use all of the steps on the Descriptors chart, so that there are more steps.

Another way to combine Circumstance dice is to take the smallest die of one type (Hindrance or Benefit), and decrease it one step for each die of the same size or slightly (say, up to two steps) larger. With this method, ignore any Minor Hindrance dice except for a d4 or d3 if there is a Major Hindrance die (and the same for Benefit dice, of course).

An even less mathematical way to handle multiple Circumstance is to simply decrease the die size by a step each time you want to add a new Circumstance of the same type. With this method, ignore additional Minor Circumstances once you have a Major Circumstance die, and a d4 Minor Circumstance that gets increased could instead become a d20 Major Circumstance, if the circumstances warrant.

progress), but in some situations doing nothing is tantamount to a bare success (if you're trying to resist someone pulling you down, just not going anywhere is almost a success). If an Opposed and Favored Force are tied in a position, treat that position as neutral and move on. If there are more Opposed than Favored Forces tied in one position, treat the position as Opposed, and vice versa.

Remember that a Major Circumstance die will determine success if it is strong enough. What exactly constitutes "strong enough" is up to the SG. If it is lower than all of the Planets, it certainly rules, but the rest of the time it is up to the SG to interpret its relative importance from its position, especially with regards to the Opposed and Favored Forces.

If you want a more-detailed result, there are two techniques for getting more information from the Hierarchy. The first, and most important, way is to consider the particular Forces involved in greater detail. While you simply assigned Forces as Favored, Opposed, or Neutral in the basic die-rolling system, here we will consider their specific natures. Which Forces come up where, particularly of the Favored and Opposed Forces, will tell you the *nature* of the success. A success with Passion (Favored) Dominant and Static (Favored) Weak is very different from one with Static (Favored) Dominant and Passion (Favored) Weak, even though both give the same nominal result. Consider the Descriptors of the characters involved, and take advantage of that distinction to describe both the nature and degree of the success or failure. If the results make sense, their relative magnitude will take care of itself.

Directly comparing successes and making sure that one success is appropriately "greater" than another is a secondary and rather minor consideration. But if you wish to be more consistent in your rulings, or you just wish finer gradations than simply analyzing the Forces can give you, the Hierarchy (with or without Circumstance dice) can be used to give degrees of success. In general, more Favored Forces in the Dominant and Major positions, more Opposed Forces in the Weak position, and stronger results from Benefit dice mean a better result, while more Opposed Forces in the Dominant and Major positions, more Favored Forces in the Weak position, and stronger results from Hindrance dice mean a worse result. Also, the Dominant position is slightly stronger than the Weak, which is in turn stronger than the Major. A suggested ordering of results is given in the chart on this page, but it is by no means definitive, nor does it cover every possible situation. The chart works from the greatest success at the upper left to the greatest failure at the lower right. Failures are white-on-black and Successes are black-on-white.

> **Thou Shalt Not Determine Degree of Success by Comparing Values on the Dice**
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> Only the placement in the Hierarchy matters, not how big or small the result number is in relation to other Planets of the same or a different character.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| F / F / - / O | F / - / - / O | F / - / - / - | - / F / - / - | - / F / - / F |
| F / F / - / - | F / F,F,O / - / - | F / O / - / - | - / O,F / - / F | - / - / - / F |
| F / F,O / - / - | F / - / - / F | - / F,F,O / - / - | O / - / - / O | O / O,F / - / - |
| - / - / - / O | - / F,O / - / O | O / F / - / - | O / O,O,F / - / - | O / O / - / - |
| - / O / - / O | - / O / - / - | O / - / - / - | O / - / - / F | O / O / - / F |

### Circumstances and Success

The Circumstance dice can also be used to give a more-detailed description of the results. When a Circumstance die ties a Planet, treat it as having the same position as the Planet for purposes of the nature of the success. This is the only way you can have more than one die effectively in the Dominant or Weak positions. If it falls between steps of the Hierarchy, consider it just before the Planet with the next-lowest score. So if it is between the Dominant and Major positions, treat it as slightly more important than the Major Planet, and so on. If it falls above the Dominant position (or above the Major, if there is no Dominant) it has a very strong influence, stronger than any of the Planets. In any case, remember that a Minor Circumstance die can not determine results, only color them. Even if it is the lowest die in the roll, it well not cause success or failure, only determine the why of it. A Major Circumstance die, however, *can* determine success or failure. In that case, consider it positionally just as above, but allow it to tell you how and why the character

succeeded or failed. For Major Circumstance dice, you can also count them in as extra Favored or Opposed Forces when looking at the degree-of-success chart.

Another optional technique is to allow multiple Hindrance dice when facing a small number of significant opponents. A separate Hindrance die can be assigned for each opponent, and you can then look at where they fall to individually determine how the opponents did, thus giving a more-detailed result. If a Main character is facing a couple of Omegas for whom you don't have Planet scores yet, you could just treat each as a Major Hindrance die, and if their particular Hindrance die is the one that causes the character to fail, or do less well, they are the cause of it, and have succeeded in inverse measure.

Another important technique, even if you don't use explicit "degrees of success", is to use the character's Descriptors, along with any Circumstance Dice, to describe the details of the results. For both Major and Minor Circumstance Dice, take them into consideration when deciding the specifics of the result, even if they weren't the deciding factor. A success due to a Favored Force in the Dominant position should be different from one due to a Favored Force in the Dominant Position with a Minor Benefit die just beneath it.

While Descriptors specifically should not be considered when setting the Favored and Opposed Forces for the task, nor when determining Circumstance Dice, they are useful in interpreting and explaining the results of the Hierarchy. Just as Circumstance Dice can help explain why the character succeeded or failed, her Descriptors can provide the inspiration for describing the results. You can also, at your discretion, consider them in terms of magnitude – it is likely that the The Cardinal would do a more effective job of holding a door against a battering ram than The Spook would, so you can decide as much even if both had the same result on the Hierarchy.

Remember, these Descriptors aren't part of Rolling the Planets, just interpreting the result. Therefore, they shouldn't change the quality of the success (i.e., which Forces were involved), just its specific expression in the game world. You already know whether or not the character succeeded (and to what degree, if you're using Degree of Success), you're just looking for an appropriate game-world explanation to match those results.

Italia is essentially Renaissance Italy as we wish it had been, with the addition of superheroes. Everything is more exciting and more amazing and more dangerous than it was in real life. There are not merely politics, but Machiavellian secret societies behind the scenes controlling everything. The Church isn't just in charge, it's right. And the inventions of da Vinci's that we know are just the ones he didn't keep secret[33].

If you want to add more detail to the world, just follow this simple principle: if it seems right to you, it probably is. This is Renaissance Italy according to movie history. If a few facts get changed to make things more interesting, that's all for the better.

There is, of course, one major change to the real Renaissance Italy to come up with Italia: the Omegas. Like many superhero settings, this one does not fully integrate the superheroes into the setting. The world is *not* altered to anywhere near the degree it most likely would be with a large body of superpowered persons within it. For the most part, life continues as it would if the only sources of power were wealth, politics, information, and the Church. Very few laws have been changed to accommodate the Omegas, though a few places have explicitly restricted them from some activities or burdened them with extra responsibilities, and a a *very* few have given them special rights. Part of the reason that they are not treated as a special population is the difficulty of identifying them – remember, very few can see how the Forces affect a person, and not all Omegas have powers that manifest obviously. For Example, Leonardo da Vinci is not an Omega, yet he is the source of the alchemy and mechanisms that make Captain Italia and the Daring Davincis Omegas. So it is easier for governments to deal with actions than people. Make controlling someone illegal, and not distinguish between mystical rituals, phenomenal mental powers, or a knowledge of herbs as the method. The Church, of course, is much more concerned with means and

motives than ends. So canonical law *does* care about how you get your powers. Of course, it still relies on the fallible mortals and Omegas within its fold, so an exact science it isn't. For the most part, Omegas whose power comes from clearly scientific sources (such as the Daring daVincis) are safe from its wrath, so long as they don't make claims to defying God's will. Those whose powers are more mystical in bent are at best seen unfavorably by the Church, unless their powers descend from the Heavens – or they claim as much. Of the rest, those who claim that they have no need of God or the Church, or who claim that their powers are evidence that God is not the only, or not the supreme, source of mystical power suffer the brunt of the Church's wrath. While the Church doesn't have enough power in most of Italia to try or punish someone merely for heretical thought (heretical action is another matter), its minions may go out of their way to cause such an Omega grief.

The other reason that Italia isn't drastically different from Renaissance Italy is one of magnitude: the Omegas just aren't that significant of a force. Perhaps, if they were united, they would be a force to contend with. As is, all but the most powerful can be brought down by a well-trained group of soldiers, and none can completely ignore social pressures. So while many an Omega can do as she wills in the face of a single mortal, or even a small group of them, if they upset a large group of people – a village, the Church, a merchant family, etc. – enough for them to want retribution, they will most likely get it. No Omega could defy the law for long, for example – those villains that do, do so by being willing to spend most of their lives outside of the rest of society, or by playing one set of laws and authorities against another. Likewise, almost all Omegas need to eat, so it is not in their interests to have the general populace against them.

Finally, Omegas have been around for as long as

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[33] in fact, da Vinci is the not-so-secret founder of the Daring Davincis, a team of Ωs that all get their powers from gadgets built by him

anybody can remember[34]. Their presence predates even Church law, so society has had plenty of time to adapt. Chiefly, this adaptation has taken the form of keeping a very close hand on Omegas, using monks and other learned men to ferret out any whose powers were not obvious. In various lands over the last two millenia, Omegas have frequently held carefully-circumscribed positions of power. Kings' champions, temple enforcers, and generals' right-hand-men have often been Omegas, and it was only by selling their services to the most powerful men in the land that a few Omegas escaped ostracization or persecution. All the while, the majority of Omegas led quite lives, hiding their powers as best they could. Many chose the seclusion of religious life or hermitage, the better to avoid those who would ask awkward questions. A few were feared or even respected, able to parlay their powers into political influence – the occaisional prophet, general, or bandit king.

**Laws for Omegas**

Here are a sampling of some of the laws or rules that specifically apply to Omegas in different parts of Italia.
- In Milano, all Omegas must be members in good standing with the Hall of Justice.
- Venicia has no special laws with regards to Omegas, but Professor Ω has come to an agreement with the Ducal Council and the Council of Ten. Anybody causing trouble and suspected of being an Omega is left to the Professor's students to take care of, or turned over to the Professor if detained before they realize this. The Professor, in turn, cooperates with the authorities and won't shelter the incorrigible Omegas.
- Roma is under the sway of Canon Law. This means that Omegas with mystical-seeming powers are in danger of a visit from the Inquisition if they do not swear loyalty to God and the Church.
- Also in Roma, the Pope has made strict decrees governing the intermarriage of Omegas and normal people.
- In Florenza, a law was passed 3 years ago forbidding anyone from selling art created by an Omega without marking it as such. It was intended to keep those with superpowers from outdoing normal artists, but has instead led to an inflated trade in the much-rarer Omega art, even though most of it is created in conventional manners, and is of rather poor quality.
- Napoli requires all Omegas to register with the Register of Deeds. However, Omegas that swear an oath to act as an adjunct arm of the law are exempt from several taxes, even if they are foreign-born.
- The village of Selerno, just south of Napoli, is experimenting with an all-Omega regiment, and has tightened restrictions on non-enlisted Omegas in order to recruit.
- Bologna, in an attempt to compete with Venicia, has recently declared all registered Omegas free of taxes, provided they have not committed any crimes, are unmarried, and, if foreign-born, have lived in Italia for at least five years.

Then, less than a century ago, an Omega decided that she could do more for society than society was letting her. She chose to step outside of society, in order to better serve it. By day, she continued her life as a weaver of fishing nets in Venicia. But by night she became Luna the Huntress, the Moon's own Avenger, striking fear into the criminals of the night. She did not concern herself with the laws of the land, for they clearly were not right. But she would let no justice go unpunished. At first, she merely beat up street thugs and disrupted smuggling rings. The law turned a blind eye to her. But

when she began to hunt down corrupt politicians and merchant lords, and the law saw her clearly. The man hunt lasted more than a year, in no small part because they never considered that their mysterious hunter might actually be a huntress. And even once they knew their quarry, they discovered she was no easy catch. Finally, after more than two months of attempts, the Council of Ten managed to capture her. However, she had captured the public's imagination, and they could not simply try and execute her as they wished. So, they made a big show of exiling a couple of Councilors, and then struck a deal with her. She would be released, free to resume her night prowlings, but should she find further evidence of corruption within the government, she would inform the Senate and let them handle it. Upon her release, she formed The Re-

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[34] Well, not *anybody*. The Pharoah originally lived during the early Egyptian empire, and could probably tell you when he first heard about an Omega. Both Rego Aquam's people, and the people that built Golem's body, might also predate the first Omegas, and thus each of them might know something of their coming. And nobody knows how old The Ineffeble Shroud is, or even if age (or even time) is a meaningful concept for her.

deemers, the first independent group of Omegas dedicated to fighting crime. Over the decades, the membership has changed regularly, with only Luna herself still remaining of the original members[35]. Meanwhile, the Senate or the Council of Ten occaisionally exiles some scapegoat, or an actual conspirator who has become too obvious, and Luna remains unaware of the true level of corruption within Venicia.

In the years following the founding of the Redeemers, similar groups of vigilante Omegas have been formed up all over Italia. Certainly the most famous of these is the Daring Davincis, of Florenza, though they are probably more famous for their namesake than on their own merits. After The Redeemers, the group to have the most influence on society would be the Hall of Justice, in Milano. Boasting over fifty current members, and another dozen now deceased, the Hall of Justice is more a loose affiliation, like a gentlemen's club, than a tight pseudo-military organization. Authorities and citizens alike come to the Hall of Justice, seeking aid, and whatever Omegas are present render it. The organization that is likely to have the greatest influence on Omegas in the future, however, is Professor Ω's School for Gifted Youth. Here, Omegas of all ages come to better learn their powers. At the current rate, in 50 years fully a quarter of all Omegas will have spent some time here, and have been exposed to the Professor's ideas of what an Omega is and what her responsibilities to society are.

### Venicia

Venicia is one of the richest cities in the world, with only Roma, Constantinople, Sophia, and

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[35] Though rumor has it that Twice-Born used to be the Omega known as Night Haunt, who is believed to have died 26 years ago.

> **State of the Art**
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> What is state of the art in Italia really depends as much on who you are as on the times. For the average peasant/burger, state of the art means a central well and outhouses; forged iron implements; a sundial and nocturnal; pickling and salting; oil lanterns; and, at best, a crude blunderbuss. For a well-off merchant or lord, or the Church, state of the art means running water, but cisterns or outhouses; forged steel implements; sand-, pendulum, or spring-driven clocks; pickling, salting and smoking; oil or kerosene lamps; and perhaps even a flintlock. For some of the Omegas, such as da Vinci, state of the art may mean hot-and-cold running water and a flushing toilet; high-tensile forged or cast steel implements; pocketwatches; canning; kerosene or perhaps even crude arc lamps; and flintlocks or wheellocks.

Alexandria being more prosperous. This is due to trade coupled with careful politics for the last thousand years. Venicia sits on a trade nexus, at the mouth of the Italian Sea, and essentially all trade to the Austro-Hungarian and Holy Roman Empires goes through it, as well as a fair bit of the trade to the Mediterranean (most of that which goes by sea). Due to its huge coffers and even larger fleet, it is more powerful than any city in Italia save Roma. Luckily, Venicia prefers to conquer with gold, rather than guns.

Physically, Venicia sits just off the shores of the mainland, sited on a dozen small, close-set islands. Over the centuries, hundreds of bridges have been built between the islands, making of them one large city. As a result, Venicia has almost as many canals as roads, and these have been dredged and walled to make deep clear channels. Even moderate-sized sailing ships can sail right into the heart of the city. The land is dominated by close-set, often abutting, 3- and 4-story wooden houses with flat roofs and frequent courtyards. Some of the government buildings are stone, and there are several mansion houses scattered about. The skyline is dominated by the cathedral, the clock tower, and the city hall, all of which are over 60 feet tall.

There are well over 100,000 people living in Venicia, and a sizable government to match. The largest body is the Grand Council, made up of several hundred hereditary aristocrats. Most of the wealthiest merchants of Venicia are members, but since the positions are hereditary, not all Councilors are rich, nor are all the wealthy Councilors. From among their number, they pick 60 to serve one-year terms in the Senate. The Senate is the body that actually does most of the day-to-day governing, pri-

marily through the proxies of countless councils and committees. The Grand Council also picks 6 members to be the Ducal Council, the personal advisors to the Doge. The Doge is elected by the Grand Council for life, and is the only person with official decision-making power, though he delegates freely to the Ducal Council and the Senate, and so long as they do not contradict his wishes they effectively can make their own decisions. The Council of Ten is one of the most powerful of the many councils the Senate oversees. Selected by secret ballot and known only to each other and the Ducal Council, they oversee the secret police of Venicia, a ruthless organization unfettered by the public relations concerns of the regular watch.

The actual people of Venicia are not very different from those of other parts of Italia. Almost everybody here is in some way related to the business of international trade, but that still includes many "normal" professions, such as inns and restaurants, cobblers, and so forth. The people are, almost without exception, Catholic, but they are slightly less fervent about it than most. Probably due to their constant interaction with other lands, the people tend to be a bit more cosmopolitan – less bigoted, more interested in science and art. Finally, they are probably the least militant people in Italia. Venecia is unique in having neither walls nor a standing military. Of course, walls would be superfluous, since they live on an island. And, in times of trouble, the merchant fleets of the city become the largest navy since Alexander's time.

### Milano

Milano is not quite as big, nor as prosperous, as Venicia. It is a well-to-do town of about 80,000 people, ruled as a true dukedom. The Duke of Milano is currently Cetto Foscari, and his family has held the title since being granted it nearly 250 years ago. Omegas are generally treated well, but at arm's length. For the most part, they have a positive reputation, but every time a villain runs amuck it hurts matters terribly.

### By the Numbers

In case you're the sort who best understands these things with hard numbers, here you go:
- There are probably about two hundred Omegas in Italia, with more than half in the states of Venicia and Milano.
- Another score or two foreign Omegas dwell within the confines of Italia.
- Other places with concentrations of Omegas include Constantinople, Cairo, Ur, and Sophia.
- Italia is, for some reason, the area with the highest percentage of Omegas. Overall, there are perhaps 500 to 800+ Omegas in the Known World, though the estimates of villainous Omegas are possibly wildly innaccurate. This means about 1 in 100,000 people world-wide is an Omega, but about 1 in 20,000 in Italia.

