

# HAUNTERS



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Playtest 1.0 – [Tabletop.WillPhillips.ORG](http://Tabletop.WillPhillips.ORG)

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THIS IS THE CONTENT NEEDED FOR  
CHARACTER CREATION ONLY.

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*You are a creature from folklore.*

*A supernatural being.*

*A visitor from the stars.*

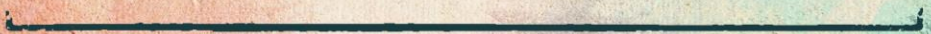
*A monster.*

*Or maybe, a mortal human...  
but one burdened by strange powers.*

You live among humanity,  
strange sights in a stranger world.

In the world's shadowy margins, you face  
the vile, the villainous, the unnatural...

...and the dark impulses of your own  
*monstrous nature.*

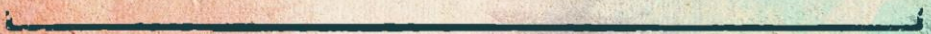


This is a love letter to the Monstrous,  
Supernatural, and Weird, inspired by:

*Hellboy* & the wider “Mignolaverse,”  
Dan Brereton’s *Nocturnals*,  
Eric Powell’s *The Goon* & *Hillbilly*,  
Alan Moore & Kevin O’Neill’s  
*The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*,  
the *Underworld* films,  
and the various incarnations of  
*The World of Darkness*...

...with mechanics streamlined and  
remixed from Christian Mehrstam’s  
*Whitehack*, Amit Moshe’s *City of Mist*, and  
*Marvel Heroic Roleplaying* from Margaret  
Weis Productions.

You’ll need all the normal polyhedral dice –  
d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20 – *plus a d16.*



# CREATING YOUR PC

## Select a Monstrous Archetype.

- Select two Monstrous Traits.
- Record your special abilities and Urge.

## Define your Origin.

- Flesh out your Origin-specific Trait.
- Select your Arc and record its XP triggers

## Specify your Bond with humanity.

- Give your Bond Trait a short description.
- Choose beneficial Knacks.

## (Optional) Select up to two Complications.

- Banes: A weakness related to your Archetype
- Flaws: Personal or mental issues
- Troubles: Social challenges and drama with your Bond

Choose and assign your four Trait Dice from the following table to your Monstrous, Origin, and Connection Traits:

d10	d10	d10	d10	d12	d10	d10	d6
d12	d10	d8	d8	d12	d12	d6	d6
d16	d8	d6	d6				

*After this, record your name and any roleplaying details you prefer. The game does not concern itself much with equipment, items, and inventory. You are assumed to have all the equipment appropriate to your Archetype and Origin, per GM approval.*



# ARCHETYPES

Choose a **Monstrous Archetype** from one of three: **The Savage, Canny, or Grotesque**. These are broad by design: many types of characters should be able to be envisioned within a single Archetype. Likewise, most concepts can be expressed as multiple Archetypes. Take vampires as an example:

## THE VAMPIRE IN THREE ARCHETYPES

The immortal, cursed sophisticate: <b>the Canny</b>	The horrifying undead Nosferatu: <b>the Grotesque</b>	Ravenous, blood- sucking seducer: <b>the Savage</b>
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## HOW ARCHETYPES WORK

Of the six **Monstrous Traits** (**Deadly, Unseen, Unrelenting, All-Knowing, Mesmerizing, and Terrifying**), your Archetype will list a subset of four from which to choose from.

Those familiar with popular roleplaying rules will be able to roughly map these Traits back to the classic six attributes: *Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma*.

## THE URGE

Each Archetype contends with a **base monstrous nature** called **The Urge**. It builds up slowly over time, usually over many adventures, until it can no longer be ignored. Each

Archetype has a different Urge, but whatever form it takes, chaos and trouble is left in its wake.

**Mechanically, the Urge is a special type of Tag** (see Tags, pg. ##). Once created, it cannot be reduced or removed except for the criteria given in each Archetype's entry. As your Urge grows, consider how it impacts you:

**Urge 1-4** becomes a lingering presence in the back of your mind. It's not intrusive, but not something you can ignore.

**Urge 5-9** becomes much more intrusive into your thoughts and emotions. You remain functional and can mostly keep the Urge at bay, but it takes its toll.

**Urge 10-14** often impacts your ability to pass and function "as normal." You can largely keep it under control with concentrated effort, and when you can't your friends, allies, and Bonds begin to suffer.

