

THE GUARDIAN

NAME: _____

BACKGROUND

- ☐ Military ☐ Outlaw ☐ Urban
☐ Monastic ☐ Privileged ☐ Wilderness

DEMEANOR

- ☐ Harsh ☐ Quiet
☐ Serious ☐ Suspicious
☐ Polite ☐ Cautious

FIGHTING STYLE: _____

YOUR TRAINING



STATUSES

- POSITIVE** ☐ Empowered ☐ Favored ☐ Inspired ☐ Prepared
NEGATIVE ☐ Doomed ☐ Impaired ☐ Trapped ☐ Stunned

STATS

Add +1 to one stat

- ☐ CREATIVITY [-1]
☐ FOCUS [+1]
☐ HARMONY [0]
☐ PASSION [+1]

FATIGUE



BALANCE

At character creation, shift your balance once if you like



CONDITIONS

- ☐ **AFRAID**
-2 to intimidate and call someone out
- ☐ **ANGRY**
-2 to guide and comfort and assess a situation
- ☐ **GUILTY**
-2 to push your luck and +2 to deny a callout
- ☐ **INSECURE**
-2 to trick and resist shifting your balance
- ☐ **TROUBLED**
-2 to plead and rely on your skills or training

See the back of this sheet for more on clearing conditions

PROTECTOR'S BURDEN

You take it upon yourself to protect the people around you in general, but you have someone in particular you keep safe.

Name your ward (choose a PC to start): _____

When they mark a condition in front of you, mark fatigue or a condition. Your ward can always **call on you to live up to your principle**—without shifting their balance away from center—and they take +1 to do it.

At the beginning of each session, roll, taking +1 for each yes:

- Do you believe your ward listens to you more often than not?
- Have you recently protected them or helped them with a problem?
- Is there an immediate threat to your ward that you are aware of?

On a 7–9, hold 1. On a 10+, hold 2. At any time, spend the hold to:

- Take a 10+ without rolling on any move to defend or protect them
- Track them down even if they are hidden or avoiding you
- Figure out what they're up to without them knowing

On a miss, hold 1, but...you're drifting apart on different paths. By the end of the session, you must choose one:

- Decide you're the only one who can keep them safe; shift your balance twice toward Self-Reliance and keep them as your ward
- Decide they can handle life without your protection; shift your balance twice toward Trust and switch your ward to a new person

You may also switch your ward if they leave play or are no longer present for some reason. When you switch your ward, you can switch to an NPC (if the GM agrees).

MOVES CHOOSE TWO

☐ SUSPICIOUS MIND

When you watch a person carefully to figure them out, roll with **FOCUS**. On a 7–9, hold 1. On a 10+, hold 2. Spend your hold, 1-for-1, to ask their player questions while you observe or interact with them; they must answer honestly.

- Are you telling the truth?
- What are you truly feeling?
- What do you really want right now?
- What are you worried about?
- What are you about to do?

☐ BADGE OF AUTHORITY

You have some badge or symbol of authority from your background, something that makes you someone to be listened to, if not well-liked or entirely respected. When you give an NPC an order based on that authority and their recognition of it, roll with **PASSION**. On a hit, they do what you say. On a 7–9, they choose 1:

- They do it, but in lackluster fashion
- They say they need something first to be able to do it
- They do it, but they're going to talk to your superiors

On a miss, the authority of your badge doesn't sway them; they do as they please and you take -1 forward against them.

☐ CATCH A LIAR

When you are suspicious of someone, write their name here: _____

You cannot write another until you have made them admit their guilt and misdeeds in front of an audience, or until you no longer seek to uncover their secrets.

When they admit their guilt and misdeeds in front of an audience, clear their name from this move. When you no longer seek to uncover their secrets, you may mark a condition to clear their name from this move.

When you expose that person's lies or wrong-doing, clear all your fatigue and up to two conditions. When you try to **intimidate** them into admitting their real crimes by using actual evidence, you can eliminate one additional option from the list on any hit before they choose.

☐ FURROWED BROW

Take +1 **FOCUS** (max +3).