### Beyond Italia

While Italia is the center of the world (by Papal Decree), there are many other lands known beyond its borders. Some have a great deal of interaction with Italia as states, while others have peoples that mix with those of Italia on a regular basis, and a few have very little contact with Italia or its people. Immediately to the west of Italia, and sharing the "island" made by the Straight of Gibraltar and the Sea of Tunis, is Espania, home of the Spanish and Catalan peoples. North and northeast of Italia is the Austro-Hungarian Empire, while north of that is the Holy Roman Empire, both powerful political rivals to Italia and each other. Perched on the coast, abutting both of these empires and near the mouth of the Sea of Italia, are the Swiss Alps, a confederation of small states upon some of the highest and most rugged mountains known. To the far north are the Kingdom of Denmark, and two small uncivilized islands known as Brittania and Eyre. South of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and east of Italia, are the lands of Serbia and Macedonia, while south of those is Greece, home of the other pillar of Gibraltar. East of the the Austro-Hungarian Emprie is Dobrudia, ruled by Commander Daemon, while east of the Holy Roman Empire is the land of Rus. South, across the Sea of Tunis, are the lands of Tunisia and Egypt, as well as the many Moorish kingdoms and states. It is said that the land continues on south of the great desert

that is the southern extent of Moorish influence, thrice again as far, though what kingdoms and peoples might inhabit this land, or if it even truly exists, is unknown. East across the Aegean Sea from Greece are The Ukraine and the Ottoman Empire. Across the Mediterranean Sea are the Holy Lands and the lands of Arabia and Abyssinia. Further to the east are Hindustan and the Oriental lands of Cathay, Persia, and Nihon, and the jungle empire of Khmer. To the far north are the uncivilized lands of the great Steppes. Of these, only those close to Italia will be detailed here.

### Austro-Hungarian Empire

The Austro-Hungarian Empire is a relatively young empire, and is still growing. It was formed by the marriage of the Austrian and Hungarian families only five generations ago. It currently has uneasy relations with both the Holy Roman Empire and Rus, as it pushes at its limits, seeking further growth. Omegas here are never royalty, but often enjoy a sort of privileged status, somewhat outside the usual social order.

### Holy Roman Empire

A thousand years ago, the Roman Empire extended as far north and west as Denmark and Brittania, controlled all of the lands to the east, as far as Persia and Cathay, and held Egypt as a vassal. It had grown so big that it was ruled from two capitols, one for the Mediterranean and eastern lands, and a second for the northern and western lands. When the barbarians sacked Roma, the Empire fell, but the northern capitol was able to maintain its rule over some of the northern lands. Over the centuries, its sway has waxed and waned , until today the Holy Roman Empire is one of the wealthiest and largest lands. However, it is a very fractious land, which undermines its potential for power. The Emperor has little more than the power of persuasion over his many barons and dukes, so the Empire only rarely acts as one unit. Here, most Omegas are caught up in the political machinations, so their status varies from individual to individual, from outcast to trusted advisor to the Emperor.

### Swiss Alps

The Swiss Alps are an extremely craggy range of mountains, at the south-west corner of the mainland. Most of the country is above 5000 feet of altitude, with many of the peaks being over 10,000 feet. The mountains plunge directly into the sea, making the coastline here a series of rocky cliffs and fjords, with thousands of miniscule islands, no more than outcroppings of rocks, within a few hundred yards of the shore. The Swiss Alps is not a single country, but a loose confederation of cities and small states, united principly by their wish to be left alone, and particularly to have no dealings with those outside the mountains. It is unknown if any Omegas live here, or how the people feel about them.

### Espania

Espania has only recently become one united country. Until a little less than four centuries ago, there were the feuding kingdoms of Aragon, Leon, Castille, and Navarre, as well as the Moorish land of Granada. Then, in 1065, Ferdinand I, King of Castille, died and divided his lands among his progeny. The eldest, Sancho, feeling that he should have inherited all of his father's holdings, waged war and treachery on his siblings, and eventually gained control of all but one parcel before being slain. Along the way, he first befriended and then banished the then Count of Bivar, Rodrigo Diaz. Before being banished, he had so distinguished himself in battle that he had become commander of Sancho's armies, and after Sancho's death became commander of Urraca's[36] armies, until being once again betrayed by his political rivals and banished. At this point, Diaz took to the mercenary lifestyle, selling his services and those of his loyal followers to the highest bidder, and often engaging in fights for his own reasons. It is said that, no matter the

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[36] Urraca was the youngest of the siblings, and the last that Sancho attacked. It was her army that defeated him, though through deceit rather than strategy, and she quickly seized control of the whole of Castille.

forces at his command, he could not be defeated, and the Moors that he drove from Granada gave him the respectful title of *seid*, "chief", which he gladly adopted as El Cid. Despite his mercenary nature, it was his conquests that eventually created Espania. Before his death in 1099, he had Christianized all of Espania, and become ruler of Granada, Castille, and Leon. His two daughters, through strategic marriages, helped him forge alliances with Navarre and Aragon, and through crafty politics managed to form a joint kingdom when the king of Navarre died. When the king of Aragon died, in 1148, they managed to get his son, the grandson of El Cid, on a throne ruling the whole of the newly-dubbed Espania. Only after this point, in their later years, was it revealed that both of El Cid's daughters were Omegas, and to this day Omegas are treated more favorably in Espania than almost any other land.

### Egypt

Egypt is the oldest land in the known world. Its empire extends back further even than those of Persia or Cathay. As such, it is also the most stable, and one of the most powerful. Egypt's navy is second only to Venicia's, but is a standing navy. Egypt also has one of the largest standing armies. However, a combination of diplomacy and the threat of force has meant that Egypt has not used its military for over a thousand years. Here, Omegas are generally feared, though in times past they ruled as gods.

### Dobrudia

Dobrudia is a forbidding, mountainous land, swept by the cold winds from Rus and lapped at by the cold waters of the Aegean Sea. It is too rocky for most crops, too rocky for good roads, and too rocky for ships to make landfall. Sandwiched between the ancient state of Rus, the growing Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the prosperous kingdom of Macedonia, it is a poor land full of poor people. It was originally a Prefect of the Roman Empire, becoming an independent state upon its fall, and only the

undesireable nature of the land has kept it free since then. That, and its current ruler. Commander Dæmon was the 2nd son and 3rd child of the last king. Seeing the Austro-Hungarian Empire become ever greedier during his childhood, he resolved to make something of his country. He knew of one asset, the people's unbreakable spirit, and discovered a 2nd: veins of minerals that, as far as he knew, had never been found anywhere else. He went to the best schools available (in Florenza and Constantinople) and spent years in the greatest libraries (at Alexandria and Ur), all looking for a way to lead his people to greatness. Eventually, he discovered uses for the minerals: better steels, superior ceramics, even improved mortars. Then, through deceit and skullduggery, he took the throne upon his father's death. He created a vast industrial architecture the likes of which has never been seen, and began creating and exporting. The raw minerals are never exported, only the products, and those in the workshops are sworn to secrecy. As far as the rest of the world knows, superior workmanship is the secret. But this has come at a price. The very people he wished to free from poverty are now all but slaves of the state. While Dobrudia has grown both more influential and richer, only a few have shared this wealth. While they no longer want for food on their plates, the masses now work harder than ever before, and see little else in the way of improvement. If Commander Dæmon ever truly wanted to better the lives of his people, he has lost sight of this goal in his quest for power. In his quest for dominance, all Omegas of the land are forced to work for the state, on pain of death.

A note on presentation: You will notice that several of the Omegas listed or described here do not have Descriptors or Planets accompanying them, and some of those that do are incomplete. This is not a mistake. This chapter provides a framework for you to build upon, so some of the Omegas are just ideas, or even only names, to serve as a jumping-off point.

### The Hall of Justice (Milano)

The Hall of Justice is the largest organization of Omegas in the known world. It boasts well over 50 members, with another dozen former members that have since died or left for other lands. Since all Omegas in Milano are required to be members in good standing, it is a fairly loose affiliation. All kinds of Omegas are members, from those who never use their powers and would just as soon be normal, through those who are reluctant members and use their powers only for themselves, to those who see their Omega status as a calling, and spend much of their time at the Hall and aiding others.

Physically, the Hall is a great stone structure, second in size only to the cathedral and the town hall (in both cases out of deference). It stands 30 feet tall, is 30 paces wide and more than 100 paces long. The front area consists of a huge meeting hall, with an entertainment stage and food and drink served. All are welcome, though mostly only Omegas are found here. The rest of the Hall has some spartan dormitories[37], a few cells, some offices and small meeting rooms, a library, and the training area. The training area consists of an arena-like room, set partly beneath the ground, more than 20 paces on a side. It is equipped so that it can be partly flooded, and has movable interior walls and other obstacles. There are arrow loops and observa-

[37] free to members, paid for by membership dues

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**The Hall of Justice (Milano)**

Marathon
The Cardinal
Tabula Rasa, the Wax Man
Gargoyle
The Ineffable Shroud
Golem, the Savage Thunder
The Mystic Rose
The Spook
Renaissance Man
Father Ultor de Chaae
The Incredible Bird
The Mathemagician
The Crier

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tion points set around the upper walls. Together with many other sophisticated features, the members of the Hall can use this room to learn to better use their powers, to practice combat techniques, or just about anything else.

The Hall of Justice was founded in 1420 by The Brown Wasp (deceased in 1457); Matteo da Milano (now known as the villain Logomancer); and the Ineffable Shroud. The current building was built by Gibraltar in 1458. While there is no leadership, *per se*, The Cardinal, Gargoyle, and The Mystic Rose take care of most of the decision making about the Hall itself.

### The Ineffable Shroud
**Known:** Ω
**Passion:** Ω
**Dynamic:** d6
**Static:** d6
**Lost:** Ω
Power: Reductio ad Absurdum
Power: Summonable – shows up when you need her most
Power: Bribe the Fates – always has a hand of 5 Storypath cards.
Weakness: Must Speak in Riddles
Weakness: Can only show up when you want her least
Weakness: Cannot use Storypath cards to directly affect herself
Quirk: She is her own Platonic Ideal, so her shadows and reflections are imperfect, and never look like her.
Quirk: Has a Buddhist-like indifference to her good acts
Quirk: Ineffable
Inveigling Tongue
Inescapable Wrath
Incomprehensible Motives
Indelible Will
Inerrable Logic
Incommutable Appearance

### The Cardinal
**Known:** d8
**Passion:** Ω
**Dynamic:** d6
**Static:** d6
**Lost:** d20
Power: Strength of God: When wearing a cross, is incredibly strong
Weakness: Shield of Faith: unable to harm true believers
Quirk: Honors Christian Icons
Power Stunt: Inhuman Endurance: draws upon the infiniteness of God's wisdom to never tire
Power Stunt: Shake the Earth: by striking the ground with his cross, he can cause great tremors
The Word of God: memorized even the most apocryphal of Christian texts
Papal Politics: familiar with to getting The Church to issue favorable edicts
Literate: Can read Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic

Combat: Practiced in both melee and missile

Scent of Corruption: can track villains unerringly

The Wealth of The Church: can tap into vast amounts of money in his quest to rid the world of evil

Resist Temptation: cannot be swayed away from the righteous path

Read Heretical Books: familiar with diabolical and pagan rites and knowledge

Flaw: Underestimates Heretical Power: believes that he will always prevail over nonbelievers, no matter the odds

Flaw: Afraid of Questioning his Faith: God can do no wrong, therefore His plans are always Perfect

## Gargoyle (Giuseppe Verde)

**Known: d6**

**Passion: d6**

**Dynamic: d6**

**Static: d6**

**Lost: Ω**

Power: Magically Transformed into Gargoyle: claws, stone skin, able to glide

Weakness: Mechanical Disinclination: cannot use machines more complex than a wheel

Quirk: looks like a gargoyle

Power Stunt: Tenderness of the Stone-doesn't feel pain

Power Stunt: Falls like a Rock-a very flat, low density, winged rock

Power Stunt: Stillness of the Night- nearly invisible when motionless

Superbly Trained: the Greek ideal of athleticism

Resourceful: carries a small alchemical lab

Knows how to find information: has good hunches about relevant sources

Underworld Contacts: knows various characters of ill repute

Alchemist: Well-versed in alchemical theory and practice

Meticulous: very methodical, leaves no stone unturned

Terrifying: can easily intimidate people with his fearsome visage

Driven By Revenge: relentless in his quest to rid the world of evil

No Humours: mood and health never change

## The Mystic Rose

**Known: Ω**

**Passion: d12**

**Dynamic: d10**

**Static: d8**

**Lost: d4**

Power: The Sorcerous Might of the Blue Garden

Weakness: Lunar Gift: must recharge every moonrise in the Blue Garden

Quirk: Obeys Aristotelian gravity

Power Stunt: Blue Garden's Duty: grants one of the powers of the Eternal Bloom's choice after moonrise meditation

Power Stunt: Blue Garden's Favor: grants one of the powers after a Planet roll where Saturn ranks Minor or higher

Power Stunt: Blue Garden's Gift: grants one of the powers after a Planet roll where Saturn ranks Major or higher

Power Stunt: Blue Garden's Boon: grants one of the powers after a Planet roll where Saturn ranks Dominant

Former Clergyman: Can speak Latin and understands the workings of The Church

Imposing: can intimidate those of a lesser will

Sleepless: does not need to sleep normally

Obliging Clothing: sorcerous robes will never get in the way at all

Occult Connections: knows where to get supernatural information

Ritual Magic: familiar with diabolical and pagan rites and knowledge

Flaw: Subtle and Quick to anger: speaks rather obtusely, and becomes enraged when others do not grasp his meaning

**Sorcerous Might Details**

Each moonrise, the Eternal Bloom in the Blue Garden brings forth another blossom. Its color determines the gifts the Mystic Rose receives when he meditates there.

Red

Brambles: can generate thorny structures

Know the Soil: Supernatural Tracking

Lord of the Forest: Control Plants

Sowing the Seeds: Plant suggestions

Yellow

Boon of the Garden: make any plant create nutritional food

Scents on the Wind: Rolls planets before determining action

Vines: create vines from staff

Wind in the Leaves: Flight

Black

Autumns Reward: His bones may be used to sow the seeds of the next Blue garden

Flesh of Bark: Skin grows barklike and gives physical protection

Oak Against the Storm: Extraordinary strength

Rustling of the Leaves: Send and receive messages through the rustling of leaves

 to a

specific target

White

Root: Regenerates as long as he remains motionless

Taint of the Nightshade: Cause vegetation to secrete a paralytic poison

Thorns of Fury: Create thorns over flesh and staff

Weather the Elements: Resilient to the Environment

## The Spook

**Known: d10**

**Passion: Ω**

**Dynamic: d8**

**Static: d6**

**Lost: d12**

Power: Psychological Invisibility

Weakness: Subconscious Obstacles: Even when "invisible", people will get in his way

Quirk: Unswayed by emotional extremes

Power Stunt: The Bond Effect: can use his real name as an "alias" and no one will catch on

A Gypsy in every Port: well known and liked among the Rom, who can be found almost everywhere

Cunning Linguist: speaks many languages

Extraordinarily Well Equipped: usually has the right tool for the job, whatever that might be

Graceful Movement: highly dexterous, rarely stumbles or falls

Master of Disguise: Can alter his appearance to deceive others

Suave & Debonair: presents a smooth, polished persona

Terribly Mysterious: not much is known about his past, and he uses that to his advantage

Trained in the Orient: has traveled to The East, and learned some of their ways

Well Traveled: familiar with remote and exotic lands

Gypsy Amulet: A gift from the Gypsies, this amulet preserves health and speeds recovery time

Flaw: Mistrusts Science: Will go with a less complex solution that is harder to accomplish over an easy one that is technological

## Golem, the Savage Thunder

**Known: d10**

**Passion: Ω**

**Dynamic: d4**

**Static: d4**

**Lost: Ω**

Power: Seventh Sense

Power: Body Construct
Weakness: Cannot Create
Weakness: Broadcast Power
Quirk: Unfeeling
Quirk: Spiritual Magnetism: spirits pay an unusual amount of attention to him
Power Stunt: Know Human Nature: can determine innermost motivations
Power Stunt: Explosive Powerup: can instantly become fully charged
Power Stunt: Thunderclap: can deafen those around him
Power Stunt: Energy Anchor: can attach to mystic ley lines and become unmoving
Brilliant Musician: has studied nearly every instrument
Fists of Fury: unstoppable in hand to hand combat
Outsmart Demons: able to devise ways to foil the most insidious plans
Hulking Brute: as strong as a small crowd, and nearly as large
Iron Will: able to resist mental commands and suggestions
Endless Health: apparently unaffected by wounds

## Renaissance Man (Guglielmo de Batsoni)
**Known: d4**
**Passion: d8**
**Dynamic: d4**
**Static: Ω**
**Lost: d10**

Power: HUZZAH: Handsome. Untiring, Zephyrlike, Zestful, Articulate, Herculean
Weakness: Inept: most of the time (until he says "HUZZAH"), he is amazingly inept at everything
Quirk: Height of Fashion
Power Stunt: Lucky: things just seem to go right for him
Power Stunt: Dramatic Entrance: when he shifts, it is in a highly dramatic way
Well Read: has read the popular philosophers and poets
Scientific Mind: well versed in theory and practice
Master of the Arts: poet, painter, sculptor, composer
Convincing Casanova: women are captivated by him, and can be easily manipulated
Wordsmith: has a way with words
Perfectly Pious: would never go against the interests of The Church
Fencing & Fisticuffs: master swordsman and boxer
Acrobatics: amazing feats of dexterity
Spontaneous Exposition: the pen , or in this case, the tongue, can be mightier than the sword
Rudimentary Mechanical Knowledge: ability to fix and modify simple machines
Good Timing: knows when to say HUZZAH

## Tabula Rasa, the Wax Man
**Known: d10**
**Passion: d10**
**Dynamic: d4**
**Static: Ω**
**Lost: d10**

Power: Shapeshifting
Weakness: Melted by Fire
Quirk: Illustrative Nomenclature: will work the initials TR into his form somewhere
Power Stunt: Strength of Steel: can temporarily make his flesh as strong as steel
Power Stunt: Partial Transformation: able to shift only a part of him. e.g. just a hand
Power Stunt: Platonic Standards: can pinpoint flaws in people

or objects by comparing them to Platonic Ideals
Power Stunt: Slips Through the Cracks: can fit through very small openings
Alchemical Transformations: has studied conversions of precious metals
Cultural identification: can mimic regional peculiarities
Present a False Face: can give mistruths without detection
Flaw: Changing From: Cannot hold a single shape for more than a few Panels
Flaw: Weak body: normally, cannot support much weight at all
Flaw: Inexact Guise: unable to mimic a specific person

### The Daring Davincis

The Daring Davincis are just about the only group of full-time crime fighters in Italia (Ebony & Ivory being the other one). After designing the super-soldier serum for the government, da Vinci decided that he'd like to investigate the possibilities a bit further. He started to put together a team of Omegas, created initially as experiments to try and understand the nature of the Forces. He recruited the most gifted of his artist friends to be his guinea pigs, and the first of them were the sister and brother who became known as Firefly and Dragonfly. Right from the start, he headed down two different paths. For Firefly, he used alchemy alone to warp her nature, tying light and thought together. For Dragonfly, he initially wanted to simply build an apparatus, but discovered that the demands on the pilot were too much for a normal person to handle. So he used his alchemical skills to enhance Dragano's reflexes and perceptions, and then to bond the apparatus to him, so that it would work for no other. Soon after, he created Pillbug, an armored exoskeleton, and bonded it to its wearer similarly. Then came Bombardier Beetle. These four made up the original Davincis, until Bombardier Beetle, always a bit aggressive, killed an innocent. Da Vinci insisted he leave the team, and soon created Cricket and Spider to fill out the team. With Renetrafusca, he thought he had finally found someone who can handle one of his apparati without alchemical aid, but either the 8 legs of Spider were too much even for him, or da Vinci simply

> **Heroes of Florenza**
>
> Daring daVincis
> - Firefly
> - Dragonfly
> - Pillbug
> - Cricket
> - Spider
> - Moth
> - Chrysalis

underestimates the complexity of his inventions. Finally, with Moth and Chrysalis, his two paths have reached their current culmination. Moth has an apparatus, the smallest one yet, that enables her to defy physical reality, while Chrysalis is the successful recipient of an alchemical treatment that enables her to alter continuously, not just the once that created Firefly.