**Urge 15** is the final threshold: you can no longer ignore, manage, or withstand your Urge. Your Archetype will frame and provide ideas for what it looks like when you give into those monstrous, destructive impulses you can no longer keep at bay.

- **As a player, your priorities should shift:** revel in the trouble and chaos your Urge would result in. Your Archetype gives you a general script to follow; enjoy it!
- **Likewise, it's the GM's job** to honestly and faithfully set up and describe the results of your monstrous Urge. It won't be pretty; there's going to be complications and ramifications. But the tension of confronting their Urges and the fallout of giving into them is at the heart of the stories of monsters-as-protagonists.

## THE CANNY

*The world is not as it seems. You know this to be true. This mystery has become your desire, your aspiration, your Obsession. Before it, all must be cast aside, but at what cost?*

Magic users, supernatural beings, aliens, as well as ancient mummies and immortals are often great examples of the Canny Archetype.

### CANNY TRAITS

Choose two:

Unseen	Unrelenting
All-Knowing	Mesmerizing

### CANNY ABILITIES

You have control over eldritch and primordial forces beyond the knowledge – and sanity – of normal men and women.

Choose three keywords from the following table. You must select at least one option from each group (e.g. you may demonstrate both mastery of Creation and Preservation of Flesh or master the Illusion of both Water and Fire).



MASTERY		<i>of</i>	MATTER	
Creation	Preservation		Earth	Fire
Destruction	Illusion		Water	Flesh
Manipulation			Air	Spirit

These abilities should have wide ranging usages and effects. Be creative in your interpretation and application! Work with the GM to determine specifics or limits.

**Usage:** Roll a die determined by your intended impact. Each use of the Canny's abilities creates more of the Urge – with more potent effects creating a stronger Urge than simple tricks.

EFFECT	DIE	URGE
Parlor tricks and cantrips	None	1
Minor, ephemeral, or close by	d6	2
Moderate, temporary, or a short ways	d10	4
Major, lengthy, or very far away	d16	8

### URGE: OBSESSION

Choose a great and singular Obsession that underlies your powers, drives your actions, or acts as your life's quest or work.

This may be a broad concept or something specific, but it should not be a goal that is (likely to be) achievable.

- **When you reach Urge-15**, you are struck by some insight or uncanny similarity to your Obsession. In that moment, other plans, promises, and responsibilities go to waste – or are folded by way of manipulation and lies to serve your Obsession. This often appears as madness or the manic focus of the brilliant and the insane.
- **You reduce your Urge to zero** when you come to some understanding of your Obsession. It may be a correct new insight, the realization that your current mania was erroneous, or that you realize there is yet another unforeseen step that you are prevented from taking in current circumstances.
- **Example:** In 1999's *The Mummy*, the titular Imhotep is obsessed with returning his lover, Anck-su-namun, to life.

## THE GROTESQUE

*Others pass through the great throngs of humanity without notice, but not you. You're different, and all the world can see it. That difference has given you great power, but an equally great yearning for Solace.*

Think of the creature, the beast, the deformed, and the outcast – the story of the golem, hunchback, and Frankenstein's Monster are good examples of the Grotesque.

## GROTESQUE TRAITS

Choose two:

Deadly	Unrelenting
All-Knowing	Terrifying

## GROTESQUE ABILITIES

The struggles of your life have shaped in in specific ways – ways that you’ve learned to shape and control. Choose one of the following:

**Torment of the Body:** You use your peculiar body, size, shape, or physical condition to your advantage. You start every scene with **Grotesque Body-5**.

**Torment of the Spirit:** Your experiences have made you introspective and a keen observer of others. You start every scene with **Grotesque Insights-5**.

**Torment of the Masses:** It is not easy for you to hide. Yet, you’ve learned to leverage this through fear, intimidation, distraction, and the perverse curiosity of gawkers and voyeurs. You start every scene with **Grotesque Fascination-5**.

When using these Tags, you can also grant an ally a free turn. If they Succeed at a Cost, you instead suffer the consequences, but only half of what they would be otherwise.

In the same way you cannot escape your nature, so too can you not escape your Urge. Add **Urge-1** when you Succeed at a Cost or Fail. This is in addition to any other complications the GM imposes.