☐ MARTYR COMPLEX

When you have a total of 8 between conditions marked, highest principle, and fatigue marked, take +1 ongoing to all moves.

YOUR CHARACTER

LOOK:

HOME TOWN:

HISTORY

- What pushed you to assume responsibility for the people you care about?
- Whom have you protected for so long...but maybe doesn't need you anymore?
- Who used to be in your circle of trust before they betrayed you?
- What tattered garment or adornment reminds you of those you protect...or failed to protect?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

CONNECTIONS

_____ is my ward—they need me to have their back, end of story.

_____ looks like they're more than capable without my help; I'm glad some of us can take care of ourselves.

⊕ MOMENT OF BALANCE ⊕

You've sworn to protect the people you care about, but balance is about finding your own place in the world as well. You know what you're capable of accomplishing, and you step up to show the world your unique strength. Tell the GM how you put your own life on the line to defeat a villain or danger that seems unstoppable.

CLEARING CONDITIONS

- **Afraid:** run from danger or difficulty.
- **Angry:** break something important or lash out at a friend.
- **Guilt:** make a personal sacrifice to absolve your guilt.
- **Insecure:** take foolhardy action without talking to your companions.
- **Troubled:** seek guidance from a mentor or powerful figure.

GROWTH □□□□

GROWTH QUESTION

At the end of each session, answer this question with the other growth questions:

- Did you pursue a desire or goal of your own, outside of protecting others?

GROWTH ADVANCEMENTS

- Take a new move from your playbook □□
- Take a new move from another playbook □□
- Raise a stat by +1 (maximum of +2 in any given stat)
- Shift your center one step □□
- Unlock your Moment of Balance □□

FIGHTING TECHNIQUES

DIVERT

DEFEND & MANEUVER

L ⊗ P ⊗ M ⊗

Step into the way of blows intended for allies; when any ally within reach suffers a blow this exchange, you can suffer it for them. If you also use Retaliate this exchange, deal an additional 1-fatigue each time.

NAME:

L O P O M O

☐ DEFEND & MANEUVER ☐ ADVANCE & ATTACK ☐ EVADE & OBSERVE

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BASIC MOVES

ASSESS A SITUATION

When you **assess a situation**, roll with **CREATIVITY**. On a 7–9, ask one question. On a 10+, ask two. Take +1 ongoing when acting on the answers.

- What here can I use to _____?
- Who or what is the biggest threat?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What's my best way out/in/through?
- Who or what is in the greatest danger?

PLEAD

When you **plead with an NPC** who cares what you think for help, support, or action, roll with **HARMONY**. On a 7–9, they need something more—evidence that this is the right course, guidance in making the right choices, or resources to aid them—before they act; the GM tells you what they need. On a 10+, they act now and do their best until the situation changes.

HELP

When you take appropriate action to **help a companion**, mark 1-fatigue to give them a +1 to their roll (after the roll). You cannot help in a combat exchange in this way.

BALANCE MOVES

LIVE UP TO YOUR PRINCIPLE

When you **take action in accordance with the values of a principle**, mark 1-fatigue to roll with that principle instead of whatever stat you would normally roll.

CALL SOMEONE OUT

When you **openly call on someone to live up to their principle**, shift your balance away from center, then name and roll with their principle. On a hit, they are called to act as you say; they must either do it or mark a condition. On a 7–9, they challenge your view of the world in turn; mark 1-fatigue or they shift your balance as they choose. On a miss, they can demand you act in accordance with one of your principles instead; mark a condition or act as they request.

DENY A CALLOUT

When you **deny an NPC calling on you to live up to your principle**, roll with that principle. On a hit, act as they say or mark 1-fatigue. On a 10+, their words hit hard; you must also shift your balance towards the called-on principle. On a miss, you stand strong; clear a condition, clear 1-fatigue, or shift your balance, your choice.

RELY ON YOUR SKILLS & TRAINING

When you **rely on your skills and training** to overcome an obstacle, gain new insight, or perform a familiar custom, roll with **FOCUS**. On a hit, you do it. On a 7–9, you do it imperfectly—the GM tells you how your approach might lead to unexpected consequences; accept those consequences or mark 1-fatigue.