## Firefly (Lucia dal Sol)

**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d6**
**Dynamic: d8**
**Static: d12**
**Lost: d6**

Power: Luminescent Psychic Energy

Weakness: Hidden Venus: cannot affect those with Passion Ωed
Quirk: Constantly Glowing
Power Stunt: Arouse Feelings: can cause changes in emotion in others
Power Stunt: Prismatic Manipulation: and bend light to her whims
Power Stunt: Blinding Smile: no, really. they go blind
Art: Glassworker: knows how to stain and blow glass
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Fiery Temper: normally a cheerful person, you wouldn't like her when she's angry
Dislikes Earthtones: feels they represent blandness of personality
Field Commander: she has been given command of the da Vincis
Force of Will: once set, her mind is unable to be changed
Sparkling Personality: bright and cheerful
Tactile Luminescence Transfer: able to cause other object to glow for a short while by touching them
Flaw: Insect Attraction: bugs swarm around her light, especially at night

## Dragonfly (Dragano dal Sol)

**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d10**
**Dynamic: d6**
**Static: d12**
**Lost: d12**

Power: potion bonded to flight apparatus
Weakness: electric enmity
Quirk: never touches the ground
Power Stunt: Dive Bomb & Hover Flight: amazing control over flight apparatus
Power Stunt: Needle in Flight: can cause a small area of complete silence to surround himself
Art: Painter
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Pulls up at the very last second: likes to show off and work flashy stunts into plans
Spontaneous Originality: can come up with odd but useful ideas
Excellent Vision
Hasten Perceptions: sees the rest of the world in slow motion and can react quickly to it
Divine Inspiration
Flaw: Short Attention Span: because of his sped up perceptions, thinks that everything takes too long, and can't pay attention for very long
Flaw: Frail: not that tough physically

Flaw: Excessively Grandiloquent Multisyllabic Vocabulation: uses really big words when they really aren't needed

## Pillbug (Dante "The Dashing")

**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d10**
**Dynamic: d6**
**Static: d4**
**Lost: d20**

Power: potion bonded to pillbug armor
Weakness: flowing permeability: armor is porous, and useless against liquids
Quirk: Fastidiously clean
Power Stunt: Human Bowling Ball: when armor is folded around him, he can knock many people over
Power Stunt: Exoskeleton Armor: armor increases strength and offers protection
Power Stunt: Feel the Rage: Can cause opponents to become cross and make mistakes
Art: Champion Wrestler: performed for the entertainment of the crowd
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Favorite of the Ladies: catches the attention of women everywhere
Elaborate Combat Maneuvers: makes even the simplest action into an elaborate event
Center of attention: makes sure that all eyes are on him
His own commentator: maintains a running monologue describing his actions
Flaw: Nonlethal combatant: untrained in causing mortal harm to opponents, he has many other ways to incapacitate them
Feedback Dependent Adrenaline Boost: without the roar of a crowd, he can't perform at his best
Mystically Challenged: unable to grasp the powers of the supernatural

## Cricket (Don Antonio Capello)

**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d6**
**Dynamic: d10**
**Static: d20**
**Lost: d10**

| Power: | An aural machine that 'Vinci devised |
|---|---|
| Weakness: | But his ears became overly acute. |
| Quirk: | He rhymes all the time to prove he's no brute |
| Power Stunt: | His chirp is quite stunning; you've been advised |
| Power Stunt: | Harm done to him is noisily excised. |
| Art: | Master Musician: piano and flute; |
| | The playbook he shares – held in good repute. |
| | Comic or Drama; his acting is prized |
| | |
| | A tongue of silver lends weight to his speech |
| | His breath he controls, not to interfere |
| | Hear countless sounds, perfectly mimicked each |
| Flaw: | His pride swells larger with every premiere |
| | |
| | The Cricket dons the costume of silver |
| | "Combat Evil!" the line to deliver. |

## Spider (Renetrafusca Giovanni)

**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d20**
**Dynamic: d6**
**Static: d12**
**Lost: d10**

Power: Potion bonded to spider apparatus
Weakness: Aquatic enmity: apparatus shuts down when it gets wet

Quirk: Compound Irises
Power Stunt: Spider legs: retractable into apparatus, can climb nearly any surface
Power Stunt: Net launcher: can launch nets to entangle opponents
Art: Circus Acrobat: used to be a performer, and has incredible balance and gymnastic ability
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Former Cat Burglar: Spider also used to be a thief and has the skills of that trade
Devoted Stoic: represses emotions and is indifferent to pleasure or pain
Extensive Planner: is always examining possibilities of a situation
Flaw: Cold and Calculating: rarely figures the well being of others in his planning
Flaw: Solitary: would rather work independently, even as a member of a group
Flaw: Scrawny: slight of build and not all that tough

## Moth (Carmelita)

**Known:** Ω
**Passion:** d8
**Dynamic:** d12
**Static:** d6
**Lost:** d10

Power: potion bonded to moth apparatus
Weakness: Radiant Prohibition: cannot use powers in bright light
Quirk: leaves moth dust behind
Power Stunt: Grain Moth Intrusion: can become insubstantial
Power Stunt: Cloak of the Nightwing: can become invisible
Power Stunt: A Whisper on the Wind: can send messages across a great distance
Art: Sophisticated Poet: She is a sensitive artist, and nobody understands her because she is so deep.
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Nimble Little Minx: highly dexterous
Nondescript: people are unable to recall descriptions in great detail
Terribly Mysterious: her past is a complete mystery
Attention to Detail: nothing escapes her notice
Flaw: Perfectionist: nothing is ever done quite as well as she would like
Flaw: Proscribed Congruence: can only be insubstantial or invisible, not both

## Chrysalis (Constanza Paradiso)

**Known:** Ω
**Passion:** d12
**Dynamic:** d12
**Static:** d8
**Lost:** d12

Power: Metamorphosis
Weakness: Protracted Transformation: requires at least three panels to change
Quirk: Leaves shell behind
Power Stunt: Impenetrable Shell: when in chrysalis form
Power Stunt: Path of the Monarch: can always sense the way home
Art: Sculptor: feels God's hands sculpt through her
Extensive Playbook: the Davincis have trained together and have plans for nearly every occurrence
Sunny Disposition: mood varies with time of day – happy during daylight, depressed during nighttime
Self Adaptation: adapts quickly to new forms
Incredibly Confident: sure she can accomplish just about anything

Brightly Colored: after transformation. Shell is drab
Flaw: Culture Shock: adapts slowly to strange places
Flaw: Hideous form: feels her natural form is ugly, and takes pains to conceal it
Flaw: Caterpillar's Sleep: must revert to natural form to sleep, and must slumber within her shell

### The Crew of the Santa Francisca de Paola

> **The Santa Francisca de Paola**
>
> Captain Italia
> The Navigator
> The Whirling Dervish
> Rego Aquam
> Gibraltar

With the rise of independent Omegas, the government of Roma decided they wanted a group of Omegas that they could count on being on their side. They embarked on a secret program, recruiting Leonardo da Vinci to their plan. Initially, they wanted to develop an alchemical formula or treatment that, when given to a person of their choosing, would result in a powerful Omega. However, there was an accident[38], and the lab with all of the notes and samples blew up. In the accident, three of the prospective recipients, Bishop Rudolpho, Sergeant Roberto, and Sergio de Roma (an accomplished merchant) were soaked by the flaming remnants of the serum. The flame changed it somehow, and the three became one. Once they sorted out how to co-operate, they decided they were Captain Italia, and discovered that they could separate into their old selves for as much as a day at a time. All three were strong believers in the importance of the State, vehement Italian patriots, and had a very strong sense of justice. Since that time, they have spent as much time as possible as Captain Italia, sailing the fastest ship on the Seven Seas in defense of Truth, Justice, and the Italian Way. The Super-Soldier Serum greatly retarded aging, so his companions have changed over the many years. Rego Aquam is apparently unaging, or at least long-lived, and has been by his side almost since the beginning. The other current members have been around for varying lengths of time, with The Whirling Dervish being the most recent addition.

## Captain Italia
**Known:** d6
**Passion:** Ω

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[38] some say it was sabotage, but if anybody actually knows and is still alive, they aren't talking

**Dynamic: d6**
**Static: d10**

**Lost: Ω**

Power: Champion of Justice
Power: Drank da Vinci's Super Soldier Serum
Weakness: Can't do wrong
Weakness: Gestalt: Bishop Rudolpho, Sergeant Roberto, Sergio de Roma
Quirk: Constantly Has Chastity Tested
Quirk: Often mistaken for Rudolfo, Roberto, or de Roma
Power Stunt: Never Harms an Innocent: able to selectively dish out damage so that bystanders aren't harmed
Power Stunt: Olympic Gymnast: athletic prowess not seen since Ancient Greece
Power Stunt: Physique of Three Men: retains the strength and endurance of his three component members
Power Stunt: Shield Blindness Attack: can blind opponents
Bishop: knowledge of Catholic rites and rituals, status within The Church
Master Negotiator: able to persuade
Veteran Soldier: master of combat and tactics
Indestructible Shield: a gift from da Vinci, no earthly power can destroy it

**The Navigator**
**Known: d6**
**Passion: d16**
**Dynamic: d8**
**Static: d20**

**Lost: Ω**

Power: Knows his way around: can find the path between any two locations
Weakness: blind
Quirk: Thinks out loud about astrology: can hear the crystal spheres moving
Power Stunt: St. Elmo's Fire: always knows where he is & where he is going
Power Stunt: Spatial Misdirection: impossible to follow due to his command of physical space
Power Stunt: Well traveled: doesn't make cultural faux pas
Student of History: knowledge of notable past events
Veteran Sailor: knowledge of sailing and sea lore
Bark of Authority: able to have commands obeyed
Sea legs: not bothered by violent ship motion
Shipsense: shares sensations with whatever ship he is navigating
Scent of the Storm: can smell changes in the weather
Flaw: Can't sleep on Land: has spent so much time at sea that it is impossible for him to fall asleep unless on a ship
Flaw: Restless: wants to keep moving and spend as little time in one area as possible
Flaw: Cultural Relativism: in a time when the Church defines what is civilized, being willing to accept heathens and savages can draw unwanted attention

**Rego Aquam**
**Known: Ω**
**Passion: d20**
**Dynamic: d4**
**Static: d12**
**Lost: d6**

Power: Control Water
Weakness: Atlantean Belt: item of power: keeps him from dehydrating, but can be taken away
Quirk: Indistinct Features
Power Stunt: Dowsing: able to find even small amounts of water
Power Stunt: Flowing Water: can create a high pressure blast of water
Power Stunt: Interrupt Shape: can become nonhumanoid for a few Panels

Body of Water: body is completely constructed of water
Atlantean Knowledge: ancient rites and rituals, maritime knowledge
Surface Tension: body can maintain its shape
Atlantean Aikido: able to flow around physical attacks
Musical Skill: all Atlanteans have studied their own mysterious, haunting musical style
Groupmind: since all Atlanteans flow together, even when separated from the flock they tend to refer to themselves as "we" and "they"
Flaw: Freezable: because Atlanteans need to separate themselves from seawater, they freeze easier
Flaw: Fluid Personality: seemingly random mood swings
Flaw: Experience Junkie: because they have little experience with the surface world, Atlanteans are drawn into possibly dangerous situations simply because they've never done them before
Flaw: Tied to the Tides: affected by the ebb and flow of the tides: stronger at high tide, weaker at low tide

**Gibraltar**
**Known: d12**
**Passion: d12**
**Dynamic: Ω**
**Static: d4**
**Lost: d6**

Power: Elemental Force of Nature: can turn body to stone
Weakness: Binding Ring: cannot channel or release the Elemental while inside a circle
Quirk: Incredibly Heavy
Power Stunt: Ruggedly Enduring: able to undertake feats of endurance
Power Stunt: Steady as a Rock: cannot be moved unless he wills it
Power Stunt: Stone Generation: one cannonball sized stone per panel
Power Stunt: Strength of the Earth: incredibly strong
Devout Catholic: knowledge of Catholic rites and rituals
Drawn to places of Druidic Power: ancient rites and rituals
Journeyman Mason: knowledge of stonework
Peak Physical Condition: even when not channeling the Elemental, he is physically fit and athletic
Steadfast: once set on a course of action, cannot be drawn away from it
University Dropout: some knowledge of literature and science
Working class stiff: garners trust among the common folk
Flaw: Doesn't know the extent of his abilities: because his powers were gained through accident, he has a tendency to over- or underestimate his capabilities
Flaw: A Spaniard in Italia: as an outsider, he faces prejudice and hostility

**The Whirling Dervish**
**Known: d6**
**Passion: Ω**
**Dynamic: d6**
**Static: d12**
**Lost: d10**

Power: Control Wind
Weakness: Broad Strokes: no fine control of his power
Quirk: Shining example of dignity and good grace, but annoying about it
Power Stunt: Spin of a Thousand Blades: able to create an impenetrable wall of steel from several swords
Power Stunt: The Dancing Scimitar: if he's only controlling a few, he can actually use the blades in combat
Power Stunt: Windshield: can block various airborne objects with wind
Power Stunt: Steal the Voice: by manipulating the winds, he can cause someone to become silent
Scholar: is fairly well read and studious

# Four Colors al Fresco

Warrior Poet: balances martial ways with contemplative reflection
Devout Muslim
The Forbidden Poetry of Abdul al Bandaras: The Kama Sutra meets Barry White
"Expert" quotation: continually quotes different experts on various subjects. These experts may or may not be made up

### Professor Ω's School for Gifted Youths

Professor Ω is a middle-aged man who has been quietly setting up his school for over 20 years. It only became public knowledge 3 years ago, though the authorities in Venicia have known about it for a decade. Professor W has the unique Power of identifying others' Powers, and he has chosen to use this ability for the betterment of society. He feels that Omegas deserve the same rights as other people, and should be judged only on their actions, not their nature[39]. He also believes that Omegas owe something to society due to their unique gifts, and that forms the basis of the philosophy of his school. He takes Omegas of all ages, but mostly those who would otherwise be heading off to an apprenticeship, and trains their bodies and minds, not only with regard to their powers, but also in mundane ways. So far, only two students have begun to take on the life of the crime-fighter, apprenticing, as it were, aboard the Santa Francisca de Paola, but as time goes on his school is likely to have an even greater influence than the Hall of Justice does now.

### Ebony & Ivory

Ebony and Ivory are very unusual in Italia: not only are both foreign-born Omegas, but both are African. Ebony is a tall gaunt Æthiopian man from the mountains south of Addis Ababa. Ivory is a beautiful Moorish woman, who just walked out of

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[39] It is rumored that he also believes in equal rights for women and foreigners, and if so, he has very ambitious goals.

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**Heroes of Venicia**

Professor Ω's School for Gifted Youths
- The Daedelan Peregrine
- The Incredible Jumping Frog of Cavalcante
- The Sextent
- The Fabulous Bouncing Man

The Redeemers
- Douser Divine
- The Clay Sumerian
- Luna the Huntress
- Twice-Born

**Heroes of Napoli**

Ebony & Ivory

---

a terrible dust storm in the middle of the Sahara one day. They are further unusual for the nature of their powers: both have a closeness with the absolutes of Good and Evil that makes the church nervous. Ivory is the current incarnation of the soul of the Virgin Mary, and is so pure that her very touch burns away the Evil in others, which can be quite painful if there is much Evil. Ebony, meanwhile, has an intimate knowledge of Evil, and in fact his Power stems from controlling a powerful dimension of Evil within himself. So while Ivory knows only Goodness and Light, Ebony leads a tortured existence, constantly forcing Evil to do his bidding. And the Church is terrified of them both, not for their power, but for the theological questions they raise if their explanations are correct. So no one has ever done anything to find out the truth of the matter.

### Villains

Sadly, not all Omegas choose to put their power to good use. Some see their power as an indication of their inherent superiority. Others are just selfish, having no concern for the fates of others. And still others are sociapaths, with no understanding of the concepts of right and wrong. Whatever the reasons, there are some Omegas who deserve no other label than villain. These are a few of them.

Commander Dæmon rules the country of Dobrudia with an iron fist, and spends most of his time working towards his ultimate goal: ruling the world. Chameleon and The Mythic Beast are brothers often found in the service of Commander Dæmon. They have powers of transformation, but can only activate them together. They also share the dubious honor of being the only villains to have come from Professor Ω's school.

**Chameleon**
    **Known: d8**
    **Passion: d20**
    **Dynamic: d8**

    **Static: Ω**
    **Lost: d8**
Power: Shape of … [a particular person]
Weakness: Permanently stuck in form if model person dies
Quirk: Reverts when brother does

**The Mythic Beast**
    **Known: d8**
    **Passion: d6**
    **Dynamic: d6**

    **Static: Ω**
    **Lost: d4**
Power: Form of … [a mythic creature]
Weakness: Can't transform if not touching the ground
Quirk: Reverts when brother does

The Victorian is the most dangerous villain of the current age. Or rather, he is the most dangerous villain prowling the current age. In actuality, he is from the far future, a time he calls the "Victorian", thus his name – he has never told anyone his true name. He dresses in strange clothes, with bland shirts, loose pants, a strange scarf tied around his neck, and a hat that looks more like an upturned bucket, and talks with an accent resembling something from Brittania. Nonetheless, whether he is truly from the future or not, he has access to many an amazing device, and has been known to use objects that even da Vinci is amazed by. His favorite tools of power are undoubtedly his quick wit and automatons, some of which can pass for human for quite some time. He tends to manipulate other villains, and even heroes, into doing his dirty work for him, and has the frustrating habit of disappearing just when his defeat or capture seem unavoidable.

**Villains of Italia**

Commander Dæmon
Chameleon & The Mythic Beast
Yorick
The Pyre
Troglodyte
The Victorian, an Unsavory Fellow (A Mastermind)
The Legionnaire
Scorpion & The Mantis
Logomancer
The Seven Deadly Sins
- Sloth
- Pride
- Hate
- Gluttony
- Avarice
- envy
- Lust
Captain Niccolo da Mari
- Catarina "The Eel" Caravello
- Porpoise
- Squall

**Crossing Over:** the act of an Ω, especially a Main character, appearing in a Title that they are not normally a part of.

**Descriptors**: everything, besides the Planet scores, that expresses your character in game-mechanical terms; essentially everything on your character sheet except for the Storypath cards and Planets (and Name). Some have special names, such as Traits, Flaws, Powers, etc.