## URGE: SOLACE

The eyes of the world are upon you, always watching, always judging, always mocking. What does the world see, and how do you respond? With fear, anger, shame? What makes you Grotesque? Where do you go - or what do you do when your torment is too much?

- **When you reach Urge-15**, you flee, perhaps in silence or perhaps in violence, but no one will fail to notice your absence. Those who stand in your way will be crushed. Your allies and your Bond will need you, but you will not be there. When will you return?
- **You reduce your Urge to zero** when you at last have made it to your place of refuge or find peaceful, undisturbed time to escape from the anger, shame, fear, or other burdens that torment your mind. This is not an easy or quick process – the world often finds a way to disrupt you, with disastrous consequences.
- **Example:** Quasimodo the hunchback, who finds Solace and refuge in the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

## THE SAVAGE

*A great Thirst of some bestial instinct or inhuman desire surges within you. It grants great power, yet ever does it call out to be satisfied. How long can you withstand it?*

**Examples:** The vampire given over to bloodlust, the raging lycanthrope, and the undead who would feast on flesh are all good examples of the Savage Archetype.

## SAVAGE TRAITS

Choose two:

Deadly	Unseen
Mesmerizing	Terrifying

## SAVAGE ABILITIES

There are certain circumstances which heighten your Savage nature and grant powers beyond even what your Traits define. Select two Territories, Threats, or Triggers:

- **Territories:** City streets, the woods, in water, the family home, pubs & taverns
- **Threats:** Specific types of people (e.g. social class, nationality, or profession), emotions, fears or phobias
- **Triggers:** A seasonal or meteorological phenomena (e.g. the full moon); consumption of certain food, drink, or drug

**Usage:** When in the selected circumstances, you have access to the following abilities (each come with a corresponding Urge Condition):

EFFECTS	URGE
Reroll an action made with one of your Monstrous Traits.	0
Reroll an action made with your Origin Trait.	1

Roll with a Monstrous Trait <b>Stepped Down ↓1</b> that would otherwise be irrelevant and unusable. This roll cannot benefit from a reroll.	2
Ask a question about the current Territory, Threat, or Trigger. The GM will answer honestly. This may be framed as heightened senses or inexplicable knowledge.	1

### URGE: THE THIRST

Choose a primal Thirst of some taboo or wicked nature: for flesh, blood, fear, destruction, chaos, etc. In even the best of times, this monstrous desire lurks at the corner of your mind – like an itch you cannot scratch. As you use your unique powers, the urge grows until you can ignore it no longer.

Whatever form the Thirst takes, it will have ruinous – often deadly – effects on the people targeted by the Savage.

- **When you reach Urge-15**, your Thirst becomes overwhelming. It cannot be ignored as it overtakes your more civilized, rational mind. You become truly Savage, only capable of acting to quench your terrible Thirst.
- **You reduce your Urge to zero** once you have overindulged or have been sequestered away in some form long enough to come back to your senses.
- **Example:** Werewolves going feral during the full moon.



## A NOTE ON THE THIRST

While this is a longstanding monster trope, the concept of an insatiable primal thirst is ripe for abuse – more so than even the Urges of the Canny and Grotesque. Be conscious of comfort levels around the table.

# ORIGINS

Archetypes represent types of *power*, but it is your **Origin** that represents the type of *person* you are – and what struggles you have in grappling with those powers. Your history and life as Flesh & Blood, a Former Human, or as The Strange Other impacts and informs your place in the world.

## HOW ORIGINS WORK

- **Origin Trait:** Each Origin has a specific Trait type of its own (Profession, Passion, and Nature) to highlight your experience and abilities outside of monstrous powers. Flesh it out with a short description (e.g. d10 Nature: Ancient D’Jinn).
- **Crafting:** In scenes you’re not in danger and have free time, you may roll to hastily “craft” an item, relic, piece of equipment, etc. relevant to your Origin Trait.
  - This craft’s name or description is a Temporary Trait (i.e. not a category of existing Trait) with a dice score equal to your Origin **stepped down ↓**.
  - The craft comes with a standalone Threshold of 5.
  - Anyone can use it.
- **Arc:** Arcs represent the common struggles and inner conflicts which frame an Origin’s Monstrous Archetype and social Bond. Mechanically, Arcs are a narrative

structure that are one of three sources of earning XP. The other two is electing to Fail (see the Gameplay section for that rule) and your optional Complications.