PUSH YOUR LUCK

When you **push your luck** in a risky situation, say what you want to do and roll with **PASSION**. On a hit, you do it, but it costs you to scrape by; the GM tells you what it costs you. On a 10+, your boldness pays off despite the cost; the GM tells you what other lucky opportunity falls in your lap.

INTIMIDATE

When you **intimidate an NPC** into backing off or giving in, roll with **PASSION**. On a hit, they choose one. On a 10+, first, you pick one they cannot choose.

- They run to escape or get backup.
- They back down but keep watch.
- They give in with a few stipulations.
- They attack you, but off-balance; the GM marks a condition on them.

RESIST SHIFTING YOUR BALANCE

When you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, roll. On a hit, you maintain your current balance in spite of their words or deeds. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7–9, choose one.

- Clear a condition or mark growth by immediately acting to prove them wrong
- Shift your balance towards the opposite principle
- Learn what their principle is (if they have one); if you already know, take +1 forward against them

On a miss, they know just what to say to throw you off balance. Mark a condition, and the GM shifts your balance twice.

LOSE YOUR BALANCE

If your balance shifts past the end of the track, **you lose your balance**. You obsess over that principle to a degree that's not healthy for you or anyone around you. Choose one of the following:

- Give in or submit to your opposition
- Lose control of yourself in a destructive and harmful way
- Take an extreme action in line with the principle, then flee

Afterward, when you've had some time to recover and recenter yourself, shift your center one step towards the principle you exceeded and clear all your conditions and fatigue. Reset your balance to your new center.

GUIDE AND COMFORT

When you try to honestly **guide and comfort** another person, roll with **HARMONY**. On a hit, they choose one:

- They embrace your guidance and comfort. They may clear a condition or 2-fatigue, and you may ask one question; they must answer honestly.
- They shut you down. They inflict a condition on you, and you shift their balance in response.

On a 10+, if they embrace your guidance and comfort, you may also shift their balance.

TRICK

When you **trick an NPC**, roll with **CREATIVITY**. On a hit, they fall for it and do what you want for the moment. On a 7–9, pick one. On a 10+, pick two.

- They stumble; take +1 forward to acting against them.
- They act foolishly; the GM tells you what additional opportunity they give you.
- They overcommit; they are deceived for some time.

GROWTH QUESTIONS

At the end of each session, each player answers the following questions:

- Did you learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world?
- Did you stop a dangerous threat or solve a community problem?
- Did you guide a companion towards balance or end the session at your center?

Each player also answers their playbook's unique personal growth question. For each yes, mark growth. When you have marked four growth, you take a growth advancement.

CLEARING CONDITIONS

- **Afraid:** run from danger or difficulty.
- **Angry:** break something important or lash out at a friend.
- **Guilty:** make a personal sacrifice to absolve your guilt.
- **Insecure:** take foolhardy action without talking to your companions.
- **Troubled:** seek guidance from a mentor or powerful figure.



COMBAT EXCHANGES

EXCHANGE STEPS

1 The GM chooses an approach for each NPC or group of NPCs in the exchange; the GM keeps their choice secret.

2 Each player of a PC in the exchange chooses an approach for their character. If multiple players have PCs in the exchange, they can talk and coordinate. Their choices can be public, but if the PCs oppose each other, they keep their choices secret and reveal in the next step.

3 The GM reveals what they chose for each NPC, and PCs opposing each other reveal their previously secret approaches.

4 All combatants who chose **defend and maneuver** resolve their approach.

5 All combatants who chose **advance and attack** resolve their approach.

6 All combatants who chose **evade and observe** resolve their approach.

7 All characters who lost their balance or were taken out now resolve those results.

After the Exchange

- The full effects of a character **being taken out** or **losing their balance** resolve outside of fight exchanges.
- **When a PC is taken out**, they are unable to act any more. The exact details of how they are taken out can be set up outside of fight exchanges—but almost always, a PC being taken out is a golden opportunity for the GM to make another move.
- **After an exchange ends**, there is no requirement to go right into another exchange.
- If **multiple combatants want to keep fighting**, then another exchange ensues. This also covers situations in which one side wants to only defend or evade.
- If **only one combatant (or one side of combatants) wants to keep fighting**—to the extent that their targets won't even resist incoming blows—then no exchange is needed; the attackers simply inflict fatigue or conditions on their targets.
- If **no combatants are engaging each other**, then there's no need for an exchange at all!
- If **all combatants on one side of the conflict are defeated**, unable to continue fighting in any way, then no more exchanges are needed!