**Diceless:** non-Ω characters. Characters who are in balance with reality, and thus have no need for Planet scores (and the dice that are used for them) in describing them. Since they have no Ωed Planets, they do not have any Powers, but they often still have Traits, and, if played by a Player, will have Storypath Cards. For purposes of helping the SG out, they are classified, in increasing order of Issue importance, as Extra, Walk-on, Recurring, Supporting, and Major (q.v.).

**Dominant:** see Hierarchy

**Dynamic:** the Force of action and movement and change. Governed by Mars, God of War.

**Extra:** a Diceless character, generally without any Traits, who occupies a very minor role in the Issue. Usually doesn't even have a name.

**Flaw:** A special kind of Trait. Flaws are Traits that are almost always negative in effect, and thus a detriment to the Character. A Flaw is something that the Character would like to be rid of.

**Forces**: There are 5 Forces that govern the world. They are Static, Dynamic, Known, Lost, and Passion. Like the 4 modern forces that govern our world (gravity, electromagnetism, strong, and weak), everything that happens happens according to the laws of these Forces. However, these Forces are much more archetypal, and more readily observable to the average person. Also, there are some people who are not governed normally by one or more of the Forces, and thus do not abide by its laws. These are the Ωs (Omegas) (q.v.).

**Guest Characters:** all of the Ωs other than the Main characters. Usually, there are one or more villainous Guest characters in an Issue, and there may also be heroic Guests, who are not part of the Main characters, but are Crossing Over (q.v.). They are almost always played by the Storyguide.

**Hierarchy:** The ordering of the dice, and thus their corresponding Forces, when they are rolled. It is the Hierarchy that determines the outcome of an in-question action. The smaller the number on the die, the higher it is in the Hierarchy. The top position (lowest number), which may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Dominant. The next highest position, or highest if the lowest number is tied, is labeled Major. The lowest position, which again may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Weak. The final position, above Weak and below Major, is labeled Minor. The Dominant and Major positions are favorable, and indicate success if Favored Forces fall into them. The Weak position is unfavorable, and indicates failure if a Favored Force falls into it.

**Issue:** a single session (evening/afternoon) of game play. Most Issues contain multiple Pages, and they are often grouped into Miniseries.

**Known:** the Force of science, reason, and the rational world. Governed by Mercury, Patron of Discovery.

**Lost:** the Force of the mystical, magical, and forgotten. The source of faith and magic, and the governing Force for esoteric occult knowledges. Governed by Saturn, the Mystic.

**Main character:** a character played by one of the Players. They are the characters around whom the stories of every Issue revolve.

**Main Title:** The exploits of the characters are organized in a number of ways. One of those is the concept of Title(q.v.). The Main Title is the Title that includes all of the characters as Main Characters (q.v.).

**Major:** see Hierarchy

**Major character:** a very important Diceless character, on par with the Main and Guest characters. She will be named, with a well-detailed personality and background, and a full complement of Traits. She may even be a Main character, and thus have Storypath Cards.

**Mastermind Trait:** a special Descriptor that only Mastemind Villains possess. It is used somewhat like a Storypath card, to make drastic alterations in the plot line, but is re-usable.

**Miniseries**: a series of Issues that are all linked together to form a single plot. The Issues of a Miniseries usually are part of a single Title, but this is not necessarily the case, and it's perfectly reasonable for a Miniseries to span as many Titles as it has Issues.

**Minor:** see Hierarchy

**Nemesis:** a villain who has a particular interest in defeating a hero or group of heroes, and who is often of particular interest to the hero(es) in return.

**Passion:** the Force of emotions and feelings. Governed by Venus, Goddess of Passion.

**Page:** a series of events that are all tightly tied together and take place in a short span of time in a single location. Essentially, a scene. A Page may be made up of any number of Panels, including none. Depending on the nature of the activities it encompasses, it won't always be divided into Panels. A Series of Pages make up an Issue.

**Panel**: the smallest unit of time in the game system. During one Panel, a character may accomplish one simple action, such as making an attack, lifting a sinking ship, or delivering some dialog. More complex actions, such as disarming a complex trap, delivering a monologue, debating a course of action, or laying an ambush, will take multiple Panels.

**Planets**: the dice ratings on your character sheet. They rate how much the various Forces affect your character; Smaller numbers indicate a stronger influence. Also, a metaphorical term for the Forces; each Force is thought to be governed by one of the known Planets.

**Players**: while all of the participants of most games are referred to as players, here the term has a slightly more specific meaning. The players are all of the participants except the Storyguide (q.v.).

**Power**: The advantageous special Descriptor associated with your Ωed Planet. Powers generally fall outside the bounds of normal reality in the world. A Power should be somehow exceptional, either in nature or degree, so as to keep it distinct from other Traits.

**Power Stunt:** a special kind of Trait. Power Stunts are special uses of a Power that aren't outside of its purview, but aren't necessarily an inherent part of it, either. A Power Stunt guarantees the ability to utilize the Power in this borderline area.

**Quirk:** the Descriptor that stems from an Ωed Planet. which is neither advantageous nor disadvantageous on the whole. Like a Weakness or Power, it should be somehow exceptional or supernatural.

**Recurring character:** a Diceless character that has appeared in several Issues; often starts out as a Walk-on. She is almost always named, and her personality and background are usually at least sketched out. Recurring characters generally have several Traits.

**Retcon**: Retroactive Continuity. Claiming that something was always true, and that history is now the way it would have been, had it been true. One method of altering something (usually a character) and maintaining consistency.

**Static:** the Force of stability and the status quo. Governed by Jupiter, the Eternal Ruler.

**Storyguide (SG)**: the Storyguide is the participant who currently isn't a regular player. It is her job to detail the setting, play all of the extra characters, provide a scenario, and adjudicate actions.

**Supporting character**: a Diceless character with a regular role in a Title. She is named, and her personality and background are somewhat detailed. Supporting characters generally have quite a few Traits.

**Title**: the collected adventures of a particular Ω or group of Ωs.

**Traits**: Descriptors other than your Power/Weakness/ Quirk. Some of these are in turn given special names, such as Flaws and Power Stunts.

**Walk-on**: a Diceless character who has a very minor, usually one-time, role in an Issue. She is usually only minimally detailed, and has only a few Traits.

**Weak:** see Hierarchy

**Weakness**: The disadvantageous special Descriptor associated with your Ωed Planet. Many Weaknesses tie directly to the Power, and either limit it in some way, negate it under some circumstances, or provide a way to counter it. But this need not be the case, and a Weakness could work in any way. What is important is that it be somehow exceptional, either in degree or nature, or it would simply be a Flaw Trait.

**Ω (Omega):** Someone who is "out of the sight of" one of the Planets, and therefore not limited to the normal rules of the Force it governs. As a result, they have what we would call superpowers, and are often capable of feats well beyond human norms. Also, Ωs are literally unseen by the Planet(s) they have Ωed, and thus cast no shadows in their light – though this lack of shadow is overwhelmed by the light of all the other stars, as well as the Sun and Moon, without a special ability to notice it. Nobody knows who first used the term "Ω", but it is suspected that it was someone trying to be clever and show their learning by making a reference to the end of normal laws where these people are concerned.

**Exempli Gratia**

In case you're having a hard time figuring out what would make a good Descriptor, here are a few lists of some we've come up with. You can also look at the example characters to find more.

## Traits

Keen Sense of Smell
Looks Good in a Cape
Looks Good in a Dress
Can Climb Sheer Walls
Has the Bible Memorized
Painter
Huge
Former Monk
Fan of the Theater
Femme Fatale
Knows Women
Keen Fashion Sense
Knows Classic Literature
Hopeful Romantic
Sees the Dead
Voice of an Angel
The 4th Musketeer – Well, I Would Be
Follower of the Arcane
Galavanting Cavalier
Holy Quest
Orphan Prodigy
Wonderful Wit
Master Weaver
Code of Honor
Journeyman Shipwright
Parish Priest
Feats of Logic
Leap of Faith
Elephant's Memory
Priestess of the Ancient Gods
Champion of the People
Culinary Adept
Culturally Adept
Tactitian for the 17th Mounted Regiment
Bound for Glory
Mercy for the Weak
Alchemist
Mind Inside the Enigma
Heart of a Lion
Animal Handler
Knows the Woods

Knows Nature
Gives to the Poor
Vow of Poverty
Trouble-Shooter
Family Avenger

## Flaw Traits

Hopeless Romantic
Short Tempered
Huge
Clumsy Around Knives
Gets Sick Easily
Weak Stomach
Afraid of the Ocean
Horrible Lack of Manners
Poor Hygiene
Poor Gambler
Perpetual Rebel
Wounding Wit
Gives the Plan Away
Frail
Habitually Late
Fear of Birds
Persistent Failure at Love
Mistrusted
Uneducated
Disillusioned
War-Torn Homeland

## Powers
### ♦ With Possible Power Stunt Traits

**Acrobatics**: the character is a world-class acrobat and gymnast.
  ◦ **Untouchable:** she has adapted her acrobatics to martial combat so that she can completely avoid being attacked

**Air Form**: the character can become a being made of air, but visually unchanged (except for being transparent).

**Alchemist**: the character is an accomplished alchemist.
  ◦ **Adjust the Humours:** she can create salves and potions that quickly incapacitate people by unbalancing their humours.

**Already Dead**: the character has died, but for some reason keeps going.

**Amphibious**: the character can breathe both air and water.
  ◦ **Human Fountain:** she can take in and hold an entire lungful of water, and then exhale it (spit it out) with great force.

**Animal Form**: the character can change into the form of some particular animal.
  ◦ **Partial Form:** she can shift just part of her body to animal form.

**Animate Earth**: the character can bring the very ground to life,

animating chunks of rock and earth.

> **Local Earthquake:** she can use less-precise control over a larger area to cause a minor earthquake in the near area.

**Animate Object:** the character can animate a mundane object, much like a marionette without strings.

**Armored Skin:**

**Balance:** the character has extraordinary powers of balance.

> **Freefall:** her balance is so phenomenal that she can twist and turn, using air resistance and landing technique to survive any fall unharmed.

**Battle Armor:** the character has a suit of mechanical battle armor.

> **Exo-skeleton:** the armor provides a boost to her strength.
> **Spare Sword:** the armor has several built-in weapons which can be produced on demand and are not obvious when not in use.

**Beast Speech:** the character can talk to all animals.

**Bestow Phobia:** the character can make someone afraid of something just by making eye contact.

> **Moment of Paranoia:** she can distract someone by momentarily giving them a powerful dose of undirected fear.

**Borrow Powers:** with a solid touch, the character can steal another Omega's Power for a Page.

**Cat Blood:** the character has many of the qualities of a cat, and is probably somewhat cat-like in appearance (cat eyes, a tail, claws, etc.).

> **Cat Ears:** she can hear higher pitches, and better determine direction. She can also pick up very faint sounds.
> **Expressive Tail:** she can convey not only her mood, but also simple messages to those who know her well, just with her tail.
> **Lands on Her Feet:** she has not only the extraordinary balance of a cat, but the ability to take a fall. Provided she has room to orient herself and her limbs are free, she suffers no harm from falls.
> **Sharp Bits:** she has retractable claws that are wickedly sharp. In addition to their obvious uses, they also make climbing easier.
> **Whiskers:** her whiskers enable her to sense as well as she would normally see, even in complete darkness, by picking up air movements.

**Chameleon:** the character can change her coloration to blend into her surroundings.

> **Something Up My Sleeve:** she can extend the chameleon ability to held objects.

**Clairsentience:**

**Claws:**

**Climbing:**

**Control Animals:** the character can bend animals to her will, forcing them to do whatever she desires. In general, the further from the animal's normal nature the action is, the harder it is to maintain control.

**Control Plants:** the character can make plants move according to her will.

> **Psychic Fertilizer:** she can cause plants to grow super fast.

**Control Water:** the character can shape water to her will, defying gravity.

**Create Fog:** the character can coalesce an impenetrable fog out of even the slightest ambient moisture.

> **Dessicate:** she can suck the moisture out of the ground or objects, creating a fog in the process.

**Danger Sense:** the character knows it's bad before it's bad.

**Darkness:**

**Delicate Touch:** the character's touch is hyper-sensitive.

> **Find Angels on the Head of a Pin:** her touch is so sensitive that she can feel even non-corporeal things.

**Digging:**

**Dimension Door:** the character can create a small rift in reality, and step through it to another location nearby.

> **Sudden Fall:** she can open the door directly underneath someone else.

**Dimensional Shifting:** the character has the ability to shift to other realities. This isn't generally a good power, as it tends to make the game very hard to run. Either the character can take others with them, which makes it impossible for the Storyguide to plan ahead, or she can't, which would either separate the characters or leave the power unused.

**Doesn't Breathe:**

**Doesn't Eat:** the character has no need to eat, and perhaps can't even if she wants to.

> **Stomach Storage:** she can hide objects in her stomach, unharmed.

**Earth Form:** the character can suffuse her being with the essence of the Earth.

> **Antaeus' Health:** she instantly heals any damage by simply absorbing more earth.

**Elastic Bones:** the character's bones can stretch and bend like rubber.

> **Spring-Loaded Punch:** she can use her own arm as a giant spring to deliver powerful blows.

**Empathy:** the character can sense others' feelings and moods.

> **Say the Right Thing:** the character may use her empathic ability super-accurately during a conversation, enabling her to adjust what she is saying word-by-word in order to ellicit exactly the emotional response she wants from someone.

**Energy Absorption:** the character can harmlessly absorby electricity, heat, and other forms of energy.

> **The Sound of Silence:** she can "suck up" all the sound energy in an area.

**Everybody's Friend:** the character is well-liked by everybody she meets.

> **Sure, You Can Do That:** people let her get away with things, even things that they're specifically charged to prevent.

**Excalibur:** the character owns Excalibur.

> **Favored of Avalon:** she is watched over by the Ladies of Avalon.

**Exploding Body:** the character may explode her body, causing the effects of a bomb in the immediate area. Her body reforms gradually after the explosion.

**Extra Limbs:** the character has more than the usual number of limbs.

> **Confusing Dexterity:** she can use her extra arms to distract others during combat or other intense situations from what she's really doing.

**Firestarter:** the character can cause objects to burst into flame.

> **The Shakes:** cause something to vibrate, but not as quickly, so it just gets shaken up rather than catching fire.

**Flamethrower:** the character can shoot jets of flames from her hands.

> **Controlled Burn:** she can adjust the nature of the flames so that they only burn certain types of materials.

**Flatland:** the character can become two-dimensional, squeezing one of her dimensions (height, width, or depth) out of existence.

> **Invisible Walk:** she has great skill at keeping her

missing dimension towards observers, rendering her effectively invisible.

**Flight**: the character can fly. she may or may not have wings or other obvious means of flight.
- **Easy Fall**: she can defy gravity even in areas that don't provide room for flight, thus not suffering hurt from falls.
- **Go with the Flow**: can use her knowledge of flight to analyze air currents, and figure out where they're coming from and going to.
- **Lighter than Air**: she can extend her density control to people or objects that she is touching, making them super light so that she can toss them about freely.
- **Power Dive**: she can make an attack much quicker by climbing to a high altitude and diving. Doing this, she can move much faster than normally, and thus all attacks are harder to avoid and physical attacks are much more devestating.

**Force Field**: the character can generate a protective field of pure force around herself.
- **Air Filter**: by concentrating, she can make it keep some elements of the air out, as well as physical objects.

**Friend to Animals**: the character is well-liked by animals, and they will never deliberately harm her.

**Frog Legs**: the character has phenomenal leaping (and landing) ability

**Gadgeteer**: the character has a mechanical solution for every problem, and carries many of them with her at all times.
- **Extraordinarily Well-Equipped**: she tends to coincidentally have just the right tool for whatever the current problem is.
- **Luckily, I Anticipated That**: she has a knack for exploring bizarre possibilities, leading to mechanisms that specifically counter opponents' Powers.
- **Those Wonderful Toys**: her mechanisms are extraordinarily versatile, so she tends to carry just a few general ones, rather than barrels full of more-specialized ones.

**Ghost Form**: the character can take a visible but intangible form.

**Golden Tongue**: the character can persuade someone of almost anything, given enough time.

**Growth**: the character can grow as large as a tree.
- **I'm a Jack!**: she can use her growth power to lift things that her strength alone never could.

**Healer**: the character may heal others of wounds, and possibly even restore life.

**Heart of a Lion – Really**: the character has a greatly enhanced constitution.

**Human Torch**: the character can cause her entire body to burst into flame. It is assumed the character is immune to her own flame, and may be immune to flame in general, though perhaps only when she is aflame.
- **Bolt of Fire**: shoot beams of flame
- **Cold Feet**: the bottoms of her feet can be turned on or off independent of the rest of the body, thus making it possible to walk on wood floors and the like
- **Control Fire**: shape and manipulate existing flames, perhaps even making pictures
- **Eternal Flame**: keep a fire burning for as long as she is present, even if it runs out of fuel
- **Everything Burns. Everything.**: cause normally non-flammable things to burn, perhaps even water.
- **Extra Weight**: by removing the (bouyant) phlogiston from an object without burning it, the object is rendered noticably heavier (and possibly non-flamable)
- **Flame Thrower**: generate a ball of flame that can be thrown or dropped
- **Got a Light?**: can inflame just parts of her body, thus creating a light source or lighting a fire without

having to inflame the entire body.
- **Liquid Fire**: create blobs of fire that behave like honey, and can be manipulated as a semi-solid (though they'll burn those who are burned by fire, of course)
- **Ride the Phlogiston**: use the inherent bouyant qualities of phlogiston, found in all matter, to fly, with about as much control as a large bird

**Hypnosis**:

**Ice Generation**: the character can create ice at will.
- **Shards of Water:** by creating a specially-shaped block of ice and striking it forcefully, she sends sharp shards of ice flying through the air, which melt moments after impact.

**Immortal**: the character can't be killed.
- **Unaging:** she doesn't suffer the effects of growing older.

**Inventive Genius**: the character has a knack for creating mechanisms, realising concepts in material form, and adapting and understanding existing mechanisms.
- **Bird Wings**: she is particularly good at making mechanical analogues of animals.
- **Grappling Arm**: she has built a mechanical arm mechanism that magnifies the user's reach and strength by many times.

**Invisibility**: the character may become undetectable by sight or light.
- **No Scent**: the field that blocks light also blocks the passage of scent.

**Know Object**: the character can read the aura residues on an object to find out who has touched it and how old it is and where it's from.
- **Read the Past**: she can also use the aura residues to reconstruct the history of actions with the object.

**Knows Nature:** the character can identify natural plants, animals, minerals, and landforms on sight or by touch.

**Lead into Gold**: the character's touch can turn lead into gold at will.

**Lend Power**: the character can lend her energy to boost another Omega's Power.

**Light**:

**Lightning Control**:

**Magnetism**: the character can generate magnetic fields.
- **Pinned to the Ground:** she may pin someone in place by acting on the iron in their body.

**Man-mountain**: the character is big, *really* big – 7'/500# at the *very* least. Her strength and ability to withstand abuse are correspondingly increased.

**Martial Artist**: the character is a master of unarmed combat.
- **Everything's a Weapon:** she is just as deadly with improvised weapons as with martial weapons.