- **Choosing an Arc:** Each Origin has example Arcs. Choose one or write your own Arc.
- **Earning XP from Your Arc:** Your Arc should often guide your decisions and actions in order to drive the narrative of your chosen story arc. When the narrative at the table lets you fulfill one of the aspects of your Arc, let the table know and record the XP.

**2 XP – Can be earned once a session:** These are the regular, expected behaviors and motivations of this narrative Arc.

**6 XP – Can be earned once, at the conclusion of your Arc:** When you earn this XP, you may choose a new Arc or elect to begin the same Arc anew – representing your continuing struggle with this aspect of your adventuring life.

## FLESH AND BLOOD

*You are human – or mostly so. But something is different about you, which you may regard as a blessing or a curse.*

### ORIGIN TRAIT: PROFESSION

How do you keep your bills paid and a roof over your head? What skills and equipment does that grant you, and how does your professional side play into this strange other life you lead?

## PROFESSIONAL CRAFTS

These are *usually* mundane items of a manufactured or technological nature. Of course, a magic-user could certainly create magical items, but nothing with the widely flexible application or power levels of the Canny's Abilities.

### EXAMPLE ARC: STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Your abilities are opening your eyes to a world much different than the mundane known to most of humanity. And in that world will be new allies, mentors, ... and enemies.

**2XP:** When you first meet – or hear of – someone with strange and unusual powers, or of a strange and unusual nature.

**2XP:** When you first can show off your own powers to help – or harm – someone who hasn't seen them before.

**6XP:** When your efforts create a close new friendship with one of these individuals – or a personal vendetta against you.

### EXAMPLE ARC: A GIFT OR CURSE?

Your powers are a source of questioning and doubt. Will your adventures have you embrace them or deny them?

**2XP:** When you remark about the strangeness, unease, or uncertainty you feel about your Monstrous Archetype.

**2XP:** When you take out an opponent or a challenge using your Origin Trait when it would have been easier to use a Monstrous Trait – or vice versa.

**6XP:** When your decision to use – or not to use - your Monstrous Traits or Abilities in pursuit of a larger goal puts you or your allies in danger.



## FORMER HUMAN

*You were once a human, but no more. That life is now a fading memory. What happened, and what are you now?*

### ORIGIN TRAIT: PASSION

Some hobby, interest, or pastime keeps your mind tied to the humanity you've left behind. What is it, and how does it help you in the adventurous life you lead now?

### CRAFTS OF PASSION

Your Passion may translate or be relevant in the current day, but depending on the nature of your Former Humanity, may represent more historic or eldritch creations.

### EXAMPLE ARC: THE UNSETTLED PAST

Your former life haunts you. You may remember it in vivid detail – or you may be bereft of your memories. Either way, you need to come to peace with it and what you are now.

**2XP:** When you are reminded, have a memory of, or experience a flashback of your former life.

**2XP:** When an aspect of your fully human past (knowledge, an item, or a person) plays an unforeseen positive or negative role in your actions – or the group's adventure.

**6XP:** When you put together the pieces about some aspect of your past and choose to affirm it as an important part of who you are – or repudiate it by leaving it behind.

### EXAMPLE ARC: OUT OF TIME, OUT OF PLACE

Your connection to the current day is confused, outdated, disgruntled, or naïve. There's no going back. How will you make peace with this world – or firmly set your heart against it?

2XP: When you make an observation, take an action, or showcase a personal belonging that's out of place for the current day.

2XP: When you allow a friend or ally to help or guide you through something confusing or difference to you – or refuse an offer of help.

6XP: When you abandon your allies in a moment of need to preserve or return to your familiar environs – or sacrifice something of your former life to help your allies.

## THE STRANGE OTHER

*You are unmistakably not human. You may be a creature from myth, or perhaps you come from the stars... or somewhere else.*

### ORIGIN TRAIT: NATURE

What are you and why are you here? What skills, knowledge, or expertise does your non-human Nature give you?

### CRAFTS OF A STRANGE NATURE

What nature of Craft are you capable of – and what specific effects does that entail? Are these magical relics, enchanted items, materials from another world or plane of existence?

## JOURNEY: THESE STRANGE CREATURES

- 2XP:** When you use your Monstrous Traits, abilities, or give into the Urge in the presence of normal humans – and they react poorly.
- 2XP:** When a human or an ally who does not share your Origin expresses interest in your Nature – and the two of you share a meaningful moment together.
- 6XP:** When you experience a breakthrough of understanding about humanity or your allies after creating and benefiting from a Tag of 15 – or after being Taken Out from a detrimental Tag of a similar nature.