STANCE MOVE

FOR PCs

When you resolve your approach, roll with the appropriate stat:

- **Defend and maneuver** rolls with **FOCUS**
- **Advance and attack** rolls with **PASSION**
- **Evade and observe** rolls with **CREATIVITY** or **HARMONY**, the PC's choice

On a 7–9, use one basic or mastered technique. On a 10+, choose one from this list instead:

- Mark 1-fatigue to use a learned technique
- Use one practiced technique
- Use two basic or mastered techniques

On a miss, you stumble, but you can shift your balance away from center to use one basic technique.

FOR NPCs

NPCs always use a number of techniques equal to 1+ their balance rating, chosen by the GM.

STATUSES

Some techniques within a combat exchange assign statuses to characters based on the fiction, such as a character getting *Trapped* by ice or metal. Techniques may assign the following:

NEGATIVE STATUSES

- **DOOMED:** You're in grave danger—mark 1-fatigue every few seconds (or each exchange) until you free yourself.
- **IMPAIRED:** You're slowed or off-balance—mark 1-fatigue or take a -2 to all physical actions (PCs) / choose one fewer technique (NPCs).
- **TRAPPED:** You're completely helpless—you must mark a combination of 3-fatigue or conditions to escape.
- **STUNNED:** You're caught off-guard—you can't act or respond for a few seconds until you steady yourself.

POSITIVE STATUSES

- **EMPOWERED:** Your abilities are naturally stronger in this moment—clear 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange.
- **FAVORED:** You're buoyed by circumstance—choose an additional basic or mastered technique in the next exchange, even on a miss.
- **INSPIRED:** You're ready to stand for something—clear *Inspired* to shift your balance toward a principle of your choice.
- **PREPARED:** You're ready for what's coming—clear *Prepared* to take +1 to an appropriate roll (after the roll) or avoid marking a condition.

BASIC TECHNIQUES

DEFEND & MANEUVER

ROLL WITH FOCUS

READY

Mark 1-fatigue to ready yourself or your environment, assigning or clearing a fictionally appropriate status of nearby characters or yourself.

RETALIATE

Steel yourself for their blows. Each time a foe inflicts fatigue, a condition, or shifts your balance in this exchange, inflict 1-fatigue on that foe.

SEIZE A POSITION

Move to a new location. Engage/disengage with a foe, overcome a negative status or danger, establish an advantageous position, or escape the scene. Any foe engaged with you can mark 1-fatigue to block this technique.

ADVANCE & ATTACK

ROLL WITH PASSION

STRIKE

Strike a foe in reach, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, mark a condition, or shift their balance away from center, their choice. Mark 1-fatigue to instead choose to hammer them with your blows, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, or strike where they are weak, inflicting a condition.

PRESSURE

Impress or intimidate a foe. Choose an approach—your foe cannot choose to use that approach in the next exchange.

SMASH

Mark 1-fatigue to destroy or destabilize something in the environment—possibly inflicting or overcoming a fictionally appropriate positive or negative status.

EUVADE & OBSERVE

CLEAR 1-FATIGUE & ROLL WITH CREATIVITY OR HARMONY

TEST BALANCE

Mark 1-fatigue to challenge an engaged foe's balance. Ask what their principle is; they must answer honestly. If you already know their principle, instead shift their balance away from center by questioning or challenging their beliefs or perspective.

BOLSTER OR HINDER

Aid or impede a nearby character, inflicting an appropriate status.

COMMIT

Recenter yourself amidst the fray. Shift your balance toward one of your principles; the next time you live up to that principle, do not mark fatigue.