**Mechanism Control**:

**Mental Illusions**: the character can cause people to believe they see something.
- **Memories of a Happier Time:** she can cause someone to permanently believe some happy memory from their past, regardless of evidence to the contrary.

**Mind Control**: the character can directly control the thoughts, and thus actions, of another. This power can be a bad idea in some Troupes, because it has the potential to step on each player's autonomy.

**Mist Form**:

**Monkey Blood**: the character has many of the qualities of a monkey, and is probably somewhat monkey-like in appearance (long tail, prehensile toes, hairy or furred, etc.)
- **Natural Mimic**: she can imitate actions with phe-

nomenal accuracy, even after having seen them just once. This extends to any physical action, including combat maneouvers or operating complex mechanisms. The mimicked actions tend to be forgotten unless practiced.

◊ **Prehensile Tail**: her tail functions as a 5th hand, and can do anything a normal hand can, provided individual fingers aren't needed.

**Multi-form**: the character can temporarily split into multiple bodies. This might be several duplicates of the original, or they might all "add up" to make the original body.

◊ **Mind of the Ant Colony:** her bodies can operate independently yet in coordination, even out of communication range.

**Night Vision**:

**Not All There:** the character has the ability to become less solid, or perhaps completely intangible.

◊ **Choking Presence:** she can become just thick enough to suffocate someone by blocking their lungs.

**Out-of-Body**: the character has the ability to leave her physical body and travel in some sort of incorporeal form.

◊ **Body? Body? We Don't Need No Stinkin' Body!:** As long as she's not in her body at the time of death, she doesn't need her body to live.

**Paralysis**: the character can make a person go limp with a touch.

**Placebo-tech**: the character can make almost anything happen, provided she can create a plausible technological object to facillitate it. She may or may not know that the technological items are just a placebo.

◊ **Jargon:** she can persuade others that her tech works, so it does, at least for a while.

**Plant Form**: the character's body is plant, rather than animal.

◊ **Healing Blood:** her sap is a powerful curative.

**Poison Touch**: the character sweats poison.

**Possession**: the character may leave her body and possess another's.

◊ **Ventriloquism:** by concentrating, she may send just a tendril of her lifeforce and use another person like a ventriloquist's dummy.

**Power Drain**: the character drains energy from other Omegas, preventing their Powers from working.

**Precognition**: the character can see into the future. This power is generally a bad idea, as it either ruins too many plots by making them predictable, or isn't accurate and thus becomes useless.

**Radar Sight**: the character can "see" via radar waves, so she is unhindered by darkness or low-density obstructions.

**Read the Past**: the character can find out what happened in the past of a location.

◊ **Know Object:** she can also find out the history of an object.

**Regenerate**:

**Sees the Dead:** the character can see the spirits of the dead.

**Shadow Form**: the character can transform her body into a shadow.

◊ **Flickering Shadows**: the character can make part of herself shadow, and then manipulate that part to alter existing shadows.

◊ **Shadow Travel**: she may disappear into any shadow, and then reappear at any other shadow, provided they are connected by shadows.

**Shadow Manipulation**: the character can animate existing shadows, causing them to change shape or move.

◊ **Living Shadow**: she may bestow a semblance of life on a shadow. It can understand simple commands and act on its own, and otherwise behaves like a simple animal. Light hurts and eventually kills it.

◊ **The Shadows Have Ears**: she may use shadows to transmit sounds, allowing her to hear anything that is connected to her current location via shadows.

**Shadow Travel**: the character may disappear into any shadow, and then reappear at any other shadow, provided they are connected by shadows.

◊ **The Shadows Have Ears:** she can stay within the shadows and thus eavsdrop.

**Shapeshifting**: the character may change into any shape she can conceive of, though generally not something with moving or seperable parts.

◊ **Organ Modulation:** she can shapeshift her internal organs, thus affecting their function, without changing her extrenal form.

**Shocking Touch**: the character can deliver electrical charges with a touch.

◊ **Electric Loadstone:** she can temporarily magnetize iron with a quick shock.

**Shrinking**: the character can shrink down as small as an ant.

◊ **Subtle Escape:** she can shrink parts of herself just enough to escape any bonds without visually changing size.

**Size Change**: the character can change her size with a moment's thought, from dwarf-like to giant.

◊ **Vanish:** she can shrink so fast that she appears to just blink out of existence.

**Sonic Blast**: the character can generate a powerful blast of sound that deafens people and pummels objects.

◊ **Vibrational Release:** she can set up resonances in objects to shake things loose without otherwise damaging them.

**Speedy**: the character is phenomenally fast.

**Super Sight**: the character's eyes are far beyond human norm, able to see with much greater clarity and at much greater distances.

◊ **Microvision:** her sight is so good that she can make out normally-microscopic details.

**Supreme Self-control**: the character can use her phenomenal willpower to control normally-subconscious body functions, such as breathing, heart rate, pain receptors.

◊ **Visage of the Corpse:** she may completely stop all life functions for a few minutes.

**Telekinesis**: the character can move objects without touching them. Generally, she has no more strength than if she were moving them physically.

◊ **Through-and-Through:** she can launch small objects at speeds to punch through almost anything.

**Telepathy**: the character can read others' thoughts, and possibly probe into memories. Generally this is a bad power, because it tends to make too many plots too easy, and annoy other players.

**Teleport**:

**Time Travel**: the character can shift herself through time at will. This is a power to be avoided. It undermines too many plots, and the modifications and limitations necessary to keep it under control tend to stretch disbelief too far, and/or make the power useless.

**Tool-hand**: she can change the form of her arm into anything of roughly the same mass.

**True Sight**:

**Unaging**: the character doesn't suffer the effects of growing older.

**Unbreakable**: the character can't be wounded or killed. She might still feel pain.

◊ **Cannonball:** jump from a great height, and strike the ground with such force that the blast will knock out

those nearby, and cause a great deal of shrapnel
damage if the surface landed on can shatter.

◊ **Group Parry**: using herself as a human shield, inter-
cepting as many attacks as possible.

**Voice of an Angel:** the character speaks with a voice that has
the authority of God.

**Weather Control**: the character may control the weather in the
immediate area (no further than the horizon).

## Mastermind Traits

He Who Fights and Runs Away...:

Contingency Plans:

Suicidally Loyal Minions:

In order to improve verisimilitude in your games, the following lists of names appropriate to the cultures, and in some cases the period, are provided. These lists are by no means comprehensive or canonical, but should be considered just inspiration. Also, constructing names with these lists won't necessarily lead to authentic names – they're only intended to give the flavor of the various cultures. Before we present the lists, here are a few guidelines for constructing names.

Italians generally follow tradition when naming their eldest children: the first male is named after his paternal grandfather, the second male is named after his maternal grandfather, the first female after her paternal grandmother, and the second female after her maternal grandmother. This tradition often leads to children in the same (extended) family, of similar ages, living in the same place, with the same exact name. Therefore, nicknames are extremely common (and the source of the Hollywood stereotype of colorfully-named mobsters/gangsters). Italian surnames, in addition to those listed below, can include patronyms: a name made out of the father's name (much like Johnson comes from "son of John"). In that case, the prefix "di" is added to the father's name: "di Falco". "Di" and "da" are surname prefixes used to mean "from" and are most often used with a place name to describe someone who is from somewhere else: "da Vinci". "La" means "the" and is usually used to attach a nickname.

Spanish names likewise could use "de" followed by a place name for a surname. Spanish patronyms

were just the father's name, with no prefix. The surnames listed below do not include patronymic or locational ones.

Greek and Byzantine names use the familiar structure of given name and surname, but surnames were often by-names earned by the person, rather than a family name, and this could change during a person's life, perhaps several times. Also, the family name needs to be feminized for women's names: "-es", "-is", "-on", and "-os" become "-ina"; "-nos" becomes "-ne"; "-tes" becomes "-tissa"; and "-as" becomes "-aina".

Jews generally use names in the local language, but all men and some women will have two given names, one in the local dialect and one Hebrew.

Arabic names are a little bit different than Western names. Rather than a constant, inherited surname, you often see patronyms. Unmarried women use "bint" ("daughter of") and the name of their father, while married women with children use "umm" ("mother of") and the name of their first-born son. Men similarly use "ibn" or "bin" ("son of") and their father's name until they have children, and then generally "abu" ("father of") and their first-born son's name. However, men may also use "abd" ("servant of") with an appropriate name, and "al" ("the") with their occupation, to construct a surname.

If you want more detail, see the *Four Colors al Fresco website* for further information.

| Italian Female | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agabitta | Andreuola | Benevenuta | Cammilla | Corradina | Dovizia |
| Agata | Angela | Benvenuta | Campagnola | Cosa | Druda |
| Agnesa | Anna | Bernarda | Canduccia | Crestina | Duccia |
| Agnesina | Antonia | Bertina | Cara | Cristina | Elizabeta |
| Agnola | Antonio | Besina | Catalana | Cristofana | Ermellina |
| Agnoletta | Apollonia | Betrina | Catarina | Dea | Falchetta |
| Alamanna | Banca | Betta | Caterina | Diamante | Fea |
| Albiera | Bandecca | Bettina | Cecca | Diana | Fecca |
| Albizzina | Barba | Biagia | Celia | Dianora | Felice |
| Aldighiera | Barbara | Bianca | Cella | Dinora | Fia |
| Alegreza | Barbera | Bianchetta | Chiara | Dionegia | Filippa |
| Alessandra | Bartola | Bianchina | Chiarita | Doccia | Fina |
| Allegranza | Bartolomea | Bice | Ciana | Domenica | Fiondina |
| Ambra | Beatrice | Bilia | Cilia | Dona | Fiore |
| Ambrosina | Belcolore | Bionda | Cinta | Donata | Florentia |
| Andrea | Bella | Bonda | Ciula | Donnina | Flos |
| Andreiuola | Bellina | Brigida | Colleta | Dora | Franca |
| Andreola | Bene | Buona | Contessa | Dorata | Francesca |
| | Benedetta | Camilla | Contessina | Doratea | Franchina |

Fresca
Frosina
Gaia
Gemma
Gentile
Gera
Gerita
Gessa
Gherarda
Gherardesca
Ghilla
Ghita
Giana
Gianetta
Gianotta
Gilia
Gilla
Ginevra
Giovanna
Girolama
Giuliana
Gostanza
Grana
Grazia
Guccia
Guglielmina
Guida
Helena
Iacopa
Isabella
Isabetta
Ismeralda
Isotta
Labe
Lagia
Laldomina
Lapa
Lapaccia
Lascia
Lena
Leonarda
Leonetta
Letta
Lia
Lippa
Lisa
Lisabetta
Lora
Lorenza
Lotta
Lottiera
Luca
Lucia
Lulla
Maddalena
Magdalena
Mandina
Manetta
Margherita
Maria
Marianna
Marietta
Marte
Maruccia
Masa
Mattea
Mea
Mechera
Michelina
Micola
Migliore
Milia
Mina
Mostanda
Naldina

Nanna
Narda
Nastagia
Nastasia
Navilia
Nencia
Nente
Nera
Nese
Niccola
Niccolosa
Nidda
Nigia
Nofra
Nonnina
Nora
Nuta
Nutina
Onesta
Orsa
Orsina
Pace
Pagola
Papera
Paperina
Papina
Pasqualina
Pencina
Penina
Piccarda
Picchina
Piera
Pippa
Primavera
Pulisena
Ricca
Riccarda
Richa
Rosa
Rossa
Rugiada
Salvaggia
Salvagia
Salvatica
Salvestra
Sandra
Santa
Sapia
Sappia
Savia
Scatta
Selvaggia
Simona
Smeralda
Solia
Spinetta
Stefana
Stella
Taddea
Tancia
Tedesca
Telda
Tellina
Tessa
Thomisina
Tina
Tita
Tommasa
Tona
Toncia
Tora
Uliva
Ulivetta
Vaggia
Vangelista

Vanna
Vegnante
Venna
Vera
Verdiana
Veronica
Vettoria
Villana
Vivola
Zaneta
Zanobia
Zebaina
Zenobia
Zita

**Italian Male**
Abram/ Abramo
Accerrito
Acorri
Adamo
Adovardo
Agabito/ Agapito
Agnesa
Agnola/ Agnoli-
no/ Agnolo
Agostino
Aiolfo
Alamanno
Alberto/ Alberti-
no
Albizzo
Aldighieri
Aldobrandi
Alessandro/
Alesso
Alfonso
Aliotto
Almerico
Altobianco
Altomanno
Aluysio/ Luysio/
Loysio/ Aloy-
sius
Amadio
Amadore
Amannito
Amati
Ambrogio
Amerigo
Amideo
Andrea/ An-
dream/ Andrea-
no
Andreolo
Andreozzo
Anechino
Anfrione
Angelo
Angino
Anichino
Antonello/ Anto-
nio/ Antonolo
Apardo
Apollonio
Appiano
Arcolano
Ardingo
Argometto
Aringhieri
Aringo
Arnoldo
Arnolfo
Arrichino
Arrigo
Astore

Attaviano
Aureo
Averardo
Avito
Avveduto
Azzerello
Baccio
Baiamonte
Balda/ Balda-
sera/ Baldas-
sare/ Baldas-
sarr/ Baldese
Baldinacci/ Baldi-
notto
Baldo
Balsamo
Bambo
Banchello
Banco
Bandetto/ Bandi-
no/ Bandoccio
Barbus
Bardo/ Barduccio
Barla
Barone
Barto/ Bartolet-
to/ Bartolo/
Bartolomeo
Barzalone
Basilio
Bastiano
Battista
Begni
Belcaro
Belfralle
Bello/ Bellozzo
Beltramone
Benasuto
Benci
Bencivenni
Bene
Benedetto
Benevenuto/ Ben-
venuto
Benghi
Benincasa
Benino
Benintendi
Benozzo
Benuccio
Berna
Bernaba/ Berna-
bas
Bernardino/ Ber-
nardo
Bernassa
Bertacchin
Bertino/ Berto/
Bertoldo
Bertuccio/ Bertu-
cio/ Bettuccio
Bettino/ Betto
Biagio
Bianco
Biligiardo
Biliottino
Bindaccio
Bindello/ Bindo/
Bino
Biondo
Biordo
Bivigliano
Bizzello/ Bizzero
Blasio/ Blaxio
Boccaccio/ Boccio

Bonacorso
Bonaguida
Bonaiuto
Bonamico
Bonanno
Bonaventur
Bonavere
Boncenni/
Bonchello
Bonfigliol
Bonifazio
Bonino
Boninsegna
Bono
Bonsi
Bonsignore
Borgo/ Borgognion
Bottiglio
Braccio
Brancazio
Brando
Breusio
Briccoldo
Brigliador
Brizio
Brogio
Brunaccio
Brunellesc
Brunetto/ Bruno
Buccio/ Bucello/
Buffillo
Buono
Buto
Caccino
Cafferello
Calderino
Calvano/ Calvet-
to/ Calviano
Cambino/ Cam-
bio/ Camillo
Canaffo
Cante/ Cantino
Cardinale
Carlo
Caroccio
Casino
Castellano/ Cas-
tello/ Catalano/
Cataldo
Caterino
Cavalcante
Cecca/ Cecchino/
Cecco
Cederno
Cenni/ Cennino
Ceo
Cerbino
Cesare
Cetto
Chello
Chiaramont
Chiarello
Chiarissim
Chiaro/ Chiaroz-
zo
Chimenti/ Chimen-
to
Chino
Chiovo
Chirico
Chiuolo
Ciai/ Ciaio
Ciango/ Ciano/
Ciapo/ Ciardo
Ciatino/ Ciattoro

Cima/ Cimetto
Cinello/ Cino/ Ci-
nozzo
Ciolo
Cione
Cipolla
Cipriano
Ciriagio
Ciridonio
Ciuccio
Ciulo
Ciupo
Clario
Co
Cola
Colombo
Compagno
Concio
Conetto
Consiglio
Conte
Contro
Coppino/ Coppo
Corradino/ Corra-
do
Corsello/ Corsino/
Corso
Cosimo
Covone
Credi
Cresci
Cristiano
Cristofano/ Cristo-
foro/ Cristofo
Daddo
Damiano
Daniele/ Danieli/
Daniello
Dante
Dardano
Dardi
Dato
Davanzato
Davizzo
Dego
Dello
Deo
Diedi
Dietaiuti
Dino/ Dioneo/
Dionisio
Doffo/ Dolfo
Domenico
Donato/ Donnino/
Dono
Dore
Dragano
Duccino/ Duccio
Durante
Duti
Elia
Enrico
Ermolao
Fabbrino/ Fabiano
Facio
Falco
Falcone
Fantino
Fastello
Fecino
Fede
Federico/ Federigo
Felice
Felle
Fenso

Feo
Ferrante/ Ferrantino/ Ferretto/ Ferrino
Figlio
Filippo/ Filippozzo
Fino
Fiore/ Fioretto
Folco
Forese/ Foresta
Franceschi/ Francesco/ Francescino/ Checo
Franchino
Franco
Frangibus
Friano
Frolio
Fronte
Frosino
Fuligno
Fulino
Gabbriello
Gaddo
Galaxio
Galeazzo
Galeotto
Galileo/ Gallo
Gamberino
Gano
Gasparo
Geminiano
Gennaio
Genovino
Gentile
Geragio
Gerardo
Geremia
Geri
Germia
Gerozzo
Ghelere
Gherardino
Gherardo
Gherarducc
Gheruccio
Ghetto
Ghezzo
Ghino
Ghinozzo
Ghirigoro
Giachetto
Giambono
Giambruno
Gianbernar
Gianbonino
Giandonato
Giannino
Giannotto
Giannozzo
Giano
Gierozzo
Giliberto
Gilio
Gimignano
Gino
Giorgio
Giosaffe
Giotto
Giovacchin
Giovachino
Giovanna
Giovannell
Giovanni/ Gian/

Nanino/ Zanino
Giovanniba
Giovannone
Giovannozz
Giovenco
Girolamo
Gisiberto
Gismondo
Giudo
Giugno
Giuliano
Giunta/ Giuntino/ Giunto
Giusafa/ Giusaffa
Giustiniano
Giusto/ Zusto
Goccio
Gonzo
Goro
Gostanzo
Grazia/ Grazino/ Graziuolo
Gregorio
Grifo
Guadagno
Gualberto
Gualente
Gualterone/ Gualterott/ Gualtieri
Guardi
Guarente/ Guarenti
Guasparre
Guccio
Guelfo
Guernieri
Guerriante
Guglielmin/ Guglielmo
Guidetto
Guido
Guiduccio
Guigliador
Guilelmo
Guinnozzo
Guisberto
Gurian
Gusme
Iacomo
Iacopao/ Iacopo/ Jacobo/ Jacopo/ Jacobino/ Iacobino/ Jacobello/ Giacomo/ Jacomelo/ Puzinello/ Bolezino/ Bolino.
Inghilese
Isau
Istagio
Lamberto/ Lambetto
Landino/ Lando
Lapaccino/ Lapaccio/ Lapino/ Lapo/ Lappino/ Lapuccio
Larione
Laro
Latino
Lattanzio
Lazzero
Lello
Lennino
Lenuzo