## EXAMPLE ARC: BECOMING ONE OF US

- 2XP:** When you discover a new aspect of life on Earth you enjoy – or indulge in one of your favorites.
- 2XP:** When you put yourself in between danger and an innocent human bystander (who is not a PC or your Bond).
- 6XP:** When you get your allies to help you complete or participate in (in totality or in some substantial part) the reason you are amidst humanity – or abandon that purpose at a crucial moment to help your allies.



# BONDS

Monstrous and alienated from the masses as you and your companions may be, you do not exist in a vacuum. You live alongside humanity and **find your place in society largely defined by one of three Bonds**: a close Companion or two, an Affiliation with a larger organization, or on the outskirts of civilized society, surviving by Rumor & Reputation alone.

## HOW BONDS WORK

- **Bond Trait:** Each Bond also serves as a Trait of its own. Flesh it out with a short description (e.g. d8 Companion: Bishop O'Connell the Exorcist; d6 Affiliation: the Bureau for Party Research & Drinking; d12 Rumor: a Strange Beast Dwells in the Sewers).
- **Knacks:** Each Bond grants access to a set of Knacks – temporary benefits and buffs you can “buy” with the XP you earn through your Origin's Arc. These reflect the nature of your Bond and what manner of people, events, locations, and institutions they can connect you with.

## AFFILIATION

*You cling closely to a larger community – this may be a loose network or movement or a formal organization with structure. You can call on it in times of trouble, both as a moral point of reference and for material aid. What is the nature of this group, and what has it taught you?*

**Examples:** Occult societies, secret government or religious agencies, organized crime, - even wholly mundane groups can work well: unions, employers, community groups.

Regardless, an Affiliation should anchor you to the mortal world. A coven of witches or hidden space ship full of aliens wouldn't work well in this context.

### AFFILIATION KNACKS

Select three Knacks. Use your Bond Trait's die as-is when you roll for them. Your connection to this larger organization gives you a reliable source of certain benefits in times of trouble.

## COMPANION(S)

*A key individual or a small group are your chief, most prized bonds in the world. Who are they, and how does your relationship with them influence how you interact with the broader world?*

**Examples:** Someone you care for or protect – or who cares for or protects you. This may be family, a friend, a servant or sidekick, or an authority figure.

They *should* be companions who are largely human. St. Michael the Archangel would not well represent a representation for your relationship to humanity, for example.

### COMPANION(S) KNACKS

Select two Knacks. **Step Up 11** when you roll for them. Your small cohort are reliable and experienced. What they can do, they do well, but their small numbers mean a limitation to what you can call on them for.



## RUMOR & REPUTATION

*All sorts of people have heard of you. Good people. Bad people. But you keep them at arm's length. You may like it that way, or circumstances have resulted in this life.*

*What stories that have attached themselves to your name? Are they true? Fair? Good? Bad?*

**Examples:** Rumor and Reputation should be specific enough to inform your roleplaying, frame your POV on humanity enough to be a plausible justification for rolling your Bond Trait outside of Downtime Knacks, *and* provide enough of a theme to give reason to the Knacks you select.

Sewer-dwelling alligator may not be enough. Notorious brownie sprite that people lead food out for may be.

### RUMOR & REPUTATION KNACKS

Select four Knacks. **Step Down ↓1** when you roll for them. You may be a drifter, an outcast, or flighty, but it's given you connections far and wide. Leveraging those diverse contacts is what's sometimes difficult.

## KNACKS

When you have enough XP and are in a Downtime, roll with your Bond Trait. Like other rolls, you'll always get your selected Knack (unless you choose to Fail), but if you Succeed with Cost, that benefit comes along with some unexpected complications for you – or your Bond.

**Some Knacks have mechanical impacts, while others provide purely narrative benefits.** Both are important. The nature of the Knacks will vary, but should align with the Bond they come from. Work with your GM if you have questions.

### KNACK THRESHOLDS

Knacks are not permanent additions to your Character. They are **an episodic, short term benefit that *will* be used up.** This limitation is represented by some Knacks having a dedicated Threshold of their own.

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#### EXPERT CRAFT

15XP

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*An item – either magical or mundane – of particular potency.*

Create a Temporary Trait with a dice score equal to your Bond. This Trait may reasonably be just about anything – it should align more with the narrative rather than a category of existing Trait. *Only you* have the knowledge, permission, or esoteric attunement to use it.

- The relic has a standalone threshold of 10.
-

HENCHMEN OR SERVANTS
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10XP
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*They are here to help you with their particular sets of skills – or strange natures – for a time.*

A small handful of helpful Non-Player Characters join you for a short time. They have a single *Origin* Trait (e.g. a Profession, Passion, or Nature of some variety) equal to your Bond die **Stepped Down ↓1** and a Threshold of 5 (which applies to the group).

- They Act on their own and get their own turn during combat and other challenges (either the GM or the Players can act as them – work it out at the table).

GUARDIAN
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20XP
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*A powerful figure joins you on your adventure.*

A single Non-Player Character joins you for a short time.

They have a single *Monstrous* Trait **Stepped Up ↑1** and a Threshold of 15. Like Henchmen, They act on their own and get their own turn during combat.

RESPITE
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5XP
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*Healing, peace, rest, and relaxation – your Bond allows you to face the dangerous unknown once more.*

Add the results of this roll to the roll of your Bond die to reduce the strength of detrimental Tags (GMs should be careful about adding new Tags as a consequence for Success at a Cost with this Knack).



## PREPERATION OR TRAINING

10XP

*Your Bond gives you the opportunity through equipment, facilities, or expertise to prepare for the struggle ahead.*

Create a beneficial Tag with a strength of 10 describing your preparation – or the goal of it. The Tag lasts until it's reduced to zero or until the GM says so – usually the next Downtime.

## WISE COUNSEL

5XP

*Provide knowledge about current and future plans, problems the character may face, and answers to current questions.*

Ask the GM a question your Bond would know the answer to; the GM will give you the truthful answer.

## SANCTUARY

10XP

*Your Bond has a safe house, a sanctuary, or mystical wards.*

*Your foes won't find you – or if they do, they can't harm you.*

**Narrative Knack:** You have a place of protection that lets the heat die down and hides you from your enemies.

## ACCESS

5XP

*Your Bond knows people... and places.*

**Narrative Knack:** By instruction, supply, or personally accompanying you, get you access to a location or individual you wouldn't be able to easily otherwise. Higher rolls may result in greater levels of access.

## TRANSPORTATION

5XP

*Cars, trucks, trains, plains, mules, tunnels, backroads, and hidden passageways. Riding in style, with a low profile, or smuggling goods and people.*

**Narrative Knack:** Your Bond can get you, your allies, or materials transported where you need to go – or loan you the vehicles to do it yourself.

## COMPLICATIONS

You may wield strange and unusual powers, but they often come with weaknesses, obligations, and pressures that make your life more complex – and increase your monstrous Urge. **Choose up two Complications: a Bane, a Flaw, and/or a Trouble.** You cannot choose two of the same type, and you can choose to not take any Complications at all.

### HOW COMPLICATIONS WORK

**Complications are rated 1, 3, or 5.** When the story at the table introduces a situation where a relevant Complication would add interesting and unexpected tension or drama, you, your GM, or the other players may call out the Complication.

**If you agree to accept the Complication, you earn XP equal to the Complication's strength, but also increase your Urge by the same amount.**

You and the GM should then work out how it would impact the scene. It may compel or prohibit courses of action, cause unintended consequences, or introduce unexpected characters.

## BANES

Banes represent specific weaknesses tied to your **Monstrous Archetype**. Think of your classic monsters, and you'll have great examples of Banes. However, Banes should be distinct from your Urge. For example, a Savage ghoul shouldn't have a Bane of "Devour Flesh," as that is implicit in their Urge.

- **Examples:** Weaknesses to sunlight, silver, religious icons, fire or other elemental phenomena, phobias, etc.

## FLAWS

Flaws encompass physical and mental struggles, character defects, and other quirks. They are loosely tied to your Origin. More so than Banes, Flaws vary wildly.

- **Physical Examples:** Deformed, exceptionally large or small, clumsy, lame, missing or extra limbs, limited senses, etc.
- **Mental Examples:** Moral code, vengeful, addiction, overconfident, naïve, uncontrollable anger, etc.

## TROUBLES

Troubles makes your social life complicated, and so often relate back to your Bond. Even the tightest bonds

- **Examples:** Debt, criminal lifestyle, enemies, Bond or other NPC at risk, social responsibilities, housing, etc.