Leonardo
Leone/ Leonello
Lerino
Libero
Ligo
Lippaccio/ Lippo/ Lippozzo
Lisa/ Liso
Lodovico
Lore
Lorenzo
Lorino
Lotteringo
Lottieri
Lottino
Lotto
Luca/ Luchas
Lucchesino
Luchetto
Luciano/ Lucio
Luigi
Lupo
Luti
Lutozzo
Maccio
Madore
Maestrino
Mafeo/ Mapheo/ Matheo/ Maffeo
Mainardo
Malacresta
Manente
Manetto
Manfredi
Mannino/ Manno
Marcello
Marchionne
Marciano/ Marco
Mari
Mariano
Marino/ Marin
Mariotto
Marmuccia
Martello
Martino
Maruccio
Masaio/ Maso
Matteo/ Matteone
Mea/ Meo
Meglino/ Meglio
Merlino
Michael/ Michaleto/ Michele
Micheleagn
Michelino
Mico
Micuccio
Migiotto
Migliore/ Migliorozz
Miniato
Mino
Modesto
Mola
Monaldo
Monte
Montuccio
Mora/ Moreto/ More
Morello
Morosino
Naldino/ Naldo
Nanna/ Nanne/ Nanni/ Nannino
Napoleone/ Napo-

lo
Nardo
Nastagio
Navanzato
Nebrotto
Nello
Nencio
Nera/ Neri/ Nero
Nerone
Nerozzo
Neso/ Netto
Niccola/ Niccolaio/ Niccoletto/ Niccolino/ Niccolo/ Nicolo/ Nicolaus/ Nicoleto/ Nicolino/ Niccolucci
Nigi
Nino
Nofri
Noldo/ Nozzo/ Nuccino/ Nuccio/ Nutino/ Nuto/ Nuttino/ Nuzzio
Oddo
Oderigo
Oliverio
Onesto
Orabuono
Orinolo/ Orlandino/ Orlando
Ormanno
Orsino/ Orso
Otto
Ottolino
Pace
Pacino
Paganello/ Paganino/ Pagano/ Pagno/ Pagnozzo/ Pagolo
Paladin
Palla
Palmerio
Palmieri
Pandolfo
Panelo
Pangratio
Pannuzzo
Pantaleo/ Pantaleone/ Pantalione
Panuzio
Paolo/ Paolino
Papera/ Papero
Papi/ Papino/ Papo
Parente
Parigi
Parisse
Pascal
Pasqua
Pasquale
Pasquino
Pazzino
Pellegrino
Perino/ Perone
Petruccio
Phylipo
Piccardo
Piera/ Piero
Pieroanton
Pierozzo

Pietro
Pinaccio/ Pino
Pippo
Piramo
Poggino
Poggio
Polito
Poltrone
Poluccia
Porcello
Prelatus
Prete
Priano
Priore
Prospero
Puccino/ Puccio
Raffaello
Raffiano
Rambaldo
Ramondo
Raynucio
Recco
Riccalbano
Riccardo/ Ricco/ Riccoldo/ Riccuccio
Riccuomo
Ridolfo
Rigi/ Righi
Rinaldo
Rinieri
Rinuccio
Ristoro
Rizardo
Roberto
Rolandino
Romaso
Romigi
Romolo
Rossello/ Rosso
Rota
Ruggieri
Rustico
Rutino
Saladino
Salamone
Salimbene
Salito
Salvadore
Salvestro/ Salvetto-Salvi
Sandro
Santi
Santino
Santore
Saraceno
Scelto
Schiatta
Sclavo
Scolaio
Segna
Semelino
Senso
Seraffo/ Serafino
Setriano
Sicurano
Signorello
Simon/ Simoneto/ Simone
Sinibaldo
Sisto
Smeraldo
Soderino
Sodo
Soldo

Sozzo
Spina
Spinello
Stagio
Stefano
Stoldo
Strozza/ Strozzo
Taccino
Taddeo
Taldo
Talento
Tamerighi
Tano/ Tanuccio
Tarvixio
Tedaldo
Tedesco
Teglia
Tegno
Tellero/ Tello
Tendi
Tendino
Tenghi
Tento
Testa
Thadeo
Tieri
Timo
Tinaccio
Tingo
Tinoro
Toccio
Tolosino
Tomaso/ Thomas/ Tome/ Tommaso/ Tomme
Tone
Toro
Toso
Totto
Triadano
Tribaldo
Tubbia
Tuccio
Tura/ Turco
Turino
Tusco/ Tuscus
Ubaldino
Ubaldo
Uberto/ Ubertino
Ugo/ Ugolino
Uguccione
Ulivieri
Ulivo
Urbano
Vaggio
Vagno
Valore
Valorino
Vangelista
Vanna/ Vanni
Vannozzo/ Vannuccio
Vendramino
Ventura
Venzi
Verdiano
Verso
Vespasiano
Vettorio
Vico
Victor
Vieri
Vincenzo
Vincilago
Vitaliano

Vito/ Vitti
Vivaldo/ Viviano
Volta
Zaccheri/ Zac-
cheria
Zanobi
Zelone
Zilio
Zonta

**Italian Surnames**
ab Aqua
Adoldo
Alberti
Alberto
Aliprando
Angelo
Antelini
Antonio
Badoer
Balbi
Barbarigo
Barbaro
Barberigo
Barbo
Barozzi
Baseggio
Basilio
Bedheloto
Bembo
Berberio
Bertaldo
Boccassio
Boccono
Boldù
Bollani
Bon
Bondemiro
Bonifati
Bono
Bragadin
Bredani
Buscharino
Buticularo
Calderario
Cancharello
Caotorta
Cappello
Caravello
Caresini
Caroldo
Carrara
Celsi
Chavalerio
Chodeschino
Cimator
Cocco
Collegario
Contarini
Corner
Correr
d'Armano
d'Artusio
D'Este
da Barleto
da Bologna
da Brabante
da Canal
da Carrara
da Cernia
da Chioggia
da Cimento
da Cola
da Ferrara
da Firenze

da Forli
da Frixaturo
da Lucca
da Milano
da Molin
da Monte
da Mosto
da Munego
da Mutina
da Negroponte
da Padova
da Parma
da Peraga
Da Polenta
da Quaterno
da Raguso
da Riva
da Sabardia
da Segna
da Treviso
da Valaseno
da Vale
da Venzone
Da Verardo
da Verona
da Vicenza
da Vigonovo
da Ziliolo
Dal Sol
Dalioto
dalla Stava
dalle Boccole
Damiani
Dandolo
Darmo
de Buora
de Mezzo
della Cava
Della Scalla
Dente
Desiderato
di Leonardo
Di Pigli
Dolfin
Donà
Doro
Duodo
Emo
Enzignerio
Faber
Falier
Famizi
Fanutio
Felone
Foscari
Francesco
Furlano
Galinarion
Gamba
Gardesano
Garzone
Girardo
Giustinian
Gonzago
Gradenigo
Graffaro
Grassi
Greco
Grissoni
Gritti
Karelo
Loredan
Malipiero
Marano
Marcella

Marcello
Mare
Marino
Marmagna
Memo
Menegi
Michiel
Minorita
Mocenigo
Molin
Moro
Morosini
Mudazzo
Muxe
Nani
Natale
Paolo
Papacizza
Paradiso
Pasqualigo
Paxe
Petri
Pisani
Polani
Premarin
Priuli
Purus
Querini
Rambaldo
Rizo
Rosso
Sanuto
Sartor
Sartore
Scrovegni
Simoneti
Solario
Solsa
Soranzo
Sorto
Sourosin
Spira
Stornado
Stornello
Taiapetra
Tansuro
Tanto
Tartare
Thadei
Tiepolo
Tomado
Torta
Trentavasi
Trevisan
Tuloni, Tulon
Turri
Utino
Venier
Vidal
Zancani

**Byzantine Fe-
male**
Anna
Eirene
Eudokia
Euphrosyne
Helene
Ioanno
Kale
Leonto
Maria
Simonis
Theodora
Thomais

Zoe

**Byzantine Male**
Alexandros
Alexios
Andreas
Andronikos
Bardas
Basil
Basileios
Christophoros
Demetrios
Georgios
Gregoras
Ioannes
Isaakios
Konstantinos
Leo
Leon
Manuel
Michael
Nikolaos
Nikophoros
Paulus
Pantoleon
Petros
Philippos
Romanos
Stephanos
Theodoulos
Theodoros
Theophylaktos
Thomas

**Byzantine Femi-
nine Monastic**
Elaiodora
Eugenia
Theodosia
Xene

**Byzantine Mas-
culine Monastic**
Bartolomaios
Dionysios
Gabriel
Gerasimos
Iakobos
Ionnikios
Isaias
Leontios
Makarios
Meletios
Nikodemos
Niphon
Sabas

**Byzantine Sur-
names**
Aboures/ Avouris
Adrianos
Agallon
Akropolites
Angelos
Aoinos
Apokaukos
Aprenos
Arbantenos
Arianites
Argyros
Asanes
Atrapes
Balsamon
Batatzes
Botaneiates

Boumbalis
Bourtzes
Branas
Bryennios
Chandrenos
Choniates
Choumnos
Chrysaphes
Chrysoloras
Dalassenos
Dermokaites
Diasorenos
Dokeianos
Doukas/ Doux
Eirenikos
Exazenos
Gabras
Glabas
Iagaris
Kabakes
Kabasilas
Kalamanos
Kaloethes
Kalothetos
Kamateros
Kantakouzenos
Katrares
Kaukadenos
Komnenos
Kontostephanos
Koresses
Kourtikes/ Kour-
tikios
Kourkouas
Laskaris
Limpidares
Machoneos
Makrembolites
Malakes
Maliasenos
Mamalis
Mandromenos
Manouelites
Melachrinos
Mourtzouphlos
Mouzakios
Mouzalon
Neokaisareites
Nestongos
Palaiologos
Pantechnes
Paraspondylos
Petraliphas
Petzikopoulos
Philanthropenos
Phokas
Pleustes
Prasomales
Prinkips
Psellos
Radenos
Raoul
Rossatas
Sarantenos
Sebastopoulos
Sgouropoulos
Sgouros
Skleros
Spartenos
Sphrantzes
Strabomytes
Synadenos
Syraneres
Syropoulos
Tagaris

Tarchaneiotes
Tornikes/ Torni-
kios
Trichas
Tsaphas
Tzamplakon
Tzykandeles
Zarides

**Greek Female**
Agathyros
Agaue
Aglaia
Aia
Aiaia
Aigialeia
Aigina
Aithra
Aitolia
Akarnaia
Akhaia
Alekto
Alkmene
Alkyone
Althaia
Amaltheia
Amyklai
Anteia
Antikleia
Antioos
Arakhne
Arethousa
Atalante/ Atalanta
Athene/ Athena
Boiotia
Deianeira
Deidamia
Dikte
Dirke
Elektra
Epikaste
Erytheia
Euadne
Euboia
Europe/ Europa
Eurydike
Eurykleia
Galateia
Graiai
Hekabe/ Hecuba
Hekate
Helenos
Hippodameia
Iokaste
Iphigeneia
Iphimedeia
Kallidike
Kalliope
Kallisto
Kalypso
Kassandra
Kasseipeia
Keto
Khalkiope
Kirke
Kleio
Klymene
Klytaimnestra
Komaitho
Kreousa
Kybele
Kythera
Laodameia
Leukippe
Leukothea

Lykia
Makaria
Medeia
Meliai
Moirai
Nausikaa
Oreithyia
Panathenaia
Penthesileia
Phoibe
Prokne
Rheia
Sibylla
Skylla
Stheneboia
Thaleia

**Greek Male**
Ademtos
Adrastos
Aglauros
Aiakos
Aias
Aietes
Aigeus
Aigimios
Aigis
Aigisthos
Aigyptos
Aineias
Aiolos
Aipytos
Aison
Akamas
Akastos
Akestes
Akheloos
Akheron
Akhilleus
Akis
Akontios
Akrisios
Aktaion
Alexandros
Alkeides
Alkestis
Alkibiades
Alkinoos
Alkmaion
Alkyoneus
Alpheios
Althaimenes
Amphiaraos
Amykos
Anios
Ankaios
Antaios
Antilokhos
Apsyrtos
Areion
Aristaios
Arkas
Askanios
Asklepios
Asopos
Augeias
Autolykos
Bakchos
Briarios
Daidalos
Danaos
Dardanos
Deukalion
Dionysos
Dioskouroi

Ekhemos
Epeios
Epigonoi
Eteokles
Eumaios
Euneos
Glauke
Glaukos
Haides
Haimon
Hekatonkheires
Hektor
Helios
Hippolytos
Hyakinthos
Hyllos
Iakchos
Iason
Ikarios
Ikaros
Inakhos
Iolaos/ Iolaus
Iolkos
Iphikles
Iphiklos
Iphitos
Kadmos
Kaineus
Kalkhas
Kanake
Kapaneus
Kastor
Kelaino
Keleus
Kephalos
Kerkopes
Kerkops
Kerkyon
Keyx
Khairephon
Khariklo
Kheiron
Khronos
Khrysippos
Khthonios
Kithairon
Kodros
Koios
Kolkhis
Kolonos
Koronis
Kreon
Kroios
Kyknos
Kyparissos
Kyszkos
Kytisoros
Labdakos
Laios
Learkhos
Leukippos
Leukothoe
Likymnios
Lykaon
Lykomedes
Lykos
Lykurgos
Lynkeus
Makareus
Makhaon
Melikertes
Menoikeus
Musios
Myrtilos
Neoptolemos

Nessos
Nykteus
Oileus
Oinomoas
Orkhomenos
Orthros
Palaimon
Parthenopaios
Patroklos
Peisistratos
Peneios
Periklymenos
Phaiakes
Philoketes
Phoibos
Plouton
Ploutos
Podaleirios
Poias
Polybos
Priamos
Prokris
Prokrustes
Rhesos
Salmakis
Seilenos
Skeiron
Skhoineus
Tantalos
Telemakhos
Teukros
Thorikos
Thrinakie
Tityos
Troizen
Xanthos
Xouthos
Zethos

**Moorish Female**
Aicha
Alegria
Anita
Biba
Estrella
Fadma
Fatma
Habiba
Hayat
Ikram
Ladan
Luna
Mercedes
Messody
Molly
Nashiema
Perla
Racquel
Rica
Sanae
Sara
Selua
Simha
Simy
Sol
Zahra

**Moorish Male**
Aben Amoras
Abrahen
Afadala
Alcaçari
Aldara
Ali
Almançor

Alnayal
Amete/ Amate/ Hamate/ Hamet/ Hamete
Amran
Anbariz
Anquete
Ansa
Archiebald
Azene
Boumediene
Boutlellis
Bulcozin
Cabi
Caçin
Cherki
Cidy/ Cide/ Cidi
Çegri
Çulema
Denni
Elmnouar
Fadma
Habib
Idir
Ishoa
Jamal/ Jimol
Le'on
Messod
Mhmd
Mimoen
Mochluf
Mohammed/ Muhammad/ Maoma/ Mahoma/ Mahomad/ Mahamete/ Mahomed/ Mohamad
Noah
Nordin
Rhali
Tamito
Waffi
Ysaque
Yuça
Yuçafe
Zenete
Zinnediene
Zumini

**Arabic Female**
Abdah
Abia
Abida
Abir
'Abla
Adara
Adila
Afaf
Afra
Ahlam
A'isha
Ain
Akram
Alima
Alya
Amal
Amani
Amimah
Aminah
Amira
Amna
Ara
Arub
Arwa

Ashraf
Asiya
Asma
Atifeh
Atikah
Awatif
Ayda
Aziza
'Azza
Badr
Bahiga
Bahija
Bahira
Banah
Barika
Basimah
Basma
Biba
Bibi
Bilqis
Budur
Busyna
Buthayna
Cab'ah
Calah
Cantara.
Dahah
Daifa
Dalal
Dalia
Danamir
Dima
Du'a
Duqaq
Ehteram
Elaheh
Elham
Elmira
Emine
Fadia
Fadila
Fadl
Faizah
Fakhirya
Farah
Faridah
Fatimah
Fatin
Fatma
Fayza
Fidda
Fukayna
Fayruz
Fayza
Fidda
Fizza
Ghada
Ghadir
Ghaniyah
Ghaythah
Ghufran
Hababah
Habibah
Hadil
Hadya
Hafsa
Hagir
Haideh
Hajar
Haleh
Halima
Hamideh
Hana
Hiba
Huda

Humai
Husniyah
Ihab
Ihsan
Ilm
Iman
Inam
Inan
Ismat
Isra
Itidal
Jaida
Jalila
Jamal
Jamilah
Jannat
Jasmine
Javairia
Jawahir
Jinan
Juml
Kahena
Kahina
Karam
Karima
Khalida
Khayriyya
Kobra
Kokab
Laila
Lamya
Layla
Leila
Leylah
Lina
Lissa
Lubna
Lujayn
Luluah
Madihah
Maha
Mahasin
Mahlagna
Maiza
Malak
Maliheh
Manal
Manar
Manhalah
Mariyah
Marwa
Maryam
Marzieh
Maysa
Mayy
Mirvat
Monir
Muhsina
Muna
Munira
Munna
Muslimah
Myisha
Nabila
Nada
Nadereh
Nadira
Nadra
Nadya
Nagat
Nagiba
Nagla
Nagwa
Naheed
Nahida

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nahla | Shafiqa | Ayman | Hafiz | Jericho | Mukhtar |
| Na'ila | Shahira | Ayub | Haidar | Jibril | Mun'im |
| Na'ima | Shahrazad | Ayyub | Hajjaj | Jinan | Munir |
| Najat | Sharifa | Az'ar | Hakeem / Hakim | Jubair | Murshid |
| Najiba | Sheba | Az'regh | Hamdan | Jurdik | Musa |
| Najila | Shukriyya | Aziz | Hamet | Kadar | Mus'ad |
| Najwa | Siha | Azizudeen | Hamid | Kadidu | Musaykah |
| Naseem | Sisi | Badda | Hamza / Hamzah | Kadin | Mushtaq |
| Nasim | Su'ad | Badr | Hani | Kadir | Mu'tasim |
| Nathifa | Suhad | Baha | Hanef / Hanif | Ka'im | Muwas |
| Nawal | Sulma | Bahir Bahjat | Harith | Kalil | Mutawakkil |
| Nibal | Sumnah | Bakhtiyar | Haroun / Harun | Kamal | Mu'taz / Mu'tazz |
| Nihab | Surayya. | Bakr / Bakor | Hasan | Kamil | Nabil |
| Nihad | Taghrid | Balban | Hashim | Karam | Nadim |
| Nihal | Taherah | Balj | Hasim | Kardal | Nadir |
| Ni'mat | Tahiyya | Baqiyya | Hassan | Karidena | Na'il |
| Nini | Talayeh | Barmak | Hatim | Karif | Na'im |
| Noura | Tannaz | Basasiri | Haytham | Karim | Naji |
| Nuha | Tarifa | Bashshar | Hedayat | Kasib | Najib |
| Nu'm | Tarub | Basim | H'emmu | Kateb | Namdar |
| Nuri | Tayyebeh | Bassam | Heydar | Kenan | Nasawi |
| Oma | Thara | Beddis | Hiba | Keraja | Nasir |
| Qabihah | Thuhayba | Berkan | Hibah | Khalid | Nasr |
| Qabul | Thurayya | Bezz'i | Hikmat | Khalil | Nguna |
| Qaribah | Touba | Bouid | Hilal | Khayrat | Nizar |
| Qubilah | Ulayyah | Bursuq | Hilel | Khayri | Nuh |
| Rabab | Umayma | Butrus | Himmi | Khayrat | Numair |
| Rabiah | Umniya | Dabir | Hisham | Khurdadhbih | Nur |
| Radwa | Utbah | Dali | Hisein / Hossein / | Kutaiba | Omar |
| Raful | Uzma | Da'ud |    Hussain | Labid | Othman |
| Raghda | Wafa | Dawud | Hotha | Lahab | Owais |
| Raja | Wahiba | Dekel | Huda | Lu'la'a | Oukesson |
| Rajya | Wahshiyah | Dharr | Humam | Lu'lu | Qadir |
| Randa | Warwar | Diya | Husam | Luqman | Qamar |
| Ranya | Widad | Duqaq | Husayn | Madidu | Qaraja |
| Rashida | Yasmin | Durayd | Husni | Mahir | Qasim |
| Rawiya | Yusra | Ebi | Ibrahim | Mahbub | Qays |
| Raym | Yusriyya | Ebrahim | Ifni | Mahmud | Qusay |
| Rayya | Zada | Ehsan | Ifser | Maimun | Qutaiba |
| Rida | Zahr | Emad | Iften | Majdi | Qutuz |
| Rim | Zahrah | Esmaeel | Ighlaf | Majduddin | Rabi |
| Ruqayya | Zakiyya | Fadi | Igider | Majid | Ra'd |
| Ruqayyah | Zara | Fadil | Igmi | Majnun | Radi |
| Rusa | Zaria | Fadl | Ihab | Makram | Radwan |
| Sabah | Zaynab | Fahd | Iher | Malik | Rafi |
| Sabra | Zebeebah | Fahim | Ihsan | Malu | Rafiq |
| Sadaf | Zizi | Faiz, | Iken | Mamduh | Raghid |
| Saduf | Zubaydah | Fakhr / Fakhir | Ilyas | Ma'mun | Rahim |
| Safa | Zuhayr | Fakhri | Imam | Manal | Rahman |
| Safia | Zukha | Faraj | Immeghar | Manar | Raisul |
| Safinaz | Zulaikha | Farraj | Immel | Mansur | Rajab |
| Safiyya | | Farid | Iraten | Marid | R'akibum |
| Safwah | **Arabic Male** | Faruq | Irgen | Masgaba | Ramadan |
| Saham | Adel / Adil | Fathi | 'Isa | Masmud | Rashad |
| Sahar | Adnan | Fawzi | Isfahan | Masruq | Rashid |
| Sahba | Ahmad / Ahmed | Fayiz | Isli | Massin | Ra'uf |
| Sajah | Akbar | Faysal | Issam | Mas'ud | Reza |
| Sakan | Akil | Fihr | Ishaq | Masudi | Rida |
| Salameh | Akram | Fikri | Isma'il | Maudad | Ridwan |
| Salha | Ala | Firas, | Ismat | Maziba | Riyad |
| Saliha | Ali | Firhun | Isra'il | Mazin | Rushdi |
| Salwa | Amal | Fu'ad. | Itbir | Meddar | Ruzbihan |
| Samar | Amin | Gadi | Itri | Mehdi | Ruzzik |
| Sameen | Amir | Ghalib | It'ij | Mejdan | Sabah |
| Samiha | Amjad | Ghanai'm | Ixzi | Mellal | Sabir |
| Samira | Amr | Ghanim | Ja'bar | Meq'wran | Sa'd |
| Samya | Anbar | Ghassan | Jabir / Jabbar | Mezwar | Sadaqat |
| Sana | Arif | Ghayth | Jabr | Mika'il | Sadiq |
| Sanam | As'ad | Ghazi | Ja'far | Mimum | Safwat |
| Saniyya | Asghar | Gildun | Ja'lal | Mojtaba | Sa'id |
| Sara | Ashraf | Gulussa | Ja'mal | Mubarak | Sajid |
| Sarab | Asim | Gulzar. | Jamil | Muhammad | Sakhr |
| Sehba | Aslam | Habib | Javad | Muhsin | Salah |
| Semeeah | Aswad | Hadi | Jawdat | Muhyiduddin | Salih |
| Shadya | Attiah / Attiyah | Hadya | Jawhar | Mu'in | Salama |

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Salim
Sami
Samir
Sattar
Sayyar
Sayyid
Sbaih
Seghada
Seif
Sekla
Selim
Sha'ban
Shadi
Shafiq
Shahriar
Shakir
Shamit
Sharif
Shukri
Sifal
Sifaks
Soheil
Suggut
Suhayl
Sulaiman
Sulayman
Sunqur
Tabat
Takfren
Tahir
Talal
Talib
Tamir
Tammam
Tarafa
T'ar'iq
Tashfin
Tayyib
Tegama
Tiljad
Todros
Tulun
Tutush
Ubaida
Ugdada
Uksem
Umar
Uqessun
Urz'ig
Usama
Usman
Uthman
Uzmir
Wafid
Wagih
Wahib
Wa'il
Wasim
Wathiq
Watt'as
Wayaasi
Yaghoub
Yahyah
Yanni
Ya'qub
Yasar
Yasin
Yasir
Yazdanyar
Yazid
Yeften
Yeh'lem
Yellel
Yidir
Yildirim

Yousef
Yuba
Yusri
Yusuf
Zafar
Zahir
Zaid
Zaki
Zang
Zayd
Zayn
Z'effun
Zer'wal
Zia
Z'idan
Ziyadatallah
Zubair
Zuhayr

**Jewish Female**
Beila
Belet
Chana
Doltza
Esther
Guta
Guthela
Madrona
Matrona
Minna
Pultzelina
Rachel
Rivkah
Saris
Scolaster
Shluida
Shoinlin
Shonlin
Tziporah
Yehudis
Yeintil

**Jewish Male**
Alechsandri
Aharon
Asher
Avraham
Baruch
Binyamin
Chayim
Chelbo
Chiyya
Chizkiyah
Chizkiyahu
Daniel
David
Efrayim
Elazar
Eliezar
Elyakim
Gedalyah
Gershom
Hillel
Kalonymos
Komlin
Levi
Machir
Meir
Menachem
Meshulam
Mordechai
Moshe
Na'aman
Nasan
Natronai

Nechemiah
Nesanel
Peter
Reuven
Shabsai
Shem Tov
Shemaryah
Shemaryahu
Shimon
Shimshon
Shlomo
Shmuel
Shneiur
Simchah
Sulam
Tamar
Uri
Yaakov
Yakar
Yechiel
Yehoshua
Yehudah
Yekusiel
Yelivah
Yitzchak
Yoel
Yom Tov
Yosef
Zelekman
Zuiskind

**Spanish Female**
Agueda
Aldonça
Ana
Andrea
Angel/ Angela
Antona/ Antonia
Barbola
Beatriz/ Beatris
Blanca
Castellana
Catalina
Clara
Constanza/ Con-
  stança/ Costan-
  ça/ Costanza
Cristina
Crus
Damiana
Elena
Elvira/ Elvyra
Engraçia
Felipa
Floriana
Francisca/ Fran-
  çisca/ Françis-
  quita
Geronima
Graçia
Gregoria
Guiomar/ Guyo-
  mar
Jerónima
Juana/ Juanica
Juliana
Leonor
Lucia/ Luisa/ Lu-
  zia
Madelena/ Mag-
  delena
Manuela
Margarida/ Mar-
  garita
Mari

Maria/ María
Mariana/ Marina
Mayor
Melchora
Mencia/ Mençia/
  Mencía
Olall/ Olalla
Pascuala
Quiteria
Sancha
Serena
Susana
Teresa/ Theresa
Ursula
Violante
Ynes/ Ines/ Ynés/
  Inés
Ysabel/ Isabel/
  Isabelica

**Spanish Male**
Agustin
Alonso
Alvaro
Andrés
Antonio
Antón
Baltasar
Barros
Bartolomé
Bastía
Bautista
Benito
Bernardino
Blas
Cambranes
Carlos
Chico
Cosme
Cristóbal
Diego
Domingo
Esteban
Eyague
Felipe
Francisco
Frutos
Gabriel
Garci
Gaspar
Gines
Giraldo
Gonzalo
Gregorio
Guillen
Hector
Hernando
Hernán
Jaime
Jaén
Jerónimo
Jorge
Jose
Juan
Jusepe
Lope
Lorenzo
Lucas
Luis
Manuel
Marcos
Martín
Mateo
Matias
Melchor

Mergildo
Miguel
Mosen
Nicolas
Pablo
Pascual
Pedro
Rodrigo
Salvador
Sancho
Santiago
Sebastian
Simón
Tomas
Tomé
Truylos

**Spanish Sur-
names**
Abril
Aguado
Alcaçar
Alcon
Almayda
Aragones
Ayere
Badelas
Bajas
Balboa
Bamonte
Banbela
Banegas
Barbero
Barril
Baylín
Bertino Sans
Bogado
Bota
Brasa
Bretanzos
Briçianos
Brusa
Bárba
Cabrero
Cacho
Calabaças
Calahorra
Calante
Calderon
Caminante
Cano
Cardoso
Carperon
Carral
Carrasco
Carreño
Carrillo
Cascon
Casteles
Castellano
Castellon
Catala
Catarribera
Cavallero
Cañero
Cenisçeros
Chacon
Chanta
Cherino
Cintero
Cocon
Cola
Coll
Collaço
Colmenares

Colon
Comete
Conchada
Correa
Corredor
Cortes
Corvacho
Cotado
Covarrubias
Cuello
Çafra
Çahera
Çapata
Çatico
Çenturion
Çeron
Çorrilla
Dey
Donant
Donayre
Duran
Escalante
Escalera
Fajardo
Ferrer
Florentin
Flores
Fogaça
Fonte Poutein
Fontesar
Forentin
Gajardo
Galas
Galiano
Galvan
Galves
Garavito
Garnica
Garrido
Gaytan
Girao
Girán
Gramaja
Grand
Guerrero
Guerrey
Herrero
Hortolano
Hurtado
Justeniano
Lascaris
Loriguero
Lusicori
Maderuelo
Madraso
Mafaraxas
Maldonado
Malon
Marañon
Marques
Marroqui
Martil
Mata
Mato
Maça
Mexica
Mexía
Mirones
Mondexar
Mondragon
Mora
Moya
Natalez
Navaroo
Oleylas

Oller
Onte
Ordas
Ordoñes
Orejón
Orenes
Ortelano
Osorio
Ospital
Ozalla
Pacheco
Palafox
Palomino
Pardo
Patudo
Patyño
Pedrosa
Pellicer
Pereyra
Pimentel
Pina
Pinedo
Pinto
Piquier
Porras
Preto
Quadrado
Quexada
Quicedo
Rache
Rachen
Ram
Rancha
Raso
Raçoso
Rejón
Roche
Roman
Romano
Romero
Rosa
Rosil
Salazar
Sandin
Sandino
Santos
Saravia
Sariñena
Sarmiento
Sarria
Serra
Serrano
Sesto
Seve
Situ
Soler
Sorje
Sosa
Symilor
Tasina
Texen
Texera
Texil
Tinoco
Torrero
Toxenes
Tuñon
Vaca
Vaes
Valdés
Valera
Vanegas
Varela
Vela
Velez

Vello
Venegas
Vera
Vida
Yebera
Ynfante

**Persian (Male?)**
Ainairya
Ardumanish
Ariyamna
Arses
Arshaka
Arshâma
Artavardiya
Artaxshasa/ Ar-
    daxcashca
Artostes
Arxa/ Arkha
Âsina
Aspacanah
Atamaita/ Mamai-
    ta/ Umamaita
Athiyabaushna
Bagabuxsha/
    Megabyzus
Bagâbigna
Bardiya/ Gaumâ-
    ta/ Smerdis
Cincixri
Cisantaxma
Cishpi
Kûru
Dâdarshi
Dârayavahu
Dâtuvahya
Fravarti
Frâda
Gaubaruva/ Gob-
    ryas
Haldita
Haxâmanish/
    Achaemenes
Imanish
Kambûjiya
Marduniya
Martiya
Nabukudracara/
    Nebuchadrezzar
Nabunaita
Nidintu-Bel
Phraotes
Skunxa
Sogdianus
Taxmaspâda
Thuxra
Upadarma
Utana
Uvaxshtra
Vahauka
Vahumisa
Vahyavishdâpaya
Vahyazdâta
Vaumisa
Vindafarnah
Vindarna
Vishtâspa
Vivâna
Vâyaspâra
Xshathrita
Xshayârshan

**Designers' Notes**

We like to think of this game as what the second generation of RPGs might have looked like if *Everway* – or *Heaven & Earth*, or *Nobilis* – had been the first published RPG, instead of *D&D*. In short, if RPGs had grown out of games like *Once Upon a Time*, instead of wargames. These are its spiritual ancestors, though perhaps not its mechanical ancestors.

We created this game in rather a backward order. It started out with the concept of a game mechanic, and only much later did we begin putting a world around it.

The original precept was to see what happened if we broke a pair of sacred cows of the RPG: focusing on the character, and giving quantitative results. We wanted to see if we could come up with a meaningful mechanic that focused on the setting, and that told us only how things happened, not to what degree. Well, as we experimented with different things, we decided that qualitative results were insufficient for our purposes – an RPG resolution system needs to tell you whether or not you've succeeded, and what we had couldn't answer that question with any kind of certitude. However, we did come away with the idea of a system that was without hierarchical scales, so that while the system now tells you that X is better than Y, it refuses to tell you by how much.

The focus on externalities is what became the Planets. Most (all?) RPGs consider the world the static, or at least definite, part of the equation, and the character striving is what the mechanics/dice rolls represent. We wanted to see what a system looked like that didn't take the character into consideration, except perhaps analogously to the modifiers that situation might have on a roll in a "normal" RPG. Instead, it would look at the world half of the world-character interaction. All of those "random factors" that most game system sum up in the luck of the dice – uncertain footing, great distance, a change in the wind; in short, chance –

would become the focus of our mechanic, while those things that are usually considered under character control – skill, natural aptitude, "attributes", etc. – would become the chance factors summed up by the die roll. In the end, it didn't end up quite that way, but it still informs the philosophy behind the mechanics. The idea has been refined into a somewhat-detailed mechanical view of the world around the character – the Planets – which consciously ignores all other aspects of character.

Once we had the mechanic that became "Rolling the Planets", though without specific forces in mind yet, we set about looking for a setting/genre where this sort of heavy-handed fate intervention would feel reasonable, or even appropriate. A couple of possibilities were tossed around, but we finally settled on low-powered supers, and thought that a pseudo-period setting with supers would be grand fun. We hope you agree on that count. The "pulp" part of the setting came from two imperatives. First, it seemed more appropriate for the setting, and, second, the lower power and less-special-status for supers seemed a better mesh for the pseudo-historical setting – with supers having less power, we could minimize the degree to which they had warped the setting.

There are some specific principles that we've tried to adhere to and convey with the rules. In case they aren't obvious[40], here they are:

- The players have complete authorial control over their personal characters in matters that are unimportant or uncontested. In the case of inanimate objects, the closer a thing is to the character, the more control the player has over it. In the case of other characters (not controlled by other players), the less significant and more appropriate the action, the more control over it the player has.
- The Storyguide may contest a player's authorial control of her character in matters that are significant or contested, at which point the rules for Traits and Planets (in that order) come into play to resolve the outcome.
- The Storyguide has authorial control over everything else.

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[40] or you want a basis upon which to judge the effectiveness of this work

- Players may assume temporary complete authorial control (including other objects and characters, but excluding other players' characters) by playing Storypath Cards.
- The game is played on a dual level, where the players both inhabit their characters and craft a story that the players can appreciate. At the level of the characters, genre conventions should be the primary basis for reality and should inform the characters' decisions. At the player level, appropriate literary trappings (framing stories, cliffhangers, issue/title distinctions, variable consistency) should shape the narrative on a broader scale.

Further, there are a set of assumptions about the descriptions of characters that are very important:

- Planets are a measure not of the character's internal capabilities, but of how the universe around the character reacts to her. A character with a very high (small die) Known is not necessarily learned or intelligent, and a very physically fit and powerful character could have very low (large die) Static and Dynamic scores.
- Similarly, Traits are not in any way "linked" to a particular Planet. Once character creation is finished, the effects and uses of a Trait (and relationships to particular Forces) should be considered only in light of the player's description of how the Trait is being used and the situation at hand. Powers and Weaknesses *are* related to their source Force, but since the player will only rarely be rolling a die for that Planet, see the next point.
- Descriptors generally decide an action, when applicable. Rolling the Planets is only used to decide actions that the Descriptors do not govern, or when two characters are too close in ability to decide the results from comparing their Descriptors.
- There are no absolute or objective hierarchies. In particular, the dice used for the Planets do not sit upon a scale, so someone with a d4 in a Planet is not necessarily more governed by that Force than someone with a d10--it depends only on the relationship within the Planets of a given character. Likewise, Descriptors are not rated in any way; decisions of relative power in that area are generally decided by a combination of dramatic fiat and narrative comparison.

Oh, and for those of you who care: yes, we *have* analyzed the probabilities for the dice, at least to a degree. And we're not telling. This isn't a game about that sort of thing. It only matters whether or not one die is less than, equal to, or greater than another, not by how much, so suffice it to say that, yes, a d20 beats a d16 about as often as a d6 beats a d4 (within a few percentage points), or for that matter, about as often as a d12 beats a d10, and this holds true so long as you only use the recommended die sizes.

If you've followed my writings online for any time, you may be aware that I think setting is king in the RPG, and mechanics are just there to bring the setting to life. So why is this game several chapters of rules, and just one paltry chapter on the setting? Two reasons. First of all, this game grew out of mechanics, and the setting game later. The point of this game, at least initially, was to challenge the assumptions of what mechanics in an RPG should look like, and to thus stretch the shape of the RPG as a whole. And most of that comes in areas that are, loosely, mechanics.

Secondly, Italia is *meant* to be 9 parts feel and 1 part detail. We are trying to evoke a mood, and want you to fill in the details as you see fit, in order to capture that mood in whatever way you wish to. Also, it is supposed to be based on cliches, tropes, and erroneous familiarity. Doubtless, we have different ideas of what "the Renaissance" is like, so by leaving Italia vague, you can better mesh it to your own preconceptions.

**Inspirography**

A great many things have gone into this game, in terms of antecedents. The most obvious and significant, from a setting point of view, are several comics, while much of the mood can be traced to movies. The mechanics, and the game side in general, come from a mix of RPGs and comics.

*Astro City*

*Kingdom Come*

It's not just the concept of a more realistic setting that actually responds to the existence of supers. Also, some of the deconstruction of the superhero, which shows up in the self-parody and tongue-in-cheek references that many of our heroes and villains display.