# GAMEPLAY

These are lightweight rules. Not every situation or gameplay experience is covered herein. This is by design. When you encounter circumstances not clearly outlined here, the GM should make a judgement call and not allow gameplay at the table to slow.

## CORE MECHANIC

Describe your actions and roll the Trait die most relevant to your action to determine how successful you are. You won't always have a relevant Trait – you will be faced with situations that don't play to your strengths. When this happens, **you can always roll a d4**, provided you're able to take an action.

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**5+: Total Success** - Just as planned without any complications or drawbacks! You may:

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**Add to or remove from** a relevant in-use Tag.

*Points 10+ can be split with another existing Tag.*

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**Create a new Scene Tag** with a Strength of 1.

Rolls of 10+ create a Tag with a Strength of 5.

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**1-4: Success at a Cost** - Still apply the results of your roll as above, but you or your allies may take a few scrapes, face new dangers, or take a new Tag.

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## FAILURE

When you Succeed with Cost, you can tell the GM you will accept outright Failure. This is sometimes called “count as zero.” You will not do damage or add successes, but you will **earn 1 XP**.

How you Fail is up to the GM, but it ends up bad for you (i.e. typically, your allies shouldn’t suffer when you decide to take a Failure).

## STEPPING DICE UP & DOWN

(Bonuses & Penalties, Advantage & Disadvantage, etc.)

When circumstances are particularly easy or difficult, you may “step” the dice you roll up or down in size (note that **you can never roll lower than a d4 or higher than a d20**). Usually this is as a result of Tags, but occasionally the GM reward a Step Up or force a Step Down if circumstances warrant it.

- **Step Up ↑1** or **↑2**: Roll a die size one or two larger.
- **Step Down ↓1** or **↓2**: Roll a size one or two smaller.
- **Step ↑1** or **↓2**: Roll the die size larger or smaller, *as appropriate to the present narrative*. This notation will often be seen in relation to Tags that could have both a beneficial and detrimental impact on your actions.

d4 ↔ d6 ↔ d8 ↔ d10 ↔ d12 ↔ d16 ↔ d20

## HELPING AND INTERFERING

You can share the spotlight (i.e. your turn) with another Character to help or interfere with their effort.

- **Helped**: **Step Up ↑1** when you roll
- **Interfered With**: **Step Down ↓1** when you roll

## TAGS

Tags are the chief method the narrative is given mechanical weight. **As you act, your dice rolls most often be creating and adding points to Tags.** Tags represent important aspects of the scene or your character's condition in that scene.

NO.	EFFECT
1-4	<p>The Tag represents a looming danger or trouble that may become a problem if not addressed – or a potential benefit if helped along. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fire-1</b>: Coals and burning logs have been knocked out of the fireplace, which start to smolder the rug and curtains.</li> <li>• <b>Wounded-3</b>: You've suffered a few cuts and bruises, but they are only a minor distraction.</li> </ul>
5-9	<p>The Tag has become significant and may impact characters and the scene when relevant. <b>Step your Trait ⬆1 when impacted by this Tag.</b> Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fire-6</b>: Those coals have created a small fire in the corner of the room, enough to be dangerous with fire and smoke if too close.</li> <li>• <b>Wounded-8</b>: You've taken a significant wound, but you're still in the fight. Your pain and exhaustion is starting to become noticeable.</li> </ul>
10+	<p>The Tag now has an overwhelming impact. <b>10+ Tags Step Traits ⬆2 when relevant.</b> Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fire-14</b>: The room is fully ablaze, risking engulfing everyone.</li> <li>• <b>Wounded-10</b>: You've significantly hurt.</li> </ul>



## THRESHOLDS

Everyone and everything has a Threshold: a limit of how much damage or trauma they can withstand – or how much power or circumstantial advantages they are able to take advantage of.

**When a Tag reaches or exceeds the character's Threshold, they are Taken Out:** they may be disabled, flee, die, - or whatever makes narrative sense for the scene and Tag in question.

Different categories of people, objects, and creatures will have different Thresholds, as follows:

#	EXAMPLES
5	Mooks, average humans, animals, furniture
10	Trained professionals, weak monsters, terrifying beasts (e.g. bears, tigers, orca)
15	<b>Player Characters</b>
	Other supernatural, monstrous, or alien beings
25	Powerful supernatural threats