*Unbreakable*

not just a deconstruction of the superhero mythos, this one also reconstructs it. He rips the foundations out from under the superhero at the very same time that he is building a new foundation, from many of the same parts, put together completely differently. In the end, we see a completely different, yet infinitely similar superhero–a postmodern reconstruction of the concept of superhero. Everything underneath has changed, but the flowers are still standing.

*The Shadow*

The Numerous Comics from which we have shamelessly stolen inspiration (and then some) for many of our stock characters.

*Everway*

*Over the Edge*

*Story Engine*

*Theatrix*

*Castle Falkenstein*


**A Final Note**

So, why are we releasing this as open content? Well, there's definitely a bit of hubris involved. We believe that this game marks a significant departure from most, if not all, RPGs published to date. But we also think that it is, at best, a first, rough, expression of an idea. Much as it took several games to really refine the model that D&D originally put forth, If this model for an RPG is to have any real value it must be refined. While there is nothing we could do to prevent others from reusing our mechanics in their creations, we know that some shy away from what they see as "stealing" in an ethical or legal sense. We want to make it absolutely clear that we don't object to, and in fact encourage, others taking this work and building on it. Our greatest hope is that this really *is* a different way of looking at the RPG, as we believe it is, and that somewhen down the line we can look back and trace at least one jewel of an RPG back to this gen-

esis.

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# Four Colors al Fresco

## The Setting

Four Colors al Fresco is a roleplaying game of pulp-style adventure, set in an alternate Renaissance. The basic setting is Renaissance Italy – as it might have been. Had there been fantastic, pre-industrial advanced technologies in the hands of a few. Had the Black Death never come. Had the remnants of highly-advanced civilizations been scattered around the world. Had reality been governed by mystical Forces instead of scientific laws. Had there been maniacal geniuses constantly plotting to take over the world. And, most importantly, had there been superheroes to thwart them.

But these are not the superheroes of our times, or even our parents' times – these are the superheroes of our grandparents' times, the action heroes of the pulps. Before the term "superhero" was coined. Before spandex costumes. When a man with a maniacal laugh, a pair of six-shooters, and the sole power to "cloud men's minds" had the power to send villains scurrying for their holes. Pulp heroes are only slightly better than the rest of us, not the breed apart of the modern superhero. They may laugh in the face of an armed man, but it is not because they are unthreatened. They may operate outside the law, but only because the authorities have chosen to allow it. And they rarely have the luxury of existing outside the norms of society for more than an evening at a time. In short, while they have exceptional powers, pulp heroes are not so powerful that they may ignore the rest of society.

The style of this roleplaying game is one of action and adventure in a morally-clear world. The villains are Evil, and the heroes are Good, and rarely is there any doubt as to which is which. Doing good doesn't result in unintended bad consequences, and the bad guys are not just misunderstood or misguided. Your characters are the heroes of this world, people gifted with extraordinary gifts and driven by moral principles.

The world, as well as all those within it, is governed by five mystical Forces, the interactions of which determine everything that happens and exists. Much as our own world is governed by the forces of electricity, magnetism, gravity, and the nuclear forces, which together can explain why everything is the way it is, and why everything happens the way it does, the world of Four Colors al Fresco is governed by five Forces. Dynamic, Static, Lost, Known, and Passion are the Forces that govern the existences and interactions of this world. Every action, every happening, every thing in the world is caused by the interactions of these 5 forces, but, generally, one or two of the forces so strongly govern a particular activity that the rest are overshadowed. When the Dynamic Force holds sway, the rock falls. When the Static Force holds sway, it stays put. Throughout most of the world, they provide a sort of balance – some things and situations are governed more by one Force or another, but on a broad scale everything balances out. But a few exceptional individuals are not in harmony with the world. The Forces do not pay equal attention to them. Some of the Forces pay them more heed, while others seem to give them short shrift, and still others apparently just overlook them on occaision. These are the Omegas , individuals who have been forgotten by one of the Forces, and thus defy the normal laws of nature in some small way. It is these Omegas that are the villains and heroes of this world.

### The Forces

**Known**: Governed by Mercury, Patron of Discovery, the Known is the Force of science and deduction and the rational world.
**Passion**: Governed by Venus, Goddess of Passion, Passion is the Force of emotion and feeling.
**Dynamic**: Governed by Mars, God of War, Dynamic is the Force of motion and action and change.
**Static**: Governed by Jupiter, the Eternal Ruler, Static is the Force of stability and the status quo.
**Lost**: Governed by Saturn, the Mystic, the Lost is the Force of faith, the mystical and magical, and the forgotten.

## The Rules

The rules are based on 3 basic concepts: Descrip-

tors, Planets, and Storypath cards. Descriptors make up the bulk of a character's description, and resolve the bulk of actions. Descriptors are purely descriptive, with no numerical or other "mechanical" component. Utilizing them is a purely narrative affair, involving the Storyguide and players agreeing on how they apply.

In the event that Descriptors can not resolve a situation, the Planets may be employed. The Planets correspond to the Forces, and determine to what degree each Force affects a character. To use them, you "roll the Planets", which involves rolling the dice for all of your characters Planets, and then ordering them according to results. This forms the Hierarchy, with the smallest result at the top, in the Dominant position. Successively larger results are further down the Hierarchy, occupying, in order, the Major, Minor, and Weak positions. If a Force favorable to the action lands high in the Hierarchy, the action is successful, while if a Force unfavorable to the action ends up near the top of the Hierarchy, it fails.

There are also Circumstance dice, which serve to modify the results of the Hierarchy. These are never based on the characters' Descriptors, but reflect external situations. They sit outside of the Hierarchy.

| Die | Descriptors |
|-----|-------------|
| *d3\** | *5 Traits* |
| **d4** | 4 Traits |
| *d5* | *4 Traits* |
| **d6** | 3 Traits |
| *d7* | *3 Traits* |
| **d8** | 3 Traits |
| **d10** | 2 Traits |
| **d12** | 3 Traits; at least 1 Flaw |
| **d16** | 4 Traits; at least 2 Flaws |
| **d20** | 3 Traits; at least 2 Flaws |
| *d24\** | *3 Traits; at least 2 Flaws; no Power Stunts* |
| **d30\*** | 2 Flaws |
| *d34\** | *3 Flaws* |
| Ω | 1 Power, 1 Weakness, & 1 Quirk |

Storypath cards are used to shift the balance of power from Storyguide to player. When a player uses a Storypath card, she gains complete authorial control over the game (except for other players' characters) for a little while. Storypath cards that are played in such a way as to be, on balance, detrimental to the group, earn the player an immediate draw for a new card.

There are also mechanics based on the notions of Title and Miniseries, and upon the units of time of Panel, Page, and Issue. The Title is the comic book series that contains the characters' exploits. All those characters that are regular members of the current Title are considered Main characters, while any others are Guest characters. A Title also has Storypath cards, and players of Main characters of that Title may use them. Any player may put Storypath cards into the Title, and upon doing so immediately draw a new card for their hand.

## Character Creation

Once you have a concept for your character, there are 3 steps to realizing her in game terms.

First you need to rate her Planets. For 4 of the Planets, you will simply rate how strongly that force influences the character. You assign each of her Planets a die, which is what you roll for that Force when resolving an action. Low rolls are better, so the smaller the die-type, the more strongly that force rules the character. You must get Storyguide permission to use the die-types on the chart that are not in bold.

One of the planets is not rated. It is designated with an Ω, and is a force that doesn't govern the character normally. She is "out of the sight of" that planet. It is from this Force (or rather, its lack) that her powers stem. Every character has a Power, a Weakness, and a Quirk associated with the Ωed Planet. Usually, the Power and Weakness are related – often the Weakness is something that negates the Power – but this is not necessary. The Quirk helps to define exactly how the Force of that Planet doesn't affect the character.

Once the Power, Weakness, and Quirk have been determined, the third and final step is detailing the character's Traits. For each Planet with a die rating,

consult the chart to determine how many Traits that Planet grants, and any limitations on how they may be used. Every Trait must be somehow related to the Force that the Planet governs.

One special kind of Trait is the Power Stunt. This is a specific special use of the character's Power, which is practiced and thus just as reliable as the character's Power itself. Another special Trait is a Flaw. As the name implies, a Flaw is primarily negative, and limits the character in some way. Power Stunts and Flaws should be labeled as such, but otherwise abide by all of the same rules as any other Trait.

As finishing steps, you should record the color of the die you are going to use for each planet, and draw your Storypath cards. Each player begins play with a number of Storypath cards equal to the number of rated Planets her character has. Decide on a name, and record the character's Title(s), and you're ready to play.

## Glossary

**Descriptors**: everything, besides the Planet scores, that expresses your character in game-mechanical terms; essentially everything on your character sheet except for the Storypath cards and Planets (and Name). Some have special names, such as Traits, Flaws, Powers, etc.

**Dynamic:** the Force of action and movement and change. Governed by Mars, God of War.

**Flaw:** A special kind of Trait. Flaws are Traits that are almost always negative in effect, and thus a detriment to the Character. A Flaw is something that the Character would like to be rid of.

**Guest Characters:** all of the Ωs other than the Main characters. Usually, there are one or more villainous Guest characters in an Issue, and there may also be heroic Guests, who are not part of the Main characters, but are Crossing Over (q.v.). They are almost always played by the Storyguide.

**Hierarchy:** The ordering of the dice, and thus their corresponding Forces, when they are rolled. It is the Hierarchy that determines the outcome of an in-question action. The smaller the number on the die, the higher it is in the Hierarchy. The top position (lowest number), which may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Dominant. The next highest position, or highest if the lowest number is tied, is labeled Major. The lowest position, which again may only be occupied uniquely, is labeled Weak. The final position, above Weak and below Major, is labeled Minor. The Dominant and Major positions are favorable, and indicate success if Favored Forces fall into them. The Weak position is unfavorable, and indicates failure if a Favored Force falls into it.

**Issue:** a single session (evening/afternoon) of game play. Most Issues contain multiple Pages, and they are often grouped into Miniseries.

**Known:** the Force of science, reason, and the rational world. Governed by Mercury, Patron of Discovery.

**Lost:** the Force of the mystical, magical, and forgotten. The source of faith and magic, and the governing Force for esoteric occult knowledges. Governed by Saturn, the Mystic.

**Main character:** a character played by one of the Players. They are the characters around whom the stories of every Issue revolve.

**Main Title:** The exploits of the characters are organized in a number of ways. One of those is the concept of Title(q.v.). The Main Title is the Title that includes all of the characters as Main Characters (q.v.).

**Miniseries:** a series of Issues that are all linked together to form a single plot. The Issues of a Miniseries usually are part of a single Title, but this is not necessarily the case, and it's perfectly reasonable for a Miniseries to span as many Titles as it has Issues.

**Passion:** the Force of emotions and feelings. Governed by Venus, Goddess of Passion.

**Page:** a series of events that are all tightly tied together and take place in a short span of time in a single location. Essentially, a scene. A Page may be made up of any number of Panels, including none. Depending on the nature of the activities it encompasses, it won't always be divided into Panels. A series of Pages make up an Issue.

**Panel**: the smallest unit of time in the game system. During one Panel, a character may accomplish one simple action, such as making an attack, lifting a sinking ship, or delivering some dialog. More complex actions, such as disarming a complex trap, delivering a monologue, debating a course of action, or laying an ambush, will take multiple Panels.

**Planets**: the dice ratings on your character sheet. They rate how much the various Forces affect your character; Smaller numbers indicate a stronger influence. Also, a metaphorical term for the Forces; each Force is thought to be governed by one of the known Planets.

**Power**: The advantageous special Descriptor associated with your Ωed Planet. Powers generally fall outside the bounds of normal reality in the world. A Power should be somehow exceptional, either in nature or degree, so as to keep it distinct from other Traits.

**Power Stunt:** a special kind of Trait. Power Stunts are special uses of a Power that aren't outside of its purview, but aren't necessarily an inherent part of it, either. A Power Stunt guarantees the ability to utilize the Power in this borderline area.

**Quirk:** the Descriptor that stems from an Ωed Planet. which is neither advantageous nor disadvantageous on the whole. Like a Weakness or Power, it should be somehow exceptional or supernatural.

**Static:** the Force of stability and the status quo. Governed by Jupiter, the Eternal Ruler.

**Storyguide (SG)**: the Storyguide is the participant who currently isn't a regular player. It is her job to detail the setting, play all of the extra characters, provide a scenario, and adjudicate actions.

**Title**: the collected adventures of a particular Ω or group of Ωs.

**Traits**: Descriptors other than your Power/Weakness/Quirk. Some of these are in turn given special names, such as Flaws and Power Stunts.

**Weakness**: The disadvantageous special Descriptor associated with your Ωed Planet. Many Weaknesses tie directly to the Power, and either limit it in some way, negate it under some circumstances, or provide a way to counter it. But this need not be the case, and a Weakness could work in any way. What is important is that it be somehow exceptional, either in degree or nature, or it would simply be a Flaw Trait.

**Ω (Omega):** Someone who is "out of the sight of" one of the Planets, and therefore not limited to the normal rules of the Force it governs. As a result, they have what we would call superpowers, and are often capable of feats well beyond human norms. Nobody knows who first used the term "Ω", but it is suspected that it was someone trying to be clever and show their learning by making a reference to the end of normal laws where these people are concerned.

# Mercury (Known)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

Power · Weakness · Quirk · Stunt · Flaw

# Venus (Passion)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

Power · Weakness · Quirk · Stunt · Flaw

# Mars (Dynamic)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

Power · Weakness · Quirk · Stunt · Flaw

# Jupiter (Static)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

Power · Weakness · Quirk · Stunt · Flaw

# Saturn (Lost)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ _____

Power · Weakness · Quirk · Stunt · Flaw

Name:
Title:

Power:

Weakness:

Quirk:

Passion
♀
blue

Lost
♄
black

Static
♃
green

Dynamic
♂
red

Known
☿
white
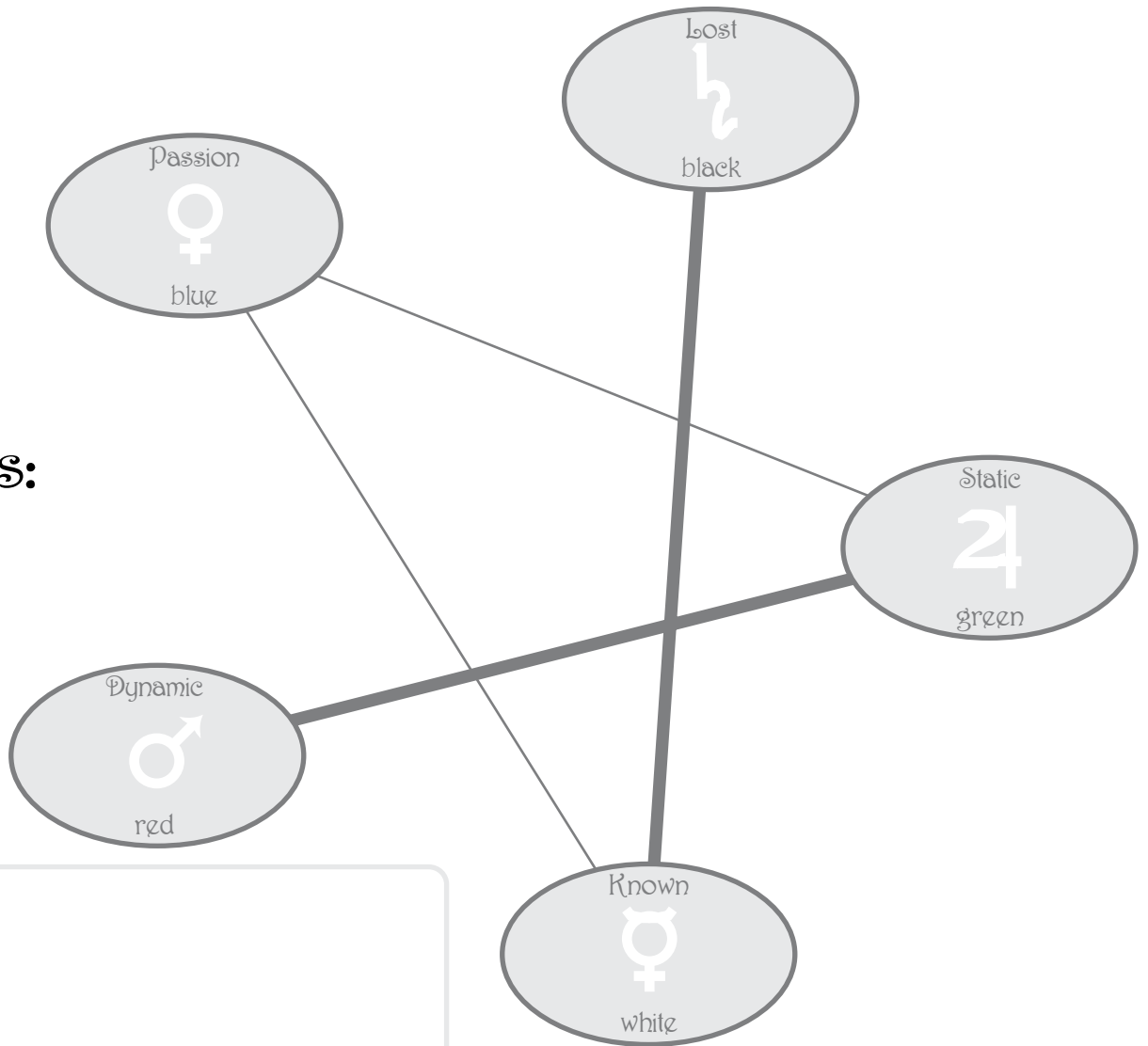
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Flaws:

Storypath Cards:

Title:

Issue:

Miniseries:

Issue
Trait:

Name:
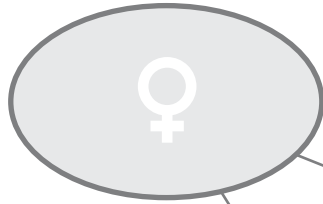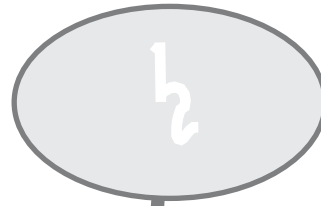
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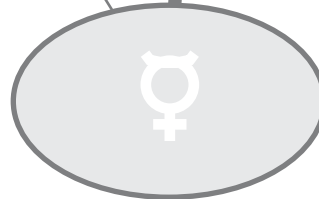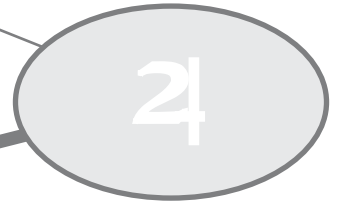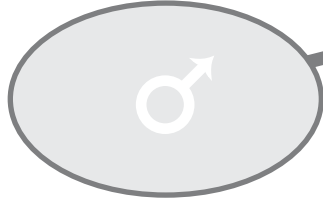
Weakness:

Quirk:

Traits:

Flaws:

Mastermind:

Power:

Weakness:

Quirk:

Mastermind Traits:

Omega

Dominant

Major

Minor

Weak

Traits:

Flaws: